

I shall define each of these, give my reasons for regarding them as essential members of the sermon, and add some instructions for composing them. The argument, which after all is the body of the sermon, will then require us to return to it, that we may consider its divisions and rules. Many preachers demur against the uniform requirement of all these parts as necessary members of a sermon. They would claim a discretion to omit all of them except the argument, and perhaps the conclusion. They say our requirement is mischievously formal, and dictates a tiresome sameness. They depreciate such sermons as "casts all run in the same mould." Let me then, in advance, explain. Their sarcasm suggests an unjust analogy. Sermons are not dead casts run into any mould, changeable or fixed. Give a new mould for each attempt, to be demolished when once used; I still reject and resent the illustration. Sermons should be living growths, like plants or trees; none of them indeed monsters, none maimed, but each one modified within the bounds of the rudimental laws of its nature, by its own circumstances of growth; so that they together present an endless and charming variety. Every natural tree must needs have certain constituent parts—its roots, its stem, its branches, its foliage, its fruit. But how end-

um sit fides, seu proposita confirmamus, seu, contra dicta dissolvimus; quanta vis in perorando," etc. He thus, like Cicero, makes four instead of five parts, proem, narration, argument (including refutation of objections) and peroration.

The current of modern writers on sacred oratory concur in making the five constituent parts which I have given in the text of my lecture.

lessly diversified is the development of these members! They cannot any of them be wholly absent, but the individuality of each tree determines their relative size; so that we have every graceful difference of form and stature, from the humble shrub to the tapering and lofty pine. But this illustration I am willing somewhat to relax. I will admit that circumstances may justify the preacher in reducing some of these constituent members to the extent of an apparent suppression. When I assign them all to the regular sermon as essential parts, I intend that all will be present in the complete type, and that this is the model toward which every sermon, even the most informal, must tend.

The *Exordium* is that prefatory matter which precedes the direct business of the discourse. The mind seems naturally to demand such a preparation. Says Cicero,¹ "There is, in fine, nothing in all nature which pours itself wholly out and bursts forth on a sudden; but Nature herself has prepared all things which are effected, even those which are effected with the most violence, by gentler beginnings." And again: "If in that gladiatorial struggle of life, in which men contend with the actual steel, many things are done before they come hand to hand, which seem meant not to wound but to make a show, how much more is this to be looked for in the oration, where it is not so much force as delectation which is required?" Aristotle tells us² that the proem, like a prelude in

¹ Cicero de Orat., L. ii., c. 78, § 317.

² Aristotle, Rhet., b. iii., ch. 15. See also Quintil., L. iv., c. 1., § 5. "Causa principii nulla est alia, quam ut auditorem, quo sit nobis in cæteris partibus accommodator, præparemus. Id fieri tribus maxime