

too strong a strain on their faith to regard this as a blessing. Indeed it seems to some almost a profanation of preaching and bordering on the burlesque. To some students this method adds little or nothing to the ordinary sermon task. But the great majority never prepare their sermons in this way, and some would find it utterly *impossible* to do so. Some write and read. Most write and deliver in substance from memory or by the aid of notes. But the Guthries are as rare now as of old who memorise sermons. The question arises:—What useful purpose can such a requirement serve? Surely it will not be supposed that a student will become so enamoured of the new method, tried but once amid the most discouraging circumstances, as to adhere to it in after life. Even though he should, is it quite certain that the method is the best? We seriously question it. We doubt even the temporary advantage of such an exercise. Is there any special merit in being able to commit a sermon to memory and recite it in the uninspiring atmosphere of a sparsely populated class-room?

We conceive the main purpose of such an exercise as preparing sermons in college is to test a student with regard to his ability in thinking out and throwing his thoughts into logical and homiletical shape. The delivery of a sermon is no small matter, and we do not dream of disparaging it. But in pursuing the new or even the old method of delivery, very little can be learned by the Professor as to the real manner in which the reader or reciter delivers his sermon, when in the presence of a congregation sympathetic and ready to hear. The chances of judging are much lessened by the new method. The ordeal is so utterly unusual and embarrassing to nearly all, that the most critical Professor cannot form any adequate conception of the manner in which the preacher would deport himself in more inspiring environment.

A suggestion has been made that instead of preaching to the class the student be required to deliver his sermon to one of the city congregations in the presence of one or more of the Professors. In Edinburgh this practice obtains and it seems to us to meet the case much better than the method we are criticizing.

If we have failed to grasp the real cause for this unpopular change we hope some one will turn on the light.