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I.–Literary.

MR. KIPLING'S VERSE.

It has rarely happened in the history of literature that a great writer has been equally great in poetry and in prose. Men who have talent only may do two things equally well; the man of genius is apt to do but one thing, but to do that one thing passing well. One of the unwritten reasons for denying that Bacon wrote Shakespeare's Plays is the difficulty of believing that the *Essays* and *Hamlet* were born of the same brain. Nevertheless, in the opinion of the world, Rudyard Kipling has accomplished the improbable, and, if popularity be an adequate test, has achieved not only supreme but equal excellence in story and in song.

It is at this late day perhaps a trite remark that Mr. Kipling has been happy in his command of subjects. He leads us into unknown lands and shows us men and deeds that are strange to us. His poetry—less, perhaps, than his prose, but still to a marked degree—borrows interest from its far-off background and setting.

Mandelay, with its "old Mulmein Pagoda" is as attractively novel to us in our clanging Western world as is Mowgli, the Jungle Man; and the "*Ballad of East and West*," that stirring tale of a time "when wolf and gray wolf meet," is only another "*Plain Tale from the Hills*," done in incomparably virile verse. Kipling's best work is popularly supposed to be in the noble *Recessional Hymn*,

STYLE IN PULPIT DISCOURSE.

Oliver Wendell Holmes was once asked when to begin the training of a child, and his prompt reply was, "with his grandmother." This is undoubtedly true not only of the moral and religious character of a child, but of intellectual development also. The training of a minister of the gospel, and his furnishing for his great work begins in antecedent generations. To be reared in an atmosphere of godliness and sincere conscientious living is for him an inestimable advantage. To have in early life the surroundings of culture, of a true literary taste and a love of learning, is to have in addition an accessory of great value in the formation of a minister, especially in his pulpit service, and gives him a force and finish that nothing else can supply. Happy the young man who enters upon this noblest of all callings with such auspicious beginnings. But it is true of this office, of which "no man taketh this honour unto himself but he that is called of God, as was Aaron," as of the call to salvation, that "base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are, that no flesh should glory in His presence." Many are called from the humble homes of those obscure in social life, devoid of educational opportunities, unknown in the State, or in the Church, except that they are good citizens, law-abiding and upright, and devout and faithful Christians. Their homes are homes of piety and devotion, of frugality and simplicity, and they are among those

> "Who through long days of labor
> And nights devoid of ease,"

pass their uneventful lives away. But the energy and courage needed to overcome untoward circumstunces, the consecration of heart and life that leads to self-denial and strenuous endeavor, bring out the heroism and worth of the scion of such a home, and gives a sinewy advantage the young man of opportunity does not possess.

It is possible however for every minister, whatever antecedent conditions may have been, to attain a literary excellence in his public discourses, which will wing every

message with directness and power, and give every utterance its utmost value. I wish to make an earnest and modest plea for this—to secure as far as possible perfection in the form of what is said.

There are difficulties in the way. Our lives are so crowded with a certain sort of literary labor. We read, we study, we prepare one, two, or three discourses a week, and our week is much broken into. It seems almost impossible to be exact in learning, accurate in statement, clear, brief, pointed, expressive, impressive, in what we say, and then to be bothered with the effort to put on any frills, to have the sermonic garment properly starched and ironed, this is too aggravating.

Then there are many who are purposely and conscientiously indifferent. They judge that it is of little consequence *how* the message is phrased, so it is understood by the hearer, provided it is the truth of God's word. What people wish is thought, they say, and blood-earnestness, not words, however smooth or elegant or beautiful. Such even affirm that it is beneath the notice of ministers, whose great business is to save souls, to consider how to pronounce a word. Pardon an illustration in my early ministry. I once ventured to tell an honored brother, a man of ability and attainment, a D. D., (though of course we all know that does not signify), that the name of Paul's friend, the messenger of the Philippians to him, was pronounced E-paph-ro-*di*-tus, not Ep-a-*phrod*-i-tus, as he had called it in reading Philippians, 4th chapter. His withering reply was that he had not time (nor inclination) to attend to such trifling details. (No doubt his mind was engrossed with larger, more important things). But he went on to say he would rather be natural than affected, and that he could not endure anything that savored of *purism*.

It is moreover beyond question a fetter to free speech and to the free use of the pen to be ever thinking of the *form* of expression. And for this reason there are many who give no study to style in discourse at all.

I take it for granted, I venture to say in reply, that we who preach wish to do so as well as we can. What is worth doing at all is worth doing not only *well*, as the adage has it, but in the right way, in the best possible

way. Anything that can add to the effectiveness of the sermon is worthy of study and effort! It is further conceded that the thought is of more value than the form, of far more value if you will. It is *not* conceded that it is of no value or of little value. Form is significant. Take for instance the matter of prayer, of public prayer. Prayer must be sincere. Unless it is the real offering up of our desires unto God, it is not prayer at all. Yet it must be reverent. Reverence is indicated by tone, manner, attitude, the outward form. Reverence in spirit there may be, and the worshipper lying in bed. But when God's people in public assembly pray, they stand in the august presence of Jehovah! To sit, to lounge, to be slovenly or caraless in manner or attitude is to be irreverent, is to insult the Majesty of Heaven. Yes, the outward form is something.

It is well then for ministers to cultivate perfection in form in public discourse, in order that they may preach most effectively. If the sermon is an arrow, it must be pointed and feathered. If the sermon is a weapon, a sword, it must be sharp and polished. As the sermon is a message, a message from the King by His accredited messenger, it must be clear, commanding, engaging.

Nor should it be forgotten that the preacher as a public speaker is an exemplar to the church or community in which he ministers. He is an educated man, and by virtue of his position a leader. He is in many communities the only man of liberal training. Hence he becomes insensibly and inevitably the model of the congregation in which he serves. One can sometimes trace the ecclesiastical lineage of a young minister by his tones of voice, his attitudes, and his manner of delivery. In his early years he sat under the ministry of such a man, whose traits of speech he reproduces. It can often be told from which seminary a student is graduated, and which Professor is his model, by his manner. So a pastor is not only the religious teacher, but in a true sense the literary leader and guide of his people. The way he reads a hymn or pronounces a name is the education in that particular of his flock. If he is inelegant in rhetoric, inaccurate in thought, careless in manner, faulty in grammar and pronunciation, it is not only a

grave offence against the taste of the refined and cultivated in the audience, but a positive damage to the untaught and to the young who have heard him, and a hurt from which they never recover. "The minister said so." Happy that village or country charge whose pastor has a large view of his opportunities as guide, counsellor and friend, who may help his young people to the high and pure enjoyments of nature and literature by his constant and stimulating example, as he lays all resources under tribute to the work of the pulpit, his true throne of power.

Without attempting to teach Sacred Rhetoric in these pages, or even Style in Discourse, I shall mention one or two elements of pulpit style by way of emphasis.

One of the cardinal qualities of style, especially in the sermon, is correctness. I do not know that that is the best word. What I mean is, to use the right word in the right place. What renders one discourse so much more charming than another is this characteristic. This accuracy in the use of words makes the style clear, easily understood. It means a knowledge of synonyms and of variant shades of meaning. This too eliminates a certain common and offensive inelegance, the use of a special word which does duty under all circumstances—a species of slang. Take for example the adjective, *grand*. What do you mean by a grand man? a grand sermon? a grand book? It sounds a little bigger than great. It has a more mouth-filling, distinguished sonorousness. How many in a careless, slipshod way say *perspicuous* for *pers-picacious*, *contemptible* for *contemptuous*, and such inaccuracies as mar speech. I believe my pet diversion is *lengthy* for *long*. Why not say strengthy and breadthy and heighthy—Bah! "Along this line," "Grant to give," *et id omne genus exeant omnia*. It is not that sometimes even elegant speech is not to be abrupt, striking, jagged. A dagger is adapted to its use. But the right word must be used to say the thought that you wish to express.

And let that word be said in the very best way, be pronounced *correctly* as well as impressively. It is not pedantry to pronounce classic and Scripture names correctly. Neither is it affectation or purism. One's scholarship is properly questioned if a name is mispronounced. And at-

tention to the niceties of orthoepy does not entitle one to be called a purist. Barti-*me*-us not Bar-*tim*-eus, Thessalo-*ni*-ca not Thessa *lon*-ica, Phi-*le*-mon not *Phil*-emon, Magda-*le*-ne not Magda-*lene*, and so forth. I once heard the epistle to Philemon read by a theological student who called the name of the runaway slave, *One-simus!* And for some time I puzzled my brain to know who *Simus* was! Then in other words, not names, the minister is exposed to a more scathing criticism because of the general knowledge of the listener. Those who affect the broad sound of *a* are on dangerous ground unless pronunciations have been thoroughly mastered. It greatly enriches the music of speech to have Italian *a* where it belongs, and broad *a* where *it* belongs. The elision of *r*, and of final *g*, both characteristics of some parts of the South, and always a provincialism, should be specially avoided. The discrimination between the verb *rise*, and the noun *rise*, (just as in the words *use*, *abuse*,) is always clearly made by students of elocution, and is often the test of the uncultivated tongue.

Another excellence of style for which I plead is vividness. This lifts speech above the commonplace. The landscape is drear and uninteresting as a work of art (however perfect the art) to the ordinary beholder, to the untrained eye, unless a hunter be painted on the perilous crag, or the helmsman be seen guiding his bark over the bounding billows. I do not refer to delivery, to action, to the dramatic power. I speak of the words themselves. This pictorial power adds greatly to the beauty and impressiveness of the sermon. It is not epigram that I desire. Perhaps there is at present too great an effort to be sententious and epigrammatic. It is after all a cheap brilliance; for there is so much imitation. The true epigram is immortal. Such are

> "Jewels, five words long,
> That on the stretch'd forefinger of all Time
> Sparkle forever."

But there is a difference between the *dry* land and *thirsty* land, *rustling* pines and *sighing* pines, *hard* muscles and *knotted* musles. (I am using illustrations from familiar reading and many more may be cited.) The effort should

be in enlarging our vocabulary of speech to use now and then fresh new coins that sparkle and gleam and have not lost their mint-mark, to use the most expressive and vivid word that brings a picture to the mind.

Dr. Hillis, in his first sermon at Plymouth church, spoke of our Lord Jesus Christ as a literary artist. The phrase does not please my taste. Yet His methods of presenting truth are eminently worthy of our study and imitation. What unapproachable majesty, what moving humanness, what matchless tenderness and power in His spoken words. "They are life." WM. S. LACY.

SOME ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS IN THE SPENCE LIBRARY.

BY PROF. W. W. MOORE.

At the recent meeting of East Hanover Presbytery in Richmond (April 20th, 1899) Mr. W. W. Henry informed the Presbytery that the original copy of the petition of old Hanover Presbytery to the General Assembly of Virginia in 1774 in behalf of religious liberty was still in existence in the State Archives, and Mr. Henrywas appointed chairman of a committee to make an effort to secure its removal to the fire-proof library building of Union Theological Seminary. As this celebrated document, with its masterly statement of those principles of religious freedom which are now universally recognized in America, may not be known to all our readers, we reprint here the interesting statement in regard to it made by Mr. Henry in his communication to the *Central Presbyterian* in May, 1888, just after his discovery of the manuscript among the archives of the State. Although it was written in 1774, it had never before been published till at Mr. Henry's instance it appeared in the *Central Presbyterian* of May 16th, 1888.

He says: "The occasion of its preparation was the introduction in the House of Burgesses in 1772 of a bill