

**A Review of J. N. Smith's Essay on Delivering Sermons.**

BY S. B. HEDRIX.

There is so much to commend and so little to condemn in the work of the essayist—Bro. Smith—that I almost feel like simply saying Amen, and dismissing the subject.

1. The essayist truly regards the delivery of the sermon as important. He regards the preparation of the sermon as one thing, and the preparation of the speaker for its proper and effective delivery another thing. To my mind the preparation of the sermon is not done till it fully permeates every faculty of the mind of the speaker. So that when the subject matter in all its divine grandeur takes full possession of the man, then, if there is such a thing possible for him he will deliver that sermon. Therefore the best possible "heart" preparation is to have "the words of Christ dwelling in you richly." With any preacher who can tell what he knows, a thorough preparation seldom begets poor delivery.

2. The careful effort to obtain the proper pitch of voice may be necessary to the beginner or the occasional speaker, but those who are almost constantly speaking generally have such compass and control over their voice as to naturally obviate any serious difficulty.

3. The slowness and calmness recommended by the essayist may do very well for some men and some sermons, but the exceptions are certainly sufficiently numerous to guard against stereotyping this rule too rigidly. In an effort to follow this rule many speakers will have little attention on the beginning, and thereby the hearer fails to note his premises and appreciate his conclusions. A great majority of most audiences can not tell a text or subject, much less the major premises of the sermon; they forget by the time they get home. The speaker was perhaps too slow in getting down to business, at least they thought so and attended to something else until the speaker got started. Watch your audience and dash right into the subject at the first opportunity—get all on board, hoist sail, and push right off from the land, and pull for the shore on the other side.

4. I commend the thought expressed by the essayist on the importance of earnestness in the delivery of the sermon as the most excellent of all other things embraced in his paper. In delivering a sermon the speaker should be truly earnest, positive and bold in his statements of divine facts, commands and precepts. We are taught that we should "earnestly contend for the faith, once delivered to the saints." And it is recorded of Paul: "And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God." Acts xix. 8. A bold, earnest, positive manner in delivery adds materially to the force and effect of your statements. A case well stated is more than half argued, and a case poorly stated is half lost in the statement, and such is the case without these characteristics. It may be thought that the intrinsic merit of truth does not require this, but I submit that the condition of the hearer requires this, and the intrinsic merit of truth will bear it. But for the bold positive manner of the orators they would meet with little success in propagating their false theories. This boldness and positiveness by no means requires impudent rudeness, nor the laying aside of a meek and humble spirit. Peter and John were as positive and bold as they were earnest. Earnestness should be attended by positiveness, and boldness as charity is by faith and hope.

5. The above, coupled with the simplicity referred to by the essayist, and one shall rarely be necessarily

misunderstood. To gain this simplicity we need to freely use such words as we find accredited to Jesus and the apostles. These will best express the divine ideas.

6. *Directness.*—If apologies and excuses are not admissible before the sermon it is useless to offer them afterwards, for the hearer has already signed, sealed and delivered his verdict upon the habitual or temporary embarrassment that may environ the speaker. In approaching the subject a speaker may "feel" his way till he gets attention; and to do this he must not be too slow to perceive his opportunity. The direct rush for "the famous apple tree" on the part of Senator Conkling at Chicago was heard and remembered by most of his vast audience. The cautious method of Garfield in building up a historical pyramid and setting his candidate upon it for a climax was the better way. The nature of the sermon may require some times one and some time the other of these models of the direct and cautious approaches to the subject. While it is true that people prefer to go directly to the land of Canaan, rather than around through the wilderness, care should be taken that the route is not so exclusively direct and easy that the hearer fails to note the lay of the land through which you bring him. In presenting thoughts for the hearer the preacher should remember that there are always more babes than full grown men. It is the common fault of almost all speakers to presume too much upon the excellent capacity of their supposed intelligent audience.

7. The essayist presented nothing upon the speaker's position and gestures.

(a) The speaker should generally stand as the soldier while at attention, or that of a parade use. These positions are easy and natural and best calculated to hold the attention of the audience. It is difficult to assume any other without appearing awkward and at a disadvantage. Careless walking around in the pulpit should be avoided; a few changes from one side to the other is admissible if made reasonably quick and natural.

(b) Gestures should not be over-much in quantity, and such as are easy and natural for the speaker. That will generally require the free use of the joints at the wrist and elbow, with a stiff arm frequently swinging the right hand over the head to beat broken time on your left hand, or the desk looks equally bad to other folks, and will excite and call out remarks from "Mrs. Grundy." The effectiveness of most sermons would not be diminished if the speaker's gestures were fewer in number or smaller in circumference. To avoid stereotyping erroneous habits in this and many other things, it is safe to engage a confidential critic who can tell you of your faults for your benefit.

Finally. At the first intermission extend to Bro. Smith the hand of fellowship for his timely counsel on the saving efficacy of "finally." When speaking regularly or frequently to the same audience, if you can not practice his theory after a few trials, engage your precenter or leader in singing, to assist you. Tell him what time you expect to reach "finally," and then charge him that in case you do not stop in five minutes after said time that he must immediately arise and sing Song No. 664:

*Glory, glory everlang.*

D. R. Dungan offered by way of criticism on the essay, "That the object of every sermon should be the highest honor and glory of God, and not simply the good of the hearer." One of the preachers present insisted that "the essayist was right; that Jesus himself came to seek and save the lost." Bro. D. replied that it is recorded of the Great Teacher, "So I came to do thy will O God;" and again, "I came not to do mine own

will, but the will of Him that sent me." It calls to our mind the lines:

"How shall I my Savior set forth?  
How shall I his beauties declare?  
Oh how shall I speak of his worth?  
And what his chief dignities are?"

**Christians are the Fruits.**

CENTERVILLE, UMATILLA CO., OR.,  
April 27, 1881.

Bro. Campbell:

In a copy of the MESSENGER issued March 25th I see in Bro. Hedrix's Iowa Splinters a position to which I would like to say a few words through the MESSENGER.

In the position which he takes is this: "Christ is the vine, the apostles the branches; and the Christians are the fruits." The latter is what I take exception to. I can not understand it so. I find no Scripture to prove that position. We would say in the first place that would be condemning the apostles on the peoples conduct, because Christ says, "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away," (John xv. 2); that is, every apostle that does not make Christians out of the sinner, will be cut off, according to Bro. Hedrix's position; so if we hardened our hearts and would not become Christians, they would be cut off for our conduct. In Matt. xv. 6, 7, we find, "If a man abide not in me he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered, and men gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned. If ye (the apostles) abide in me and my word abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you." Again, in the 16th verse, "That ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain," (that is that their works, actions or words should remain, and we have it—the New Testament.

Judas betrayed Christ, and was cut off, it was not because he did not make Christians out of the sinners, but because he did not work for Christ, went contrary to his will, or went contrary to the commandments given the apostles; therefore we are not the fruits, but we receive that fruit. See Phil. i. 10, 11. It seems here that they (the Philippians) were filled with the fruits of righteousness, and the fruits of righteousness are the teachings of the apostles. Please read all of the first chapter of Philippians, and according to the Testament the fruits of the Christian is working for Christ. See Matt. vii. 15-22; xii. 33; iii. 7-13; Phil. iv. 17; Jas. iii. 17, 18; Gal. v. 22-26; Eph. v. 9-12; Heb. xiii. 15.

Now, who are the branches? See Prov. xi. 28; Rom. xi. 16-25. What is the natural branches here, is it the Apostles and the Christians, branches sprang up from the fruit that the apostles sowed?

Now, what do we learn from labor? See Matt. ix. 35-38; Luke x. 1-8. Here the harvest is great, but the laborers are few. The harvest is the people ready to receive the word; when the laborers teach them the word and they receive it, then the fruits will come forth (which is the actions of those that came in). See John iv. 36-38: "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal; and he that soweth and he that reapeth rejoice together." So did not the apostles sow and do we not reap the word (or in other words receive it)?

As I have no time to write much I will say no more, and I hope some one will take up this question and discuss it fully with Bro. Hedrix, for if I am wrong I want to know it, and if he is wrong I want him to know it, for I feel that it is our desire to grow in grace and in the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. I do not feel competent to discuss the subject with Bro. Hedrix if I had the time, therefore I desire that some one take up the subject and bring out the merits and demerits. Bro. Hedrix, I write this to learn, though it looks to me your position is wrong. Your so-called Iowa Splinters I always read

with great interest. I like your manner of writing, besides it is written from home (Iowa). I left Fairfield in October, 1872. I was then a Baptist, but being convinced the Disciples were correct, I was constrained to unite my efforts with them.

I will just say that Bro. Neal Cheetham expects to be here on Thursday before the second Sunday in May, and hold a series of meetings. May the Lord bless his labors.

As ever your brother in Christ,

J. H. MOORE.

**The Lost Boy.**

BY A MOTHER.

He had black eyes with long lashes red cheeks, and hair almost black and curly. He wore a crimson plaid jacket, with full trousers buttoned on; had a habit of whistling, and liked to ask questions; was accompanied by a black dog. It is a long time since he disappeared. I have a very pleasant house and much company. Everything has such an orderly, put-away look—nothing under foot—no dirt. But my eyes are aching for the sight of whittlings—and cut paper on the floor; of tumbled-down card houses; of wooden cattle and sheep; of pop-guns, bows and arrows, whips, tops, go-carts, blocks and trumpery. I want to see boats a-tiggling and kites a-making. I want to see crumbs on the carpet and paste on the kitchen table. I want to see the chairs and table turned the wrong way. I want to see candy-making and corn-popping, and to find jack-knives and fish hooks among my muslins. Yet these used to fret me once. They say: "How quiet you are here! Ah! one may here settle his brains and be at peace." But my ears are aching for the pattering of little feet; for a hearty shout a shrill whistle, a gay tra la la; for the cracks of little whips; for the noise of drums, fifes and tin trumpets. Yet these things made me nervous once. They say: "Ah! you have leisure, nothing to disturb you. What heaps of sewing you have time for!" But I long to be disturbed. I want to be asked for an old newspaper; for a cent to buy a pencil or peanuts! I want to be coaxed for a piece of new cloth for jibs of mainsails, and then to hem the same. I want to make little flags and bags to hold marbles. I want to be followed by little feet all over the house; teased for a bit of dough for a little cake, or to bake a pie in a saucer. Yet they say; "Ah! you are not tied at home! How delightful to be always at liberty for concerts, lectures and parties. No confinement for you." But I want confinement. I want to listen for the school bell mornings, to give the last hasty wash and brush, and then to watch from the window nimble feet bounding away to school. I want frequent rents to mend, to replace lost buttons. I want to obliterate mud stains, fruit stains, molasses stains and paints of all colors. Want to be sitting by a little crib of evenings, when weary little feet are at rest, and prattling little voices are hushed that mother may sing her lullabys and tell over the oft-repeated stories. They don't know their happiness then, these mothers. I didn't. All these things I called contentment once. A manly figure stands before me now. He is taller than I, has thick whiskers a frock coat, a bosomed shirt and cravat. He has just come home from college. He brings Latin and Greek in his countenance, and dust of the old philosophers into the sitting-room. He calls me "mother," but I am rather unwilling to own him. He avers that he is my boy, and says that he can prove it. He brings his little boat to show the red stripe on the sail (it was the end of the piece) and the name on the stern, Lucy Low, a girl of our neighbors, who, because of her long curls and pretty round face, was the chosen favorita of my boy. The curls were long since cut off, and she has

grown up a tall, handsome girl. How his face reddens as he shows me the name of that boat! My little boy is lost, and my big boy soon will be. Oh, how I wish he was a little tired boy, in a long white nightgown, lying in his crib, with my hand on his forehead, watching his eyelids droop, and listening to his deep breathing. If I only had my little boy again, how patient I would be. How much I would bear and how little I would scold. I can never have him back again, but there are many mothers who have not yet lost their little boy. I wonder if they know they are living their best days; that now is the time to really enjoy their children? I think if I had been more to my little boy I might be more to my grown up one.—Sel.

**A Homely Woman's Charm.**

Girls who think that it is necessary to be beautiful in order to be attractive, should get bravely over that notion. A young woman's plainness—which by the way, saves her from a great many annoyances and dangers—need detract nothing from her loveliness if only her disposition is amiable, her mind cultured, her heart kind and pure.

The story is told of a famous lady who once reigned in Paris society, that she was so very homely that her mother said one day, "My poor child, you are too ugly for any one ever to fall in love with you."

From this time, Madame de Circout began to be very kind to the pauper children of the village, the servants of the household, even the birds that hopped about the garden walks. She was always distressed if she happened to be unable to render a service. This good will toward everybody made her the idol of the city. Though her complexion was sallow, her grey eyes small and sunken, yet she held in devotion to her the greatest men of her time. Her unselfish interest in others made her, it is said, perfectly irresistible. Her life furnishes a valuable lesson.—Ex.

**Celery for Rheumatism.**

In celery there must be some special virtue, if we only knew what it is. Nothing is made in vain, and the powerful smell and extraordinary taste of celery are intimations from nature that it has some special mission. Mr. Ward, of Perriston Towers, Ross, writes that rheumatism becomes impossible if celery is freely used as an article of diet. Unfortunately, he says cooked celery; for it is the article in the raw state to which we are all accustomed. "Cut the celery," he says, "into inch dice. Boil in water until soft. No water must be poured away unless drank by the invalid. Then take new milk, slightly thicken with flour, and flavor with nutmeg; warm with the celery in the saucepan; serve with diamonds of toasted bread round the dish, and eat with potatoes."

"Permit me to say," he adds, "that cold or damp never produces rheumatism, but simple develops it. The acid blood is the primary cause and the sustaining power of evil. While the blood is alkaline there can be no rheumatism and equally no gout." And Mr. Ward proceeds to say: "Let me fearlessly say that rheumatism is impossible on such diet, and yet our medical men allowed rheumatism to kill in 1876, 3,640 human beings—every case as unnecessary as a dirty face. Worse still; of the 30,431 intersted as dying from heart-disease, at least two-thirds of these are due directly, more or less, to rheumatism and its ally, gout.—Ex.

—Let us beware how we ever sever what is painful in intercourse from what is encouraging; never quit a friend with words of displeasure; let your last discourse with him be always kindly; never give to censure the painful distinctiveness of succeeding silence.