

language, he must have committed this injury by making it more subordinate to grammatical rules. Foreigners and future generations will be more capable of understanding it, since he has excluded expressions which are only to be found in colloquial intercourse and vulgar phraseology. From his example, men may learn to give to their style energy, perspicuity, and elegance. They may acquire a habit of close thinking, and become accustomed to express their ideas with force and precision.

His political writings will be read and admired only for the dignity and energy of their style. His compositions are a most valuable addition to the literature of his country, and will confer a lasting reputation on his name. They are replete with "useful instruction, and elegant entertainment," and by perusing them, mankind may advance in knowledge and virtue. The efforts of his mind discover a life of study and meditation. His writings display a genius cultivated with industry, and quickened by exertion. His multifarious productions are an honor to the English nation; and his answer to his sovereign might more fairly be allowed, "that he had written his share," if he had not written so well. His mind has been laid open to the public in his printed works, without "reservation or disguise;" and, with all his faults and failings, he is still the admiration of mankind.

XCVII.

ON THE COMPOSITION OF A SERMON.*

On the Choice of Texts.

There are, in general, five parts of a sermon: the exordium, the connexion, the division, the discussion, and the application; but as connexion and division are parts which ought to be extremely short, we can properly reckon only three parts: exordium, discussion, and application. However, we will just take notice of connexion and division after we have spoken a little on the choice of texts, and a few general rules of discussing them.

1. Never choose such texts as have not complete sense; for only impertinent and foolish people will attempt to preach from one or two words which signify nothing.

2. Not only words which have a complete sense of themselves must be taken, but they must also include the complete sense of the writer whose words they are; for it is his language, and they are his sentiments, which you explain. For example, should you take these words of 2 Cor. 1: 3. "Blessed be God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort," and stop here, you will include a complete sense; but it would not be the Apostle's sense. Should you go farther, and add, "who comforteth us in all our tribulation," it would not then be the complete sense of St. Paul, nor would his meaning be wholly taken in, unless you went to the end of the fourth verse. When the complete sense of the sacred writer is taken, you may stop; for there are few texts in Scripture, which do not afford matter sufficient for a sermon, and it is equally inconvenient to take too much text or too little; both extremes must be avoided.

* These directions and remarks are taken from Hannam's "Pulpit Assistant." The student will also find much aid from Gresley's "Treatise on Preaching."

General rules of sermons. 1. A sermon should clearly and purely explain a text, make the sense easily to be comprehended, and place things before the people's eyes, so that they may be understood without difficulty. This rule condemns embarrassment and obscurity, the most disagreeable thing in the world in a gospel pulpit. It ought to be remembered, that the greatest part of the hearers are simple people, whose profit, however, must be aimed at in preaching: but it is impossible to edify them, unless you be very clear. Bishop Burnett says, "a preacher is to fancy himself as in the room of the most unlearned man in the whole parish, and must therefore put such parts of his discourses as he would have all understand, in so plain a form of words, that it may not be beyond the meanest of them. This he will certainly study to do, if his desire be to edify them, rather than to make them admire himself as a learned and high spoken man."

2. A sermon must give the entire sense of the whole text, in order to which it must be considered in every view. This rule condemns dry and barren explications, wherein the preacher discovers neither study nor invention, and leaves unsaid a great number of beautiful things with which his text might have furnished him. In matters of religion and piety, not to edify much is to destroy much; and a sermon cold and poor will do more mischief in an hour, than a hundred rich sermons can do good.

3. The preacher must be wise, in opposition to those impertinent people who utter jests, comical comparisons, quirks, and extravagances; sober, in opposition to those rash spirits who would penetrate all, and curiously dive into mysteries beyond the bounds of modesty; chaste, in opposition to those bold and imprudent geniuses who are not ashamed of saying many things which produce unclean ideas in the mind.

4. A preacher must be simple and grave. Simple, speaking things of good natural sense, without metaphysical speculations; grave, because all sorts of vulgar and proverbial sayings ought to be avoided. The pulpit is the seat of good natural sense, and the good sense of good men.

5. The understanding must be informed, but in a manner, however which affects the heart; either to comfort the hearers, or to excite them to acts of piety, repentance, or holiness.

6. One of the most important precepts for the discussion of a text, and the composition of a sermon, is, above all things, to avoid excess:—

1. There must not be too much genius. I mean, not too many brilliant sparkling, and shining things: for they would produce very bad effects. The auditor will never fail to say, "The man preaches himself; aims to display his genius, and is not animated by the spirit of God, but by that of the world."

2. A Sermon must not be overcharged with doctrine, because the hearers' memories cannot retain it all; and by aiming to keep all, they will lose all. Take care, then, not to charge your sermon with too much matter.

3. Care must also be taken never to strain any particular part, either in attempting to exhaust it, or to penetrate too far into it. Frequently in attempting it, you will distil the subject till it evaporates.

4. Figures must not be overstrained. This is done by stretching metaphor into allegory, or by carrying a parallel too far. A metaphor is changed into an allegory when a number of things are heaped up, which agree to the subject in keeping close to the metaphor. Allegories may sometimes be used very agreeably: but they must not be strained: that is, all that can be said of them must not be said.

5. Reasoning must not be carried too far. This may be done many ways; either by long trains of reasons, composed of a number of propositions chained together, or principles and consequences, which way of reasoning is embarrassing and painful to the auditor. The mind of man loves to be conducted in a more smooth and easy way.

Of connexion. The connexion is the relation of your text to the foregoing or following verses. To find this, consider the scope of the discourse and consult commentators; particularly exercise your own good sense

When the coherence will furnish any agreeable considerations for the illustrations of the text, they must be put in the discussion; and they will very often happen. Sometimes, also, you may draw thence an exordium: in such a case, the exordium and connexion will be confounded together.

Of division. Division in general ought to be restrained to a small number of parts; they should never exceed four or five at the most; the most admired sermons have only two or three parts.

There are two sorts of divisions which we may very properly make; the first, which is the most common, is the division of the text into its parts the other is of the discourse, or sermon itself, which is made on the text.

1. This method is proper when a prophecy of the Old Testament is handled; for, generally, the understanding of these prophecies depends on many general considerations, which, by exposing and refuting false senses, open a way to the true explication.

2. This method is also proper on a text taken from a dispute, the understanding of which must depend on the state of the question, the hypothesis of adversaries, and the principles of the inspired writers. All these lights are previously necessary, and they can only be given by general considerations; for example, Rom. iii. 28. "We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." Some general considerations must precede, which clear up the state of the question between St. Paul and the Jews, touching justification, which mark the hypothesis of the Jews upon that subject, and which discover the true principle which St. Paul would establish; so that, in the end, the text may be clearly understood.

3. This method also is proper in a conclusion drawn from a long preceding discourse; as for example, Rom. v. 1. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ." The discourse must be divided into two parts; the first consisting of some general considerations on the doctrine of justification, which St. Paul establishes in the preceding chapters; and the second of his conclusion, that, being thus justified, we have peace with God, &c.

The same may be said of the first verse of the eighth of Romans, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation," &c., for it is a consequence drawn from what he had been establishing before.

4. The same method is proper for texts which are quoted in the New Testament from the Old. You must prove by general considerations that the text is properly produced, and then you may come clearly to its explication. Of this kind are Hebrews i. 5, 6. "I will be to him a Father," &c. "One in a certain place testified," &c., ii. 6. "Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith," &c., iii. 7. There are many passages of this kind in the New Testament.

5. In this class must be placed divisions into different regards, or different views. These, to speak properly, are not divisions of a text into its parts, but rather different applications which are made of the same texts to divers subjects. Typical texts should be divided thus; and a great number of Passages in the Psalms, which relate not only to David, but also to Jesus Christ. Such should be considered, first, literally, as they relate to David; and then, in the mystical sense, as they refer to the Lord Jesus.

There are also typical passages, which, besides their literal sense, have also figurative meanings, relating not only to Jesus Christ, but also to the church in general, and to every believer in particular.

For example, Dan. ix. 7: "O Lord, righteousness belongeth to thee, but unto us confusion of face, as at this day," must not be divided into parts, but considered in different views: 1. In regard to all men in general. 2. In regard to the Jewish Church in Daniel's time. 3. In regard to ourselves at this present day.

So again, Heb. iii. 7, 8. "To-day, if ye will hear his voice," which is taken from Psalm xcvi., cannot be better divided than by referring it—1. To David's time. 2. St. Paul's. And lastly, to our own.

As to the division of the text itself, sometimes the order of the words is so clear and natural, that no division is necessary, you need only follow simply the order of the words. As for example, Eph. i. 3. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." It is not necessary to divide this text, because the words divide themselves, and to explain them, we need only to follow them. Here is a grateful acknowledgment. "Blessed be God." The title under which the Apostle blesses God, "The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." The reason for which he blesses him, because "he hath blessed us." The plenitude of this blessing, "with all blessings." The nature or kind signified by the term spiritual. The place where he hath blessed us, "in heavenly places." In whom he hath blessed us, "in Christ."

Most texts, however, ought to be formally divided; for which purpose you must principally have regard to the order of nature, and put that division which naturally precedes, in the first place, and the rest must follow, each in its proper order.

There are two natural orders; one natural in regard to subjects themselves; the other natural in regard to us.

And though, in general, you may follow which of the two others you please, yet there are some texts that determine the division; as Phil. ii. 13. "It is God who worketh effectually in you, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." There are, it is plain, three things to be discussed; the action of God's grace upon men, "God worketh effectually in you;" the effect of this grace, "to will and to do;" and the spring or source of the action, according to "his good pleasure." I think the division would not be proper if we were to treat, 1. Of God's good pleasure; 2. Of his grace; and 3. Of the will and works of men.

Above all things, in divisions, take care of putting any thing in the first part which supposes the understanding of the second; or which obliges you to treat of the second to make the first understood; for, by these means, you will throw yourself into great confusion, and be obliged to make many tedious repetitions. You must endeavour to disengage the one from the other as well as you can; and when your parts are too closely connected with each other, place the most detached first, and endeavour to make that serve for a foundation to the explication of the second, and the second to the third; so that, at the end of your explication, the hearer may at a glance perceive, as it were, a perfect body, a well finished building; for one of the greatest excellences of a sermon is, the harmony of its component parts; that the first leads to the second, the second serves to introduce the third; that they which go before, excite a desire for those which are to follow.

When, in a text, there are several terms which need a particular explanation, and which cannot be explained without confusion, or without dividing the text into too many parts, then I would not divide the text at all; but I would divide the discourse into two or three parts; and I would propose, first, to explain the terms, and then the subject itself.

There are many texts, in discussing which, it is not necessary to treat of either subject or attribute; but all the discussion depends on the terms, *syncategorematica* (words which, of themselves, signify nothing, but, in conjunction with others, are very significative). For example, John iii. 16, "God so loved the world." The categorical proposition is, God loved the world; yet, it is neither necessary to insist much upon the term *God*, nor to speak in a common-place way of the love of God, but, divide the text into two parts; first, the gift which God in his love hath made of his son; secondly, the end for which he gave him, "that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

There are texts of reasoning, which are composed of an objection and an answer and the division of such is plain; for they naturally divide into the

objection and solution. As, Romans vi. 1, 2, "What shall we say then?" &c. There are some texts of reasoning which are extremely difficult to divide because they cannot be reduced into many propositions without confusion. As, John iv. 10, "If thou knewest the gift of God," &c. I think it might not be improper to divide it into two parts, the first including the general propositions contained in the words; and the second, the particular application of these to the Samaritan woman.

There are some texts which imply many important truths without expressing them; and yet it will be necessary to mention and enlarge upon them, either because they are useful on some important occasion, or because they are important of themselves. Then the text may be divided into two parts, one implied, and the other expressed.

In texts of history, divisions are easy; sometimes an action is related in all its circumstances, and then you may consider the action in itself first, and afterward the circumstances of the action.

To render a division agreeable, and easy to be remembered by the hearer, endeavour to reduce it as often as possible to simple terms.

As to subdivisions, it is always necessary to make them, for they very much assist the composition, and diffuse perspicuity into a discourse; but it is not always necessary to mention them; on the contrary, they must be very seldom mentioned, because it will load the hearer's mind with a multitude of particulars.

Discussion. There are four methods of discussion. Clear subjects must be discussed by observation, or continued application; difficult and important ones by explication or proposition.

I. *By Explication.* — The difficulty is in regard to the Terms, to the subject, or to both.

1. *Explication of Terms.* — The difficulties of these arise from three causes; either the terms do not seem to make any sense, or they are equivocal, forming different senses; or, the sense they seem to make at first appears perplexed, improper, or contradictory: or, the meaning, though clear, may be controverted, and is exposed to cavil.

Propose the *ratio dubitandi*, which makes the difficulty; then determine it as briefly as you can.

2. *Of Things.* — Difficult things. If the difficulty arise from errors, or false senses, refute and remove them; then establish the truth. If from the intricacy of the subject itself, do not propose difficulties, and raise objections, but enter immediately into the explication of the matter, and take care to arrange your ideas well.

3. Important things, though clear, must be discussed by explication, because they are important.

There are two sorts of explications; the one, simple and plain, needs only to be proposed, and agreeably elucidated; the other must be confirmed, if it speak of fact, by proofs of fact; if of right, by proofs of right; if of both, proofs of both. A great and important subject, consisting of many branches, may be reduced to a certain number of propositions or questions, and discussed one after the other.

N. B. Sometimes what you will have to explain in a text will consist of one or more simple terms; of ways of speaking peculiar to Scripture; of particles called *syncategorematica*; and sometimes of different propositions.

1. Simple terms are the divine attributes, goodness, &c., man's virtues or vices, faith, hope, &c. Simple terms are either proper or figurative; if figurative, give the meaning of the figure, and, without stopping long, pass on to the thing itself. Some simple terms must only be explained just as they relate to the intention of the sacred author; in a word, explain simple terms as much as possible, in relation to the design of the sacred author. Sometimes the simple terms in a text must be discussed professedly, in order to give a clear and full view of the subject. Sometimes, when there are many, it might be injudicious to treat of them separately, but beautifully to do it by comparison.

2. Expressions peculiar to Scripture deserve a particular explanation, because they are rich in meaning; such as, "to be *in* Christ," "come *after* Christ," &c.

Particles called *syncategorematica* (such as *none, some, all, now, when, &c.*), which augment or limit the meaning of the proposition, should be carefully examined; for often the whole explication depends upon them.

3. When the matter to be explained in a text consists of a proposition, give the sense clearly; if necessary, show its importance; if it require confirmation, confirm it.

In all cases, illustrate by reasons, examples, comparisons of the subject; their relations, conformities, or differences. You may do it by consequences; by the person, his state, &c., who proposes the subject; or the persons to whom it is proposed; by circumstance, time, place, &c. You may illustrate a proposition by its evidence or inevidence. It is discoverable by the light of nature, or only by revelation. Let good sense choose the best topics.

Sometimes a proposition includes many truths which must be distinguished; sometimes a proposition must be discussed in different views; sometimes it has different degrees, which must be remarked; sometimes it is general, and of little importance; then examine whether some of its parts be not more considerable; if so, they must be discussed by a particular application.

II. *By observation;* which is best for clear and historical passages. Some texts require both explication and observation. Sometimes an observation may be made by way of explication. Observations, for the most part, ought to be theological; historical, philosophical, or critical, very seldom. They must not be proposed in a scholastic style, nor common-place form, but in a free, easy, familiar manner.

III. *By continual application.* — This may be done without explaining, or making observations. In this manner we must principally manage texts exhorting to holiness and repentance. In using this method something searching and powerful must be said, or better it should be let alone.

IV. *By proposition.* — The texts must be reduced to two propositions at least, and three or four at most, having a mutual dependence and connexion.

This method opens the most extensive field for discussion. In the former methods you are restrained to your text; but here your subject is the matter contained in your proposition.

The way of explication* is most proper to give the meaning of Scripture; this of systematical divinity; and it has this advantage, it will equally serve either theory or practice.

N. B. Though these four ways are different from each other, for many texts it may be necessary to use two or three, and for some, all the four; the discourse has its name from the prevailing method of handling it.

The conclusion. This ought to be lively and animating, full of great and beautiful figures. Aiming to move Christian affections. As the love of God, hope, zeal, repentance, self-condemnation, a desire of self-correction, consolation, admiration of eternal benefits, hope of felicity, courage, and constancy in afflictions, steadiness in temptations, gratitude to God, recourse to him by prayer, and other such dispositions.

There are three sorts of dispositions; the violent, tender, and elevated. To raise these, the conclusion should be violent, tender, or elevated. It may be sometimes mixed, it must always be diversified.

N. B. Let the peroration, or conclusion, be short; let it be bold and lively. Let some one or more striking ideas, not mentioned in the discussion, be reserved for this part, and applied with vigor.

* See No. I. on the previous page.

Example.

OF THE SKELETON OF A SERMON.

The existence of God.

"The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God." Psalms xiv. 1.

"The fool hath said,"—it is evident that none but a fool would have said it.

The fool, a term in Scripture, signifying a wicked man; one who hath lost his wisdom, and right apprehension of God; one dead in sin, yet one not so much void of rational faculties, as of grace in those faculties; not one that wants reason, but one who abuses his reason.

"Said in his heart;" i. e. he thinks, or he doubts, or he wishes. Thoughts are words in heaven. He dares not openly publish it, though he dares secretly to think it; he doubts, he wishes, and sometimes hopes.

"There is no God,"—no judge, no one to govern, reward, or punish. Those who deny the providence of God, do, in effect, deny his existence; they strip him of that wisdom, goodness, mercy, and justice, which are the glory of the Deity.

Men who desire liberty to commit works of darkness, would not only have the lights in the house dimmed, but extinguished. What men say against Providence, because they would have no check, they would say in their hearts against the very existence of God, because they would have no judge.

The existence of God is the foundation of all religion. The whole building totters, if the foundation be out, of course. We must believe that he is, and that he is what he declared himself, before we can seek him, adore him, and love him.

It is, therefore, necessary we should know why we believe, that our belief be founded on undeniable evidence, and that we may give a better reason for his existence, than that we have heard our parents and teachers tell us so. It is as much as to say, "There is no God," when we have no better arguments than those.

That we may be fully persuaded of, and established in this truth, on deavour,

I. To bring forward a few observations in the defence thereof.

1. All nature shows the existence of its Maker. We cannot open our eyes but we discover this truth shine through all creatures. The whole universe bears the character and stamp of a First Cause, infinitely wise, infinitely powerful. Let us cast our eyes on the earth which bears us, and ask, "Who laid the foundation?" Job xxxviii. 4. Let us look on that vast arch of skies that covers us, and inquire, "Who hath thus stretched it forth?" Isaiah xl. 21, 52. "Who is it also that hath fixed so many luminous bodies, with so much order and regularity?" Job xxvi. 13. The various works of creation proclaim to us "His eternal power and godhead." Romans i. 20; Acts xiv. 16, 17; xvii. 26. Every plant, every atom, as well as every star, bear witness of a Deity. Who ever saw statues, or pictures, but concluded there had been a statuary and limner? Who can behold garments, ships, or houses, and not understand there was a weaver, a carpenter, an architect? All things that are demonstrate something from whence they are. A man may as well doubt whether there be a sun when he sees his beams gilding the earth, as doubt whether there be a God when he sees his works. Psalms xix. 1-6.

The Atheist is, therefore, a fool because he denies that which every

creature in his constitution asserts; can he behold the spider's net, or the silk-worm's web, the bee's closets, or the ant's granaries, without acknowledging a higher being than a creature, who hath planted that genius in them? Job xxxix.; Psalms civ. 24. "The stars fought against Sisera." Judges v. 20. All the stars in heaven, and the dust on earth, oppose the Atheist. Romans i. 19, 20.

2. The dread of conscience is an argument to convince us of this truth "Every one that finds me shall slay me," Genesis iv. 14, was the language of Cain; and the like apprehensions are not seldom in those who feel the fury of an enraged conscience. The psalmist tells us concerning those who say in their heart, "There is no God," that "they are in fear, where no fear is," Psalms liii. 5. Their guilty minds invent terrors, and thereby confess "a Deity, whilst they deny it,—that there is a sovereign Being who will punish. Pashur, who wickedly insulted the prophet Jeremiah, had this for his reward, "that his name should be Magor-missabib," i. e. "fear round about," Jeremiah xx. 3, 4. When Belshazzar saw the hand writing, "his countenance was changed," Daniel v. 6. The apostle who tells us, that there is a "law written in the hearts of men," adds, their "consciences also bear witness," Romans ii. 15. The natural sting and horror of conscience are a demonstration that there is a God to judge and punish.

The Atheist is a fool, because he useth violence to his conscience. The operations of conscience are universal. The iron bars upon Pharaoh's conscience at last gave way. Exodus ix. 27.

3. *Universal consent* is another argument. The notion of a God is found among all nations; it is the language of every country and region; the most abominable idolatry argues a Deity. All nations, though ever so barbarous and profligate, have confessed some God. This universal verdict of mankind is no other than the voice of God, the testimony of reason, and the language of nature; there is no speech, nor tongue where this voice is not heard.

Is it not, therefore, folly for any man to deny that which nature has engraven on the minds of all?

4. *Extraordinary judgments.* When a just revenge follows abominable crimes, especially when the judgment is suited to the sin; when the sin is made legible by the inflicted judgments. "The Lord is known by the judgments which he executes," Psalms ix. 16. Herod Agrippa received the flattering applause of the people, and thought himself a God; but was, by the judgment inflicted upon him, forced to confess another. Acts xii. 21-23; Judges i. 6, 7; Acts v. 1-10.

5. *Accomplishments of prophecies.* To foretell things that are future, as if they did already exist, or had existed long ago, must be the result of a mind infinitely intelligent. "Show the things that are to come hereafter," Isaiah xli. 23. "I am God, declaring the end from the beginning," Isaiah xli. 10. Cyrus was prophesied of, Isaiah xlv. 28, and xiv. 1, long before he was born; Alexander's sight of Daniel's prophecy concerning his victories moved him to spare Jerusalem. The four monarchies are plainly deciphered in Daniel, before the fourth rose up. That power, which foretells things beyond the wit of man, and orders all causes to bring about those predictions, must be an infinite power: the same as made, sustains, and governs all things according to his pleasure, and to bring about his own ends; and this being is God. "I am the Lord, and there is none else," Isaiah xlv. 6, 7.

What folly, then, for any to shut their eyes, and stop their ears; to attribute those things to blind chance, which nothing less than an infinitely wise and infinitely powerful Being could effect!

II. A few observations.

1. If God can be seen in creation, study the creatures; the creatures are the heralds of God's glory. "The glory of the Lord shall endure." Psalms civ. 31.

The world is a sacred temple; man is introduced to contemplate it. As grace does not destroy nature, so the book of redemption does not blot out the book of creation. Read nature; nature is a friend to truth.

2. If it be a folly to deny or doubt the being of God, is it not a folly also not to worship God, when we acknowledge his existence? "To fear God, and keep his commandments, is the whole duty of man."

We are not reasonable if we are not religious. "Your reasonable *ser vice*," Romans xii. 1.

3. If it be a folly to deny the existence of God, will it not be our wisdom since we acknowledge his being, often to think of him? It is the black mark of a fool, "God is not in all his thoughts," Psalms x. 4.

4. If we believe the being of God, let us abhor practical Atheism. Actions speak louder than words.

"They professed that they knew God," Titus i. 16. Men's practices are the best indexes to their principles. "Let your light shine before men." Matthew v. 16.

*The following Skeletons are on a different plan.**

1.

Psalms xlvi. 1, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

Sorrow is our common lot, many seem to know little of it, the widow, fatherless, &c.; text needs no explanation.

I. The wonderful condescension of God in assuming this character towards man, — not, however, according to the usual reasoning, — man's greatness, — his progressive faculties will equal angels, &c. Surpass all intelligence except God, — but there will still be an infinite distance between God and man, — Man's moral estate; these the reasons.

II. The emphasis of the text, — *present, very present*, — our mechanical habits, — the divine presence not *realized*, — a man first awakened or convicted feels it, — but soon is lost, — suppose a pure and holy being were present at your sins, — as an angel, — but God is present! See the Christian in a storm at sea, — hearing the crash, indulging sin. —

Objection to the infinite God's caring for man, — all worlds particles of sand. — How should this thought affect us, — Mother! Jesus stood at the coffin of thy infant child, at the grave of thy parents! He is with thee. Shall we weep and repine even in a garret, when God is with us?

III. Cautiousness of the text. — He is a help, — not sole deliverer, — there is something for us to do, — prayer is one reason of it. — Nothing otherwise. — Farmer. — Mechanic, — health by medicine.

IV. Applicability of the text to all the poor unfortunate, — stranger, — widow, — orphan, — mourner, — Christian in temptation, — quality of all, a guilty conscience.

2.

Rev. vii. 17, "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Context: — Nature and probable design of these prophecies. —

I. Afflictions in the present state of the Christian, an important and advantageous part of his moral discipline. 1. The fact that they are permitted, shows that they are advantageous. — How many instances, — texts.

2. They afford exercise for our Christian virtues, moral, — fortitude patience, resignation.

3. They show us the futility of worldly comforts, — our friends die, — health and beauty fade, — wealth and pleasure must be left behind us.

* They are, in fact, the notes of a distinguished extemporaneous preacher.

II This discipline is preparatory to another which shall be exempt from affliction.

1. The Scriptures assert the existence of such a place called heaven, Kingdom of God, Paradise, New Jerusalem, &c. It is implied in the doctrine of immortality.

2. It is consistent with all rational supposition. — Analogy between this world and other planets. — 3. All causes of sorrow shall cease there. — 4. It is everlasting in its duration. —

APPLICATION.

Do I address the mourner who has lost friends, estate, health? — the aged? — youth declining in early life? &c.

3.

Gal. iii. 18, "But it is good to be zealously affected always in a good thing."

Christianity is designed to call into activity the noblest sentiments of the heart, — firm resolve, — intrepid daring and undaunted perseverance, — zeal. — The Christian's life is a holy warfare, — a holy chivalry. — The Apostle lays down the proposition, that if anything is good, it is good to be zealously affected in that good cause, — Christianity is good considered.

I. In respect to its *origin*, — divine, — bears its marks, — it is interesting to contemplate nature, — but much more revelation, — the noblest gift of God to man. —

II. In its nature, — its theory of doctrines, — its code of moral rules was never equalled by 1. Philosophy, — 2. Education, — all improvement has failed without it. — Its nature renders it efficient in its effects, — its preservation, — triumph over infidelity. —

III. Its effects, — individual effects. — 1. Benevolence, — 2. Death. — 3. Peace of conscience.

2. General effects, — 1. It prevents crime. — 2. Elevates society. — 3. Sustains good government. — 4. War.

We should be zealous, 1. Because God commands us to be so. 2. The wants of the world call for it. 3. Our happiness hereafter will be proportioned to our zeal, — a philosophical as well as Scriptural fact. — We have high examples to copy, — the apostles, martyrs, and reformers, — Wesley Whitfield, &c.

XCVIII.

SUBJECTS FOR COMPOSITIONS OF ALL SORTS

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| 1. Mythology. | 10. Ruins of Rome. |
| 2. Rural happiness. | " Greece. |
| 3. Our native land. | 11. Twilight. |
| 4. Description of a storm. | 12. A winter evening. |
| 5. Scene at a summer's noon. | 13. Moonlight at sea. |
| 6. A winter landscape. | 14. Spring. |
| 7. A market day. | 15. Summer. |
| 8. An evening walk. | 16. Autumn. |
| 9. The entrance of Christ into Jerusalem. | 17. Winter. |
| | 18. The equator. |