

and enforced, the most prevalent vices denounced, and the most daring offenders chastised, while not even the censorious or the sensitive can find room for complaint. For these and similar reasons, we conceive the expository way of preaching to supply a grand deficiency in our common pulpit ministrations.

6. The expository method admits of being made generally interesting to Christian assemblies. We are aware that the vulgar opinion is just the reverse of this, and that there are those who refrain from this way of preaching, under the belief that it must necessarily prove dry and repulsive to the hearer. To this our reply is, that the interpretation of the Scriptures *ought* to be interesting to every member of a Christian community: if it is not so, in fact, the cause of this disrelish is an evil which the church should not willingly endure, and which can be remedied in no other way than by bringing the public back to the assiduous study of the Bible. It is not every sort of exposition, any more than every sort of sermon, which is interesting. He who hastily seizes upon a large portion of the text, in order to furnish himself with ample material for an undigested, desultory, and extemporaneous address, cannot expect to awaken and maintain attention. With all their blindness in certain matters, the public are very sagacious in discovering when the minister gives them that which costs him nothing. But let any man devote equal labour to his lectures as to his sermons, and unless he be the subject of some idiosyncrasy, the former will be equally interesting.

The observation is very common that expository preaching is exceedingly difficult. Yet the writers on homiletics, as if it were the easiest thing in the world, and taught by nature, almost without exception, dismiss the whole subject with a few passing remarks, and lay down no rules for the conduct of a regular exposition. We are persuaded that if equal pains were taken to prepare for one as for the other, and if the one were as often practised as the other, this complaint would have no place.

As a matter of fact, we have observed no lack of interest in such exercises, on the part of intelligent hearers. The truth is, the Bible is made for the common mind, and as it is the most