

memorize and recite what they have previously composed; or, 4th. They speak what they compose as they go along. This last only is strictly extempore speaking, although the second and third are frequently so designated. The objection to written sermons is that they are generally badly read: the objection to extempore sermons is that the matter is generally poor. Consequently bad readers with bad memories are not likely to make good preachers, however skilled they may be in composition.

Grammar, in its most restricted sense (as when we speak of good or bad grammar), lies at the foundation of elementary composition. In a wider sense, as when we take up analysis, parsing and syntax, by examining and taking to pieces the work of others, it assists us to build up for ourselves. In its most extended meaning, grammar includes all we are now considering.

There are three points at which all composition should aim. 1st. Conciseness. 2nd. Comprehensiveness. 3rd. Purity.

1st. Conciseness. Some persons, when they sit down to write for a newspaper, seem to imagine that there will be but little else in the paper worth reading, and consequently want elbow room. Of the articles intended for publication many never appear, and of those that are inserted not a few are scarcely read at all, simply because they are too long. Nor is this whose nuisance exemplified in newspapers alone. What with repetitions and unnecessary statements, much of our correspondence is extended to needless length,—a loss of time to both writer and reader. "Write to Jones," said a merchant, in rather ill-humour, to his clerk one day. "What shall I write him?" said the clerk. "Something or nothing, and that pretty quick!" was the answer.

In a few days a money letter was received from Jones, and the merchant wished to know what the clerk had written to bring the cash so soon. "I wrote what you told me," said the clerk, turning up the letter-book. "Here it is: 'Something or nothing, and that pretty quick!'"

Post-cards and telegrams have done much to save the use of unnecessary words, an improvement which might with advantage be exhibited elsewhere, though it might be charged with being the result of making "a virtue of necessity."

2nd. Comprehensiveness. By this I mean that nothing essential should be omitted. "One word, your majesty," said a soldier to Napoleon. "I'll have you shot if you say two," said the emperor. "Sign," said the man, as he presented him with a document ready for signature. The two great errors where lack of comprehensiveness occurs are: 1st. Forgetting to make some important statement, as when one gives notice of a meeting but omits to say where it will take place; and 2nd. Taking for granted that the reader or hearer knows what he really does not know, as when a meeting is announced to take place at the usual hour, when possibly some individual in the audience is not aware what the usual hour is. This class of errors requires constant watchfulness.

3rd. Purity. By this I mean that the ideas should be truthful, and the language well-chosen. Unfortunately, on this side the Atlantic, party feeling runs so high, and newspaper writers are so addicted to the use of extravagant language that the narration of bare facts seems to be lost sight of in the desire to further an object, or to injure an opponent. Not in politics alone is this exemplified. Are the merits of itinerant lecturers, minstrels, actors, societies or exhibitions under consideration, the ques-