

CHAPTER II.

THE SEVERAL PARTS OF A SERMON.

§ 1. INTRODUCTION. § 2. DISCUSSION. § 3. CONCLUSION.

THE analysis of a discourse which some writers have proposed is too artificial. Some of the parts which they distinguish, are very often blended with other parts. The *exposition*, for instance, will often constitute the introduction, and in many cases no formal exposition is necessary or appropriate. The *proposition* of the subject scarcely needs to be treated as a distinct part of the discourse. It is rather, if formally stated at all, a *transition* from the introduction to the discussion of the subject, and so belongs to both. The simplest and most natural analysis would seem to be that which gives three parts, namely, the introduction, the discussion (including divisions, when these are made), and the conclusion.

§ I. THE INTRODUCTION.¹

(1) It can scarcely be necessary to argue at length to the effect that sermons ought generally to have an introduction. Men have a natural aversion to abruptness, and delight in a somewhat gradual approach. A building is rarely pleasing in appearance without a porch, or something corresponding to a porch. The shining light of dawn, which shineth more and more till the perfect day, teaches us a les-

¹ This topic is very fully and carefully treated by Quintilian, IV. 1, and by Claude. See also Vinet, Hoppin, Phelps, and others.