Description of Jesus Christ.

Copy of a letter from Publius Lentulus, governor of Judea, to the Senate of Rome respecting the person and actions of our Blessed Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, which may serve as a strong testimony and evidence in favor of the divinity of our Lord's person and doctrins against the stale objections of the Deists, as the authenticity of the manuscript from which it was translated, is founded on the best authority. Tiberous Ceaser caused this letter to be published throughout all the Roman provinces, which is as follows:

"There appeared in these our days a man of great virtue, named *Jesus Christ*, who is yet living among us, and of the Gentiles is accepted as a prophet of truth, but by his own disciples is called the Son of God. He raiseth the dead and cureth all manner of diseases. As man of statue somewhat tall and comely, with a very reverend countenance, such as the beholders may both love and fear, his hair is the color of a filbert full ripe, and plain almost down to his ears, but from his ears downward somewhat curled, more orient of color and waving about his shoulders. In the midst of his hair goeth a seam or partition of his hair, after the manner of the Nazeriter, his forehead very plain and smooth, his face without spot or wrinkle, beautified with comely red, his nose and mouth so formed that nothing can be reprehended, his beard somewhat thick and agreeable color to the hair of his head, not of any great length, but forked in the midst of an innocent mature look, his eyes gray, clear and quick. In reproving he is terrible, in admonishing courteous and fair spoken; pleasant in speech mixed with gravity. It cannot be remembered that any have seen him laugh, but many have seen him weep. In proportion of body well shaped and straight; his hands and arms a sight delectable to behold; in speaking, very temperate, modest and wise; as a man, of singulal beauty surpassing the children of men."—*Moor's Rural New Yorker.*

The English Pulpit.

BY PROF. E. P. THWING.

The English pulpit, as seen by American eyes during two summers, has furnished some instructive suggestions, particularly in the matter of delivery. Critical reviewers have frequently contrasted American and English preachers in their theological and phisophical characteristics and tendencies of thought. We have been also interested in comparing their homiletic and rhetorical peculiarities of preaching.

It is obvious that the biblical and expository style is more common with the bulk of our English brethren than the oratorical. One of the most gifted of living Scotch ministers remarked to the writer, a short time since, that he regarded the work of the preacher to be an expounder of the Word, rather than that of a sacred orator. The fact that expositions of the Scripture are now so generally in the hands of the people, in the form of elaborate and critical commentaries, and in the more popular forms of periodicals and Sunday school helps, did not seem to modify his view; nor the still more noticeable fact that ordinary church-goers already admit the truths of the Gospel intelectually, so that the conspicuous need is "to persuade men," both converted and unconverted, to discharge acknowledged ooligations. His own preaching is an illustration of his ideal—a calm, unimpassioned unfolding of what he believes to be the mind of the Spirit, as conveyed in the text or chapter chosen. Leaning on the desk, his eyes on the audience, undiverted by manuscript, he quietly talks with the people, in a simple, unstudied style. We had read that the English preachers were more energetic than we are, in delivery, and were impressed in 1855 with the fervid eloquence of Raffles, Candlish and others. Yet at that time we heard in Dublin, Edinboro, London, and elsewhere more who seemed to lack animation than those who exhibited it in any marked degree. It is true that preachers of the Reformation were fiery, like Knox, who, "er he haid done with his sermone, was sae active and vigorous that he was lyk do ding the pulpit in blades and flie out of it." The pulpit remains at Stirling which the reformer pounded, but his extravagance of action is now rarely seen. So when Dr. Duff, from Calcutta, spoke in Exeter Hall on one occasion, his torrent of eloquence bore everything before it. Lords and earls, knights, presbyters, and people were electrified, we are told, by his utterance, accompanied with "gestures, contortions, and a vehemence of action" seldom seen.

The absence of agitating and exciting themes, such as stirred these men, may account in part for the change in the style of delivery. Broadus says that "the well known aversion of the English to rhetorical art" is remembered, when we look in vain for any *treatise*, whatever as to the history of their rich literature of the pulpit. "America has greatly surpassed the mother-country in the production of numerous and valuable works on homiletics, and, in like manner, it may be that Americans will take the lead in writing the history of the English pulpit."

Now whence arose this aversion to rhetorical art? Whence the source of Sydney Smith's satire on the Established Church, whose numbers are given with the last census of England at twelve and a half millions? Outside the pulpit, he says, an earnest pleader "articulates with every limb, and talks from head to foot with a thousand voices. Why this holoplegia on sacred occasions alone? Why call in the aid of paralysis to piety? It is a rule of oratory to handle the most sublime truths in the dryest manner? Is sin to be taken from men, as Eve was from Adam, by casting them into a deep slumber?"

In the first place, it may be said, in reference to the English sanctuary, that the "service," not the "sermon," "worship," not preaching, is a churchman's central idea. More time is spent in prayer, in praise and in hearing God's Word, without note or comment, than in the delivery of the discourse, which, with Americans, is, practically, the culmination toward which "the preliminaries" look. Then, again, the stiffness, or stateliness, if that be a better word, with which other exercises are performed before entering the pulpit, continues there. Clinging to the velvet cushion, eye riveted to the page, and limb and thought alike pinioned, "the most intrepid veteran of us dares no more than to wipe his face with his cambric sudarium. If by mischance his hand slips from its orthodox grip of the velvet, he draws it back as from liquid brimstone or the caustic iron of the law, and atones for this indecorum by fresh inflexibility and a more rigorous sameness."

Moreover, the intoning of one's prayers leads to the intoned, or singsong voice in preaching. This helps to create an insensibility to the truth on the part of speaker and hearer. Houses of worship came to be, what Dean Swift called them, "public dormitories."

Yet again, the work of "reanimating the silent naves of our cathedrals," as Dean Stanley expresses it in his "Memorials of Westminster Abbey," is no small task in an elocutionary point of view. Listening, a few weeks ago, to this distinguished minister, we were impressed with the hindrance to the preacher's power which exists in ecclesiastical architecture. The parallelogram, the common form of audience rooms in America, is bad enough, but the acoustic properties of Gothic cathedrals and the basilicas used for worship, abroad, are far worse, and render them unfit for teaching purposes. The effort to project tones to a distance, results in drawling, mouthing and mispronunciation. Music, indeed, is sweet:

"Where, through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault,
The pealing anthem swells the note of praise;"

but the preacher's voice is well-nigh lost in the echoes and reverberations of these vast buildings.

There are other conditions, besides these material and traditional environments, which help to give the English pulpit a character of its own. One or two will be treated next month. They may help to explain the aversion referred to and set in stronger light the excellencies and defects which exist—thus teaching us to copy the one while we avoid the other. Dr. W. M. Taylor has justly observed that the two nations were never nearer than now. They are now, like Homer's heroes, "exchanging gifts, but there is no such disproportion in their value as that between the shields of Glaucus and Diomede, and the result will be an increase and perpetuation of the friendship."—*Times.*

Sidney Smith's Philosophy for a Happy Life.

Subsidiary to this personal courage was his hopeful way of looking at the world. He was always practicing and inculcating the disposition. "Some very excellent people," he said, "tell you they dare not hope. To me it seems much more impious to dare to despair." He had an excellent rule for the happiness and wisdom of life as to the future, not to look too far into it for inevitable, though probably distant disaster. "Take short views, hope for the best, and trust in God." Inclined by temperament to anticipate coming evils—for our wit, spite of his many jests, was a serious man—he resisted the atrabilious tendency and avoided drawing drafts on the misery of futurity. "Never," he said, "give way to melancholy; nothing encroaches more. I fight against it vigorously. One great remedy is to take short views of life. Are you happy now? Are you likely to remain happy till evening? or next week? or next month? or next year? Then why destroy present happiness by a distant misery which may never come at all, or you may never live to see it? for every substantial grief has twenty shadows, and most of them shadows of your own making." It was said of the happy nature of Oliver Goldsmith that he had a knack of hoping; with Sidney Smith it was principle. Cheerfulness he made an art. He liked household illuminations of a good English coal fire, "the living thing," he said, "in a dead room;" abundance of lights, flowers on his table, prints and pictures on his walls. There is a highly characteristic anecdote of the man, illustrating his habitual regard to human happiness, and frequent solicitude for the natural welfare of children. The story is thus told by his daughter, Lady Holland; "One of his little children, then in delicate health, had for some time been in the habit of waking suddenly every evening, sobbing, anticipating the death of parents, and all the sorrows of life almost before life had begun. He could not bear this unnatural union of childhood and sorrow, and for a long period, I have heard my mother say, every evening found him at the waking child with a toy, a picture book, a bunch of grapes or a joyous tale, mixed with a little strengthening advice and the tenderest caresses, till the habit was broken, and the child woke to joy and not to sorrow."—*Ex.*

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