

There exists a mental and spiritual thirst in all our congregations that is as commendable as it is limitless. The better the sermons the greater the demand for them; these *must* be forthcoming—two a week the year round. Shall the sermons be *pumped* out of the heart and brain of the preacher, or shall they flow freely and spontaneously from a personality that is surcharged with helpful truth? Who does not know how exhaustive and laborious is the ceaseless effort to provide for others without retaining anything for one's self? How may the "pump" process be replaced by the easy and delightful "fountain" method? We venture a few suggestions:

1. Select themes for pulpit treatment in which you yourself are at the moment most interested. Fruitful themes are constantly suggested by letters, conversation, reading, and public events.

2. Resolutely refer every subject of thought to your own Christian consciousness and experience. The habit of always adding the personal element to one's thinking soon becomes second nature.

3. Keep the mind wide awake. Ceaseless mental activity that questions, ransacks, penetrates things to get at the bottom of them, will serve to keep the barrel full.

4. Remember that the spiritual needs of your people are not greater than your own. Why should you not first enjoy what you give to them?

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Cigar-Box vs. Theme-Book.

THE suggestion of W. H. Isley (HOMILETIC REVIEW, XXI., 187) that the minister keep a theme-book is a most important one. I have, however, adopted a plan which serves my purpose better. I employ sheets of unruled paper, preferably 4x6, and briefly note the text, the theme, and any part of the outline which may suggest itself. These notes then go into an ordinary

cigar-box on my desk, and are so frequently thumbed that they are very familiar. If, in the course of reading, I find additional material, a reference to the volume is at once made; if a newspaper furnishes a clipping it is pinned to its appropriate sheet; when one sheet is filled another blank is attached to it. Thus it results that I usually have some two hundred embryonic sermons, and it rarely happens that among them I cannot find something toward which my mind turns with zest.

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Advice to Young Preachers.

WHEN you go to a church with the intention of settling there exercise a manly frankness with the pulpit committee, and tell them the main points of your situation—such points as have a direct bearing upon the terms of settlement. One point, for example, may be the question as to whether you be married or are single. It may be that the church prefers to have for its pastor a married man; but you, we will say, are unmarried, yet expect to be married ere long. Now, be frank and honest enough to tell the facts in the case. This may seem to be uncalled-for advice; but here is an example which shows that such advice is sometimes called for. A young man studying theology in a certain seminary wanted to supply a certain church for one year. He learned that the church desired a married man, but he was single, although he was expecting to be married in a few months. But he conveyed the plain impression to the pulpit committee that he had a wife. He frequently spoke of his "wife." The church hired him, and he began service on the first of January. The impression prevailed far and near that he was a married man until about the first of April, when he arrived at the parsonage with a lady to whom he was just married! Of course, public feeling set strongly against him. He was accused