

In many instances, I have been called upon, without a moment's preparation, to preach a sermon. Not long since an instance of this kind happened. The deceased was a member of another denomination. A minister of his own church, at a distance, had been sent for to preach; but, when the hour arrived, word came that he could not come. I was then urged to deliver the discourse. How could I refuse? The congregation was very large, having assembled from various towns around. I had, of course, no sermon prepared for the occasion; but did the best I could under the circumstances. What surprised me most, it gave, as I afterward learned, entire satisfaction to the friends of the deceased, and was pronounced by the people as the best funeral sermon I had for sometime delivered.

It is good to mourn with those who mourn and to weep with those who weep; yet it is painful to see a person, young or old, cut off without timely repentance. It is painful to see a large family of children bereft of their best earthly friend,—a mother,—to see them weeping with inconsolable grief while her remains are about to be deposited in the grave. How often has my heart been made exceedingly sad while witnessing scenes of this description! How often have I been led to exclaim, in the language of the prophet: "Oh, that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears!"