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## REVIEW SECTION.

### I.—THOUGHTS ON SOME PRACTICAL USES OF THE RELATION OF THE NATURAL TO THE SPIRITUAL.

BY PRINCIPAL SIR WILLIAM DAWSON, LL.D., MONTREAL, CANADA.

THE treatment, within the compass of a few pages, of a subject which embraces all earth and heaven, must necessarily be merely suggestive. But for this kind of treatment we have ample warrant in the teaching of Him of whom it was said, "Never man spake as this man," and who suggests all things, but expands and elaborates nothing. Paul assures us that if there is a natural body there must also be a correlative spiritual; and in like manner the most eminent physicists of our time are convinced that the laws of conservation and dissipation of energy require us to believe in the existence of an unseen universe corresponding to that which is visible to us. The greatest of English poets, whose insight was more profound than that of ordinary men, puts the same truth in the form of a question: "What if earth be but the shadow of heaven, and things therein, each to the other like, more than on earth is thought?"

But our knowledge of the natural comes to us mainly by observation and experiment, and is based on the evidence of our senses, on which we are accustomed implicitly to rely. Our knowledge of the spiritual comes to us chiefly by divine revelation, and therefore in some sense at second-hand, though it can appeal as evidence first to our intuitive conceptions, with which it is in harmony, and secondly, to the natural facts which corroborate that testimony. It is instructive to note that our Savior fully acknowledges this in His teaching, and in His appeals to those who disbelieved His divine mission. For instance, in John vi: 45, He quotes a sentiment, more than once ex-

### III.—REV. DR. STUART ROBINSON AS A PREACHER.

BY B. M. PALMER, D.D., NEW ORLEANS.

It is true of the orator as of the poet that "he is born—not made": in both the verdict holds good, "*nemo vir magnus sine afflatu aliquo divino unquam fuit.*" None the less however, as in the case of Samson, do we seek the hiding-place of this supernatural power. It is a chapter in metaphysics to trace the combination of qualities necessary to true greatness, or to learn the discipline by which it mounts to the height of its fame. A conspicuous illustration of this divine gift of speech is furnished in the career of the distinguished gentleman whose name graces the head of the present paper. His eloquence threw its spell over audiences of every grade of culture, from the rude mountaineers of his favorite Virginia, to the polished assemblies of Baltimore and Louisville. It was exhibited in every form of address, in the pulpit, on the platform, upon the floor of ecclesiastical councils, and lost nothing of its force during a period of forty years. Everywhere, and under all surroundings, in whatever country or clime, his speech swept irresistibly on—either rippling with humor, or else foaming with the rush of vigorous logic.

The first element of power in Dr. Robinson as a speaker, lay in the breadth of his sympathies. Perhaps this is the core of Quintillian's definition of a perfect orator, that "he must be a good man;" and it is refreshing to know that true eloquence roots itself in the character, the hidden ground of all its richness and strength. It calls for no proof, that he who would lay his hand upon the key-board of the human heart must first thrill with the music which his touch produces. In vain can he hope to sway an audience by the contagion of emotion which does not first throb in his own breast. Through his own sensibilities he knows the chords which should tremble beneath the breath of his inspired passion. In this broad sympathy with human life Dr. Robinson had no superior. His great Irish heart gave a quick response to every cry of joy or sorrow that came up from the soul of the race. In this regard, he particularly resembled the great London preacher, Mr. Spurgeon; in whom, as in himself, this was found to be the ultimate secret of oratorical success. The resemblance extends even to the external appearance of the two. The innate benevolence was reflected in the outward aspect of both. It needed no expression in words, for it lay in the open countenance and in the well-rounded figure, over which was an air of repose such as can be cast only by a sense of inward goodness. In neither was there any gush of sentiment, or parade of virtue; but the "*nil humani alienum*" gleamed in every look and breathed in every tone, bringing the speaker and the

hearer into mysterious and instant accord. In this delicate and spiritual organization, so sensitive to Nature's touch, we find the underlying condition of the poet and orator alike; constituting each the "*sacer vates*," the "*interpretes deorum*," speaking to mankind in the universal language of the heart.

Another secret of Dr. Robinson's eloquence lay in the strength of his convictions. A profound philosophy couches in the declaration of the Psalmist, "I believed—therefore have I spoken." The traditional belief, which rests only upon the assertions of others, will rather crumble before the opposition through which it fails to cut its way. But the truth which speaks with commanding emphasis, and proves itself

"The golden key  
That opes the palace of Eternity,"

must first be wrought into the texture of our own being. Partaking thus of our intellectual life, its utterance will be no dead word, but a living force impregnating other minds. In Dr. Robinson truth entered into the bone and sinew and muscle of his intellectual and moral nature. No one entered more fully than he into the fine sentiment of Milton, that "a man may be a heretic in the truth; and if he believes things only because his pastor says so, or the Assembly so determines, without knowing other reason, though his belief be true, yet the very truth he holds becomes his heresy." Not so with him of whom this paper treats. The depth of his convictions attested his loyalty to truth; and the words that were wrought in "the forge of his thought" went forth with a glow and heat that burnt their impression upon all who heard. Truth is a mighty conqueror, and the man of strong convictions is her herald at arms. As with the silver trumpet at whose blast the disenchanting horsemen leaped upon their steeds, the true orator rouses men to action through the intensity of his faith, and inspires them with a zeal akin to his own.

From the vigor of his conceptions we naturally pass to the simplicity of their expression. Dr. Robinson's force as a speaker lay, to no small extent, in the directness of his language, coupled with a rare facility of illustration. It is a familiar adage, "the style is the man." In the expanded form of Fenelon, "a man's style is nearly as much a part of him as his physiognomy, his figure, the throbbing of his pulse." The thought weaves around it the dress in which it appears, reflecting the cast of mind from which it proceeds. This was pre-eminently true of the subject of this sketch. The mental attribute more obtrusive in him than any other, was its practicalness—betraying itself in what may be termed the business energy of his speech. It is a mistake to suppose that intense feeling always indulges in the language of passion. There is often a concentration of force in a word which is bloodless simply from the excess of its passion, as the water is stillest

at the centre of the vortex. Dr. Robinson was too severely earnest for dalliance with the graces of rhetoric. His manner was generally calm and self-contained, sometimes approaching to nonchalance. His style was simple and direct, sometimes colloquial—and even slipping into negligence, when a touch of carelessness would secure the confidence he sought to win. But no man knew better how to make himself understood. As he spoke always to convince, there was a pulse in his words which throbbed with the energy of his thought. A robust simplicity may be signalized as the characteristic of his style ; which disdained the mere trickery of speech, in order through its own directness to lodge truth itself in the conviction of the hearer.

In this he was greatly assisted by an amazing fertility of illustration, lighting up the subject under discussion as with an electric splendor. Springing spontaneously to his lips in the fervor of speech, and being never prostituted to meretricious adornment, it became in his hands an instrument of logic. His illustrations were accordingly singularly happy, especially when softly suggested in a word—as when he represented the prayer in the Christian's mere desire by the hungry look of the child who pleads for what he wants in the silent, yet expressive, language of the eye. This threefold combination of vigor of conception, business energy of language, and the pictorial presentation of his thoughts, often lifted him to the sublime. It was a generous criticism of his oratory by one of his own colleagues at Danville, himself a master of the same great art, who said to the writer, "there are passages in Robinson's Discourses on Redemption which are Miltonic in their grandeur."

Reference has been made to the practicalness of Dr. Robinson's mind, as well as to the diffusive benevolence of his heart. It may not be logically distinct from these to emphasize the interest he felt in the social questions which agitated the age in which he lived. The discussion of these living issues formed a link betwixt himself and the masses, and was a most potent factor in the influence which he wielded over them. In early life his attention was arrested by those unruly forces which, disguised under varying forms of fanaticism, were seeking the overthrow of order and government among men. He patiently exposed these disorganizing schemes, and expounded the principles upon which society must be conserved and reformed. We find just here the explanation of his special fondness for the exposition of the historical portions of the Bible, which opened to him the opportunity of meeting these social issues ever recurring, under the pressure of similar exigencies, in the great historic drama. Whilst legitimately employed in unfolding the meaning of holy Scripture, he could deliver his ponderous blows against destructive popular errors.

His mode of discussion deserves also to be noted, as drawing him near to the public audiences he was called to address. He was no

minute philosopher dealing with the abstractions of the closet, and spinning out his conclusions through fatiguing processes of the reason. He rather leaped, as by the intuition of knowledge, to the hidden principles which controlled the discussion; and his forte seemed to lie in the luminous exposition of these to the clear apprehension of other minds. If the distinction may be allowed, he was not a reasoner of the schools but of the forum. It was a mistake to have locked him up for two years in a seminary of learning, except with reference to a specific work of which he there acquired the hint, and which formed the pivot of his after career. With this topic, however, the present paper has nothing to do. He was a man for the multitude, and his sphere was the pulpit and rostrum. His reasoning was not that of the dialectician, but of the orator. He had a grand power of generalizing and enforcing comprehensive principles, which, clearly stated, are easily embraced by minds wholly incapable of grasping the subtle speculations of the schoolman.

In Dr. Robinson the distinction was evident between the elegant declaimer and the true orator. In him there was no artificial polish of manner or style. His speech had the ring of genuine gold. Such a combination of wit and logic, of humor and pathos, of sober thought and earnest passion—such a union of the elements which enter into the orator and the poet, it will be the good fortune of a generation to see but once.

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#### IV.—A SYMPOSIUM ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

NO. V.

BY PROF. MATTHEW B. RIDDLE, HARTFORD, CONN.

**I. DATE OF THE EPISTLE.**—It was written at Corinth, just before Paul's final visit to Jerusalem (comp. chaps. xv: 25 ff. and xvi: 1, 2), during the three months' stay in Greece (Achaia) mentioned in Acts xx: 2, 3. In regard to the precise date opinions differ, since there is a variation in the reckoning of this entire period of the apostolic history. The more probable date seems to be in the early spring of A.D. 58, though Meyer and others say A.D. 59. The relative position of the Epistle, as indicated above, is not doubted; nor is the Pauline authorship denied by any scholar. Questions of "higher criticism" do not enter here. As is well known, even Baur of Tübingen acknowledged the genuineness of the four Epistles which are grouped together toward the close of the third missionary journey, namely, Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Romans. Some difference of opinion exists as to the exact position of Galatians: whether it should be placed before, or after, those to the Corinthians; but all four were penned during the latter half of the third journey; probably the interval between the com-