did not appear to stand on firm footing. And when his deistical friend the Marquis d'Argens in Potsdam wished to establish a deistical form of worship, the same monarch desired first to see the list of subscribers shown, for at least ten years. Never and nowhere, so far as history reaches and gives testimony, has pure rationalism, has religion having only human reason for its basis, shown a church-forming power, not even where, as in England and America, all room was left for it. A period of six years is the longest, that a large rationalistic church community, has hitherto been able to survive.[1] He who understands the holy word religion, who is conscious what man seeks in religion and through religion, communion with God, he has no other aim, and can have no other aim, than Christ, the Son of the living God. And you too, my friend, will attain to rest, only when you rest in him.

ARTICLE III.

THE AMERICAN PULPIT, — ITS ENDS, ITS MEANS, AND ITS MOTIVES.

By Rev. W. A. Stearns, Cambridge, Mass.

In no part of the world is the business of preaching so arduous, or so powerful in its effects, as in the United States. We deal with shrewd, intelligent minds, with men who are not to be imposed upon by ceremony, sophistry, or mere declamation, with thinkers, free thinkers in a good sense of the term, whose understandings however are capable of being enlightened, and whose hearts can be moved to noble impulses, purposes and exertions. It cannot therefore be amiss to devote a few pages to a consideration of the American pulpit,—its ends, its means, and its motives.

Its ends are the highest present and eternal welfare of man.

Its means are truth eloquently enforced, or Christian eloquence.

Its motives are to be found in the truth, in its author and in its objects.

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[1] The rationalistic religious society of Theophilanthropists in Paris subsisted from 1796—1802.

The first and last of these topics will be briefly discussed, but more time allowed to the consideration of the second..

We use the word American, because while most of our remarks will apply to the pulpit generally, they have reference emphatically, and some of them almost exclusively, to the pulpit in the United States. On such a subject, and for such readers, when one voluntarily selects excellence of speech for his theme, it is not necessarily false modesty which confesses some embarrassment. But let us bespeak indulgence, by the remark, that opinions may not be without their value nor suggestions wholly worthless, even when practical skill is unable to approximate the ideal which it conceives and attempts to shadow. We are also encouraged by the thought, that those whom we address have made sufficient attainments to appreciate the difficulty, the almost impossibility of speaking well, and because in the words of a distinguished French rhetorician, we know that mediocrity alone is severe while genius like virtue is indulgent. Je scais que la mediocrité seule est sévère, et que la génie est indulgent comme la vertu.[1]

The ends of the pulpit are the highest present and eternal welfare of man. It is intended primarily to announce and enforce the doctrines of grace. It is the echo of inspiration; the voice of God which having reached a human heart is borne from it, with all the power of a living experience, into the hearts of other men.

The New Testament presupposes, while it declares, man fallen. It depicts human nature as radically corrupt, guilty, disabled, condemned, momentarily exposed to destruction. It describes and presents a Saviour, " the brightness of the Father's glory," absolute virtue impersonated, divinity incarnate, humanity deified. It presents him as man's brother, man's Lord, and man's redeemer. It presents him an expiatory victim for sin, Christ crucified, dead and buried, Christ resurgent, Christ ascendant. It offers spiritual resurrection to ruined humanity, through simple faith in the appointed redeemer. This is then the primary mission of the pulpit, and of every preacher of the Christian word. Man is lost, entirely, eternally, hopelessly. Utter it from the tops of the mountains, from the deck of every ship, from the watch-towers of Christendom; on the tomb of the false prophet, in the sanctuaries of heathen abomination cry aloud; roll the heavy thunders of this truth round the globe! Man is saved! There is a Saviour. Salvation, O salvation! sound out the tidings; with tears

[1] Panegyric De Saint Louis par la Cardinal Maury.

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and tenderness, with demonstration and pungency, win the world to Christ.

But let us not suppose that the primary mission of the preacher is his only mission, or even the most arduous part of the work which he is appointed to perform. Society is to be regenerated; the immense multitudes of spiritually dead are to be resuscitated; and from the moment when the pulsations of spiritual life begin to be perceptible, they are to be cherished, strengthened, moulded into the image of Christ, sanctified, until the world presents its 800,000,000 of men, women and children, all disenthralled from the bondage of evil, all enlightened, all aspiring towards the perfection of their being; one vast fraternity of magnanimous, Christlike minds.

Hence for the accomplishment of this work, the author of our religion instituted churches which are to be the the nurseries of excellence and the centres of all good influences. Every church has, or should have, its divinely commissioned leader whose office it is to attempt the formation of character after the highest model. He is to persevere and press on with the noble work, till the immortal objects of his charge are gradually transfigured, till their countenances shine with the majesty of goodness and their spiritual raiment becomes white as the light. The preacher is in this respect a Phidias who is to conceive, and, from stones taken rough out of the quarry, to fashion forms of superhuman dignity and beauty. He is to smooth down the roughnesses of character, develop true proportions and bring forth all possible expressions of strength and loveliness. He is to improve now the rounding of a limb, and now the power and grace of a feature, to hammer here and hammer there, year after year, hammer, hammer, hammer, often unapproved and alone, till perchance with the enthusiasm of an ancient sculptor, *just at the last*, he can strike the rock and bid it speak.

But his labors do not *end here*. His mission extends to the community in which he resides, to his country, and to the world. He is to secure as far as possible the moral elevation of man. Hence whatever subjects influence human improvement and happiness—these subjects have bearings and relations which demand the attention of the pulpit. Physical condition, as its healthfulness is affected by obedience to, or violation of the laws of the physical constitution, intellectual symmetry and enlargement, moral grandeur and beauty, harmony of spirit with the great central spirit of the universe, equality, fraternity among men, benevolence and mutuality in social organizations, in one word the just

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development and perfection of all the human powers; elevating man from selfish individuality to a state of disinterested brotherhood with his kind, from the thraldom of low instincts and brutalizing passions, to a companionship with God—this is the province and end of the pulpit. It is to regenerate men, the masses, all men; to sanctify, to ennoble, to make them godlike.

Secondly. The means by which this work of difficulty may be accomplished, is truth eloquently enforced, or Christian eloquence. Neither the sword, nor governments, nor commercial intercourse, nor intrigue, nor the hope of wealth, nor even education, in the common sense of that term, can deliver man from the canker of evil which corrodes him, and elevate his spirit to the high rank for which it was originally created. Martial glory, dazzling virtues grounded in selfishness, splendid productions in literature and art often coëxist with imbruting sensuality among the refined, and with a deep and universal corruption of the masses. This remark is preëminently true of the cultivated nations of antiquity. A few tall trees present the appearance of a verdant forest in the distance; but when you approach, the undergrowth is a dark mass of mildew and rottenness, and the verdure which you admired is that of the deadly Upas, breathing destruction upon all who seek repose beneath its shades. The principles of Christianity, and nothing less, urged in their simplicity, and in their power, can rebuild down-fallen humanity, and make it, according to its original design, the temple of an indwelling God.

It is not however of the principles of Christianity, but of the manner of enforcing them that we would now speak.

We have said that the divinely-appointed means for the accomplishment of the proposed end is preaching, or Christian eloquence. But what is eloquence? How are we to define it? By what marks shall we recognize its presence? On what does its power depend?

A good definition was given by the prince of Roman orators, more than eighteen hundred years ago: Is enim est eloquens qui et humilia subtiliter, et magna graviter, et mediocria temperate potest dicere, (Orator 29.) He is the eloquent man who is able to speak upon small subjects wisely, upon great subjects sublimely, upon those of an intermediate character moderately; and, we may add, upon all subjects properly; and therefore, especially on those of great importance, earnestly. And what is this when applied to the orator, who is always supposed to have an object to gain, but *the art of persuasion* by *discourse.*

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According to this definition, eloquence is not always passion, nor always ratiocination; nor always, though often, a combination of both. It does not consist in words; for words, though its usual medium, when too numerous or not well chosen, encumber and sometimes destroy it. It is not poetry; for poetry is designed to please, to elevate the sentiments, to influence the imagination, but not often to control the will. It is not taste; for the refinements of literature sometimes distract attention and diminish emotion. Least of all is it vociferation; for one may have the lungs of a Stentor and bellow like a bull, and produce no more effect upon us than the unmeaning wind. Nor is it gesticulation; for bodily exercise, without a forth-going soul, profiteth little. Rudeness, vulgarity, bombast, rant, are always, among the cultivated, antagonists of it. Nor does pedantry, nor extravagance, nor a lavish display of genius, nor anything but wisdom and sincerity produce conviction. Logic, passion, poetry, taste, intonation, gesture, learning and genius are all the *tributaries* of eloquence, but they are not it. Eloquence is an outward manifestation of a sincere, earnest soul, of a soul deeply interested in some subject and intent upon some ends, of a soul full of truths and emotions, guided by the understanding to the accomplishment of its purposes. The *words* by which it is conveyed, Mr. Coleridge has called *living* words. "The wheels of the intellect," he says, "I admit them to be; but such as Ezekiel beheld in the visions of God as he sat among the captives by the river of Chebar. Whithersoever the spirit was to go, the wheels went, and thither was their spirit to go, for the spirit of the *living* creature was in the wheels."

The leading quality of eloquence, and that which expresses its combined elements in one word is *force*. We say *force*, rather than earnestness, for while we cannot be forceful without earnestness, we may, through lack of wisdom, be earnest without force.

Let us illustrate this quality by examples both secular and sacred, and then show some of the principles on which it depends.

Begin with Homer. The Iliad, though an epic poem, is every where alive with oratory. Its speeches are of course the creations of the poet, yet they are unquestionably conceived in the spirit of ancient eloquence, and become realities to the vivid imagination of the blind old bard. They are clear, rapid, concentrated, wisely directed, irresistible utterances. They burst out like lava from a volcanic mountain, pouring down in rivers of fire.

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They always have an end, a meaning, an object, and never forget that "a strait line is the shortest distance between two points."

Demosthenes was the very personification of force. In the oration for the crown, which Bossuet has somewhere pronounced the greatest work of the human mind, and of which Cicero—after describing his *ideal* of eloquence to be what no human genius ever did or can attain, after denying that Crassus or Cotta or Hortensius were in this high sense eloquent, or even that Demosthenes himself, qui unus eminet, inter omnes in omni genere dicendi, (Orator 29,) could satisfy his ears, ever desiring an infinite unreachable excellence—says, "that in this oration for Ctesiphon, where the orator speaks of his own deeds, councils and merits in respect to the republic, the *ideal* is filled, so that no higher eloquence can be required;" in this oration for the crown, we say, *force* is the predominating quality. In this master-piece of oratory, genius and judgment, logic and passion, vehemence and self-control, combine like so many chemical elements, to produce that intense livid heat, by which rock is melted and iron is consumed.

The circumstances were indeed unusual, and without the concurrence of which Demosthenes, though still perhaps without a superior, would never have been *the* Demosthenes to whom eloquence herself does obeisance as her prince. The orator, goaded by his deadly assailants—his honor, prosperity, life, everything he had toiled for and valued at stake—was excited to the highest degree. As though he had been raised up, as an illustration of eloquence for all ages, his great powers were stimulated and concentrated to the production of a speech, which for two thousand years has been considered a perfect model of its kind. It is force personified.

The same quality distinguished Cicero, though in an unequal degree. Cicero was the superior of Demosthenes in general learning, in philosophy, and as a great writer on numerous topics, and not inferior to him in statesmanship, nor in some departments of oratory. Yet the strength, the majesty, the *vis animi*, the concentrated energy of the former was rarely paralleled by the latter. Cicero was like the Amazon, great in all its windings, and on the whole the broadest, largest, mightiest river in the world. But Demosthenes was one whole Niagara whose awful thundering flood nothing could resist. At the same time Cicero excelled most if not all other orators in those very attributes which made Demosthenes super-eminent. At the close of his

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great orations, he gathers his arguments and thoughts into one mass which by ardor of emotion, he kindles into a devouring flame. It was this intenseness of feeling, especially in the peroration, to which he attributes principally his success. No secular orator ever surpassed him in pathetic conclusions. After him Hortensius pleading for a friend, feared to respond. Catiline, accused by him in the senate was struck dumb. On another occasion Curio, attempting to answer him, suddenly sat down, saying that his memory had been taken from him by poisón. Most of his cases in the forum were obtained, according to his own account of the matter, by a kind of rhetorical passion, preceded however by clear and conclusive argument.

He secured them, he says, not so much by his genius as by his feelings—by grief in his defences, by indignation in his accusations. Intense, though wisely directed, emotion, magna vis animi, a great power of passion inflamed him, so that sometimes he could scarcely contain himself. The outpourings of his full heart were overwhelming.

Let us select a few of the chiefs of oratory from another age and portion of the world. There are perhaps no brighter names in the department of secular eloquence than those which shone in the British senate during our own revolution. With other qualities of successful oratory, it was *force* which made them peculiarly eminent. Take first Mr. Fox,—a man of singular wisdom, integrity, and common sense, a business man, a matter-of-fact man, his whole soul went out after his clear positions and historical demonstrations and pressed them irresistibly into the hearer's heart. "It was," says Mr. Hazlitt, "to the confidence inspired by the earnestness and simplicity of his manner, that Fox was indebted for more than half the effect of his speeches. Some others, (as Lord Lansdown for instance,) might possess nearly as much information, as exact a knowledge of the situation and interests of the country, but they wanted that zeal, that animation, that enthusiasm, that deep sense of the importance of the subject, which removes all doubt or suspicion from the minds of the hearers, and commends its own warmth to every breast."

Some give the palm of British oratory to the Earl of Chatham. What was the secret of his power? It was not learning, it was not imagination, it was not cunning. It was authority, it was vehemence, it was an indomitable energy of purpose to carry his points. With a firm conviction of the proper ends to be obtained, he exercised a sort of magnetic power of determination to obtain them.

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Burke was in some respects a greater man than Chatham or Fox. Perhaps he had at his command more of the material of oratory, than any other English statesman. But there was a want of that directness, that concentration of thought, that *fire*, which is essential to the highest effect. He was too loquacious, sometimes too abstract and prosy. There is some justice, in the satire of Goldsmith, in the Retaliation:—

> "Here lies our good Edmund whose genius was such
> We scarcely can praise it, or blame it too much;
> Who too deep for his hearers still went on refining,
> And thought of convincing while they thought of dining."

Burke however was not only a statesman, a genius, a scholar, but an orator. He did not always like Chatham concentrate all his vast powers upon one point, and carry it with the irresistible impetus of his attack. But Burke was still among the sons of the mighty. He was a whole *cloud* of thunder, wind and rain, which passing off with a bow upon it left the earth fresh and beautiful, while Chatham was a single bolt falling straight from Heaven, burning, melting, shattering what it struck. It was simple force which gave the latter superiority.

In our own country, we need but mention Patrick Henry and Fisher Ames, as illustrations of the power which earnest feeling combined with wisdom gives to speech. Nor is the greatest living orator an exception. With a mind expansive as the globe, fertile as the country whose constitution he defends, solid and massive as the granite of his native state, his wise positions, his clear logic, his compact thought, his burning spirit, manifest in the eye, the cheek, the hand, the whole body, give to his eloquence a power before which enemies quail, and under the influence of which men sometimes hold their breath, or shout with involuntary applause. The leading characteristic of Webster's eloquence is force.

We pass from secular oratory to the pulpit. But here let it be premised that force is not vehemence alone. There is force in the still small voice as well as in the earthquake. That which produces conviction, that which deeply affects the feelings, that which moves to action partakes of this excellence. There is force in mathematical demonstrations. When Archimedes proved that the weight of a solid body in water is diminished in proportion to the weight of the water displaced, and by this means discovered the amount of alloy which an artist had fraudulently used in mak-

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ing a golden crown for king Hiero, he is said to have exclaimed εὕρηκα, εὕρηκα, such was the power of the conclusion upon him. And if any one could produce in few words a demonstration of the soul's immortality, which should have all the conclusiveness of mathematics, his speech though bare of rhetorical ornament, though destitute of metaphor or imagination, would have greater effect upon many minds, than all the sublimities of Milton condensed into one paragraph.

There is force too in *beauty*. Moonlight, the music of birds, the Æolian-harp, flowers, sometimes impassion the soul. Turn to the closing lines of the 6th Book of the Æneid, where Virgil in those beautiful elegaic hexameters, describes the young Marcellus, Augustus' nephew and adopted son, moving mournfully in the world of shades, with eyes cast down, and gloomy night around him. What more effective than where he exclaims, Heu, miserande puer! si qua fata aspera rumpas, Tu Marcellus eris. What exquisite tenderness, as father Anchises calls for handsfull of lilies, to strew around the unhappy shade, and pay it these sad offices of respect and affection, though in vain. All is gentle, intensely beautiful, tender, and yet how overwhelming. If Octavia fainted during the rehearsal, and Virgil received a present, amounting to seventy-eight pounds sterling a line, as history relates, it was a tribute to the genius of the poet no greater than the surpassing eloquence of this inimitable paragraph deserved.

There is indeed force in every variety of wise and earnest speech. In the great thoughts and rotund periods of Johnson, in the keen satires of Pope and Horace, in the ludicrous imaginations of Don Quixote, in the cutting irony of Junius, and the savage humor of Dean Swift.

We make these remarks not only to explain the nature of *force*, but to prepare the mind to see it exemplified in its *tender* as well as in its more majestic forms, in the Christian pulpit. Christian oratory demands its sons of consolation as well as its sons of thunder. Pathos and unction, so rarely seen or required in the senate, have their proper throne, in the sacred desk. The Christian religion is characterized less by vehemence than by tenderness. It appeals indeed to all the powers of the human mind. It affords opportunity for cool statement and reasoning, for awful sublimities, for gorgeous descriptions, for utterances of chilling horror; it does not forbid sometimes a chastened wit, but its favorite theme is "that dear blood for sinners spilt, which shows my sin in all its guilt." This is the key note of that holy psalm which, sweet as the harps

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of angels, more softly sad than the dirge of Mozart, is to be sounded out from Calvary's cross through all the world.

Among distinguished preachers, the French, and those chiefly in the age of Louis XIV. have paid most attention to oratory. Bossuet, Massilon and Bourdaloue were justly considered by their countrymen the most eloquent men of their times. They are the founders of what may be called the French school of oratory, a school of great excellences though great defects. They were all court preachers, Catholics, Frenchman, and not safe models for the protestant American pulpit. Fanciful interpretations of Scripture, declamation, artificialness, excessive flattery are their prominent faults. But they were all great preachers. They made powerful exhibitions of the majesty and awfulness of God, they searched and harrowed the guilty conscience, they struck the delicate cords of tenderness and produced showers of tears.

The arrangement of their thoughts is clear, explicit and full without redundance. There is beautiful completeness in their discourses, and often bursts of emotion in the climaxes which have rarely been imitated. They had the conrage and the sensitiveness,—and the French mind allowed it—to give themselves up to their emotions, and reproduce their own strong feelings in their audiences. The matter and structure of their sermons, the manner of delivery which was mostly memoriter, and the physical temperament of both speakers and hearers, was adapted to powerful effect. Voltaire frequently attended the preaching of Bossuet, and from that snarling infidel was extorted the testimony, that among all the elegant writers of the age, Bossuet was the only eloquent man. Most critics will be disposed to acknowledge that his immediate successors, Bourdaloue and Massilon, were scarcely his inferiors.

The protestant Saurin was less learned, less artificial, more careless and inelegant, but not less effective. His discourses are torrents of fire, and their immediate influence was often equal to their character. He may be profitably studied, but not safely imitated. His sermons show the power of intense emotion, in producing its desired effects.

The English sermonizers have rarely been distinguished for the highest eloquence. Barrow is a mine of rich thought, all gold and precious stones. Jeremy Taylor was a wilderness of sweets. Howe was serious and mighty in the Scriptures; Tillotson wise, elegant, but cold. Baxter was heart-searching, pungent, and sometimes pathetic. But all of them, except perhaps the last, were

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deficient in oneness and concentration, and still more in self-abandonment to the great emotions which the tender or awful themes of the New Testament are calculated to inspire. Old John Bunyan with his comparative ignorance, his colloquialisms, and violations of taste, in true oratorical fire, was more effective than either of them.

Whitefield belonged to two continents. He had a deep experimental perception of gospel truth, and an almost infinite sense of its importance. He saw, or thought he saw, the English and American churches, reposing on the pillows of a dead orthodoxy, or in the freezing slumbers of a delusive Arminianism. The doctrines of regeneration, and justification by faith alone had to a great extent faded out of view. He looked upon our congregations as in immediate, fearful danger. He looked upon the cross of Christ as the only refuge. He felt the great truths of our religion, as almost no other man ever did. To him they were an ever present reality. He thought himself raised up to enforce them; they were as a fire in his bones till he spoke. With great majesty and persuasiveness, he went forth as a divinely commissioned messenger to announce the wrath and mercy of God. At one moment he stands by the roaring flames of hell and cries, Flee, flee, flee O sinner, flee! at another by the cross, crying, Come, come, come poor sinner, come! He united the courage, the judgment, and the passions essential to a perfect popular orator, and by a complete self-abandonment to his work, and to its appropriate emotions, he became the most effective of preachers.

Our own great Edwards was eloquent, but in a different way. His mind was of crystal clearness, acute, logical, ratiocinative, ardent. His convictions of truth were as decided as Whitefield's. He was more solid, if possible more solemn, soul-searching, and soberly earnest. But he had not that power of appealing to all the passions of men in popular address. He wrote his sermons and confined himself to his notes. But he went on uncovering men's hearts, bringing out evil from the deepest recesses; exhibiting the hideousness of sin in the magnifying glass of truth; arresting the guilty and arraying them before the judgment seat of Christ; painting heaven above and hell burning beneath, and wretched sinners suspended by a hair over its horrors; till a whole assembly on one occasion rose and stood pale and trembling, ready to exclaim, where, O where shall guilty souls find refuge!

We have not time to proceed further in our illustrations of force, or the power of real, unaffected, heartfelt but wisely man-

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aged earnestness. We see that it is the soul of eloquence, and are now prepared to inquire more particularly on what it depends.

It depends first, and as a prerequisite, especially in this country, upon a well trained and well disciplined mind. Natural genius, without cultivation, will sometimes, under favorable circumstances, produce a powerful effect. We see it in stump orators, during the canvass of an exciting election. We have felt it in the public confessions of many a recovered drunkard, who from his own melancholy experience, narrates the woes of them who "tarry long at the wine." The outcry of real distress is always eloquent; so is the burst of unfeigned joy; so is the anthem of salvation shouted by the young convert. But we should remember, that it is not merely an occasional outpouring of emotions, on some one subject that the pulpit and especially the American pulpit demands. It is a perpetual flow of wise and earnest speech, *a whole life of oratory*, an amount of literary labor paralleled in no other profession. Critics express amazement at the mental fertility of Walter Scott, but every clergymen who composes his two full sermons a week, writes sufficient for five or six moderate sized octavos in the course of a year, and enough for a considerable library during his ministry. It is true that few men accomplish so much; for they find it impossible. They resort to exchanges, to extempore, or to premeditated but unwritten discourses, or to a repetition of some of their best sermons. But with these alleviations, the amount of labor requisite to prepare for the American pulpit, taken in connection with the pastoral and miscellaneous duties of the minister, is incredible to those who have not experienced it. Now a mind of moderate capacities, and imperfect cultivation, with sincere piety and apostolic zeal, can produce a few valuable not to say brilliant discourses. But after a few Sabbaths, certainly after a few months or years, when by frequent repetition, the fire of one's eloquent thoughts has perished, his performances become necessarily flat, sterile and unprofitable. The preacher to sustain himself must be constantly presenting truth in new relations, with new forms of speech, and with fresh emotions. Difficile est proprie communia dicere says a Roman critic, (Ars Poetica 128). But to speak well on common topics, on the same reiterated themes, is the employment of the minister's life. To do this he must have a mind disciplined to investigation, and furnished with materials of thought. Without it a man can no more make good sermons, week after week, and year after year, than he can make worlds.

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Even with it, he *may* fail, but without it, failure is unavoidable. Remember he is to speak to the same congregations, to intelligent, shrewd, thinking New Englanders, to the vigorous, masculine intellects of republican, opinionative Americans; he is to speak on subjects with which many of them have been familiar from their childhood, which they have heard not merely once or twice, but—in respect to those who sit under the same preacher, as is sometimes the case, half a century,—thousands of times. He who could uniformly speak well, under such circumstances, without cultivation must be more than man.

Nor can a mind *continue* well furnished without continued study. Our collegiate and theological courses are perhaps sufficient, by way of professional preparation. But in them we attain only the rudiments. Our early acquisitions are our capital which must be constantly increased to meet increasing wants. Whoever expends upon it, in neglect of all accumulation, will soon become an intellectual bankrupt. And here with all deference we would start an inquiry as to the cause of the prevailing mania in our congregations for young ministers? Why are so many old men turned out of their pulpits, to get their living by the road-side, or even not get it in their profession at all? Is it because they have less experience, less wisdom, less piety, less information than their younger brethren? Certainly, *no!* Is it because, as Sampson lost his strength with his hair, men lose their power of efficient speech, as their locks fall off, or begin to change their color? Why who is the genius of eloquence in Homer? It is not the Pylian *sage*, the patriarch of three generations—

> "Experienced Nestor, in persuasion skilled,
> Words sweet as honey from his lips distilled."

Who is the "old man eloquent" of the American congress? Who but a statesman of almost four score—a man who if he had been the pastor of a country church, ought according to the natural course of things to have been superanuated and laid aside twenty years ago. The stars both of the American and British senates are nearly all venerable for years. And no person has yet been thought worthy of the Presidency of the United States, the most responsible office in the world, till he had attained the experience of an aged man. Why then this general desire to exchange *old* men for young ones in the pulpit? Among other reasons may not this be *one?* Amidst the labors of the ministerial profession, in the constant interruptions to which it is exposed, in

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the severe draughts which are continually made upon the pastor's spirits, is not study too much neglected? Are not "the old acquaintances," if we may whisper such a question among ministers, too often brought forward? "The barrel" too often upturned?—the yellow, blotted manuscript too frequently exposed? Or are not the same generalities, though on fresh paper, too often repeated. We know the ready apology, and it has weight. In the multiplicity and pressure of duties, there is not time for study. But may we not as well reverse the position and say, *in the absolute necessity for study*, there is not time for so many miscellaneous avocations? Why should study so indispensable to success be placed last in the catalogue of our employments? Ought not this to be a fixed principle with every settled clergymen, that the most sacred purpose for which time is given, next to actual preaching and the cure of souls, is *study?* "Give thyself to reading," said Paul to Timothy. "Neglect not the gift that is in thee. Meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all." We do seriously advise every young minister, if he would give the pulpit its true power, if he even desires to retain his situation, to let *study* be the last duty which he neglects. In addition to some general knowledge of the current literature, by which he acquires a perception of present modes of thought, and the condition of the popular mind, let him discipline his powers occasionally at least, if not by mathematical demonstrations, by the close study of such works as Butler's Analogy and Edwards on the Will, by reading the magnificent prose and poetry of Milton, by attention to such delineations of character as are found in Othello and Macbeth. Let him also give some attention to the ancient classics, to those immortal works which always have been and always will be models of good composition. Let him be as deeply read as possible in theology and in theological and general history. Above all, let him meditate upon the sacred Scriptures, catch the spirit of the sweet psalmist of Israel, and rise to the sublimities of those grand old prophets whose anthems resound like the sea. The New Testament will be the source of his authority, the chief fountain of his eloquence. The masters of Christian oratory are Paul and John, and—bowing reverentially at the name,—Jesus. "Never man spake like this man."

Study is both general and particular. We have spoken of it *generally*, though only in reference to eloquence. But there is a particular study which each particular sermon requires. "There

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are," says Mr. Sheridan, "a few leading thoughts on every subject, and he that will chain his mind to the work may detect and bring them out." It is this chaining of the mind, in each successive preparation, which brings up the truth that is to be urged, rouses and inflames the spirit, and fits it for a powerful utterance.

With this general training and particular study, the orator is prepared for composition.

Force depends, secondly, upon a clear perception and exhibition of one's whole subject. The attainment of this clearness is often the most difficult part of the speaker's work. But previous training in the severer studies, with some attention to the best rhetorical canons, combined with practical experience, will constantly diminish the task which the uncultivated find it impossible to perform. A steady contemplation of the material to be arranged, with the end to be accomplished, will then prepare the mind, —like a general born to command, whose word brings every soldier to his place,—to collect the thoughts, and arrange them in their appropriate divisions and ranks.

Clear arrangement is among the essentials of good oratory. One secret of the unequalled power of a certain most eminent jurist, consists in the transparency, fulness and precision with which he states his case. "There is no better way," says Mr. Baxter (Reformed Pastor), "to make a good cause prevail, than to make it as plain and as thoroughly understood as we can." And says Fenelon, "the best way of proving the truth of religion, is to explain it *justly*," (Fenelon's Dialogues).

With clear statements the doctrines of a discourse are to be commended by illustration and sustained by arguments. Apt illustration illumines, vivifies, magnifies truth. The mind is pleased by it, and detained in contemplation of the sentiment advanced, till a corresponding emotion is enkindled. But our principal dependence in confirming truth must be upon sound and convincing *reasons*, drawn from the nature of things and the word of God. By these the understanding is satisfied, the intellect yields assent, cavilling scepticism, so natural to the human mind, is silenced, faith is strengthened, and that restraint which a wise man keeps upon his feelings till truth has been demonstrated, is removed.

In no country is the demand for argument more imperious than in this. We are a questioning, discussing, arguing people. This disposition is our birthright. It runs in the Saxon blood. It has been fostered by the Reformation, and by its acknowledged rights

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of private judgment. The old puritan was a living book of logic. His indomitable will could be swayed only by reasonings. He submitted to God, but acknowledged nothing to be of divine authority till it was demonstrated to be such from the unquestioned principles of things, or "cleared" to him out of the Scriptures. Argument also was both the parent and the child of the revolution; nor can the great idea of American republicanism—liberty regulated by just law—be sustained without it. With us, all are readers, all are law-makers, all are voters; independent judgment, independent accountability, is the great doctrine of protestantism and Americanism. Our people are educated to discussion. It is as natural to them as their breath; and whoever, in this country, announces God's messages unsustained by their appropriate reasonings, as far as any powerful influence over the intellectual classes, or over the mass of our strong-minded yeomanry is concerned, speaks to the wind.

In any attempt, then, to enforce divine truth, it is the preacher's business, first to convince the understanding. Error must be opposed, its walls must be assailed and shattered by the hard-headed battering rams of logic. Sound doctrine must be presented, shown up, proved. The reasoner must be reasoned down, the arguer must be out-argued, the questioner mightily convinced, and the caviller silenced.

But here force requires condensation and concentration. Two or three invincible arguments clearly, fully stated, without redundance of detail or of qualification, and expressed in the fewest possible words, will complete the work of conviction in the minds of a popular audience, better than long-continued processes, or innumerable feebler proofs. Whatever force there may be, over here and there a highly disciplined mind, in conclusions arrived at, after wearisome and tortuous wanderings through the labyrinths of a thoroughly metaphysical discourse, the mass of the people will neither be edified nor convinced. They must have argument, but it must be clear, invincible, and so brief, that the *media* of proof can be seen from beginning to end, and *recollected*. This is the preaching which captures the strong common-sense intellect of an American, and prepares the way for those effects which, based on solid and well remembered argument, rouses to action the powerful energies of his mind.

Next to argument comes *passion*. From the cooler region of the understanding we descend to the heart, and by metaphor, by imagination, by emotion, we kindle our foregoing logic into a flame.

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When the machinery and everything else is in readiness, the steam, which has been gradually rising and condensing, is made to press upon the wheels of discourse and set it in rapid motion. But *here* there is a point to be reached, there is an end to be obtained. The mastery of one's whole subject implies the clearest perception of this end, a full vision of the stopping place to be aimed at, with a knowledge of the moment in which it is reached.

Perhaps popular speakers (and the remark applies to all parts of a discourse) fail nowhere more frequently than here. They sometimes neither see the thing to be done, nor know when it is accomplished. They begin before they have studied the subject *through*. They talk and talk on; and when the first hour is out, they may just as well talk through the second. They have proved nothing, have come to no result, have made no progress. Like a bewildered guide, they go round and round through the woods, and at length leave their audience in the swamps, or come out where they entered. If such oratory is ever entertaining, it is never forceful or effective. We should never commence our journey till we know where we are going to. Let the exordium and peroration of a discourse stand over against each other like the two continents at Beering's Straits, with one or both of which always in sight; while you cross as soon as practicable the intermediate sea of discussion, and complete the voyage.

With this clear perception of the whole subject, force requires a deep sense of its importance, with corresponding self-forgetfulness and abandonment to its power. He who attempts eloquence for the sake of *being* eloquent, or securing a reputation for oratory, or gaining applause, may be sure of failure and of deserved contempt. Let no man speak till he has something to say. We must have a subject, and deeply feel our subject, and try to impress not ourselves but our subject upon our hearers. Even the stage-player must enter, for the time being, into the character he assumes. He must *be* frenzied Lear, maddened by the ingratitude of his daughters; or thoughtful Hamlet, shaken in spirit by his mother's crime and troubled by his father's ghost. We must sincerely feel what we say, and never think to excite emotions in others which we do not experience ourselves. "Si vis me flere," says Horace, "dolendum est primum ipsi tibi; tunc tua me infortunia laedent, Telephe vel Peleu: male si mandata loqueris aut dormitabo aut ridebo (Ars Poet. 102—105)—If you wish me to weep, you must weep first yourself; then will your misfortunes grieve me, O Telephus or Peleus; but if you speak badly things

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commanded or on commission, I shall either sleep or laugh." It is this speaking on commission, speaking for hire, or because one must, particularly for personal display, speaking on subjects in which the would-be orator feels no real interest, that produces so much fustian and inefficient declamation: Parturiunt montes, nascetur ridiculus mus.

We do not say that an ambitious man may never become eloquent. Ambition may stimulate to preparation, and sometimes lie at the foundation of great efforts. But we do say that consciousness of admiration, a desire to obtain applause rather than a verdict, even the idea of an audience present to witness an exhibition, paralyzes eloquence. Any self-consciousness in the act of utterance is always painful to the sincere. Hence that shrinking and distress of mind which the sensitive preacher experiences, when he knows that some person, whose opinion he values, has come to meeting just to hear him preach. He can preach *to* men, but he cannot preach *before* them. If the idea of a spectator being present, to hear in cold blood and to criticise, cannot be overcome, the preacher always falls below himself. It is a thousand times easier to address one's enemies, in direct opposition, than to *perform* before one's friends, who come simply to observe the performance. Self, for the time being, must be annihilated; and the circumstances, the occasion, the subject, fill the soul. Otherwise the attention of the speaker is divided, and his emotion quenched. His words descend upon an audience like shot without powder, with a great pattering, but with little execution.

In the Philippics, we can hardly suppose Demosthenes to have remembered that such a man *as* Demosthenes ever lived, much less that this same was the prince of all orators of the world. In reading those magnificent productions, the mind is filled with Athens, with Philip, with the coming flood of war, with the apathy and danger of its now effeminate victims. We draw the sword, we rouse all Greece, we rush out to meet the Macedonian and conquer or die.

In the splendid orations of his known rival, we are interested, charmed, enraptured. But we too rarely lose sight of the man. The speaker revels in the delights of his own eloquence. He seems often to be saying, as he lays his hand gracefully upon his heart, "here you see—quod nihil est aliud eloquentia ipsa—nothing less than eloquence herself."

Robert Hall may have been constitutionally ambitious. But by self-discipline and by the power with which his gigantic

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intellect grappled an important truth, Robert Hall became distinguished for the manifest absorption of self in the greatness of his subjects. And this was one secret of his power. It was not so much the dissenting minister of Cambridge that Brougham and Jeffries ran to hear, as it was truth itself, moving in measured cadences, with irresistible cogency of argument, authority and emotion, right onward to its results.

The importance of this self-forgetfulness is proportionable to the dignity of the subject. The themes of the pulpit are the most vast, the most awful ever addressed to man. Hence apparent self-consciousness in the preacher betrays insincerity, and is absolutely intolerable.

Too much, we are aware, is expected of the sacred orator. No preacher could be constantly equal to the immensity of his themes and live. The outward physical machinery would be consumed by the excessive internal heat. Nor can he ever be satisfied with his own perceptions or feelings. But still a singular degree of abandonment to the subject is required of him and must exist. He who will not or cannot attain it, let him follow the plough or measure tape behind the counter, but let him not mount the rostrum, and above all the sacred desk.

And why should not the preacher abandon himself to his subject? In whose presence does he speak? First, in the presence of the Almighty, whose minister he is. Second, in the presence of miserable men whom he is commissioned to accuse. Third, of Jesus Christ who suffered death for them all and whose mercy he is to announce and enforce! Consider the awful circumstances in which he speaks—heaven glittering from afar, hell rumbling beneath, sinners hesitating, the time for decision coming to an end! Can one think of self, of his reputation, of the applause his demonstrations, his figures, his balanced sentences, his fine intonations are to secure? Shall he sue for flattery, or canvass for votes, or shrink from the breath of censure? Remember he is the minister of God Almighty to the dying men whom he addresses.

In this connection we see the necessity of *faith*. We speak of it now not as an essential to salvation, but as a requisite to Christian eloquence. When religious truth fades out of view, when themes of eternity, as awful verities, cease to stir the soul, something insincere, artificial, unreal, is suggested to the hearer, and the speaker finds himself lifeless and inefficient. Unbelief relaxes the nerves of oratory, and makes one an empty declaimer,

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instead of a powerful preacher. It requires the electricity of faith to produce sons of thunder.

It was this firm faith in the scriptural revelations, this vivid *realization* of the spiritual and the unseen, although of course never disconnected from divine influence, that gave the simple hearted Brainerd such irresistible power over the sons of the wilderness. Paul always spoke of eternal things as one *who knew*, and prophets uttered their terrific maledictions, and foretold coming glories, with the conviction of a conscious certainty. Grasp the truth with the simple but gigantic faith of a patriarch; live in the atmosphere of the invisible when its night stars beam steadily upon the soul; converse with God like old John Bunyan, like the reformer Knox, like the puritan Shepard; penetrate eternity, by a living confidence in its revelations; looking up steadfastly into Heaven, like the martyr Stephen, *see Jesus*,—and there will be an earnestness, a *reality*, a power which, if attended also with appropriate evidences, few can resist.

With all these qualifications, *force* implies *judgment*. The true orator is known as well by what he does not say as by what he does say. He avoids vulgarities, extravagances, pomposities. He remembers the maxims, "ne quid nimis," and "there is nothing beautiful which is not true." He rejects the decayed flowers of rhetoric, and declines to encumber truth by excessive ornament. He eschews dead forms of words, cold conventionalities, and the cant of sect. Like the Moor of Venice he avoids "set phrase" and in the sincerity of passion, "a round unvarnished tale delivers." Of course his speech has a meaning. It has also a certain easy native beauty, naturalness and grandeur. It was intended for the heart, "it comes from the heart, and goes to the heart." In nothing does the true orator offend, in nothing disgust, in nothing neutralize the magic of his emotions, or provoke the censure of the refined.

Some good preachers in other respects err here. They lack judgment. This appears not only in the arrangement of their thoughts, not only in mistaking what is appropriate to different times, occasions, connections, and audiences, but in logical incongruities, and uncomeliness of rhetorical costume. You will be interested, charmed; then comes a remark, so out of place, so vulgar, so shocking to a delicate taste, that you are offended and disgusted. What should we think of the Venus de Medici deformed by a crooked limb, or with an ugly wen upon her beauti-

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ful neck? Or what would we say of the architect who should seriously reproduce the Parthenon with a country meeting-house steeple upon it? Could these objects, so beautiful in themselves, be seen, thus desecrated, without merriment or disgust? The same kind of fault prevails, in many a bold, off-hand orator who mistakes vulgarity for genius, and the shrinking of outraged sensibilities for the power of eloquence. Nothing is gained by bad taste in any direction, while the cultivated are offended. Audiences who listen to it and drink it in, are degraded by it, and if any good is done, it is at best but a billingsgate and tavern-slang piety which it produces. Delicacy, symmetry, beauty, are characteristics of the Christian religion. Our speech may be plain—no matter how plain,—unvarnished, unwrought, but it must be in accordance with the principles of taste, or it will lose its efficiency.

The force of speech depends also upon personal character. The ancients had a maxim, that no one could be eloquent but a good man. This is especially true of the pulpit. How can one recommend goodness, earnestly, powerfully, successfully, and for a series of years, unless he possesses it? How can he impress upon us the beauty of holiness, the bliss of harmony and communion with God, the infinite value of the crucifixion, the tenderness of Jesus, unless he has experienced it? Ignorance of what he utters will make his common places soulless, while the consciousness of a hollow heart paralyzes his spirit.

Besides, who does not know that on many subjects it is not so much what is said, as who says it? With what weight does a quotation from Milton or from Shakspeare, or a sentence from the farewell address of Washington, or an opinion from the great Edwards always fall! Yes, the simple opinion of some men is more powerful than the best logic and oratory of others. "Experience has convinced me," says Demosthenes, "that what is called the power of eloquence depends, for the most part, on the hearers." All men are influenced by authority, by weight of character, by the confidence they have in those who address them. Neither vehement declamation, nor cogent reasoning, nor solemn tones, nor tears, can have influence with a congregation, if we are known to be other than men of integrity, men of truth, men of honor, men who *are*, in some measure, what they preach. In order to successful pulpit eloquence, (we speak now only in reference to oratory,) the orator must at least *seem* good; and the only way to seem good, taking life together, is to be so.

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We have now gone through with all that we intended to say upon the first and second topics proposed for consideration. The ends of the pulpit have been described as having respect to the present and eternal welfare of man. Its means have been presented as truth eloquently enforced, or, in one word, Christian eloquence. The nature of eloquence has been illustrated by some of the great examples of ancient and modern times, taken from the bar, the senate, and the desk. Some of the conditions have been stated, on which the power of the pulpit depends, such as a well trained and well furnished mind, including continued study, both of a general and a particular character; a clear perception of one whole subject, with precise statements, conclusive demonstrations, and earnest conclusions; a deep feeling of the importance of what is delivered with self-forgetfulness in the utterance of truth and self-abandonment to its power; also faith, judgment and character.

It remains, in conclusion, and as a stimulus to effort, that we allude to some of the motives by which the American pulpit excites its orators to a fulfilment of their mission.

These are found in the truth, in its author, and in its objects.

In the truth. Every Christian minister is an apostle of the truth. His commission is the highest ever given. "Is there a nobler work of God in the souls of men," says Herder, "than the divine thoughts, impulses, aims, and energies which he sometimes imparts to one chosen man for the cultivation of a thousand?" (Herder's Spirit of Hebrew Poetry). "God himself is *truth*," says Milton, "in propagating which, as men display a greater integrity and zeal, they approach nearer to the similitude of God, and possess a greater portion of his *love*," (Milton's Second Defence, 926). And a wiser than Herder, a more sublime than Milton, exclaims: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion thy God reigneth," (Isa. 52: 7). As ministers of Christ, we are entrusted with that whose value the whole material *creation* does not equal. We are brought into partnership with God. As he spake stars and suns into existence by his word; so as co-workers together with him, we are to create, in the souls of men, new heavens and new earths, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Motives to exertion are found not only in the truth, but especially in its author. We all have heard of the ivory statue of Christ, lately exhibited in our principal cities. It is the work of a Geno-

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ese monk, who spent four years, day and night, in its execution. Having accidentally, or providentially, found an enormous block of ivory, which antiquarians of Italy have pronounced a relic of the antediluvian world, though practically ignorant of statuary, he felt himself impelled to attempt an image of the divine Christ. "Suddenly," he said, "the inspiration came *like a thought*. He saw Christ on the cross—*dead*." The crucified vision was always before him. In giving it form, he sometimes labored twenty and even thirty hours together, till, under the influence of fasting and intense excitement, "a miraculous glory seemed to encircle the head of the figure, as he worked upon it." In four years it was done; and what a work! We saw it in Boston some months ago; and what a sight! It can never be forgotten, but never can be described. There it was: our crucified Lord! His head bowed; every cord in the body tense, every muscle extended, every vein swollen. And what a *countenance!* In it, masculine grandeur combines with the softest beauty. You see "agony knit into the brows and frozen upon the lofty forehead." You see resignation, patience, dreadful endurance, *love*. Men look at it in silence, and unbidden tears flow down their cheeks.

It is not the statue but the original, not the ideal but the reality, who is designated the author of truth. We are preachers, not of the ivory, but of the Christ who *liveth*, and was dead. That great heart of tenderness *beats* in the centre of his kingdom, and that large eye of love is upon us. By generosity known only in heaven, he has become our Saviour. We are his friends, his disciples, his preachers. It is for HIM that we would seek to be eloquent! If a poor monk, intensely excited by the ideal, found sufficient motive in it to stimulate his incredible labors for years, till his ivory Christ was fashioned and presented to men, how should we labor earnestly, powerfully, justly to exhibit Christ, evidently set forth crucified before us, as the sinner's friend. If anything can rouse to effort, sustain toil, produce enthusiasm, it is to be a preacher of Christ.

We find our motives, also, in the objects of truth. Its objects are men, men of ruined greatness, great in ruins. The human soul! What thoughts, what capabilities, what feelings does it possess! Created in the likeness of God, never dying, always expanding, the bliss of goodness flows through it like a river, or remorse burns it like a fire! It is broken, it is sick, it suffers. We are sent to "minister to minds diseased; to pluck from memory its rooted sorrows." We are to go and proclaim man's misery, to rake up

his sins from their burial places in the bosom, to show unspiritual, unregenerate man to himself, as odious, guilty, lost. We are to present the Saviour, to depict his noble character, to paint his dreadful sufferings, to tell the story of his love. We are to hold up Christ, to recommend him, to draw sinners to him. We are to heal broken hearts, to rebuild the ruined temples of humanity, to lift up degraded man to companionship with Jesus, to a rest in the bosom of God. We are to transform society, till it becomes a second Eden, whose trees are all trees of life, and around whose branches no serpent coils.

Men have been eloquent in the senate and on the field of battle; there are also Homers and Miltons and Shakspeares in the world; but there is an inspiration which neither patriotism nor blood can furnish, which Urania and Melpomene never felt; it is the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. This is the nerve, the energy, the soul of the true Christian orator. Its influence will often come upon him, and while he utters the Spirit's truth, as revealed in the holy word, he will preach with the Spirit's demonstration and the Spirit's power; for it is not he that speaks, but his *Father* that speaketh in him. Let him not be discouraged, then, by the greatness of his work. The germ of eloquence is in him. Meditation, study, prayer, will develop it. Great emotions, excited by great subjects, will give it vent. Wisdom will make it perfect. He who devotes some attention to Christian oratory every day, and has the soul of a true man within him, can scarcely fail to become eloquent at length.

ARTICLE IV.

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.

By Daniel R. Goodwin, Professor of Languages, Bowdoin College, Brunswick, Me.

Our readers will not be surprised at meeting the title of this Article in a Theological Review; for they must have observed that almost all, whether clergymen or laymen, who have hitherto discussed the subject proposed, have given it more or less of a theological aspect. The principles involved in the range which the discussion has taken, are *fundamental* in Christian as well as political ethics. We shall, therefore, offer no apology for introducing the subject here.

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