

REHASHING OLD SERMONS.

Unintermitting study in a minister is an essential part of his vocation, and if this fact be lost sight of, he may rely upon it that he will never meet the demands of a thoughtful congregation; and instead of growing in efficiency, he will retrograde, and lose reputation. He makes a serious mistake, if he flatters himself that he can fall back on his old preparations. We have known this to be tried, in some instances, with anything but pleasing result. In most cases, a sermon prepared with careful study, depends for its effect on the fresh and awakened feeling of him who has prepared it, and which is manifest in its delivery. When the occasion has passed which led to its preparation, and the feelings with which it was imbued have departed, its delivery is apt to become a cold recitation, which neither interests the speaker or hearer. The plan of construction is the same, and yet it is a very different thing, which no artificial attempt can galvanize into life.

We have known ministers who have relaxed in their studious habits, earnestly coveting a change of place, under the false impression that in this way they could, by the use of their old sermons, very greatly lighten their labours; and we have seen such go from place to place, repeating the same series of discourses, which, however good in the first instance, failed to awaken their own hearts, and, by inevitable consequence, the hearts of their auditors. The life and freshness of them had evaporated—the skeletons alone were left. The thoughts and expressions were the conceptions of the author in former years, and of course, could not have the vigor and raciness of the productions of yesterday. The people are disappointed, because they were put off with a stale rehash, when they had a right to expect fresh beaten oil.

As we have before hinted, study is necessary to the invigoration of the mind, and a better proof of this could not be furnished, than by the deterioration of any minister who neglects his study by falling back on old preparations. He not only goes backwards in point of improvement, but he will soon find it next to impossible to arrange his thoughts and use his pen as he once could. His plans of study have been interrupted, and he is at a loss to begin where he left off. Many excellent preachers have been thus spoiled hopelessly. Besides, the aim merely to meet the requisitions of the pulpit by "letting off" a sermon, argues a low state of piety in the preacher's heart. If we suppose a minister of God to possess a high sense of the value of souls, we shall find him deeply solicitous to win attention, and by earnest expostulation

and entreaty, to persuade men. He will instead of rummaging over his old sermons which were composed under different circumstances, tax his powers to meet the state and necessities of the congregation before him, by the best adapted and most stirring presentation of truth. He will not content himself to be dry.—*Presbyterian.*

Chinese Bible Completed.

The Rev. Dr. Culbertson, who has long been laboring at Shanghai, with the lamented Dr. Bridgman, on a new Chinese version of the Bible, wrote May 3:—

"I have been permitted to bring to its close the great work on which I have been engaged for so many years—the translation of the Bible. On the 17th of March, 1851, our committee, consisting of five members, began their work. On the 27th of March, 1862, I brought it to a close, having been left single-handed by the lamented death of my only remaining colleague, Dr. Bridgman, in November last. The other members of the committee, as you are aware, were obliged by ill health, to withdraw before we had finished the Pentateuch. The translation of the New Testament, and of the Old as far as Isaiah, is the joint work of Dr. Bridgman, and myself. From Isaiah to Malachi I translated alone, though most of it was done prior to Dr. Bridgman's death. I feel deeply grateful to our heavenly Father that I have been permitted at last to see the end of this task. I have found it a delightful work, and esteem it a great privilege to have been thus brought into close communion with the word of God day by day, for so many years. I have been highly favored, too, in having for a co-laborer such a man as Dr. Bridgman; so spiritual, so meek, so faithful, and withal so uniformly courteous and amiable.

"How often have I despaired of ever finishing it. Yet in spite of all trials, difficulties, and interruptions, I am now permitted, by the goodness of God, to see the whole Bible ready for the hands of the printer. An edition of 1,500 copies is already commenced, with the Berlin font, which we hope will be a kind of family Bible, highly valued by our Chinese Christians."

They have aimed throughout to give "a translation of the inspired words as exact and literal as possible, consistently with the idiom of the Chinese language."

As rivers and fountains proceed from the sea, and return thither again; so true grace in the heart, as a fountain, sends forth all its streams towards God, the ocean from whence it flowed.