

thing to be noted is, that in a few moments, *by letting the mind flow*, and not interfering with the flow, one may jot down materials for a long discourse. It was not merely *heads*: these are barren, they are disconnected; it was concatenation, it was *genesis*.

I consider this a little new, but Nevins showed me something like it for Sabbath lectures; I have done too much in the way of naked skeleton. I wish I could embody my thoughts in a formula; try it thus:

1. Write rapid sketch, the faster the better.
2. In first draught omit all partition, and do not force your mind to method.
3. Let thought generate thought.
4. Do not dwell on particulars; leave all amplification for the pulpit.
5. Keep the mind in a glow.
6. Come to it with a full mind.
7. Forget all care of language.
8. Forget all previous cramming, research, quotation, and study.
9. In delivery, learn to know when to dwell on a point; let the enlargement be, not where you *determined* in your closet it should be; but where you feel the spring flowing as you speak *let it gush*. Let contemplation have place *while you speak*.

For this, *pauses* are all important. Thus Rob. Hall preached. Thus my beloved honoured father, above all men I ever heard; his eye kindled, his face was radiant; he forgot the people; and as he was wrapt in contemplation, *he thought aloud*.

All this is connected with the subject of *gifts* in preaching; and the operation of the Holy Spirit aiding the speaker. Holy emotions are indispensable. Hence the best sermons can never be exactly reproduced—much less written. The best written discourse of my father is no more to his best preaching, than a black candle is to a burning flame.

§ 25. *Extempore Preaching*.—This afternoon I made another trial of the method mentioned above. I found it good as far as

plans—traditional modes. Why do I not break out? I read Vinet or Howe, and feel “Io ancheson pittore!”

§ 28. *Eloquence*.—In physics there are forces which operate not mechanically, but dynamically; not by the conveyance of new matter, but by the production of a new state or contact. Such is now believed to be the mode of producing vision in the human organ.

Something analogous to this occurs in operation of mind on mind. *Over and above the truth conveyed*, I believe there may be an operation. When I go to see a poor widow, and take her by the hand, the words which I speak to her are for the most part such as she has known before; and yet she is comforted. The same truths uttered from the pulpit by different men, or by the same man in different states of feeling, will produce very different effects. Some of these are far beyond what the bare conviction of the truth so uttered would ordinarily produce. The whole mass of truth, by the sudden passion of the speaker, is made red-hot and burns its way. Passion is eloquence. Hence the great value of extempore discourse.

Demosthenes' discourses read coldly sometimes; but who can restore on paper the whirlwind and earthquake power of the passion with which they were delivered! No man can be a great preacher, without great feeling. Hence the value of devotional preparation, You should seize, for writing, moments of great feeling. Record the outflow of these, and you will perhaps have some measure of them in delivery.

§ 29. *Dividing Sermons*.—My opinion has changed a little within a few months, about formality of *Division*. I mean I incline more to Fenelon's judgment after having been very much the other way.

I am perhaps in more favourable circumstances for a judgment than I was, because I am constantly experimenting.

The principle from which I set out, is one which grows in my esteem every day, as a canon of composition: it is this—*In writing or speaking throw off all restraint.*