

FEELING.

75

have been reduced—such topics should be profoundly meditated by the speaker, until the sentiments make their due impression upon his own heart, and the fire of feeling is kindled up in his own bosom.

(2.) Or the preacher of the gospel is about to deliver a discourse on the sacrifice of Christ, for the object of awakening trust and love in his audience. Here he ought to meditate beforehand on the faithfulness and love which Christ has manifested by the sacrifice of himself in our place; upon his constancy to our cause in the face of all his temptations to abandon it; and upon the elements of trustworthiness and loveliness which are embodied in his person and character; until he has thoroughly possessed himself of such causes or reasons for emotion, in application to his own case, and until the fountains of trust and love are opened in his own soul. This will enable him to speak so that none will criticise his want of feeling, or his power in delivery.

¶ 39. **The second means of exciting the requisite feeling is the cultivation of the sensibilities.**

It has been already observed, as everywhere implied in the discussion of this source of power, that a speaker, in order to be truly eloquent, must be a man of sensibility. Hence the systematic cultivation of the emotional faculties of the soul, must be regarded as an important means of being able to command the requisite feeling for each occasion of speaking.

1. *The emotional nature is capable of such cultivation and development.*

There is, indeed, a great difference between good and able men, in this respect, as in all others, but there are none in whom this class of faculties are not capable of being quickened and purified. The esthetic and moral affections—sensitivity to beauty physical, intellectual and moral; sympathy, compassion, hope and joy; the love of truth, duty and justice—these, and all other right affections of the soul, are as capable of culture and development as the intellectual faculties.

2. *The method of cultivating the sensibilities is by exercising them upon their appropriate objects.*

All the sensibilities of the soul should be systematically exercised upon their appropriate objects; the esthetic, in the contemplation and enjoyment of beautiful objects: the moral, upon moral objects. Sympathy and pity, *e. g.* should be exercised in sympathizing with, and in relieving the wants and sufferings of those who are in affliction and calamity; and so of all the others. Without such exercise, the sensibilities of the soul grow feeble, especially as we advance in years, and our power to call forth the requisite feeling, on our various occasions of speaking, declines. This is one reason why some speakers, whilst young and immature, are much more effective than in later life. Instead of gaining, they lose power from decline of their susceptibility of emotion and passion.