

ents of conciliation in the introductions of many of his parliamentary speeches. He aggravated hostility by defying it. He often produced it by inviting it. He gave occasion for it by assuming its existence, and answering it in kind. On one occasion he said, "Mr. Speaker, I rise under some embarrassment occasioned by a feeling of delicacy towards one half of the house and of sovereign contempt for the other half." Cicero would have pronounced him a savage.

This power of person with an audience is a legitimate object of homiletic culture. Why not? That is a false sentiment which prompts a man to say, "I will speak the truth, no matter what men think of me." Something of their respect for truth depends on what men think of you. Such is the divine ordinance of the ministry, that truth is never so powerful that it can afford to part with that alliance with the man appointed to proclaim it. No wise preacher, therefore, will defy a prejudice against himself among his hearers, or invite indifference to himself, by his neglect of any thing which forethought and self-discipline can add to his power of person.

Applying these principles to the subject of homiletic introductions, it should be further observed that a preacher seldom needs to construct introductions made up of fragments of his personal history. This ancient expedient, with rare exceptions, would be an offense in the modern pulpit. The general habit of the pulpit respecting things personal to the preacher must be that of silence. He needs the power of person which personal introductions are aimed at; no man needs it more: but he has certain advantages for gaining it which lie back of the pulpit. His personal character is known to his hearers: it may be presumed to be

favorably known. His reputation for intellectual ability speaks for him. His known history as a man of culture, as an *alumnus* of literary institutions, speaks for him. His reputation for piety precedes and introduces every sermon that he utters. Fortunately for every individual of the clerical order, the order as a whole has an accumulated history of qualities which commends it to the respect of men. That history is a common fund from which each one may draw, for his own use, of the power of person, till he does something which proves him unworthy of it. A preacher's chief cultivation of the power of person must be outside of the pulpit. In his home, in the homes of his people, in his study, in his closet, he must build up, in part unconsciously, the reputation on which the power of the man must rest.

Yet it should be remarked that every preacher must meet some occasions on which the introductions of his discourses should be devoted to the work of gaining the influence of person. He may be called to preach to an audience which he knows to be prejudiced against him. He may preach to another which is sublimely indifferent to him. Every preacher, even in the most retired and staid parish, will find that there are some subjects in regard to which, if he would speak, he must undo a personal prejudice, or remove a suspicion, or break up indifference, of which he is the object. He can be heard genially, it may be, on all subjects but one: on that he must charm wisely, if he would get a hearing which shall promise success.

That was not a wise man, who, in the time of the civil war, in a South-western State commenced a sermon by laying a revolver on the pulpit by the side of the Bible, saying that his life had been threatened, and

that he was prepared to defend it, as he would against a mad dog. A humble Massachusetts chaplain was his superior in homiletic tact, who was compelled by Gen. Butler to preach to a wealthy Presbyterian congregation of rebels in Norfolk, who were also in their seats on the Sabbath morning, in obedience to military order. Said the preacher, in commencing his discourse, "My friends, I am here by no choice of mine. I came to your city as a chaplain, to look after the souls of my neighbors who are here, as I am, under military rule. I stand in the place of your honored pastor by command of my military superior; but I am a preacher of the same Christ whom you possess, and I ask you to hear me for his sake." He had a respectful hearing for the next three months.

You can not foresee in what forms the need of such exordiums will arise; but every preacher in a long ministry must meet them, and his success must depend largely on his habit of estimating fairly, and cultivating in a manly way, the influence of person.

2d, The second specific object of the introduction may be to stimulate the attention of hearers, — "*reddere auditores attentos.*" Generally this is the chief object of the introduction: oftener than otherwise, it is the only object.

(1) Preachers labor under disadvantages in seeking the attention of an audience. The frequency of preaching is a disadvantage. No other public speakers speak so much as preachers do. The unchangeableness of their audiences is a disadvantage. It tempts both hearer and preacher to listlessness. The pulpit and the lyceum are sometimes contrasted in respect to the popular interest. You might as well compare vegetation with a cyclone. Nobody notices the one: every-