

*Reality of Faith* (Charles Scribner's Sons), are in a line with his "Old Faiths in a New Light," though, like that work, they have far less to do with a revolutionary theology than with a recreative spirit in Christianity itself, which it is not easy to define in a systematic form. He addresses the people in clear and firm propositions, unmistakable in themselves, and which are not doubtful in their application. But he is the least dogmatizing of theologians, and as a preacher steers wide of the dogmatizing method. Natural order and a simple progress on a line of moral sequence and ideal development mark his sermons. They are pointed, serious, suggestive, enriched with ideas, embellished with literary illustration and imaginative form of expression; but they are neither fashioned on any known principles of homiletics, nor contrived to make the ordinary homiletic impression on the congregation. Those in this volume seem to be selected for their harmony with each other and as bearing upon a definite view of the ministry of the pulpit to modern unbelief. They are no more apologetic in tone than they are dogmatizing in method; but they are full of replies, suggestions and words of good counsel to hearers in the transitional stage of faith, or wrestling with the withering perplexities of the times. If there is anything in them which disturbs the impression of full serenity, it is the eagerness of the preacher to draw his hearers onto the solid foundations which he discerns so clearly, and which he believes have been rendered more accessible and more secure by the later scholarship and thinking of the Church. As characteristic sermons we name those on "The Ultimates of Knowledge and the Beginnings of Faith," "The Difficulty of not Believing," "God's Forgetfulness of Sin," "The Inspiration of Jesus," and "Life a Prophecy." Dr. Smyth's method of presenting the severer and more legal side of Christianity is seen in the closing sermon of the volume, on "The Last Judgment, the Christian Judgment," and "Looking Back Upon our Earthly Life." We are glad to find in this volume a sermon on "The Missionary Motive" which was more or less discussed when preached, and which shows how the preacher would present the motives to mission work. We print the following extract:

"I must here crowd large considerations into a small space. Think of the distance to which the hand of Christian love may now reach. St. Paul with his letters and journeyings often could reach at furthest only a few hundred miles around him; but now Christian benevolence holds the whole world in its hand. The Christian merchant can go to his counting-room and send forth a check that may wing a benevolent thought of his heart around the world. It may light a college in Turkey, from which men have been sent forth with a Christian education to positions of responsibility and power; it may hover over a school for girls in the East, where woman is waiting for the deliverance of the Gospel of the Son of Mary; it may enter as a ray of light the dark continent; it may help swell the stream of Christian influence for the regeneration of India; it may travel on its mission of mercy along the crowded ways of the Celestial Empire; it may meet with Christ's hope for the future the awakening mind of Japan; it may fly across the ocean and reach the shores of the isles of the sea; it may follow the lines of new railways—a messenger of peace—through the stormy heart of Mexico; it may visit prisons and hospitals, carry bread to the starving and succor to the suffering, and return from its world-wide flight to his own door, a prayer and a blessing for him and for all Christians who, gladly constrained by the love of Christ, have sent forth under the whole heavens the angels of their charity to bring laws and liberty, to leave righteousness, joy, and peace in the Holy Ghost among all peoples and nations for whom Christ died and rose again."

....It is difficult to define Dr. Newman Smyth's power as a preacher. Power he unmistakably has, various, inspiring and impressive, and such both in quantity and quality that his recently published volume of sermons may fairly raise a doubt whether his place is not that of a preacher rather than of a theologian. The sermons he has recently printed under the title of *The*