

is not properly anxious for his own soul; he is only anxious about the anxiety of another for his soul.

We are now perhaps prepared to give an answer to the question, how far sympathy may be legitimately employed as a lever for moving the careless about the things of God. This law of sympathy, yea, of the religious sympathies, was given to our souls by our Maker; was it for nothing? Has it, unlike all his other works, no legitimate use? Again: the true orator, when he arouses feeling by the exhibition of his own feeling, undoubtedly appeals to the law of sympathy. Is all this improper? We answer, no: there is a legitimate use which may be made of this law. We often find our fellow-men because of their inattention insensible to the clear truths presented to the understanding, which are the Spirit's sole instruments for salvation. It is then desirable to superinduce feeling in connection with these truths, even if it be at first unintelligent feeling, and such as is not sanctifying, in order that saving truth may catch the attention, may be truly heard, remembered, and by God's further blessing felt. We would then allow to these sympathetic impressions their proper place as means, but as means of secondary grade and importance. They are, indeed, only means to other means; they are but an expedient for securing attention to that more direct means, the truth, by which alone saving impressions can be made. If therefore the preacher aims to excite the sympathetic religious emotions by that scriptural and rational warmth of feeling with which he is expounding scripture truth to the understanding, with that feeling which such truths should reasonably stimulate in a gracious and enlightened heart, he does well: he is guilty of no abuse. For, while he aims to produce the sympathetic emotion which, if it remained mere sympathy, would be unintelligent and worthless for ulterior good, he also presents Bible truths to the understanding, gaining for them the warmth and quickened attention of the temporary feeling; so that by their truths the hearer's soul may now, perchance, be profited. But if he merely seeks to excite and harrow the sympathies by touching or dramatic incident, or by fiery displays of passion, which contain no perspicuous explication of Bible truths, he is abusing his power. He is exciting by mere contagious influence a senseless and worthless agitation, which can do no good, being accompanied with no light for the

understanding, and which is likely to do irreparable evil, by being mistaken for true religious feeling. Again, the exhibition of genuine religious emotion, which is the just fruit of right views of truth held by the understanding, may have a valuable sympathetic effect on others; as when that exhibition is properly made in the daily duties of a holy life, in the approaches to the throne of grace, in the tender expostulations of the Christian with his impenitent neighbor. The sympathetic softening may make way for the teachings of instructive example or discourse to the mind before inattentive. But when emotions are paraded in publicity and inflamed by the artifices of the ecclesiastical "manual exercise," in order to propagate a passion beyond that begotten by the truth itself, the result is unmingled mischief. The misguided subject is taught to regard this unintelligent passion as the end, instead of a very secondary means, and to rest in it as constituting gracious affections. It is as though the sick man, benumbed with the approaching chill of death, should mistake the warmth of the appliances used from without for the glow of that animal heat, the inward and living result of vitality, which the former could only serve to stimulate. To apply our comparison to the soul, where the true principle of vitality exists, which the Spirit of God bestows and which he only bestows by the means of THE TRUTH intelligently apprehended in the understanding, the artificial caloric applied from without may do some good, by stimulating the internal spiritual heat which is the effect of genuine spiritual life and which therefore must ever originate from within. But all the warming of a dead corpse with external applications of heat which human art can imagine will never make it a living man. It may hasten putrefaction! Just as soon as the applications are suspended, it will be a cold marble corpse again. And how ruinous would be that error which should mistake the fleeting touch of warmth given from without for the true animal heat?

The nature of sympathetic excitements has now been somewhat explained. It has been shown that the mere witnessing of emotion superinduces some degree of the same emotion in the soul of the spectator, and that this excitement is not produced by any rational view of a cause of emotion seen, or at least supposed to be seen, in the understanding, as is always the case with independent emotions; but that it is immediate