

more limited than the tone of the book would indicate. We suspect that even in England the case is not quite so bad as it is made out. It is, of course, possible that Professor Mahaffy has been led to his view of the pulpit's decline by a wide and close examination of all the facts, but this is not the impression made by his treatise. It has rather the air of a brilliant essay, written in the library, and based on sharp but casual observation and on personal taste. It is vivacious and suggestive; it lacks breadth, caution, far-sightedness, historical judgment. It is, from the first, not a sustained, well-balanced argument, but a more or less well-connected series of assertions, some of which are undeniably true, while others rest, to say the least, on very grave misapprehension, all the graver because it sometimes *almost* grasps the fact.

Mr. Mahaffy makes his fundamental mistake in attempting to consider the preacher as distinct from the pastor. Neither practically nor logically can this have any other effect than to distort the reality. The modern preacher gains a legitimate, and often his greatest, power from the very intimacy of his connection with the affairs of human life, and the true conception of his work as a preacher must include that vast stock of influence which he carries with him into the pulpit out of his living contact with the men to whom he speaks, and in whose natural, human relations he has a share. There is a singular inconsistency in the emphasis with which Mr. Mahaffy reminds us that forms of apostolic evangelizing are out of date, when compared with his own recommendation of itinerant preachers—an institution which the commonsense of the church, based on long experience, recognizes as at best only a makeshift. There is something grotesque, and suggestive of an unfortunate acquaintance with parish gossips, in the serious decrying of marriage and family-life as a hindrance to effective pulpit-work. There is an utter failure to see how surely the standard of the ministry would fall, if the proposed reading of printed sermons should become a general custom. In all these notions, however, there is a certain remoteness—a polished mediævalism—which will prevent their doing much harm. The paragraphs on the non-essential character of piety, on the other hand, with their confusion of terms and misunderstanding of the point at issue, may be very hurtful. The essay will find an echo from many who are in intellectual sympathy with its author, and at the same time are not in any profound sense spiritually susceptible—whose fault that is, we need not discuss; but that its final acceptance will be limited may be believed when we recollect that Mr. Mahaffy speaks to a generation that has not forgotten Robertson, Maurice, or Kingsley, and in a century that has listened to Guthrie, Chalmers and Robert Hall.

Dr. Phelps's book (2) is all the more effective, by comparison, from the fact that it assumes as thoroughly established the very things which Mr. Mahaffy assails. That preachers must and may be men of power—each in his way, but still men of genuine power—is the proposition which underlies all these lectures. How this power may be largely acquired from the study of men and books is what he endeavors to show. And here there are a ripeness of counsel, a catholicity of taste, a strong, thoroughly disciplined, guiding thought, which make the volume not only helpful to the theological student, but of tonic and corrective value quite outside of professional limits. As was remarked in these columns with regard to 'The Theory of Preaching' by the same author, its rules and suggestions, while comprehensive, and perhaps at first sight too exacting, are yet wisely elastic, and their intelligent application must contribute greatly to manly culture, and so to effective force in work among men.

The Art of Preaching.*

IN DR. PHELPS and Prof. Mahaffy we have two men writing in different hemispheres with reference to the most important profession in the world, yet with ideas wider apart than seas can divide as to the true aim of that profession, its most useful methods, and its probable future. Professor Mahaffy's book (1), we may say at once, deserves to be read with attention and candor. It is to be feared that in the quarters where it might do the most good it is likely to be treated with the least patience. The regions where it is applicable, however, are, in this country at least, much

* (1) The Decay of Modern Preaching. By J. P. Mahaffy. New York: Macmillan & Co. (2) Men and Books, or Studies in Homiletics. By Austin Phelps, D.D. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.