

to write any part of a sermon that I propose to deliver extemporaneously, because I find that the two processes interfere with each other; endeavoring to recollect what is written is one mental operation; to present thought previously thought out or prepared is a different thing. I confine myself altogether to the latter. I take it for granted, if I thoroughly understand a subject, that the best words to present it will come at the moment of delivery.

In the beginning of my ministry I wrote every word of a sermon and committed it to memory. After awhile I wrote and did not commit to memory—simply impressed the heads and subdivisions, memorized something, but left the rest for extemporaneous consideration. And so I gradually passed over into the other method.

I was brought up in a part of the Church in which it was altogether out of the question for a minister to appear in the pulpit with a manuscript; I was brought up in the German Church. In Germany it is the rarest thing in the world for any one to preach from manuscript. Some of the ablest and most eloquent ministers in Germany have written and committed their sermons *verbatim* for years, but never appear with a manuscript in the pulpit. So that, in the very beginning of my ministry, it was, to me, almost a *sine qua non* to prepare myself to preach without a manuscript before me.

I am strongly in favor of extemporaneous preaching. Different persons must try different methods, but the object should be to arrive at the extemporaneous method. Of course the written method has its advantages. A man can prepare his language more carefully; he can be more precise; the manuscript that he has prepared is of service afterward; he is always ready, and he is not subject to those various disturbing circumstances and influences that very often affect the extemporaneous preacher.

REV. DR. WEDEKIND.

I have never been absolutely wedded to either written sermons or extem-

poraneous preaching. My practice has generally been the use of a manuscript in the morning, and of a tolerably full skeleton in the evening. Of late years I rarely take a manuscript into the pulpit.

My conviction is decidedly in favor of thorough preparation, and then of free, or, as it is commonly called, extemporaneous delivery. Nine-tenths of the laity, I am pretty sure, are generally in favor of this method.

The practice of writing a sermon and then committing it to memory is simply monstrous.

SHUNNING EVIL MEN.

*Then said Saul * * * I will no more do thee harm.*—1 Sam. xxvi: 21. *And David said * * * I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul.*—1 Sam. xxvii: 1.

The two passages show us Saul profuse in professions of penitence, and David more than ever afraid of this royal penitent. David had several times spared Saul's life, when he had the power to slay him. After each act of mercy Saul repents, and David takes new precautions.

Saul never sincerely repented. After the disobedience at Shur (see chap. xv.) Saul repented in fear of a penalty. After each escape, by David's forbearance, he repented that he had been in great peril. But his wicked will remained unchanged. He was deliberately and persistently wicked.

There are other such evil men in the world. We are apt to forget it; we want to believe that all men are as good, or as bad, as ourselves; and so good people are always surprised at a deceit or a crime. David's lesson—that he had to do with a man who could not be trusted—we also may have to learn. There is no value in a sentimental good opinion of all men: it is as unwise to deny that the bad man exists, as to doubt that there are good men.

A wise caution in shunning the bad man is a duty. Perhaps, like David, we may have our chances of personal victory over him: but David could not touch the Lord's anointed: we cannot do evil to evil men, but we can avoid them.