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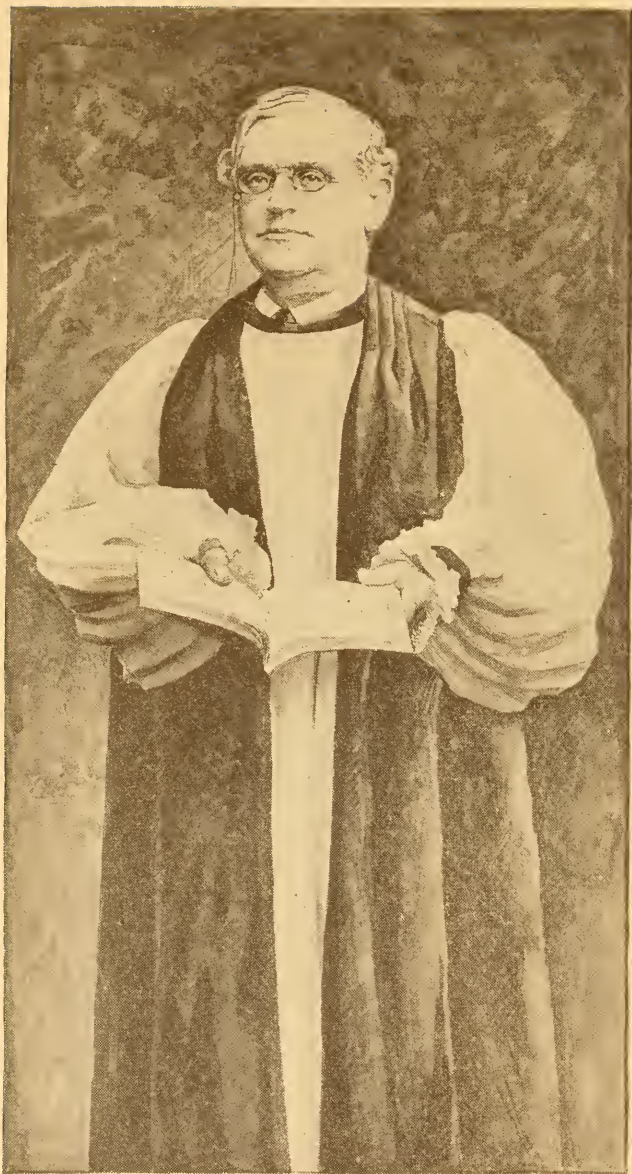
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The Bishop of Massachusetts.

PHILLIPS BROOKS

Bishop of Massachusetts

BY

NEWELL DUNBAR



WITH VIEWS OF TRINITY CHURCH, BOSTON

Boston

J. G. CUPPLES, PUBLISHER

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SECOND EDITION,

REVISED.



To the Admirers of

True Manhood

this little volume (much too has-

tily prepared) is lovingly

dedicated by

the Author





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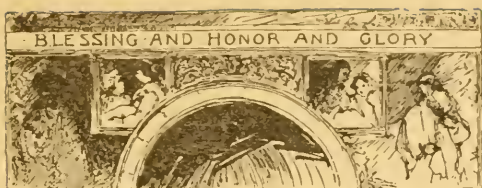
Together with HEAD and

TAIL PIECES.



PERSONALITY.





I.

PERSONALITY.

THE man (or woman) of this world has been spoilt by the world. He has given himself over to standards and methods of which the sum and substance are selfishness, and has allowed himself to grow — to state the plain truth — into a repulsive monstrosity. Himself he regards in the light of all but a deity to be worshiped ; upon his fellows he looks about to see how best he can make use of them. He has drifted far from

and reversed the healthy instincts of his childhood and of Nature. The scholar (signifying by that term the man or woman, who is not merely a receptacle for facts, but who has thought and aspired in those broader and deeper and more life-giving, if less exact, departments of intellectual endeavor—the theologies, the philosophies, the poesies, the æsthetics, of the intellectual *curriculum*—of which the prerogative is that they tend to decipher the meaning of life and to give it an unrest, a self-dissatisfaction, a distinctively human charm, and a worthy aim) has at least *considered* the “what ought to be,” as well as the “what is.” He feels its superiority.

When, as occasionally happens, he is true to his teaching, and is besides, in addition to being a scholar, a man of strong will and of virile powers, making up his mind he will never desert that which he knows in his heart to be the higher for what he equally by intuition knows is the lower, he achieves some appreciable measure of success in embodying the ideal in his own life, and in causing it to be embodied in the life about him. Such men constitute the flower of our race. And it is, in the first place, to be noted of them, that they represent normal and consistent growths of humanity, are not vitiated or warped, but such as

Nature intended human nature to be; the man not contradicting the boy, but continuing him — *containing* the boy — the boy grown up — a *bigger* boy — combining all the youth's simple, true, generous instincts, and all-embracing sympathies and affections, with the man's added stature, strength, polish, knowledge, culture, and wisdom. Says Novalis: "*Tugend ist die Prosa, Unschuld die Poesie.*"

Such a man eminently is Phillips Brooks. Those who have had the privilege of knowing him intimately have often styled him a "big boy." The scholar, the high-bred gentleman, the man of weight and of influence upon the community about

him, if not, indeed, in the world; but beneath all simple, unaffected, modest, hopeful, trustful, unselfish and well-wishing. It needs but to see him upon the tennis-ground with children, or in his church on a "children's day," to recognize the peculiar aptness of the epithet alluded to above. Its truthfulness no doubt accounts in large measure for his influence with the young, especially with young men, it being a notorious fact that amongst preachers he is the darling of American universities. Those who have beheld that vast surpliced frame in Trinity Church chancel drop upon its knees and lift up its voice in all the artless effusion of unques-

tioning prayer, have the key to the man. There is nothing studied, or affected, or done for effect, or *sham*, about him. He is natural and genuine, and fundamental (in the sense of clinging to and embodying the great underlying facts — the first principles — of life and of our common human nature), and true. That here is a genuine man, human through and through, and with all his elegance and cultivation at heart one with humanity, one with the *people*, no one could question after reading his sermon preached in the church of the Holy Trinity, Philadelphia, after the assassination of President Lincoln — it is so gloriously adequate to its high theme.

No one could so speak, no one could so appreciate the simple grandeur of character of that remarkable man, and not be himself compact of true manhood.

In his Boston Latin School oration, he praises the school because its teaching has never been "the privilege of an aristocratic class, but the portion of any boy in town who had the soul to desire it and the brain to appropriate it." A fact that indubitably attests the authenticity of his metal is that, whenever he preaches or speaks to what might be termed the populace, the populace eagerly listen to him. Just as the gipsies and poachers were Charles Kingsley's friends, styling him

their "priest-king," the lower ranks of American society flock to hear Phillips Brooks, whenever they get the chance, equally with the more critical classes. They seem to be equally abject subjects of his spell: and as between reality and sham the populace in any country possess a very keen vision, that in the long run nothing spurious cheats. His "eye is single,"—one evidence of this trait being his deliberate determination to lead a celibate life, in order to devote himself the more completely to his sacred calling. Mr. Drummond, in one of his recent books, speaks of the fine opportunity afforded by the Christian ministry for devoting one's self to a high ideal,

undistracted by the disturbing element of money, which is so potent a factor in most other callings. Narrowness of means, indeed, Bishop Brooks has been spared ; but no one can doubt it would have made no difference to his zeal, whatever it might have done to his effectiveness, if he had not been ; certainly in choosing his profession he was not actuated by mercenary motives.

To have his name in the mouths of the community, and to have the community's gratitude express itself in gifts, have fallen to him naturally ; but they have made no difference in the man.

As it happens to almost every

one in Boston, at one time or another, to meet him with his burly frame and big eloquent eye upon the streets, where he may be seen hustled like any ordinary mortal by hackmen and porters, who are apparently perfectly unconcerned and unconscious that they are rubbing elbows with a great man (or, perhaps, even exhibit a somewhat overdone assumption and bravado of ignorance or of self-assertion, as is wont to be the way with the low-class American); or running across him occasionally in a book-shop, with his face buried in a volume in rapt and scholarly abstraction; or finding him a near neighbor in the audience at some public place of amusement, or listen-

ing with fine modesty in the audience or congregation to the eloquence of another — even the most careless observer may notice in him a certain noble intentness of countenance, and a sober restriction of regard, that bespeak the genuine unspoilt nature, self-centred in the sense of being loyally wedded to and humbly dependent upon the revelation of the highest within.

Very characteristic of the man was a little scene the writer remembers to have witnessed, one evening in early summer, on the Commonwealth Avenue mall in Boston. The great preacher was sauntering down the walk in earnest converse with a friend, or at least acquaintance,

whose hand he held in his, and was affectionately swinging as he talked — just as children swing hands and talk. His companion, who was known to the writer as a man notoriously not *all* unworldly and a saint, though of average size, looked a mere boy beside his own heroic proportions. Brooks was expostulating with him in regard to some point on which he evidently wished to change him, and his big, convincing, *winning*, “Nonsense — nonsense, Edward — put it aside — you *know* it is not so,” sounded very hard to resist. It is not always argument with him, but oftentimes the pressure brought to bear of a well-nigh irresistible magnetism and potent personality.

It is amusingly told of him (and it illustrates the modesty of the man) by one of his clergy, who is rector of a suburban Boston parish, and in whose church he frequently preaches — on which occasions the pews overflow, settees are placed in the aisles, and all the available interstices are occupied by people standing — that always, after the service, he says, with the utmost good faith, “Grey, what a splendid congregation you have !” It apparently never enters his head to imagine that that is not the usual condition of things in that church, when preachings are afoot.

Another story told of him by his friend Archdeacon Farrar illustrates the same trait. When wonder was

expressed, during one of his English visits, by some of his English friends, at the generous, if unaccepted, offer made to him by certain members of his congregation at home, to send him abroad for a year, paying all his expenses and those of a substitute during his absence, he answered laughing, "Oh, they were tired of me, and wanted a change!"

Any reference to the personality of Phillips Brooks would be incomplete without some allusion to his *physique*. To be not only big morally and intellectually, but well-nigh herculean bodily, constitutes a sort and condition of man that is eminently adapted for reaching all classes in the community — both

those who appreciate the higher spiritual graces, those who delight mainly in hard-headedness, and lastly the more purely animal, upon whose lowness of grade moral and mental adornments are quite thrown away, but who recognize and respect good tangible thews and bulk when they see them. When the apostle of mercy and forbearance comes, it is well for him to come, if possible, equipped in this Milonian fashion: for one thing, he can scarcely then be suspected of preaching what he practices from necessity and from motives of interest.

Like all thoroughly healthy natures, Phillips Brooks at once detects and hates flattery. Intelli-

gent appreciation is welcome to him, as it must be to every genuine man. The outside world exists for him as something to be benefited: for its adulation he does not seem to care, preferring for society that of his intimate friends, with whom he is sunshine itself. Of himself he speaks little. His sense of humor is strong, as any one for instance may see by reading the delicious oration delivered at the celebration of the two-hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the Boston Latin School, which has already been referred to. Nobody seems to know when he does his work: he is always accessible and disengaged in the morning. He is very optimistic, believing in the

intrinsic goodness of human nature. He thinks that the world makes steady progress in accordance with a fixed law. His principal regret is that he cannot live longer, since he is convinced that at about the time when the next generation shall have fairly taken its place upon the scene and settled down to work, there will occur a sudden blossoming out in the condition of humanity such as it has never before beheld.

How shall the personality of Phillips Brooks be summed up? Archdeacon Farrar calls him "every inch a man." To the writer recur the words Brooks himself spoke of Lincoln (so different from himself till you get down to the very core

of the two men) — “the greatness of real goodness, and the goodness of real greatness.”



BIOGRAPHICAL.





II.

BIOGRAPHICAL.

THE Right Reverend Phillips Brooks, D.D., Harv., Bishop of Massachusetts, and today doubtless the greatest preacher in America or in England, if not of Protestantism and of the world, was born in Boston, December 13, 1835, and is consequently now in his fifty-sixth year. He is in the full vigor of a regally-endowed manhood, and likely to be able to devote many years to come to the causes of religion and of education,

which he has held so dear. The original home of his family was North Andover. That his parents were devoted to Christianity, appears from the fact that of their six sons four, including him, became Christian ministers. When he was a boy, the family attended St. Paul's Church, in Boston, of which the rector was that admirable pulpit-orator, the Rev. Alexander Hamilton Vinton, whose polished eloquence, it is not unnatural to suppose, may have had considerable influence in arousing in young Brooks's heart that predominant ideal which so often makes the boy in a great sense father of the man. Dr. Vinton afterwards for

a second time, as will be seen later, exerted a beneficent influence upon his young friend, and at a critical point in his life. Dr. Vinton, by the way, preached the consecration-sermon at the consecration of the new Trinity Church, Boston.

Young Brooks fitted for college at the Boston Latin School, and in 1851 was admitted to Harvard University, by which famous institution he was duly graduated in 1855, being then in his nineteenth year.

It is on record that at about the time of his graduation—that critical period in the lives of educated youth—he was in doubt (as so

many such young men are) what profession to adopt. When still a senior he consulted the President of his University on the point, and that learned gentleman, with all the omniscient insight of a very wise man, said: "In deciding the difficult question of a choice of profession, I think, we may always be helped towards a solution of the problem by eliminating, in the first place, the *impossible* vocations. This saves much trouble and loss of time, as it at once narrows the field, and restricts the mind to fewer points, from which to make its selection. Now, in your case, for instance, owing to the impediment in your speech, you could

never be a *preacher*, and we may as well therefore at the outset lay aside all thought of the ministry." Just what profession collegiate infallibility recommended its young applicant for advice to adopt, need not be recalled here: the irony of subsequent events has extracted the interest from the rest of the little oration. The advice given was no doubt sound, judging from the standpoint of probability, and weighing what seemed to be the chances. Moreover, the speaker, beyond a doubt, gave it with reluctance, as his preferences must all have been in favor of the pulpit. This very funny story, however, would never have risen up and lived

to be told against him, if, classical scholar as he was, he had not been temporarily oblivious of the paradoxical case, upwards of two thousand years ago, of a certain somewhat famous man in Athens, named Demosthenes. The wreck of his prophecy only furnishes one more proof, what unforeseen and wonderful things a great personality, in "dead earnest," unaccountably manages to achieve.

In spite of the well-meant advice of the sagacious but *human* President, the future preacher decided to make the ministry his life-calling; and, in order to prepare himself for it, betook himself to the Episcopal Divinity School at

Alexandria, Va., graduating here in 1859. Many are the recollections of his noble character and promise cherished by those who were his classmates here. Here it was that he wrote his first sermon, on "The simplicity that is in Christ," of which he himself—his sense of humor being keen, even when he himself is the victim—recounts that a classmate's criticism of it was, "There was very little simplicity in it, and no Christ."

If graduating from college is the Saarbrück in a young man's career, graduating from his professional school is his Sedan. The perplexing question of establishing himself, and of making a start, then confronts

him. In this respect, indeed, the young minister has the advantage over the young lawyer and the young doctor. Unless the latter have some means of subsistence apart from their professions, the outlook for them is disheartening, indeed: in all probability, it will be years before their position is secure, and their practice remunerative. The "starting" clergyman, on the other hand, as soon as he has secured a parish at all, at once secures with it a living, and a place for making himself felt. But with a young man of large possibilities, how great the importance where and what that first parish is! If it be off by comparison somewhere in the backwoods, with a scant, commonplace and insignificant congregation, in all human likelihood, to be sure, he

will work to the front, and win the position suited to his powers, in time ; but it will probably take him years to do so, and when the opportunity shall have been conquered, youth will have fled, and the momentum and keenness of his first onset have been dulled. Phillips Brooks's first parish was the Church of the Advent, in Philadelphia, of which he became rector in 1859. The story of his settlement here constitutes quite a little romance, — one of those fascinating romances of genius with which the biographies of eminent men present us. At the Advent, his preaching and character at once made themselves felt ; but, though in a general way it may be said that the intellectual grade of nearly *all* Episcopal parishes is high, still by comparison the congregation

was composed mainly of plain people, the church edifice was in an obscure quarter of the city, and the opportunity afforded for the rector to become widely-known was small. It was just at this point that Dr. Vinton — who had in the meantime become the rector of the large, wealthy and growing Church of the Holy Trinity, in Philadelphia — rendered the essential service spoken of above. He opened his pulpit to young Brooks Sunday afternoons : the results being that the Advent presently began to overflow Sunday mornings with Holy Trinity parishioners, and that when Dr. Vinton removed to New York soon afterward the rector of the Advent was invited to take his place. After being thrice asked, Brooks was installed rector of Holy Trinity in 1862 ; thus, with few tedious preliminaries, quickly

stepping into a first-rate position in a great and populous city. Here his fame as a preacher grew, and came to extend far beyond the warm-hearted Quaker City, and indeed beyond its State. In Philadelphia, he remained ten years, and departed thence greatly regretted, leaving behind him a memory such as it has been given to but few men to create. Whenever he returns thither on a visit, his welcome resembles that of the prodigal son.

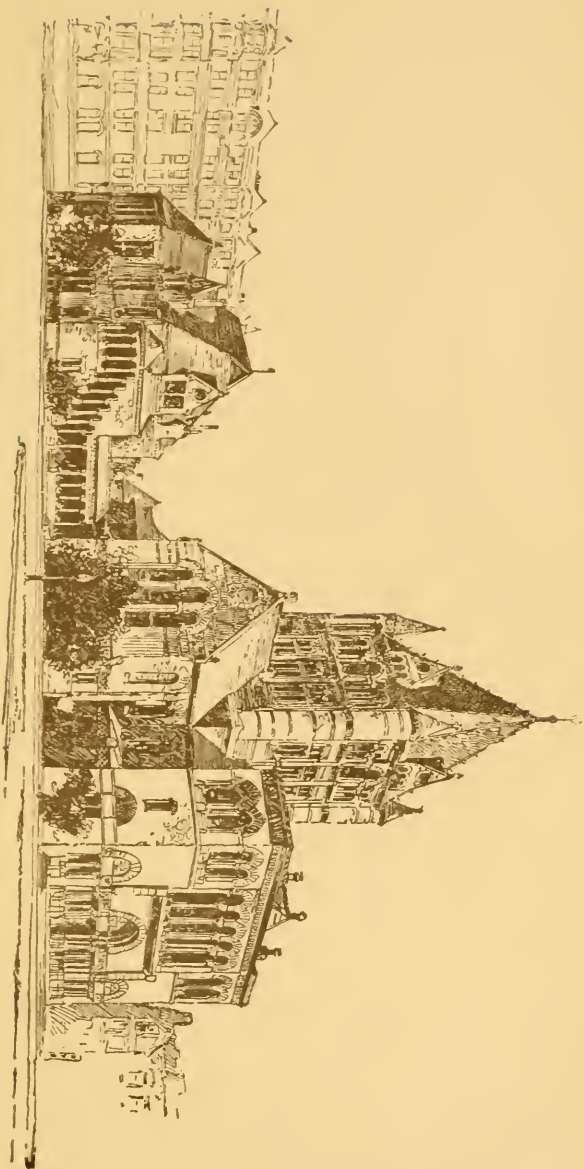
When young Brooks was seeking his first parish, his native city of Boston—in regard to whom, her critics have not been slow in pointing out how frequently she has failed to know her greatest—somehow or other did not seem burning with anxiety to furnish him a

foothold ; but when the noise of him had gone abroad in the land, and it began to be said that Phillips Brooks of Philadelphia was the greatest preacher in the Episcopal Church, if not indeed in the country, Boston — if somewhat tardily — opened her eyes and heart (not forgetting her pocket), and concluded to take him in. Indeed, it has been further remarked by those extremely keen-sighted persons, her critics, that after driving her unrecognized geniuses from her door on penalty if need be of starvation, once let them become of mark elsewhere, and — thrifty Yankee that she is with eye ever roving for the “rising sun” — she hastens to wel-

come them back. In 1869 the rector of the Holy Trinity, Philadelphia, received and accepted a call to and became the rector of Trinity Church, Boston.

His new parish, like the one he left, was a strong and influential one. Its church edifice, with "its battlemented tower, like a great castle of the truth," was at that time a conspicuous object in Summer Street. It was destroyed in the "great fire" of 1872. The parish at once proceeded to erect a new place of worship. The plans for it were drawn by that architect of sweetness and light, Mr. H. H. Richardson, — whose untimely death was a loss to American art, — and

by all odds the most complete, thoroughly-built and beautiful church-building in the United States, with a seating capacity of over two-thousand, situated on Boylston Street in the choicest residential portion of the city, and costing over a million dollars, was the result. For architectural beauty it will compare with many of the famous places of worship, hallowed by time and by sacred memories, of green England. As one regards it in the bright morning or in the early evening light, fancy adds the softening of outline — the mellowing and metamorphosis of tints — the more daring spread of the ivies — that are to come with the years, and the



TRINITY CHURCH, Exterior.

heart, yielding a sigh of deep content, confesses to itself: "It is enough!"

The new church was taken possession of in 1877, and from that time to this has been the home of Phillips Brooks's eloquence. The audiences it has contained have grown with the fame of its rector, till today it often scarcely suffices to admit the throngs that seek entrance. In 1886 he was elected Assistant-Bishop of Pennsylvania, but declined. The offer of a Professorship in Harvard University was also at this time made him; but neither did he accept this.

He has at various times been a quite extensive traveler, having

visited no inconsiderable portion of the earth's surface, including India, Palestine and Japan : it may be added that he cherishes the hope of extending his travels before he dies still further. In England his visits have been numerous, and he has made many friends and created a deep impression there. He preached at Westminster Abbey ; at both the Universities ; before the Queen, and before many of the first people in the Kingdom. It was and is the opinion of Archdeacon Farrar, that his equal as a preacher and as a man does not exist amongst the clergy of the English Church.

At the death of Bishop Paddock in

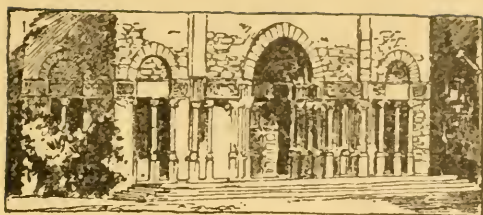
1891, he was almost unanimously elected Bishop in his stead by the Diocese of Massachusetts. According to the very singular, and it is thought wholly unprecedented, arrangement existing in the American Episcopal Church, however, in that church a diocese practically cannot elect its own bishop, the election not being valid until it has been ratified by a majority of all the bishops in the Church. The objections urged against him, the long contest over the matter, and all the sorry tale of innuendo, recrimination and partisan strife, need not be recounted here. They are fresh in the minds of all, and are now happily ended. Even as you are

reading this little book its title has been justified, and Phillips Brooks is in fact Bishop of his native State.



THE PREACHER.





III.

THE PREACHER.

ONE need not be very far advanced in life to remember the time when Curtis, and Willis, and Emerson, and Lowell, — and many another illustrious name of that mighty generation of writers and speakers, of which today the survivors are, alas! so few,—were uttering their philippics against the materiality and sordidness of American life. American life, indeed, has

advanced since then at a giant's pace; it has expanded all round; since its birth, money was never held by it in so high esteem as now; but it has grown in other ways, too. It is not as yet much recognized, in our crude and semi-barbaric day, that, great as is its power, money does not give the *best* things,—though that is the fact, seen to be such by the more civilized and sharpest minds. It is an excellent adjunct and accompaniment of the best, but furnishes a poor substitute for it. Did money, for instance, ever yet win a heart? Can it of itself bring happiness? Will it command health? Is anything it ever bought to be com-

pared with the joy of the artist, who, day by day, sees grow in visible embodiment beneath his inspired fingers some one of the dreams amongst which his soul habitually dwells, in regions the world wots not of, save as occasionally he vouchsafes it a token from them? With the measureless content of an author, as he pens the last word of a work that he knows will move the hearts and decide the actions of his day, and, when those who make his day shall have vanished, move hearts and influence destinies yet unborn? What within its reach is comparable with the lofty existence, not like unto that of other men, passed by a music-

composer — by Schumann, for instance — amidst celestial harmonies, whereunto only his ears, and those of the great tone-gods, are privileged to listen? With the exultant sense of beneficent power that floods and fires the soul of a great mistress of song — of Christine Nilsson, say — as she stands before three thousands of her fellow men and women, and knows there is not a tear in all their eyes, a drop of blood in all their veins, that is not her slave? Or of an actor, who focuses the hearts, with the eyes and ears, of box, pit and gallery upon the quiver of an eyelash, the trembling of a tone? Or of an orator, such as Kossuth, or Phillips

or Gough? And of all orators, what one can be likened for uniqueness of position (standing as he does between man and God), for dignity and momentousness of the issues involved, to the orator of the pulpit — the preacher?

As a preacher — and that, beyond a doubt, is the capacity in which he is greatest — the quality that, in the writer's opinion, first strikes all Phillips Brooks's hearers, is what may perhaps be termed, for lack of a better word, his *copiousness*. He is like a colossal reservoir, that seems full almost to bursting, and well-nigh unable to restrain what it contains. He takes his place in the pulpit, and opens his mouth,

and without any accompaniment of manner (whatever may be the case with the matter) specially appropriate to an exordium, just *begins*—right in the middle, as it were. The parting of his lips seems like the bursting open of a safety-valve by the seething thoughts and words behind, and out they rush, so hot in their chase the one of the other, that at times they appear to be almost side by side; and from then till the moment when he stops, with equal abruptness, he simply pours — pours — pours! out — out — out! It seems as if he could not possibly say enough, or begin to express what he has to utter. Just as in his writing, he is super-

latively and superbly reckless in lavishing his treasures — apparently feeling that the difficulty is, not to *find* what to say, but to *use* a tithe of the material that throngs and beats and surges to be let out. He gives the *best he has*; never speaking, any more than writing, *down* to the supposed requirements of auditors only partially developed; not stopping to sort, but flinging his words out as they come, satisfied that each hearer will appropriate what belongs to him, and all will get something. Great torrents and waves, as it were, of appeal and aspiration and eloquence and thought rise and fall, and whirl and eddy, throughout the church, till they

seem to become almost visible and tangible, and to beat upon the eyes and foreheads of his hearers as they do against their hearts. The audience, caught in the rush and swing of this fervid oratory, feel as if they were rocked upon the impassioned bosom of an ocean of inspired speech. It is soul speaking to soul. Indeed, you have to pay the closest attention, and catch all he says only with difficulty. So rapid and thronging is his utterance that, as is well known, the English reporters, used to a more leisurely eloquence, were at first perplexed and even utterly baffled in their efforts at "taking" him, and finally succeeded in achieving

the ability to reach that end only by a sort of special education, obtained through chasing his exceptionally "whirling words." It is to be hoped, by the way, this practice may have had some appreciable effect towards reforming the profession of tachygraphy in Great Britain. Bishop Brooks's oratory has been not inaptly compared to the headlong rush of an express-train.

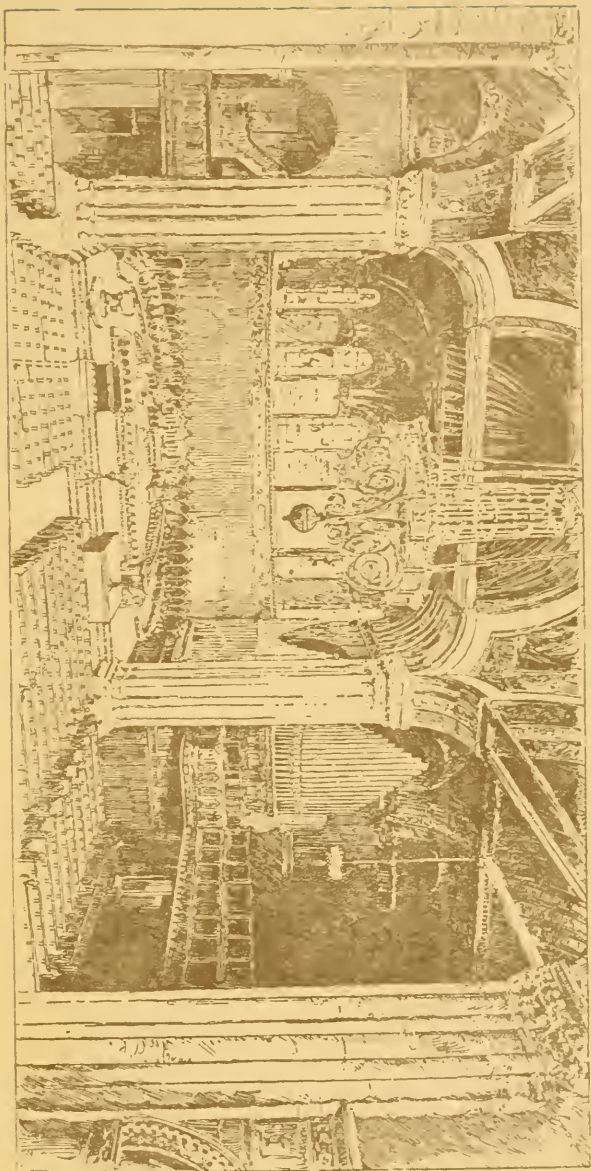
In point of fact, coolly considered, Phillips Brooks exhibits as a preacher well-nigh every fault of delivery: but he does not leave you time to criticise. There are in him a tremendous vitality, a vigor, an exhaustlessness, an irresistible onset of confident and ardent ear-

nestness, that, whether you will or not, take you clean off your feet, and whirl you along — at their mercy, but pleased, and it is to be hoped benefited. It is not to be wondered at that when Samuel Morley was spending three months in the United States, he stayed over a second Sunday in Boston in order to hear Phillips Brooks preach again.

As to the audiences attracted in his native city and elsewhere by this great American Preacher, they are composed of persons by no means all Episcopalians, but drawn from almost every denomination — some, indeed, having no very distinct religious affiliation or belief of

any kind. It seems to have been the case with all the historic preachers that their power has sufficed to break the bonds of denomination — thus causing something like a return to the primitive simplicity — and of unbelief. There is something elemental about pulpit utterances of the first rank: they are the lava-stream melting and transfusing all it touches. One who has made a study of the matter is forced to confess that there is good reason for thinking that no inconsiderable number of those who go to hear Phillips Brooks go, less for the sake of any religious instruction or benefit to be received, or because they believe what the preacher says,

than for the simple purpose of enjoying his oratory—just as they would go to a public place of amusement (a concert, for instance), or to any literary entertainment. Neither probably is this exceptional in his case. It is deeply to be regretted; but looking at the subject inductively, as a matter simply of observation and experience, one is compelled to recognize the fact. This is unfortunately a sceptical and irreligious age, though Americans notoriously admire a man who preëminently “understands his business,” and performs it perfectly. Doubtless, Chrysostom never converted *all* his hearers.



TRINITY CHURCH, Interior.

If, however, any amongst the audience do not believe what the preacher says, it is simply impossible for any man, woman or child not to believe that the preacher believes it. At those wonderful noon-day services in Trinity Church, New York, last year, not one of those clear-headed breathlessly-attentive Wall-Street operators — judges of men trained in perhaps the most sceptical school on earth, and some of them the kings and princes of finance — but knew in his heart by intuition infallible that the speaker before them was a kingly man, who spoke kingly from his soul, and simply *could* not lie, palter, or pretend. They might

not in all cases or at all points be able to understand him, but they instinctively knew him to be true. And after all it is impossible to say what chords are genuinely touched, what natures awakened, by pulpit oratory, in spite of themselves, and sometimes even to their own hearts unconfessed. Only He who knows all knows this too. At any moment he who goes to listen from curiosity or to enjoy may find his conscience stung beyond control.

Of the English clergy and their sermons the verse runs —

“ They make the best and preach the worst.”

Charles Kingsley in the pulpit rested his arm upon or grasped

the cushion, meaning to avoid gesticulation ; but as he became aroused, his eye kindled, his whole frame vibrated, and with his right hand he made a curious gesture—which he seemed unconscious of and unable to restrain—the fingers moving with a hovering motion like a hawk about to swoop upon its prey. Cardinal Newman in the pulpit resembled a tall, unimpassioned, though piercingly earnest spectre from another world, with a silvery voice. Of Whitefield indeed Southey said his “elocution was perfect” ; he used to preach each sermon over and over again, till every inflection and gesture became perfect. Franklin said he could always tell on

hearing him, from the stage of its finish, how new the sermon was. Bossuet's delivery was dignified yet vehement. Jonathan Edwards stood motionless in the pulpit, one hand resting on it, and the other holding up to his eyes his little closely-written manuscript from which he read. The first sermon Whitefield preached after ordination to the diaconate drove fifteen people insane with fright. When Edwards preached the congregation at times rose to its feet unable to remain sitting, and people fainted. Great men are great *in spite* of their faults. Kingsley had an impediment in his speech, — which disappeared however as soon as he began

to speak *in the pulpit*. Whitefield had a cast in one of his eyes. Bossuet's voice was too shrill. All these men succeeded as preachers, as Robertson succeeded, as Brooks succeeds, because they were on fire with holiness to the bottom of their being, and back of their words lay their lives.



THE AUTHOR.





IV.

THE AUTHOR.

WITH perhaps the single exception of two ventures in verse and of his dispassionate paper on "The Episcopal Church" in the "Memorial History of Boston," Bishop Brooks's claims to be considered as an author rest upon his published Sermons, Lectures, and Addresses. Though of course these were written for the purpose of being *delivered*, since they have been made into printed books and given to the public, they may not improperly

be regarded as belonging to the province of authorship. Indeed, it might with some show of justice be urged that, when he writes *any* of his sermons or addresses, he is in that act a *writer*—it being only when he mounts the pulpit or the platform to pronounce them, that he becomes the *preacher*.

Amongst the strong and well-remembered impressions that come back to one, on turning over the leaves of the five volumes of Sermons, of the Yale College and of the Bohlen Lectures, and of the rest, perhaps the best-remembered and strongest is that of *rich profusion*. Simile, metaphor, insight; historic, scientific, theological and

literary allusion ; observation ; a deep knowledge of human nature — all the wealth of an opulent scholarship and of a teeming brain ; all the riches of an overflowing heart — are proffered without reserve. His learning is worn as a suit of mail-armor, never cramping or stiffening the natural play of his members. Pedantic he never is ; and whenever he employs what may perhaps be styled “library-facts,” they have become delightfully metamorphosed : he has put more of himself into the statement than there is of the facts. Indeed he often plays with them — which Goethe thought to be a sign of the master. Especially apt, effective and beautiful are his illustrations, though they are

never used for effect, but only as they should be to illustrate. Take one, where a hundred might be given :

“We are like southern plants, taken up to a northern climate and planted in a northern soil. They grow there, but they are always failing of their flowers. The poor exiled shrub dreams by a native longing of a splendid blossom which it has never seen, but it is dimly conscious that it ought somehow to produce. It feels the flower which it has not strength to make in the half-chilled but still genuine juices of its southern nature. That is the way in which the ideal life, the life of full completions, haunts us all.”

Such passages as this surely are what even an adversary terms, in the sermons of Luther, "*oasis, pleins de fraîcheur et de poésie, des pensées nobles et délicates, des mouvements pathétiques et affectueux.*"

His pages bristle with quotable expressions, phrases and sentences of the most striking aptness. As for example: "Faith is the king's knowledge of his own kingship."

"A scramble for adherents rather than a Christ-like love for souls."

"That first step which costs, we know, cannot be too costly, if it starts the enterprise aright."

The curious thing about a sermon is that, though it is stated logically, the material composing it

consists of feeling rather than of thought; and in this respect of *feeling logically handled* Phillips Brooks is unexcelled. He takes a subject and expands it perhaps first, as it were, lengthwise; then laterally; then downwards; and finally upwards to its loftiest reach; adding room after room to the growing edifice, and ever and anon shooting rays of apocalyptic light through it diagonally in every possible direction, till the whole theme stands developed and revealed, vibrating through all its length, and palpitating as it were in all its pores, with a glory of prismatic hues; so to speak, sounding and throbbing even with a music celestial. Sometimes a figure used at the outset of a discourse is

repeated or referred to again and again, each reappearance casting a new and wonderful light upon the theme, and marking a fresh step in its growth: as for example the plant and flower illustration in the sermon on "Withheld Completions," or Edom and Judah in the "Conqueror from Edom," which, hinted at and persistently and in greater and greater fullness recurred to throughout, emerge in their complete and overwhelming splendor only at the very end—just as Gounod treats Margaret's apotheosis-theme in "Faust." The beauty and force of these repetitions, occurring often when least expected, and each time strangely like the familiar though changed voice of an un-

earthly bell knelling out of the sermon's progress, amount at times to a revelation: they attack us in our most defenceless part, in the reason beneath reason, what may be called our "intuitional reason," irresistibly — our tears start, and we cry aloud! He who has read one of the best of Phillips Brooks's sermons has gazed upon a cartoon drawn — listened to an oratorio composed — by a Great Master of logical and of artistic expression, and of the human heart. Having as it were wafted his reader for half-an-hour through the heavens on rose-tinted clouds, to close sometimes he brings him gently to earth again — in vulgar parlance, "lets him down easy" — in a way that occasionally seems to partake somewhat of anti-climax;

although doubtless whenever used it serves the good purpose of leading the audience gradually into harmony with their every-day surroundings, while it at the same time leaves the splendors of the sermon's heights still ringing through their consciousness, to be afterwards recalled at leisure and in quiet (who shall say when or how often throughout the years to come, or indeed while life lasts?). Sometimes, on the very crest of the climax, he abruptly ends with a quick prayer to the All-Father, which of itself inextricably *clinches* in his hearer's heart the sermon's benign invasion.

Reference has been made, in a previous chapter, to his never writing *down* to the level of his readers. In

addresses composed for delivery before students, theological or other, niggardliness of learning would not perhaps be expected: but in the Sermons, addressed to miscellaneous audiences, the case is not far from being as bad. His feeling in the matter would seem to be, it is best to *give* — only *give*: if each one does not grasp it *all*, he will *some*: and the *attempt* to grasp — the attitude of reaching *up* — the effort to comprehend what one has not as yet thoroughly mastered — is of itself helpful (much preferable to the supine and indolent mental posture of one who is quite on the level of, or even a little above, what he reads). It is very noticeable in him that, whether writ-

ing or speaking, he never seems satisfied till the note struck is the *octave-note*—that view of the matter in hand which is the *highest* his thought and life have yielded him — and every subject he handles he seeks to lead up and attach to the loftiest he knows : he is never willing to rest till he has reached that theme. A loyal knight, ever alert to duty. Dr. Lyman Abbott has recently remarked of him that he always *preaches* : any of his after-dinner speeches he might use the next Sunday in his pulpit.

Not only is he complex, and instead of coming down to his readers invites them to come up to him : he is never afraid of giving full measure, heaped up and running over. Into every

address or chapter he puts material enough to make, if more thriftily spread out, four highly respectable ones. Every page scintillates with gems, not only gathered from widely-distant quarters of thought and of feeling, but packed into the smallest space. A discourse of his is like the "dark rich cloth bursting out into jewels from within," which serves him as an illustration in one of his sermons. He may be said to compose *royally*, as who has the storehouse of the Universe and of Eternity behind him, and nothing is further from his thoughts than an intellectual economy. Indeed, his resources and the activity of his brain are such, that it is probably *easier* for him

to lavish than to withhold and dilute.

It must be confessed, he knows how to feel his way to the deep places of the human heart led by an instinct infallible, and upon the corrupt and sore spots of the soul he lays the renovating and healing touch of a master. Carlyle, speaking of what used to be called "bil-lowy Chalmerian prose," says that "no preacher ever went so into one's heart" as Dr. Chalmers—but when did Carlyle ever state an opinion moderately? In one of the Yale Lectures, if the writer remembers the place correctly, Brooks points out to his hearers, young men preparing for the Christian

ministry (and, through them, to students of religion at large), how wondrous and confirming, to the young priest who goes from his school out into life, is the revelation of finding that, the longer he lives, and the deeper he sees into the surrounding mystery of things, the more are the teachings of the Master and of the wise ones, which he studied during his years of preparation and accepted largely on *trust*, corroborated by the world, the more are they discovered to be applicable in the way of alleviation to the world. This revelation has clearly been made to him,—and he is moreover to be credited with noticeable *originality* of insight and

of application. The "Lectures on Tolerance," for instance — mere suggestion, instead of the elaborate work on the subject that would have been so welcome, and he would have written so well, though they are — are of marked originality. Such production as this it is, that causes Dr. Abbott to indulge in the shrewd conjecture that Phillips Brooks thinks even more than he studies — adding that he entertains the suspicion that he prays. In no sermons recalled by the writer at this moment, are there in proportion to the whole a larger number that, once read, stamp themselves ineffaceably and forever upon the memory and heart, and are found to come up,

throughout life — like some of Robertson's, and one or two of the late Dr. George Putnam's — alike in our hours of revery and of crisis, as it were, "with healing on their wings." It seems hardly too much to say that, in the bitterest adversity or affliction, he who has ever read the sermon on the "Consolations of God" will have had done for him the utmost that human means afford.

His style is fitted for and at once suggests his delivery: the same abrupt start, quick getting under headway, and sustained and out-pouring rush. It is like a high-bred racer: there is so much vitality in it, its speed cannot be kept down. Indeed, when-

ever you take up an address of which you do not know though you may begin to suspect the author, as soon as beneath the growing statement you hear the *gathering rush* you may feel sure you are reading Phillips Brooks. The only prose of his the writer remembers that lacks this decisive trait is the "Memorial History" chapter already referred to—without the signature it would never be known as his. Whatever he writes is written to be spoken. He has the extemporaneous instinct. The main thought or feeling he wishes to express is jumped at at once, and struck out first, leaving the details to fall into place afterwards. As Porson said of Charles James Fox, "he

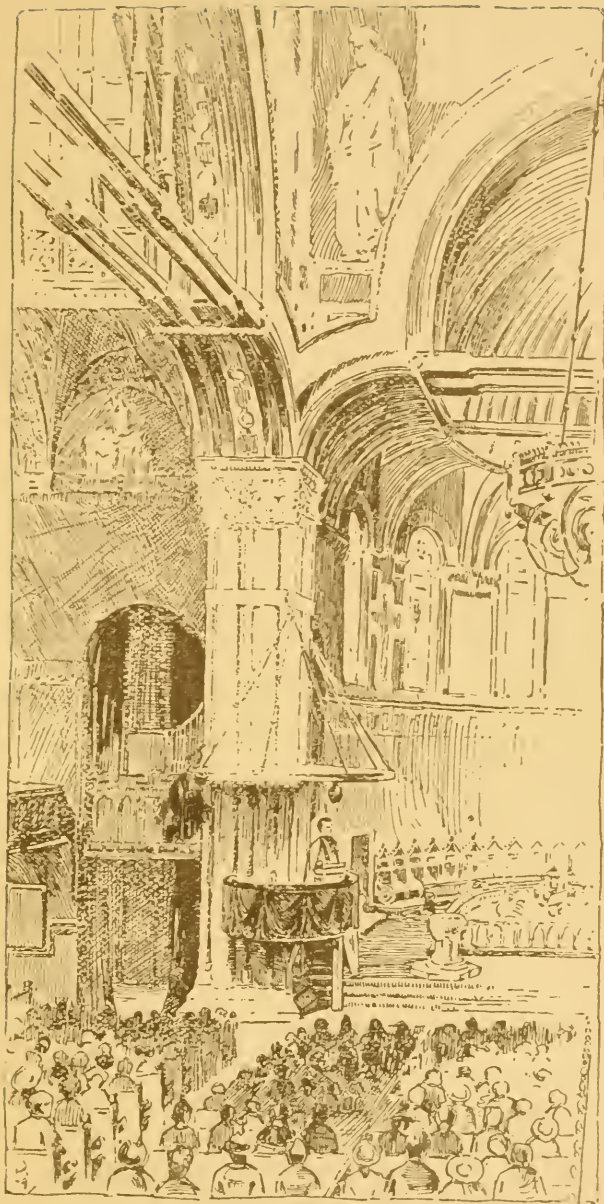
throws himself into the middle of his sentences, and leaves it to Almighty God to get him out again." He often *feels* several times for the exact word he wants, just as one does in speaking, though each time his word of tentation is almost a blow. Nor does he make any extensive experiments in the way of variety of manner. Lowell, to take a single instance, exhibited several quite distinct styles or veins, but Brooks is always Brooks — the same unchanged instantly-recognizable quality wherever met with. It is as if, having in the first place carefully studied a thing and learned to do it well, he had never cared to bother with excursions after universality of form, but just

goes on *doing the thing* over and over again.

His vocabulary is copious, pithy and choice. His sentences are short; each sentence and phrase contains its idea rolled into a pellet; each presents a totally new idea, generally drawn from a source widely-different from the last. They follow each other in almost breathless succession, till all the marvelous complexity of the subject he is presenting has been built and welded together and driven home.

WHAT HE STANDS FOR IN
THE EPISCOPAL
CHURCH.





A CORNER OF TRINITY.



V.

WHAT HE STANDS FOR TODAY.

IS it asked, what does Phillips Brooks stand for today in the "Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America"?

It may be answered : Phillips Brooks in *any* church stands first and foremost for the Fatherhood of God — the sonship of Christ and of man — the inspiration of the Spirit. If we, in the words of Arch-deacon Farrar, when speaking of him, "want to know something of

Christianity as Christ taught it, before it was corrupted," we may turn to him.

He believes, above all things, as regards both the Founder and the preachers of Christianity, in personality; in life rather than doctrine; in giving "not an argument but a man." He says: "If there has been one change which above all others has altered our modern Christianity from what the Christian religion was in apostolic times, I think beyond a doubt it must be this, the substitution of a belief in doctrines for loyalty to a person as the essence and the test of Christian life. . . . [The gospels] had no creed but Christ. Christ was their creed." "Not from simple brain

to simple brain, as the reasoning of Euclid comes to its students, but from total character to total character, comes the New Testament from God to men." Again: "The king must go with his counsellors at his side and his army at his back, or he makes no conquest. The intellect must be surrounded by the richness of the affections and backed by the power of the will, or it attains no perfect truth." "The method which includes all other methods must be in his [the preacher's] own manhood, in his character, in his being such a man, and so apprehending truth himself, that truth through him can come to other men." This comprehension or intuition of the supremacy of per-

sonality, for instance, it is that forces him, in his address upon "Biography," delivered at Phillips Exeter Academy, to confess that he would rather have written a great biography than any other great book, and that if he were going to be a painter he would by preference paint portraits. Of his own words it has been said that, like the Master's, they themselves "*are* spirit and *are* life."

To him, again, "religion presents itself . . . as an elemental life in which the soul of man comes into very direct and close communion with the soul of God." Everywhere his utterances, his character, and his life are full of this. In the sermon upon the "Knowledge of God," he

points out how Christ "knew God. He sent back adoration, trust, exuberant love in answer to the recognized care which was always pouring itself upon him." This is his ideal for man. He impresses it upon the students whom he seeks to help; he inculcates it in his congregations; he unconsciously illustrates it in his career.

Personality first, uttering itself in fullness and perfection of life. Above all is the Father. Be led by the Spirit to Christ, and "hid with Christ in God"—be joined to Him—let His life flow through you, and supply and impel and restrain and guide you: that is the only thing. It renders all else superfluous. After

that, indeed, all else follows of itself.

As God is our Father, so are all men our brothers. Nothing human is to be accounted foreign or alien to us. We are to love even infidels and pagans — Buddhists, Mohammedans, and the worshipers of Hellenic Zeus — as well as the Christians of sects other than ours. Around each one of us lie four concentric circles : the nearest encloses the particular church to which he belongs ; the next distant, the whole body of Christians ; the one after that, those who cherish any religious belief whatever ; the last, all mankind, even those with no religion at all. Of these four, the first — the one

enclosing the particular church to which a man belongs — “nestles to its centre with a warmth of sympathy which the others do not know :” and there, stated in his own words, lies Phillips Brooks’s Churchmanship.

He is, it may be said, in the first place, a son of God *at first hand*; never out of the presence or the thought of his Father; in direct and intimate relation with Him; receiving his inspiration and credentials immediately from His hand: and as he is, so would he have others be. There is no need for the priest to *over-emphasize* himself, his machinery, or his methods. He is not infallible; he is subject to doubt, to error, to growth, the same as any other man, and would

do better never to feel hesitation in saying so. To the men and women of his congregation, whom he has so often instructed from the pulpit, he often finds himself in need to come for instruction and help himself. He is here, not to obtrude *himself*, but only to do what he can towards helping his fellow men put and keep themselves in the same direct, original communication with God that he enjoys, and become his brothers indeed. He is simply a window through which the Light may be seen ; merely a door by which men may enter in. That it is his privilege to be : beyond that he may not hope nor ask.

Different sects are necessitated by the very constitution of human nature.

They have always existed, and always will exist. We talk of the "unity of faith," but it never was nor ever will be possible for Christianity to be in all respects a homogeneous unit. One in impulse, one in purity, one in "fullness and perfection of life," indeed, it may be — that is, one at *heart* — but in matters of the head, of opinion, of doctrine, of organization, it must always contain shades of variance. One who has reached the bottom (or top) of things, and is united with God, will recognize others who are in like manner united. He will feel that they may be so united, and yet differ with him in doctrine or denomination; he will respect and entertain tolerance for their opinions;

since these are something decided, and so better than mere indifference, he will, up to a certain point, even admire them for holding them, and rejoice that they do so. "The more men you honor the more cisterns you have to draw from." He may argue with them and seek to arouse their reason to accept his views: he will never exclude, or scorn, or seek to coerce them. Beyond a doubt, he may preach in their pulpits (as Phillips Brooks himself has done). Different men will always see different aspects in the same thing. When this is a very large and complex and constantly-unfolding thing—as in its applications is Christianity—no one body of observers grasps it all. No

single denomination can appropriate all the truth in Christianity. For those who do not regard it in all its details just as we do, we should *rejoice* that other denominations exist, to which they may resort. Only an aggregation of progressing denominations can hope to represent or master it all.

And yet in essentials and at bottom Christianity may be comprehended in "a few first large truths." "Every truth is necessary to man which is necessary to righteousness, and no truth is necessary to man which is not necessary to righteousness." "There are excrescences upon the faith which puzzle and bewilder men and make them think themselves un-

believers when their hearts are really faithful. Such excrescences must be cast away."

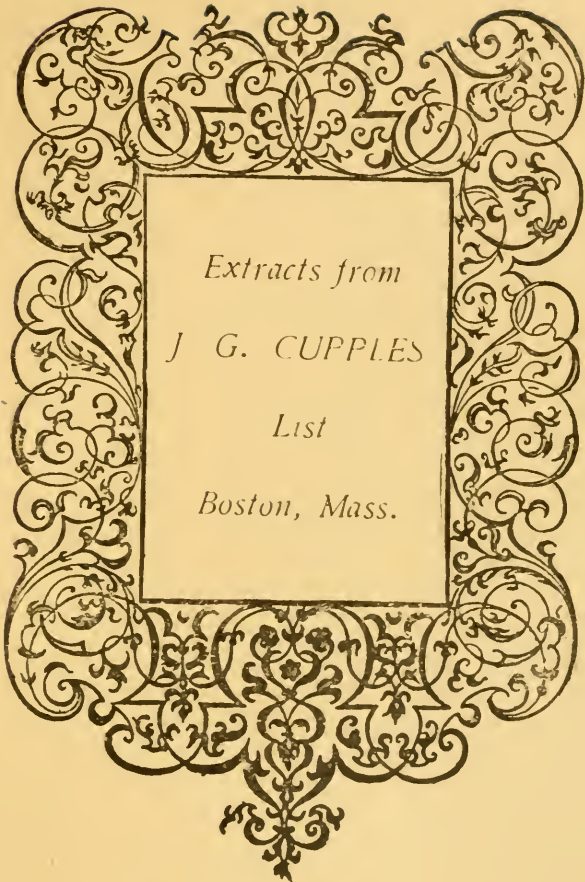
As to the future life, and punishment — "such as God is can punish such as men are for nothing except wickedness : honestly mistaken opinions are not wicked." "Error is not guilt." "Whatever comes to any man in the other life will come because it must come, because nothing else could come to such a man as he is." "Insincerity (whether it profess to hold what we think is false or what we think is true), cant, selfishness, deception of one's self or of other people, cruelty, prejudice,— these are the things with which the Church ought to be a great deal more angry

than she is. The anger which she is ready to expend upon a misbeliever ought to be poured out on these."

What Phillips Brooks stands for in the "Protestant Episcopal Church of America" is thus seen to be something at bottom very simple; very broad, catholic, lofty and grand; and, it must be confessed, it seems very like the Truth.

THE END.





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