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THE

BIBLIOTHECA SACRA.

ARTICLE I.

LIFE AND SERVICES OF PROFESSOR AUSTIN PHELPS, D.D.[1]

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED IN THE CHAPEL OF ANDOVER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, JUNE 10, 1891, BY THE REV. DANIEL L. FURBER, D.D., OF NEWTON CENTRE, MASS.

WE have consecrated the services of this hour to the memory of one whose name will long be cherished on this hill of sacred learning, and throughout the wide brotherhood of Christian ministers and scholars. We have done this partly from a sense of the greatness of our loss, partly from gratitude to God for a life which illustrated so much of the power and beauty of the Christian religion, and partly for the benefit to ourselves of calling such an example freshly to mind. The Scriptures make much use of the example of holy men. They do not stop short with mere eulogy, but they say, "Seeing therefore that we are com-

[1] The author of this discourse would not have attempted to delineate the character of such a man as Professor Phelps, had he not been requested to do so by the professor himself. He had been brought into near connection with Dr. Phelps by a lengthened correspondence with him during the last year of his life. In this correspondence the author gained more distinct knowledge

passed about with so great a cloud of witnesses," "let us run with patience the race that is set before *us*."

The glory of an institution of learning like Andover Seminary is made up largely of the names of its eminent instructors. The name of the institution suggests the names of the men who have made it what it is. If the early history of this Seminary is referred to, you have in mind, at once, the name of the father of biblical literature in America. If its later history is spoken of, you think of one whom Professor Phelps placed in that long line of New England theologians "who," he says, "have done more in the way of original thinking for the advance of strictly theological science than any other equal number of men, within an equal space of time, since Augustine's day." But you think not of him alone. He had a co-laborer, loving and beloved, who stood in the very front rank of the teachers in his department, and of whose chief published work in that department, it has been very justly maintained that its equal is not to be found in the whole range of Protestant homiletical literature. Of the originality and practical value of that book to all writers of sermons, we may judge from a remark in its preface, that "nine-tenths of it consists of answers to the inquiries of students." *This* man's fame enters into that of the Seminary. A great teacher gives his life to an institution and the institution in return becomes his memorial,—it may be to the end of time.

In attempting to commemorate his life and labors in the presence of such an audience as this, I feel like quoting the words of Bossuet in one of his funeral orations, in which

preacher I desire to appropriate, with the deepest sense of their pertinence to what I may have to say.

The key to the right understanding of the life of Professor Phelps and of his remarkable success as a teacher and preacher is to be found in his exalted conception of the dignity of the office and work of a Christian minister. He regarded the pastoral office as the first of all human vocations. This sentiment he imbibed in very early childhood from his father, whose success as a preacher, he tells us, bordered upon inspiration, not less than two thousand souls having attributed their conversion to words spoken by him.[1] Dr. Eliakim Phelps never told his son that the family descent could be traced to the German Guelphs,—and thus a connection be established with the house of Hanover, now on the throne of Great Britain,—but he did remind him that he inherited the blood of eight generations of ministers and deacons. Virtually he said to him in the words of Cowper,—

> "My boast is not that I deduce my birth
> From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth;
> But higher far my proud pretensions rise,—
> The son of parents passed into the skies."

The child of this godly ancestry resolved before he was four years old that he would be a minister, for the reason that his father had taught him nothing above that to which ambition could aspire. This decision shows remarkable mental activity in a child of that age. Some months before he was two years old his father, one day, announced the death of Napoleon. Fifty or sixty years afterward, he remarked that that incident with the tones and look of his father, was vivid in his memory. At the age of four he began to go to the district school, where the rudeness and

vulgarity which he met were in such painful contrast with the refinement of his home, that he said his earliest impression of social life was that of his own solitude. His home life was nurtured under the influence of the pre-eminent religious culture and prayerfulness of his mother, and the intense spirit of his father, the staple theme of whose conversation was the salvation of men. Up to his sixth year the two things most impressed upon him were his father's preaching and his mother's singing. The best parlor in the parsonage, rarely open to him except on Sundays, was hallowed in his thoughts by his mother's sweet voice in Watts's hymns, and by the rehearsal of the Westminster Catechism.

At the age of six he entered the high school at Pittsfield, under the care of Rev. Dr. Chester Dewey, where began his acquaintance with men of distinction as educators, who exerted a powerfully stimulating influence upon his young mind. At the age of thirteen he entered Hobart College, at Geneva, N. Y., and stood at the head of his class. Professor Horace Webster of that college, and afterwards at the head of the college of New York City, gave him private lessons in advance of his class, and greatly aroused his ambition by remarking to some one that the world would yet hear from young Phelps. His favorite study was mathematics, and yet his recitations in the languages were so critically accurate that one of his teachers unjustly suspected him of employing the aid of translations.

The latter part of his college life he spent in the University of Pennsylvania, at Philadelphia. There he came under the influence of Professor Henry Reed, editor of the American edition of the works of Wordsworth. Hours of time he spent in the privacy of the professor's study, listening to his enthusiastic explanation of the superiority of the type of literature which Wordsworth represented. He gratefully recorded his sense of obligation to the great men, rich in culture, who were his instructors, and from whom he gained in

very early life a reverence for learning and a lofty estimate of mind.

In speaking of the influence of Albert Barnes over him during the six years in which he was one of his parishioners, he said, "Probably I owe more to him than to any other one man, except my father. I found myself drawn to him by a singular affinity. His personal qualities fascinated me. His tastes, his opinions, his aspirations, his literary and professional aims, seemed to form a world of thought and feeling in which I felt *at home*. Whatever he said and did seemed to me just that which would have been natural for me to say and do, *if I could*. His preaching moved me as that of no other man ever did, before or since. I have heard the ablest preachers of this country and Great Britain, but never one of them has risen so near to my finished ideal of a Christian preacher as he did. I accept it as the one providential blessing of my life, more rich and lasting than any other not involving the fruits of ancestral influence, that I was, at the most critical period of my youth, brought into contact with that man." "We used to think him the holiest man in the world. We called him the beloved disciple, he was so much like the apostle John. We did not believe that Saint John was better than he."

Mr. Phelps graduated at the age of seventeen, the youngest in his class, and had the valedictory. Then followed a year of historical and literary reading under the direction of Professor Reed, to which we are perhaps indebted for the wealth of historical and literary allusion scattered through his works. After this came his study of Hebrew in New York under Dr. Nordheimer, of theology in New Haven under Dr. N. W. Taylor, and the preaching of his first sermon at

upon his pastoral work at the age of twenty-two, and continued in it six years. As I shall refer to this pastorate further on in my address, I will only add here that men now living, who were members of his church, say that his removal to Andover was a loss from which Pine Street Church, as such, never recovered.

In 1848 he entered upon his duties as professor in this Seminary. As a teacher of homiletics he taught his pupils that the reason why a preacher should do his best in the preparation of his sermons is that the dignity of his office and the grandeur of his work demand it. The conception of this dignity as it dawned upon his childish mind at the almost infantile age of four years, never faded from his thought. As a child he vaguely thought of it as something great and therefore to be desired. But it grew with his growth and strengthened with his strength: he never renounced his early visions; he never forgot the dreams of his youth and of his childhood; and when, with maturing years, he came to understand what the greatness was, and saw, under the guidance of the Spirit, that a minister of the gospel is an ambassador for Christ to pray men in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God, as though God himself did beseech them by him, oh, then he saw that the work of a minister is a work in which Heaven itself is concerned and all the powers therein. His constant aim was to fill the minds of his pupils with the same enthusiasm with which he from childhood to manhood had been possessed and controlled, so that the best that was in them might be consecrated to

No man ever became an orator without taking pains. So sermons are to be elaborate. There is no good preaching which is not the result of mental and moral struggles, either in the discovery and presentation of truth, or in the formation of character. It must come out of costly experiences, either of intellect, or heart, or both. "In the treatment of stale themes we must brood over them, as the prophet stretched himself over the dead body of the widow's child, until new life is breathed into them." If an extemporaneous effusion, which at the time costs almost nothing, appears to produce more effect than sermons which have cost weeks of labor, that effect was the result either of labor previously performed, or of experiences equally fertilizing to the mind of the preacher.

Some years ago a sermon was preached on a public occasion by a distinguished doctor of divinity in Massachusetts in disparagement of what he called intellectual preaching. Perhaps he meant scholastic preaching. That sermon represented a prejudice which exists to some extent against what are called great sermons, and a feeling that such sermons are not likely to be very religious. The same sentiment excuses a great amount of commonplace in the pulpit, under cover of the name of simplicity. All this, Dr. Phelps would rebuke. He would say, The salvation which you are sent to proclaim is a great salvation, and the way in which you proclaim it should be as great as your power of thought and your skill in expression can make it. "If ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame and the sick, is it not evil?" It may be that great sermons are not spiritually great. Then let them be con-

and that he had better preach other men's sermons and spend his time in miscellaneous usefulness? But why not preach other men's sermons? Because that is not preaching. To preach is to put one's own, living, consecrated personality into what he says. It is to speak out of a soul that has felt the power of the truth, and that in the ardor of love wishes others to know it. The true preacher, like Jeremiah, takes the truth and eats it, and when it has become the joy and rejoicing of his own heart he is prepared to influence others by means of it. When our Lord said, "Go preach," he instituted the grandest possible method of influencing the human mind. The press and the school are inferior to it. Authorship is inferior to oratory. It is easier to find an Aristotle than it is to find a Demosthenes. Hence God has put the pulpit in the front rank of dignity in the work of the world's conversion.

We must reject that theory of the ministry which subordinates preaching to worship, to the fascinations of music and architecture, to liturgies, and costume, and intonation, and which makes the pulpit give place to the altar. Such a theory humiliates the pulpit. Its tendency is to destroy it, and this it virtually did in the Romish Church for five hundred years. This theory does not belong to Christianity. It belongs to a dispensation which long ago decayed, and waxed old, and vanished away. The pulpit comes with a dispensation which makes it a throne of power, and pushes aside whatever would deny its supremacy. The dignity and solemnity of worship are to be maintained, but we lay emphasis upon preaching, in order that worship my be intelligent.

We must deal in our preaching only with great themes. Young preachers are apt to fear that the constant handling

material was to be found for another. But if one is a student of the Bible he need not fear. Let him dig daily in that mine of golden ore, and he will be richer than California could make him; and then let him deal out his wealth to his people. The Bible is full of great themes. It is a book which God has provided expressly to feed the hunger of the soul, which is a great hunger. Why should a minister spend his time upon the outermost edges and margins of the truth, instead of coming home to its heart? He spends his labor for that which satisfieth not, and which is not the bread which God intended that his hungry children should have. Though he were to use substantially the same subject many times, this is only what the great painters and sculptors and tragedians do. Such subjects will bear repetition, and the people will be better fed than by the discussion of matters of comparatively little importance. Great subjects are full of suggestion: they awaken thoughts in the minds of the hearers which the sermon does not contain, and in such cases the preacher gets the credit of saying many a good thing which he did not say. Variety will be secured by presenting different aspects of the truth, and also by the mental and spiritual growth of the preacher. As to subjects of minor importance, many of these can come in as inferences and remarks. There is room enough in the crevices of a great sermon to insert the substance of many a small one. On this point Dr. James W. Alexander agrees with Dr. Phelps: "Preach only on great themes."

If the pulpit is to maintain its true dignity, the preacher must give himself wholly to his work. If he engages in secular employments, he diminishes the reverence that is felt for his office, and creates the impression that a minister has

effect, the preacher should consider. Dr. Phelps's conception of a sermon was of a philosophic character founded upon laws as fundamental as the laws of human nature. He looked upon a sermon as a structure, put together with care as truly as a tragedy or an epic poem, and for the reason that such care is needful for effectiveness in public address. Whatever the wisdom of the ages from Aristotle and Quintilian to our own time has found to be true in regard to the best ways of convincing and persuading men by the power of speech should be attentively considered by Christian orators in the pulpit. If a sermon is a structure, then it has parts and is susceptible of divisions; and the divisions numerically stated are sometimes disliked on the ground of their formality, and preference is given to the unbroken and flowing style of popular literature. Yet John Quincy Adams said that divisions belong to the art of thinking, and Dr. Phelps says that the pulpit has been driven to the use of them by the lofty nature of its themes. It is very foolish for the pulpit, dealing in great themes, to yield to a prejudice which popular literature, dealing in smaller themes, has created, and to abandon a method which the great preachers, as well as the leaders of the English and American bar, have always used. To elaborate sermons, divisions are a necessity. Talks, exhortations, and pious remarks can do without them. When my class was in the Seminary and Professor Park was in the chair of homiletics, he was one day teaching us how to make plans of sermons. After he had presented several plans and remarked upon them, a member of the class said, "It would be very fine for us to

thought of for professor at Andover. After he became professor, he concluded a course of four lectures on the divisions of a sermon with these words: "Let me express to you the conviction that strength in preaching depends on no other rhetorical excellence so much as on good divisions and propositions; that is, on good planning of thought." As a means of mental discipline, he regarded the critical study of the art of planning a discourse as worthy to rank by the side of the study of psychology. In his criticisms upon the plans of sermons he showed the consummate skill which Dr. Park had ascribed to him. Those who were his pupils thirty or forty years ago have not ceased to express their admiration of it. The plans of beginners are apt to be meagre and crude; but he took them in hand, and during the hour in which the class were discussing a plan, he would give it unity, precision of statement, correct theology and exegesis, orderly arrangement of thought, and a vastly expanded outlook into the fields of related truth. The wealth of material which he added was enough sometimes, to remind one of the miraculous multiplication of the loaves and fishes. Often the plan was transformed almost beyond recognition; and yet he was most generous in commending all that was good in it. What he said of it was always helpful, never discouraging. One day, when he had placed the standard for a sermon very high, some one said, "Who writes such sermons?" "Albert Barnes," said he.

"When the sermon is well planned, the greater part of the work of sermon-making," said Dr. Phelps, "still remains; namely, the development." But this remark he made to young men, and it expresses what he found to be true of himself when young. He said that when he began his life's

thing, in short, and of everybody who came in my way, I kept this query before me: Does this illumine anything in the Bible or in any part of my pulpit work? Every night for years I wrote down hints of whatever real life had given me during the day." By this method, pursued for thirty years, he had acquired such facility in writing that there was no conscious effort after he had shaped his outline. He went on as fast as his pen could move. This explains also the great variety of accompaniments and enforcements of thought which we find in his writings. As we read his pages we are astonished at the affluence of his illustrations, drawn from every department of knowledge,—from the pulpit, the bar, the senate, the forum, in America, in Great Britain and on the Continent, in Greece and Rome. He seems always to have at command a fitting quotation, a pertinent anecdote, a striking incident, an historical parallel. Poetry and prose, science and philosophy, history and literature, as well as the events of daily life, rise up and come forward at his bidding, to strengthen and adorn his pages. It is said of Sir Walter Scott that he remembered all that he read and all that he observed. It was very much so with Professor Phelps. He seemed to forget nothing. And the reason was that when knowledge came to him, he had a definite purpose as to what he would do with it. The ruling passion of his life assigned it at once to its place and its duty. That exalted ideal of the Christian ministry, that determination to make everything tributary to the pulpit, that feeling which the apostle Paul had when he said, "This one thing I do"

Latin classics. In his riper years he built up his remarkable wealth of diction under the influence of the best models of English literature and out of the quarry of his own classical scholarship. All this was consecrated to the task of illumining and defending the Bible. When he commended vividness of style to his pupils in their expositions of Scripture, this was not for the sake of the vividness, but to give full force to the meaning of the Scriptures. "The Bible," said he, "is the most brilliant book in the world, and on a vivid sense of the force of the passages selected, and a picturesque presentation of them, hinges the question of expository preaching." Of course a dull comment cannot explain a brilliant book.

That part of the sermon on which a Christian orator in the pulpit is to lay out the best reserves of his strength is the application. Here the intensely practical character of preaching is revealed, and a true preacher will not leave his subject until he has shown his audience what personal concern they have in it. They have followed him through his discussion, and have commended, it may be, his doctrine, his philosophy, his logic, his rhetoric, and his illustrations, and now, in his closing words, he shows them that their regeneration and sanctification were what he had in view from the beginning. In the body of the sermon his mind was more upon his theme; now it is less upon the theme and more upon his audience. If it is his heart's desire and prayer to God that they may be sanctified and saved, this desire will now appear. The appeals which he makes to them will be founded upon the strongest materials which the sermon contains, will be conducted with his utmost skill, and will be projected upon his audience with "the supreme strain of personal force." Thus did the ancient orators. They threw themselves with all their energy of mind and heart and will into their perorations. So far as they were true orators they did not seek applause, but they sought to lead men to see

the truth as they saw it, and to act accordingly. If the chief aim of Demosthenes had been his own fame, the probability is that we never should have heard of him. He became the prince of ancient orators through his lofty, disinterested, and incorruptible patriotism. If a preacher would have power over men, it must be seen that he is embarked, body and soul, in a great cause, and that, whatever becomes of him, he is devoted to that. "Whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it." Eloquence depends upon character. It is character that speaks. Consecration in the preacher puts a mighty efficacy into his words when he calls for consecration in the hearer. Crises in the religious life of eminent preachers through which they have ascended from a lower to a higher plane in their walk with God have been the means of a vast re-enforcement of spiritual power. It was so with Chalmers, with Doddridge, with Robert Hall, with Norman McLeod. Praying men have power in the pulpit. Richard Baxter used to spend the hour preceding public worship in secret prayer. Mr. Finney, when the last stanza of the hymn before the sermon was reached, stopped singing, turned his back to the audience, raised his face and seemed to be saying, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help." When the singing was ended he was ready to preach, and it was evident to all that help had come down to him from the heavenly hills.

The application of the sermon gains power from the preacher's conviction that this is a lost world and that only the gospel can save it. The Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost. Every time the preacher urges upon men the acceptance of Christ as their Saviour, he knows that he is setting before them life and death, blessing and cursing, and that it may be that, even while he is speaking, some minds are awakened to a sense of the exigency which is upon them, and are made to tremble and vibrate on the

point of a decision whose results will reach onward through endless duration. He may not often speak of the fearful alternative of life and death eternal, but he knows what Christ has said in regard to it, and he cannot banish it from his thought. It gives tone to all his utterances. He speaks with eternity in view, and with the pressure of infinite concerns upon his heart. He may not often preach the doctrine of future retribution,—and Dr. Phelps said that he ought not to do it often; but he also said that this doctrine is the exponent to the preacher of the state in which the gospel finds men, and, as such, it stands in the forefront of all theology. He told his pupils that any lowering of the tone of their faith in it would be followed by a proportionate lowering of their faith in the doctrines of depravity, atonement, and regeneration. When this result is reached, then the propelling forces which should arouse a man to the work of saving souls will cease to act, his mental and moral tension will give way to slackness, and he will be as a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument, but his efforts to rescue and save the perishing will be ended.

The deep solemnity of a preacher's work must never oppress his spirit. It will sober him but not paralyze him. He labors in hope. We are saved by hope, and the buoyancy of the preacher's hope for his people is an important factor among the means which he employs to save them. The gospel which we preach is a gospel of salvation. "The provisions are ample to meet the emergency. The world is a wreck surrounded with life-boats. It is a lost battle-field with reserves at hand who are ample to reverse the fortunes of the day. It is a world on fire, with the windows of heaven opening over the conflagration. The loss of the soul is never a necessary catastrophe. Our business is that of *saving* souls. Not retribution, but eternal life, is the chief burden of our message." But the preacher must not

be afraid of showing enthusiasm in his work. Revivalists like Whitefield and revivals like the "Great Awakening" have always been opposed by a portion of the clergy who are satisfied with other kinds of success than that of saving their hearers. While Richard Baxter was bringing men by scores and hundreds into the kingdom of God, Robert Southey was using his great powers to ridicule what he called the fanaticism of the Puritans.

Dr. Phelps told his pupils for their encouragement that if they were diligent Bible students and intensely prayerful men, they would find that they would have the aid of the Holy Spirit in their work. "Sometimes a pastor has such an overpowering consciousness of mental illumination that he cannot help ascribing it to superhuman assistance;" and he is reminded of the promise, "It shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak." It was so with Mr. Finney in an eminent degree, and the cases of this kind which occur need not be exceptional. Another encouragement is the thought that God is a magnanimous judge of the work of his ministers. Often his judgment is more lenient than their judgment of themselves. He cordially and generously accepts the imperfect service of a consecrated man. The man may shrink before the magnitude and solemnity of the duties which he must perform, but his poor attempts, as he regards them, are turned to account in the providence of God, in ways that he thinks not of. John Foster's ministry ended in a wail of disappointment; but his published writings furnished material for metropolitan pulpits for nearly two generations.

These are the ideals which Dr. Phelps held before his classes, and these the encouragements which he gave them.

instructor and pupil exist, than in his lecture-room;" and another says, "Never were instructions more quickening, more sympathetic, more genially adapted to find out and fetch out the best of which a man was capable." Dr. Phelps's professorship was famous throughout the country, and students came from afar to hear his lectures, as they did to hear those of Professor Park. If his views of the surpassing dignity and power of a truly consecrated ministry could be accepted by our best young men, would not that intensely secular spirit which now draws so many of them away to other occupations be counterbalanced and overcome; and then might we not hear from our pulpits a more effective eloquence than is heard anywhere else? We should have a right to expect this, both from the vastness and the momentous importance of the themes which belong to the pulpit, and from the fact that the Bible, which deals with those themes, has more sublimity and loftier strains of eloquence than any and all other books.

Not only was Dr. Phelps a master in homiletics, but he was a biblical scholar and a theologian. Professor Stuart spoke of him as one of the best Hebrew scholars whom he ever knew, and Professor Park says that he could have instructed in theology as ably as he did in homiletics. Two theological seminaries—one in New Haven, and one in Chicago—invited him to fill their theological chairs. He had felt the powerful stimulus of the mind of Dr. Taylor in theology, of Professor Stuart in biblical literature, and of Albert Barnes in both. His theological opinions were not formed until after he had joined Mr. Barnes's church, at the age of eighteen. In forming them he went through a period of protracted mental struggle, lasting nearly a year, which affected his health to a degree from which he never afterward recovered. His old notion that conversion was a re-creation

of moral nature caused him untold misery and despair. He read all the theology in his father's library, and he formed his own theology for a lifetime in what he calls the "throes of agony" which he then endured. He came to see that what he needed was not an emotive experience, but a *will* to serve God.

In harmony with this view he wrote in his book upon "The New Birth:" It is degrading to conversion to call it a constitutional change, for it is a moral change. Character in a soul, conceived of as the effect of God's working, is a more sublime product than the make of that soul. Suppose the soul to be dissolved into nonentity, if that were possible, and then spoken again into being by the word of the Almighty, that would not be so great a change as regeneration. For aught that we know, God could translate a lost soul to heaven and make a Gabriel of it. But in his estimate, this would not be so noble an achievement as to win that soul just as it is,—to allure it by the infinite ingenuity of love to give itself away to him willingly, so that holiness shall be his own choice.

But if such an application of divine skill is needful to bring about this change, what are we to infer in regard to the depth of human depravity, which requires the intervention of omnipotence to root it out? And this depravity is guilt. In any sense of it which makes it an object of moral displeasure it is *character*, and depraved character is guilt. The sinner can obey God and will not. He can give to God all

said to the other, after hearing the sermon, "Now we have found a man for our vacant professorship," I will give a few sentences from the discourse: "The Scriptures hold the sinner responsible for everything which constitutes regenerate character, and no hint is given that this responsibility is at all dependent on the gift of regenerating grace. That we are responsible for everything that God requires of us is the unfaltering testimony of every man's consciousness. Dr. Johnson's remark about the freedom of the will applies here: 'A man knows it, sir, and that is the whole of it.' The doctrine of the ability of the sinner to obey all God's commands is compressed into this brief statement: 'I can, because I ought.' God would never have so constituted my being that I must feel guilty for not doing what I cannot do, or for not being what I cannot be. We must teach the sinner that he has the power to do anything that God has the will to command, or we shall never get the unbroken force of conscience over to the side of truth. 'I can, because I ought.'

"The dependence of the sinner upon the Holy Spirit is not for power to obey, but for the will to obey, and this dependence is unspeakably more intense than that of a sinner who has not the power to obey. The latter has no moral significance; the former is full of moral significance. Its very groundwork is guilt, and guilt only. It is the most profound and terrific dependence under which a moral being can exist. We say to the sinner, You can repent and turn to God, but the very head and front of your offending is that you will not do it till his grace constrains you. It depends therefore upon his sovereign will whether you shall be saved or

essential to the training of a preacher; and that he had every year an increasing conviction, that, as it respects intellectual preparation for the pulpit, it is the true theory, and that no less severe ideal is equal to the range of apostolic thought. That is the ground on which he defends the Calvinistic theory of preaching: *The range of apostolic thought requires it.* He laid down the proposition that preaching should consist pre-eminently of *the argumentative discussion of theology*, and that this should be the grand staple of the preacher's material. He would not advise a young man to enter the ministry who had no enthusiasm for such preaching. This is not only the Calvinistic theory; it is the apostolic theory, the Protestant theory, the Puritan theory, the New England theory. It created the New England pulpit and the New England theology, and in no part of the world has it held such sway as in New England. If you inquire whether this has been a beneficent sway, Professor William S. Tyler, after comparing the New England pulpit with the British pulpit, and admitting that the British pulpit has a broader culture, says: "The New England clergy as a body, in intellectual discipline, in theological training, in moral and spiritual culture, in all the substantial qualifications for their work, were never surpassed, probably never equalled, by the clergy of any other country or any other age." This acknowledged pre-eminence of the New England pulpit Dr. Phelps sought to preserve and perpetuate by the argumentative discussion of theology. There is a prejudice against doctrinal preaching on the ground that it is not practical. But there is no such preaching, says Dr. Phelps. If what professes to be a doctrinal sermon is not practical, then it is not a sermon. It may be an essay. If what is called a practical sermon is not doctrinal, it is not a sermon. It may be an exhortation. A sermon is a discourse of which the spinal strength is doctrine, and it is the preacher's business to make it practical. Doctrinal preach-

ing is often thought to be dry and uninteresting. The reason is that it is not vivacious, and this is the preacher's fault. "Audiences will listen to anything that seems to them to be alive, truth or falsehood, it makes but little difference, if it has mental oxygen in it it can get a hearing." Scripture doctrines furnish material for the very highest eloquence. The triumphs of all oratory consist in the advocacy of great principles, the utterance of great thoughts. The great thoughts for the pulpit are the doctrines of theology. It is a mistake to suppose that the people are not interested in them if they are properly presented. The people reason more deeply on religious subjects than on any others, for these subjects are of deep personal concern to them, and religious truth is more awakening to thought than other truth. The New England Calvinistic pulpit has made the New England people what they are in intelligence and mental vigor. Senator Hoar has acknowledged the obligations of the bar to the pulpit. Some of Mrs. Stowe's descriptions of the New England life of former times show how doctrinal discussion entered into the ordinary conversation of the people. Dr. Griffin's most powerful discourses were doctrinal discussions. His Park Street lectures were preached to crowded and entranced assemblies. Dr. Nettleton's sermons on election and decrees were his most popular sermons. Albert Barnes relied on doctrinal preaching to produce revivals. One of the most fruitful revivals that blessed his ministry followed a series of discourses on the doctrine of divine decrees. The same was true of Dr. Lyman Beecher's preaching on Long Island. The people of the Tron Church in Glasgow were enraptured with the eloquence of Chalmers as they listened to his seventeen sermons on the depravity of human nature. The strong Calvinism of the Scottish pulpit has *made* the Scotch a thinking people, appreciative of that eloquence which has its roots in great themes. The pulpit could educate the people

now to such appreciation, if it would try, for it has done it, both in Scotland and in New England, and it was a noble effort for Dr. Phelps to seek to re-enthrone the pulpit in the reverence of the people, by urging his pupils to put the strength of the everlasting hills into their sermons. People say that the preaching of former times has gone by and that every age must have a type of its own. But the doctrines of the Bible have not gone by. The grass withereth and the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever.

It is often charged that Calvinism is declining. It is true that it is not preached or held now as it was two hundred years ago; but, as modified and improved by the New England theologians, and as held by half a score of religious denominations, Dr. Phelps did not believe that the charge is true, or that it ever could be, for he believed that the system is embedded in the Scriptures. The doctrine of a limited atonement has been discarded, and the freedom of the will is as boldly asserted by Calvinists as it is by Methodists. But we hold the doctrine of decrees, because we find it in the Bible. With Dr. Phelps this was a practical doctrine. He makes constant allusion to it in his writings, and yet his sense of freedom was as unfettered as that of the bird let loose in eastern skies. He quotes with approbation the remark of William Jay, that some doctrines are more important than others, and that the doctrine of election is not *so* important as the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints; and yet, in another place, he comes back to the doctrine of the divine

name it in our theology, it is simply the execution of a plan which was never a novelty and will never be obsolete in the Divine Mind." In the "Memorial" of his gifted wife which he wrote for the "Last Leaf from Sunny Side," he speaks of a series of six discourses on the Divine Decrees, preached in the Seminary Chapel by Professor Park, and says, "They were a word in season to one that was weary. This doctrine, with the whole group of truths kindred to it, from that time took a permanent place in her affections. It gave her new conceptions of the value of existence. Allusions to it became habitual in her expressions of religious experience. In times of affliction or of despondency it was to her aching heart as the 'shadow of a great rock in a weary land.' In regard to the same matter she herself wrote: 'This subject has opened a new world to me. I shall be better for it as long as I live. I never could understand or divine before my claim upon the Deity's overruling care. Now I do get a glimpse of it, enough to make me feel like an infant in its mother's arms.'"

How unusual it is for us to hear this doctrine presented in such an amiable aspect of it,—one so fitted to incline us to receive it, not as a dogma that must be submitted to, but as a truth that we should welcome and rejoice in!

Divine decree and human freedom are opposites which balance each other in the system of truth like the centripetal and centrifugal forces governing the motions of the heavenly bodies in their orbits. The harmony of the great whole is the result of them. The wholesome influence of this balance of opposites is especially manifest in times of revival. By one set of appeals the mind is aroused and by another it is kept from fanatical vagaries. The Calvinistic pulpit has always cultivated a thoughtful piety. Its ministers have been educated, thinking men, who have drawn audiences of thinking men to hear them, or have made them thoughtful if they were not so. As a class they have been the strong-

est preachers the world has ever known, and they have done more for the education and elevation of the people than any others, and more for human freedom and the rights of man. Calvin, Knox, South, Chalmers, Candlish, Edwards, Hopkins, Davies, Spring, Alexander, Nettleton, Griffin, Lyman Beecher, Albert Barnes, Finney,—these were men of great minds, great hearts, and great influence upon the world. If the system of truth which they preached were losing its hold upon the minds of men, it would be like the shadow going ten degrees backward upon the dial of the world's progress.

With regard to other doctrines not specifically Calvinistic, Dr. Phelps's view of the malign nature of sin is intensified by his sturdy sense of the freedom of the will. "Sin is embattled against God," he says, "behind the ramparts of moral freedom. We do not denounce involuntary corruption; we do not demand conviction of sin for constitutional degeneracy. The soul that *sinneth, it* shall die. Without a sense of sin," he adds, "our religion is nothing, but with it we find our way to Christ very soon, and then we repeat the hymn which perhaps, above all others, has won the affection of Christian hearts :—

> 'There is a fountain filled with blood,
> Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
> And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
> Lose all their guilty stains.'

The violation of æsthetic taste in this stanza every one admits, but Christian feeling refuses to allow it to be altered."

Dr. Phelps wrote much upon the doctrine of future retribution. He had reason to believe that many of our ministers are silent upon this subject, and that others that do speak

worked, and that the doctrine of human responsibility had got knocked out from under, and he thought it his duty to put it back into its place. So Dr. Phelps in his writings upon retribution was laboring to put in its true place, a doctrine which was neglected. The doctrine of eternal punishment is so dreadful, and its consequences to those who die in impenitence are so appalling, that the preaching of it is a trial to the sensibilities of both preacher and hearer. But shall the truth be suppressed on that account, and the awful reality be allowed to overtake the soul, lost, because unwarned? So did not Christ. Albert Barnes was once exhausted almost to fainting by preaching a sermon on this subject; but he preached it. It is a tremendous responsibility which a preacher assumes when he delivers only a part of his message and conceals the remainder. Even in relation to doctrines far less solemn and momentous than this, can Christ be pleased with a man who selects only those topics which are pleasant to speak upon and to listen to? How can he know but he is avoiding the very truths which are most needed to produce conviction of sin and a sense of the need of a Saviour? A minister is only a messenger. He must deliver his message just as it is. He has no right to alter the substance of it, or the spirit and tone of it, or the proportion of it. "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully."

Dr. Phelps maintained, also, that the very words and emblems which the Bible uses to describe the future state of the impenitent are to be used in the pulpit. The description is fearful, the emblems are terrific. That is just what the author of inspiration intended they should be, for without them no adequate warning can be given of the doom of a lost soul. The writers and speakers apparently felt that

produce. Who was it that told us of the worm that dieth not, and of the fire that never shall be quenched? It was he who wept over Jerusalem. Who was it that told us of the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone? It was that disciple whom Jesus loved. When we use these words and call them figurative, we have no right to convey the impression that this makes the doom of the lost less dreadful than it would be if they were literal. We are to use the very words and symbols which Christ and his apostles used, and let them make their own impression. "If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book;" and "if any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book." Dr. Phelps in uttering such sentiments as these spoke with the deep and solemn earnestness of one who felt that God had called him, as he did the prophet Jeremiah, saying, "Thus saith the Lord: Stand in the court of the Lord's house, and speak . . . . . all the words that I command thee to speak; diminish not a word." His voice was the voice of one crying in a wilderness of silence. Like a wakeful watchman on the walls who sees the sword coming and many a sentinel sleeping, over and over again he put that faithful trumpet to his lips and blew the alarm. But there were scoffers, walking after their own lusts, who mocked and said, All things continue as they were; wilfully ignorant that the heavens and the earth, which smile above and around them, are reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. The last paper that Dr. Phelps wrote upon this subject was finished but a short time before he died, and when he was too weak to write with a pen. The closing sentence was a most pathetic appeal to his brethren in the ministry to beware how they neglect, or in any way impair, the force of those words of a

compassionate Saviour which must have wrung his heart with anguish when he uttered them.

The harm that comes from the neglect of any important doctrine of the Bible is, first, that its appropriate influence is not exerted for the regeneration and salvation of souls; secondly, if long neglected, it comes to be disbelieved and falls out of one's creed; and, thirdly, when it falls out of one's creed it carries other doctrines with it, so closely related are the doctrines to one another. Of the more important doctrines it is especially true that, if one is lost, the others are endangered. Dr. Phelps speaks of a quadrilateral of doctrines, which, if held in equilibrium, will exclude essential error. These are the depravity of man; his exposure to retributive suffering in a future life; the necessity of his regeneration by the influences of the Holy Spirit; and the dependence of pardon as a judicial act of the divine government upon the sufferings and death of Jesus Christ. It is remarkable, said he, with what unerring aim a false departure in theology, starting anywhere, reaches the central doctrine of the atonement. Error achieves no fatal ruin till it gets possession of that citadel of the faith. Consequently, begin where it may, its march thither is prompt and swift. The chief object for which men need a faith is to determine the problems which the experience of sin creates and the atonement of Christ solves. There is reason to believe that Dr. Channing's departure began with the doctrine of endless retribution. In a very short time he had abandoned the doctrine of the atonement.

The following prayers for the Seminary and for his pupils are taken from a little collection of prayers written by Professor Phelps:—

"O thou who art the Head of thy Church and its auxiliary institutions, I beseech thee to watch over the Seminary to which my life's work has been consecrated. Do thou deliver it from destructive errors and incompleteness of belief.

Make it true to the ancient faith. May the mind of Christ inspire the opinions taught there. Let the heart of Christ sway the sympathies cherished there. Remember the prayers and sacrifices in which it was founded. Make it a tower of strength to thy Church to the end of time. May those who go from it to preach thy gospel, go in the energy and faith of apostles. Let them be preachers of those truths to which thou hast pledged the conversion of this world to Christ. Amen! O Lord, Amen."

"I implore thy blessing on my pupils and on the Churches committed to their charge. Do thou remember them with elective and loving care. Strengthen them in their toils. Cheer them in their trials. Protect them in their temptations. Give them repose in their work. Reward them for their fidelity. For Jesus' sake, Amen. O Lord, Amen."

I have said that Dr. Phelps was both a theologian and a biblical scholar. Biblical and theological study, including Hebrew and Greek, were carried along by him side by side, systematically, during his pastorate in Boston. He gave a course of doctrinal discussions in the forenoons, and of biblical sermons in the afternoons. In six years he had not exhausted the books of Isaiah and Romans, or traversed more than one-third of a system of doctrinal theology. If he had remained twelve years longer in the ministry, he would have delivered from his pulpit a complete system of theology,—as Dr. Dwight did in New Haven, and as Dr. Emmons did in Franklin,—and he would have led his people into such knowledge of the Scriptures, by his afternoon discourses and his expositions at prayer-meetings, as few congregations ever obtain. Where is the pulpit that gives, year in and year out,

When he spoke to his pupils of the importance of the study of the Bible, you would have taken him for a professor of sacred literature, and when he spoke of dogmatic theology, he said: "No man can preach the Bible truthfully who does not preach it with fidelity to a system of truth which pervades it. Without such fidelity to system he will derive from it extremes of truth which are not truthful." Consider also that the expository preaching of Dr. Phelps was begun nearly fifty years ago, when there was no such interest in the study of the Bible as there is now, nor anything like it; nor any such helps to the study of it. Only twelve years previous to that, Albert Barnes began to prepare his notes on the Gospels, and all the books he could depend upon for assistance were thirteen folios in Latin, which formed the best part of his library. In 1842 it must have been a new thing for a Boston congregation to be listening every Sunday afternoon to expositions of the Bible from the pulpit. Dr. Phelps, in one of his lectures, tells his pupils in an almost confidential way something of his experience in this kind of preaching when he was in the ministry. He had been speaking of the importance of re-instating in the pulpit, by means of textual and expository discourses, the biblical instruction which was common in New England in former days. This was needful for variety. No one thing would give to the pulpit so wide a range of religious thought. He then alludes to the despair with which he began his own pastorate, and says that the first gleam of confidence which he gained was from the way in which his people received his expository remarks at conference meetings. Then, led as he believed by the Spirit of God, he took the Prophecy of Isaiah and the Epistle to the Romans, and, with the best helps he could command, devoted to them from one to two hours every day. Soon, materials of sermons came thronging upon him from those two books of the Bible. In less than four months he began to use the results of these studies in

the pulpit on Sunday afternoons, and with so much satisfaction that he continued the practice through his whole ministry. He believed that it saved his pulpit; that it brought him near to the best Christian experience of his most godly hearers, that it diversified and simplified his preaching, that it expanded and deepened his range of thought, and that it greatly assisted him in extemporaneous prayer. I am sure, said he, that nothing else of which I was master, could have held for me the confidence of my people in my ability to be their spiritual teacher. Then he urges his pupils to try the experiment for themselves. "Supply your libraries with the best works in biblical literature; do not spare your purses in so doing; wear the old coat and buy the new book; your wedding can wait, but your library cannot; systematize your work, and hold on to your purpose to the death. Take the common stock of biblical thought, work it over, put it through the laboratory of your own thinking, polish it, quicken your interest in it by making it your own, and come to your biblical sermons with a mind that aches to deliver itself. The result will be that you will uplift your hearers to the heavens."

Such words of counsel as these he often spoke to his pupils. He believed that the study of the Bible would have saved many a minister whose life appears to have been a failure, and that it would make a new man of many a minister whose preaching is dull and repetitious.

We have now considered the work of Dr. Phelps in three separate departments of it. He was a teacher of homiletics, a biblical scholar, and a theologian. He could have taught in either of these departments with equal ability, and he would have done it with equal enthusiasm. This shows a breadth of mind which can but command our admiration. The great number of subjects, also, upon which he wrote, and on which he formed positive opinions, should be remembered, and the variety of Scripture truth presented and discussed in

his writings, much of which is allowed by many ministers to lie unused upon the pages of their Bibles; sin and penalty, election and decrees, the existence and agency of the devil and his angels, the activity of good angels thronging our atmosphere and perhaps contending against the evil angels in the interests of man, the doctrine of particular providences, the teaching of the Spirit as a precious reality to ministers of the gospel,—these and other truths are brought forward as needful for the man of God if he is to be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. There are many persons who quote the words of John Robinson, and say, God has much truth yet to break forth out of his word, when much of what is already broken forth they seldom use.

Another item in the variety of Dr. Phelps's labors is the interest which he took in the psalmody of the church. He regarded the Sabbath Hymn Book as not only a book of song, but as one of the very best of books for devotional reading. To the last year of his life he regarded the labor which he bestowed upon the preparation of that book with peculiar satisfaction.

But this is not the whole of the character of Dr. Phelps. Beside and above all these things he was a minister of the gospel. By this I do not mean merely that he was at one time pastor of a church, but that he had the spirit of a minister, and that his heart was in the ministry as the highest and noblest work to which a man is ever called. The thought of it was always an inspiration to him. It was his loftiest ideal of the way for a man to make the most of himself and do the most for the world. From this ideal his mind never wavered. A life here at Andover of brilliantly successful teaching, in which he knew that he had the love and admiration of his pupils and of all who had the interests of this Seminary at heart, never could draw from him the admission that such a life was more to be desired than the

life of a preacher of the gospel. The desire of some young men to be professors in theological seminaries he could not understand. When at his graduation from college his president asked him to study for a chair in the University, he did not entertain the proposition one minute. He was not then a member of the church, but he was going to be a minister. That he felt to be his calling, his true calling, his high calling. He never wanted to come to his Andover professorship, and nothing but the fear that he could not long stand the strain of a pastorate in Boston led him to consent to do it. "In doing it," said he, "I left my first and only love." After writing his letter accepting the call to his professorship and going to Governor Armstrong's house with it, he backed down the steps before putting his hand to the bell, and walked to and fro, hoping for some providential indication that would turn the scale the other way. At the age of fifty-six he said, "I made the great sacrifice of my life when I accepted the call to Andover. I felt so at the time; I feel so now. I have never seen the time when the change did not seem to me a retreat on the march of life."

A man with such love and reverence for the pulpit as that we may well say was made for the pulpit. The work to which a man gives his whole heart and soul he generally does well. To show how acceptable his preaching was, he received calls, before he was twenty-one years old, from Wilmington, Del., from Dr. Cox's church in New York, from Newton Centre, Mass., and from churches in Roxbury and East Boston. Within twelve years he received calls from churches in Andover, Lawrence, Boston, Roxbury, Philadelphia, Portland, Hartford, and New York. The demand for his services as a preacher was so constant that between 1850 and 1862, a period of twelve years, he preached eighty-nine sermons on public occasions. After that he was unable to preach to large assemblies.

The quietness of his manner in the pulpit is difficult to

explain. His preaching was always with power. You saw that his whole soul was launched into the subject upon which he spoke, and yet he was almost as motionless in speaking as Albert Barnes. One would have expected just the reverse. In his boyhood, at the age of only eight years he was so fine a declaimer that he was in demand at all the public exhibitions, and his name usually closed the list of speakers. He revelled in declamation. He amused himself with it in the daytime and dreamed of it by night. I presume he went into the fields and pastures and made speeches, as Henry Clay did, to the cows and oxen. One day, when the conception of a good speech dawned upon him, he felt as if he had discovered a mine of gold, and from that time he was thrilled with the hope that he should some time be an orator in public life. But action is so closely associated with oratory in our conception of it, that it seems strange that he should have had so little of it in the pulpit. It may be that the influence of Albert Barnes over him accounts for the absence of it, for we are apt unconsciously to imitate those whom we greatly admire.

One way in which Dr. Phelps showed that he had the spirit of a minister was by the interest he felt in the masses of the people who are never seen in our sanctuaries. He was painfully sensible, as we all are, of a drifting asunder of the pulpit and the lower orders of society. We have not so large a proportion of uneducated people in our congregations now as we had forty years ago. Meanwhile wealth and luxury are increasing, and the tendency is stronger and stronger toward a complete separation of the rich from the poor, and the gathering of congregations of the rich by themselves in fashionable localities from which the poor are practically excluded. Costly and imposing church edifices are erected, a hired quartet goes through artistic performances, as in a concert room, sumptuous dress, and an air of

refinement mingled with pride make up a scene from which the poor are repelled with the feeling that they are not wanted. Dr. Phelps denounced such a state of things as this as unchristian, and said that the preaching of the gospel would never be with any great increase of power until the spirit of aristocratic caste is extirpated from our churches. He rejoiced in what he called the magnificent history of the Methodist Church, which acted, in the beginning of its career, on the principle that Christianity is a religion for the poor, and went among them with a gospel, not of condescension, but of equality, and invited them, not into mission chapels, but into its own meeting-houses, so plainly constructed that the people would feel at home in them. But he saw that even the Methodists, with increasing wealth, education, and culture, were losing in some measure their hold upon the people, so that it is a serious problem which we have upon us now. Dr. Phelps did not believe that ministers are too highly educated. He had never seen a man who wanted an ignorant preacher for his minister. What we want is learning and culture consecrated and used in a Christian way; more heart, more prayer, more love to men as the objects of Christ's love, and more skill in winning them to him, however low they may be in the social scale. The preacher is not to allow the scholastic seclusion in which he has spent a large part of his life to put him out of sympathy with the ignorant and uncultivated. He must come into personal contact with them, and any arrangement by which he is excused from that duty, and by which lay helpers in mission schools and mission chapels are substituted to do it for him, is an arrangement for robbing him of half his power. By mingling with the people he learns to adapt his preaching to them, and the preaching that is intended for the people without distinction of class is the best preaching and the strongest. Chalmers' "Astronomical Discourses" were written for his cottagers at Kilmany and

were not intended for any other audience. This is the man who, when professor in the University of St. Andrews, gathered and taught a Bible class of poor and neglected children in his own house, and prepared himself for that duty as conscientiously as he did for his class in the University. But suppose that pastors all had the spirit of Chalmers; are the churches ready to co-operate with them? On this point Dr. Phelps spoke with great emphasis. He counselled his pupils to refuse to be pastors of churches that are gathered by the law of social affinity, if they insist upon their exclusiveness. He once said that *he* would not accept a call from a church where the singing was done by a fashionable quartet, and that he could not expect ever to see a revival in such a church. He used the right adjective when he spoke of "*puny* quartets performing before dumb assemblies." Can we honestly say that the artistic displays both of music and architecture which are now so common are in harmony with the spirit of Christianity? They are in harmony with Judaism and with Roman Catholicism, but not with the religion of Christ and his apostles. The early history of Christianity shows that it had no fine arts of its own, and that it looked with disdain upon those of others. Mr. Barnes, in his volume of New York lectures, says, that "there has been a deep conviction in the minds of the best friends of Christianity that the extensive cultivation of the fine arts is not conducive to the growth of a pure Christianity, but that such a cultivation is, from some cause, closely connected, in fact, with a deterioration in doctrine, and with corruption in practical life." In a similar strain of remark Dr. Phelps says, "Christianity leans to severity of tastes and simplicity of usages. We will not abjure the resuscitations of art, except so far as they become substitutes of truth. As such, they minister to an imaginative, and therefore an effeminate, and at length a corrupt religionism." It was Dr. Phelps's lofty estimate of mind that led him to

denounce the spirit of exclusiveness in our churches, just as it was Christ's lofty estimate of mind that led him to spend his life among the poor; and it was Dr. Phelps's deep reverence for truth that led him to distrust the ministries of art in religion. He wanted the truth to find an unobstructed way to the minds for which it has been sent into the world.

He said that, since the mission of the gospel is to save men, it must not stand upon its dignity; it must go where men are. He rejoiced in the preaching of Wesley and Whitefield to thousands and thousands of men in the open air. When he visited the Coliseum in Rome, he said, "What a place this would be for an Italian Whitefield to preach!" When preaching was forbidden on Boston Common, he spurned the restriction, with a sense of the rights of free men that was born not of the gospel only, but of the Mayflower and the American Revolution. He felt that the word of God should not be bound, and he believed that the golden age of street preaching is yet to be.[1]

If we look at the life of Dr. Phelps as a whole, and as a plan of God, we see how many things conspired to make him the wise, scholarly, saintly teacher that he was, and to

[1] Dr. Phelps showed the spirit of a minister in his care for the reputation of ministers. He said there was a daily newspaper in Boston, respectable in all things else, which was noted above its peers by the venom with which it thrust its little prongs at clergymen. In view of such assaults, he said, "I have known the clerical profession for more than thirty years as no man can know it who is not in it and behind the scenes. With more or less of personal intimacy I have known nearly two thousand preachers of the gospel. I know their aims, their motives, their methods, their weaknesses, their policies, their secrets; for every profession has its honorable secrets and its wise policies. And my conviction is that there is not another body of men living, of equal numbers, the record of whose life, public and private, will bear scrutiny so well as theirs. The testimony which the Earl of Shaftesbury publicly gave to the character of the American missionaries in Western Asia in 1860, 'they are a marvellous combination of common sense and piety,' is true of the great body of Protestant ministers whom I have known. Out of the whole number, but five have made a wreck of moral character. Of what other profession or guild, equal in numbers, and chosen at random, can that be said?" —Studies of the Old Testament, p. 209.

secure for him the unbounded enthusiasm and reverence which, in the days of his strength, his pupils felt for him. The unity of aim running through his whole life, the ambition awakened even in childhood, and from which he never wavered, to make the most of the powers which God had given him, the facilities provided for him, under the best of educators, the special pains taken with him by some of his teachers privately, because he was so good a scholar, and on the principle that to him that hath shall be given, the depth of the impression made upon him through six years of his early life by one whom he believed to be the best man in the world, the fierce and long-continued struggle at the time of his supposed conversion, the life-long battle with ill health and bodily pain, the felicity of his domestic relations, in which he was greatly blessed and greatly afflicted,—all this commingling of favoring providences and fatherly chastenings, which are the evidences of God's love, presents a varied scene of spiritual culture such as the great Husbandman uses to produce the richest fruits of grace in his children's hearts. Added to this was the wisdom given him to begin his pastorate in Boston with the systematic daily searching of the Scriptures. He tells us what the result was,—an uplifting of his mind into a biblical atmosphere, specially an atmosphere of faith in God and in this world's future. An hour or two each day spent in this way, that he might find green pastures and still waters for his flock, was a constant refreshing to his own spirit. "He that watereth shall be watered also himself." He that lives upon the thoughts of the Bible, employs the surest means of personal sanctification. "All grace grows," said Philip Henry, "as love to God's word grows." The truths of that word are the life-blood of piety. With the love and the perusal of them grows confidence in them, for they are their own witness. Accordingly, in reading the writings of Dr. Phelps, we are impressed with the vividness of his sense of the

reality of truth. His faith laid hold of it as the bread of heaven, and when he discoursed about it he spoke like one who could say as the apostles did, "We know." This enabled him to rise to the full height of the prerogatives of the believers in Christ, and to say of them, They are kings and priests, the elect of God, joint heirs with Christ, judges of angels, dear to God as those in whom his Spirit dwells, dear to Christ who is not ashamed to call them his brethren. On the grandeur of such truths as these he sought to awaken in the minds of believers a consciousness of worth, a sense of the value of existence and of the preciousness of immortal hope which should lead them to exclaim, with the thought of the image and superscription of the Almighty upon them, "Now are we the sons of God." His sense of the living reality of these great verities imparted a dignity and nobility to his character which drew upon his thoughtful face the lineaments of habitual seriousness, and as he stood before his classes, his mere presence was a rebuke to levity and thoughtlessness, and a summons like the voice of a clarion to attention and earnest work.

The Bible, again, is a book of truth. It is pervaded by the spirit of him who is *the truth*. Hence it is natural that one who lives daily in the atmosphere of it should be a true man, and that with simplicity and godly sincerity he should have his conversation in the world, an Israelite indeed, guileless in thought, candid in feeling, truthful in speech, artless in conduct. When he preached or taught or wrote, men felt, as those did who listened to Philip Doddridge, that in absolute integrity of mind and heart he uttered that which was true to his own soul. It was also true to God's word, which to him was the only infallible truth. Honoring that word, he was honored by the Spirit who inspired it, and the Spirit led him into the truth, so that he tasted the good word of God and the powers of the world to come, until the savor of heaven was upon his spirit. He lived on terms of

friendship with God, because, like Abraham, he believed God, and obeyed him. He believed the promises, and this led him to write as he did about prayer in that little book which has blessed the world in six languages. "Prayer," said he, "is a power lodged right in the heart of God's government, for his children to use, and they should expect to reach the mind and heart of God and to gain their requests because they are his children." He believed that before long the mighty efficacy of prayer will begin to be understood, and that then the conversion of the world will not be far off.

It was not best for Dr. Phelps to have his way about spending his life in the pulpit. If he had, his work through the pulpit would now be ended; but now, if he looks down from heaven, he sees twelve hundred pulpits in which the message of mercy is proclaimed by men whom he helped to train for their work; and this will remind him how generous God was to him in the ordering of his life. Perhaps, also, he has a pulpit in heaven. He believed that the saints will be ministering spirits like the angels, engaged in tireless activities of benevolence, and he once said that he could think of no more attractive service than that of ministering to the people of his Pine Street Church whom he loved. He believed that there is organized society in heaven, and if so, why may there not be teacher and pupil, preacher and hearer? He hoped that we might sing in heaven some of the hymns that have so often been the gate of heaven to us here: "My faith looks up to thee;" "Rock of ages, cleft for me;" "Nearer my God to thee;" "Not all the blood of beasts, on Jewish altars slain;" "Just as I am, without one plea, but that thy blood was shed for me;" these are the hymns he specified. All but one of them relate to Christ and his atoning sacrifice. Another of the occupations of heaven he believed would be prayer,—prayer in its most confidential import; not merely adoration, confession, supplication, thanks-

giving, but simply loving converse with God, like that of Jesus in the seventeenth chapter of John; the communion of friends with Friend. "This," said he, "is the most characteristic act of undying union with Christ." The thought of a mansion in heaven without a family altar in it was no more inviting to him than a prayerless home here on earth.

But what shall we say in regard to secret prayer? Is there no secret prayer in heaven? Here on earth we say,

> "My God! is any hour so sweet,
> From blush of morn to evening star,
> As that which calls me to thy feet—
> The hour of prayer?"

Is the worship of heaven to consist only of stupendous choruses of saints and angels united, in myriads upon myriads, and is no place to be found for my individual communion? Are the all-seeing eye and the all-hearing ear to lose sight and sound of my individual prayer and praise, and am I to be lost in the throng? Then, in that respect, is heaven a less favored place than earth, for no sceptic nor any apostle of the higher criticism can make one of Christ's little ones doubt that his particular personal need is noticed and supplied in answer to prayer by Him who seeth in secret and heareth in secret. "I am poor and needy," he exclaims, "yet the Lord thinketh upon me." So the Lord thinketh upon his saints in glory, upon each and every one of them, and that privilege of prayer which consists of loving converse will never be denied them. Though angel and archangel in thousands upon thousands were paying their loudest praise, yet no whispered thought of love and gratitude from one who belongs to Christ, however far away from the worshipping throng he may be, will fail to find its way to the ear and heart of Him who will always be known as the hearer of prayer.

This privilege which our needy spirits crave and have of

hymns which express personal communion with him. The five hymns which he hoped we might sing in heaven are all of this character. The Rock of ages was cleft for *me*. The Lamb of Calvary died for *me*. The blood of the Lamb of God was shed for *me*. All that Jesus did and suffered for us was to bring us into that living union with himself which opens the way for the communing of our spirits with his; and we rejoice to believe that our dear friend who did so much while he was with us, both by his words and by his example, to make

"the blood-bought mercy-seat
A place than all besides more sweet,"

now finds by blessed experience, and will forever find, that prayer in its inner meaning is what he said it was,—"loving converse with God."[1]

[1] The publications of Dr. Phelps are as follows:

Memorial in Last Leaf from Sunny Side,		1853.	112 pages.
The Certainty of Success in Preaching,	Bibliotheca Sacra,	1853.	20 pages.
Christian Character a Power in the Redemption of the World,	Bibliotheca Sacra,	1854.	24 pages.
The Theory of Preaching,	" "	1857.	41 "
The Oneness of God in Revelation and in Nature,	Bibliotheca Sacra,	1859.	28 pages.
The Still Hour,		1859.	143 "
Hymns and Choirs,		1860.	137 "
Election Sermon,		1861.	61 "
The New Birth,		1867.	243 "
Sabbath Hours,		1874.	157 "
Studies of the Old Testament,		1878.	333 "
The Theory of Preaching,		1881.	600 "
Men and Books,		1882.	339 "
My Portfolio,		1882.	280 "
English Style in Public Discourse,		1883.	389 "
My Study,		1885.	319 "
My Note Book		1890.	324 "