

**HINTS ON
EXTEMPORANEOUS
PREACHING**

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Hints on Extemporaneous Preaching by Henry Ware

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HENRY WARE

**HINTS ON
EXTEMPORANEOUS
PREACHING**

TO
THE STUDENTS
IN THE
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY IN HARVARD UNIVERSITY,
THIS LITTLE TREATISE,
WITH THE
SINCEREST PRAYERS THAT THEY MAY BECOME
PROFOUND DIVINES AND POWERFUL PREACHERS,
IS AFFECTIONATELY INSCRIBED
BY
THE AUTHOR.

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PREFACE.

It is the object of this little work, to draw the attention of those who are preparing for the christian ministry, or who have just entered it, to a mode of preaching which the writer thinks has been too much discountenanced and despised; but which, under proper restrictions, he is persuaded may add greatly to the opportunities of ministerial usefulness. The subject has hardly received the attention it deserves from writers on the pastoral office, who have usually devoted to it but a few sentences, which offer little encouragement and afford no aid. Burnet, in his Treatise on the Pastoral Care, and Fenelon in his Dialogues on Eloquence, have treated it more at large, but still very cursorily. To their arguments and their authority, which are of great weight, I refer the more distinctly here, because I have not quoted them so much at large as I intended when I wrote the beginning of the second chapter. Besides these, the remarks of Quintilian, x. 7. on the subject of speaking extempore, which are full of his usual good sense, may be very profitably consulted.

It has been my object to state fully and fairly the benefits which attend this mode of address in the

pulpit, and at the same time to guard against the dangers and abuses to which it is confessedly liable. How far I may have succeeded, it is not for me to determine. It would be something to persuade but one to add this to his other talents for doing good in the church. Even the attempt to do it, though unsuccessful, would not be without its reward; since it could not be fairly made without a most salutary moral and intellectual discipline.

It is not to be expected—nor do I mean by any thing I have said to intimate—that every man is capable of becoming an accomplished preacher in this mode, or that every one may succeed as well in this as in the ordinary mode. There is a variety in the talents of men, and to some this may be peculiarly unsuited. Yet this is no good reason why *any* should decline the attempt, since it is only by making the attempt that they can determine whether or not success is within their power.

There is at least one consequence likely to result from the study of this art and the attempt to practise it, which would alone be a sufficient reason for urging it earnestly. I mean, its probable effect in breaking up the constrained, cold, formal, scholastic mode of address, which follows the student from his college duties, and keeps him from immediate contact with the hearts of his fellow men. This would be effected by his learning to speak from his feelings, rather than from the critical rules of a book. His address would be more natural, and consequently better adapted to effective preaching.

HINTS

ON EXTEMPORANEOUS PREACHING.

CHAPTER I.

It is a little remarkable that, while some classes of christians do not tolerate the preaching of a written discourse, others have an equal prejudice against all sermons which have not been carefully pre-composed. Among the latter are to be found those who favor an educated ministry, and whose preachers are valued for their cultivated minds and extensive knowledge. The former are, for the most part, those who disparage learning as a qualification for a christian teacher, and whose ministers are consequently not accustomed to exact mental discipline, nor familiar with the best models of thinking and writing. It might seem at first view, that the least cultivated would require the greatest previous preparation in order profitably to address their fellow-men, and that the best informed and most ac-