

4th. It enables a pastor to bring before his people more systematically and thoroughly all the doctrines and precepts of the Bible.

The minister's work is very great;—to feed all the flock of God, over which the Lord has placed him, from the babe in Christ to the matured and experienced father in Israel, with food convenient for their growth in grace and full spiritual development, amid the ever varying feelings and circumstances of which they are the subjects; “warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that he may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus;” that none may tumble or perish through his unfaithfulness or ignorance; declaring the whole counsel of God, that he may not only edify the church but also be “pure of the blood of all men.” If an inspired apostle felt that the work was so great, what must be our insufficiency, who have only such intellectual ability as we may have acquired for this great work, lacking that infallible guidance and teaching of the Spirit which he possessed?

In his theological studies he may have passed in review all the leading doctrines of the Bible, and stored his mind with much lore; but, valuable as is such a course—and we cannot place too high an estimate on it—it is not sufficient to make him an efficient workman in all the duties and emergencies of a ministerial and pastoral life. Large by nature, and strong by discipline, must be those minds, which can with freedom take up any doctrine or precept of revelation, and intelligently interest and instruct an audience, for forty or fifty minutes, once or twice on every Sabbath from year to year, without a free use of their pen in the study and their notes in the pulpit.

One great danger in not using the manuscript is, the tendency to run, in every sermon, into the same channel of thought, and to use a stereotyped phraseology, whereby many precious doctrines very rarely if ever come before the people especially, with freshness and vigor, as if new cast. The use of the manuscript enables the preacher to review the ground he has passed over, and discover what has been neglected; so that, as a teacher of God's appointing, he may build them up in all the truths of God essential to their edification, purity and peace.

II.—NEGATIVELY.—“READ SERMONS ARE NOT THE BEST, BUT SPOKEN ONES.”

1st. Because there is great danger of making them mere intellectual exercises, where feats of mind may be displayed.

The human heart is ever prone to exalt and glorify itself; it is ever ready to exhibit its powers and attainments. Preaching is the minister's most important and public performance—the work in which he is the most expert. The carnal man in him is tempted to show itself, if it can, in this. But, besides the ambitiousness of his own heart, there is a pressure from without, tending to pervert the Christian minister into a mere intellectual essayist. Popular writers and speakers, both on science and literature, are continually aiming, by the display of profound wisdom, great learning, and extensive research, to present something new and striking, rather that they may excite astonishment and admiration, than impart instruction and promote the public good. Such efforts create, in many hearers, a demand for similar orations in the pulpit, and the production of such is essential, in their view, to any man's becoming an acceptable, popular preacher, or worthy to minister to those churches which are wealthy and intelligent, though too often only formalists in godliness. Ministers feel this pressure, and too many