

EMINENT AUTHORS



ON

EFFECTIVE REVIVAL PREACHING.

COMPILED BY

✓
REV. WALTER P. DOE.

HATFIELD, SHEPARD, PARK, FINNEY, BARNES, McILVAINE, McCOSH,
BEECHER, STOWE, MURRAY, CUYLER, TAYLOR, HALL,
TALMADGE, SPURGEON, MOODY, AND OTHERS.

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CHAPTER XV.

THE REVIVAL PREACHING OF DR. NETTLETON.

(AUTHORIZED AUTOBIOGRAPHY.)

REV. LYMAN BEECHER, D. D.

“The power of his preaching included many things. It was highly intellectual, as opposed to declamation or oratorical, pathetic appeal, to imagination or the emotions. It was discriminatingly doctrinal, giving a clear and strong exhibition of doctrines denominated Calvinistic, explained, defined, proved and applied, and objections stated and answered. It was deeply experimental in the graphic development of the experience of saints and sinners.”

But, with all this intellectualization and discriminating argument, there was, in some of his sermons, unsurpassed power of description, which made the subject a matter of present reality. Such was his sermon on the deluge, one evening, in a village a few miles north of Albany.

It was in a very large and crowded hall, and the house was filled with consternation, as if they heard the falling of the rain, the roaring of the waves, the cries of the drowning, the bellowing of cattle, and neighing of

horses, amid the darkness and desolation. The emotion rose to such a pitch that the floor seemed to tremble under the tones of his deep voice. He would say, pointing with his finger, "Will you take up the subject immediately?" and each would reply, "Yes, sir! Yes, sir!" as if Christ was speaking, and the day of judgment had come.

But there was another thing which gave accumulating power to his sermons. They were adapted to every state and stage of a revival, and condition of individual experience..

His revivals usually commenced with the church in confessions of sin and reformation. He introduced the doctrine of depravity, and made direct assaults on the conscience of sinners, explained regeneration, and cut off self-righteousness, and enforced immediate repentance and faith, and pressed to immediate submission in the earlier stages.

Toward the close he had a set of sermons to guard sinners against dropping the subject, such as "Putting the hand to the plow," "Quenching the spirit," "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man," etc. To this was added whatever was necessary on the signs of self-deception and the evidences of true religion, with sermons to young converts.