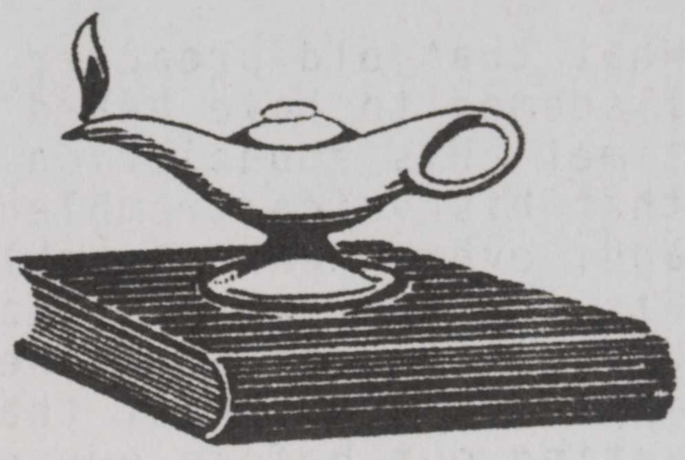
It was as a man, and to men---that preacher preached! But, truth glowed in his brain and heart, and came hissing-hot with pure originality.



I know from experience in hearing a thousand sermons [many of them dull]; I know there is no spiritual eloquence without a man behind it. No preacher ever did, or ever will, be truly eloquent to his hearers, without being a constant reader of the Holy Bible...and, an admirer of the purity and sublimity in its powerful descriptive language. The man's words were holy, because of the deeds they covered. ---He was in the Word! On hearing him preach the words of Emerson came to mind:

"Speech is power: speech is to persuade, to convert, to compel."

In College and experience elocution taught me this: In all pulpit eloquence, the one great difficulty lies here...We must give the sacred subject all the dignity it deserves---Without attracting any importance unto ourselves. How many preachers fail here! But, the old preacher was a master in this art.

He was led into the pulpit by a little child.

There was a peculiar dignity about his presence as he began. A more than human solemnity in his pulpit air and manner. At once he took sovereign possession of his audience as he announced his sermon title...

I WAS THERE WHEN JESUS DIED!

Six simple words, how electrifying they were. I wished I had thought of them first.

That God-given commanding voice came across that pulpit like a silver bell... melodious, it filled the room and made my blood run cold and my whole frame shiver. His theme was an old one. The Bible story of the passion of Christ. I have heard that subject handled a thousand times; I thought it exhausted long ago. Little did I suppose that day, in the backwoods of rural America, I was to hear a man whose living words would give that familiar topic a new and sublime pathos than I had ever before witnessed.

This was indeed a new experience for me in worship! I soon forgot him! That blind preacher drew a word picture for us---his unseen listeners; of the sufferings of our Saviour. His trial before Pilate. His ascent up Calvary's Hill and His crucifixion and death. Just like the Galatian hearers of the preaching of Paul..."*Before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you.*" That day...WE SAW HIM KILLED!!!

I tell you it was wonderful!

From childhood I knew the whole story: But, never until then, had I heard the circumstances so selected, so arranged, so illustrated, so colored with power! Everyone in Divine presence...Came to Calvary, and worshipped!