



PUSHING THROUGH THE EVERGLADES.—DRAWN BY HARRY PENN FROM SKETCHES BY WOLF HARLANDER.—[SEE PAGE 152.]

HENRY WARD BEECHER.

As we go to press with this number of the WEEKLY, HENRY WARD BEECHER lies between death and life. There is a faint possibility that his physical life may be briefly prolonged, but his mental activity is ended. That, in the opinion of his physicians, must be the result of the apoplexy and paralysis from which he is now suffering. This famous son of LYMAN BEECHER, himself a notable pulpit orator, and of REXANA FORTY, was born at Litchfield, Connecticut, June 28, 1813. He was a bashful lad, with a poor memory and imperfect speech. Then his writing was bad, his spelling worse, and his Latin exercises suspiciously good. It was at Amherst College, where he was graduated in 1834, that his primacy among his associates was first developed. He was the best talker of his class, and he lectured frequently upon phrenology, intemperance, and slavery. Thus his earliest efforts were concerned with topics which were later to set the world aflame. From Amherst he went to Lane Theological Seminary at a time when a controversy was raging between his father, representing the New School, and Dr. WILSON, representing Calvinism. Thus his

theology, like his politics, was born and formed in heated times. He took the first opportunity which offered, and began preaching at Lawrenceburg, Indiana, near Cincinnati. His hearers were of the humblest sort, and his stay was brief. Chance threw among his audience the President of the Bank of Indiana, who took the now rising preacher to Indianapolis, where he staid eight years. Still his surroundings were of primitive simplicity. He made his own garden, did his own chores, painted his house with his own hands, and preached good sermons. His "Lectures to Young Men" inspired a committee of the congregation which was to become Plymouth Church with a desire to know more of him. On May 14, 1847, he preached for them. Since then the church has had no other pastor, and every Sunday when he was in the pulpit the building has been crowded to the doors. This is only a part, a small part, of the life work of the marvellous intellect now fading out. His labors on the *Independence* and *Christian Union* would alone mark him as an unusual man, while his volumes are basic enough for fame. Perhaps the best known of all was his novel *Nervous*, and the most pretentious was his unfinished *Life of Christ*, while his solidest work was his *Tale*

two on Preaching. In 1849, 1863, and 1886 he made trips abroad, and his lectures in England in war times are memorable even in his career. Scarcely ever did orator face more hostile audiences upon more trying topics. That he was always equal to the occasion is faint tribute to the triumph of his eloquence. When he returned he was, "next to ABRAHAM LINCOLN, the most honored man in the United States." Only one shadow, but a deep one, falls across the brightness of his career. In June, 1874, THOMAS TILGH, who had been employed by H. C. BOWEN to report Mr. BEECHER'S sermons, publicly said he held him responsible for his domestic unhappiness. A church council declared that Mr. BEECHER was blameless; but the case was taken before a jury, which deliberated for a week. They disagreed, but nine were for the defendant. After this another church council sustained the fact, and Mr. BEECHER'S usefulness survived. In 1887 he married, after an engagement of seven years, ESTHER WARR BULLARD, who still lives. He has also a daughter, EM. SCOTT, and three sons, WILLIAM, HENRY, and BERT BEECHER. The fine portrait of Mr. BEECHER which we reproduce on our front page is the result of sittings given Mr. DILLMAN last year.