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RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

ESSENTIAL TO

A CHRISTIAN MINISTER.

A

SERMON,

PREACHED AT

BROADMEAD, BRISTOL,

AUGUST 1, 1804,

BEFORE

THE BRISTOL EDUCATION SOCIETY.

BY JAMES DORE.

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE SOCIETY.

Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

JESUS CHRIST.

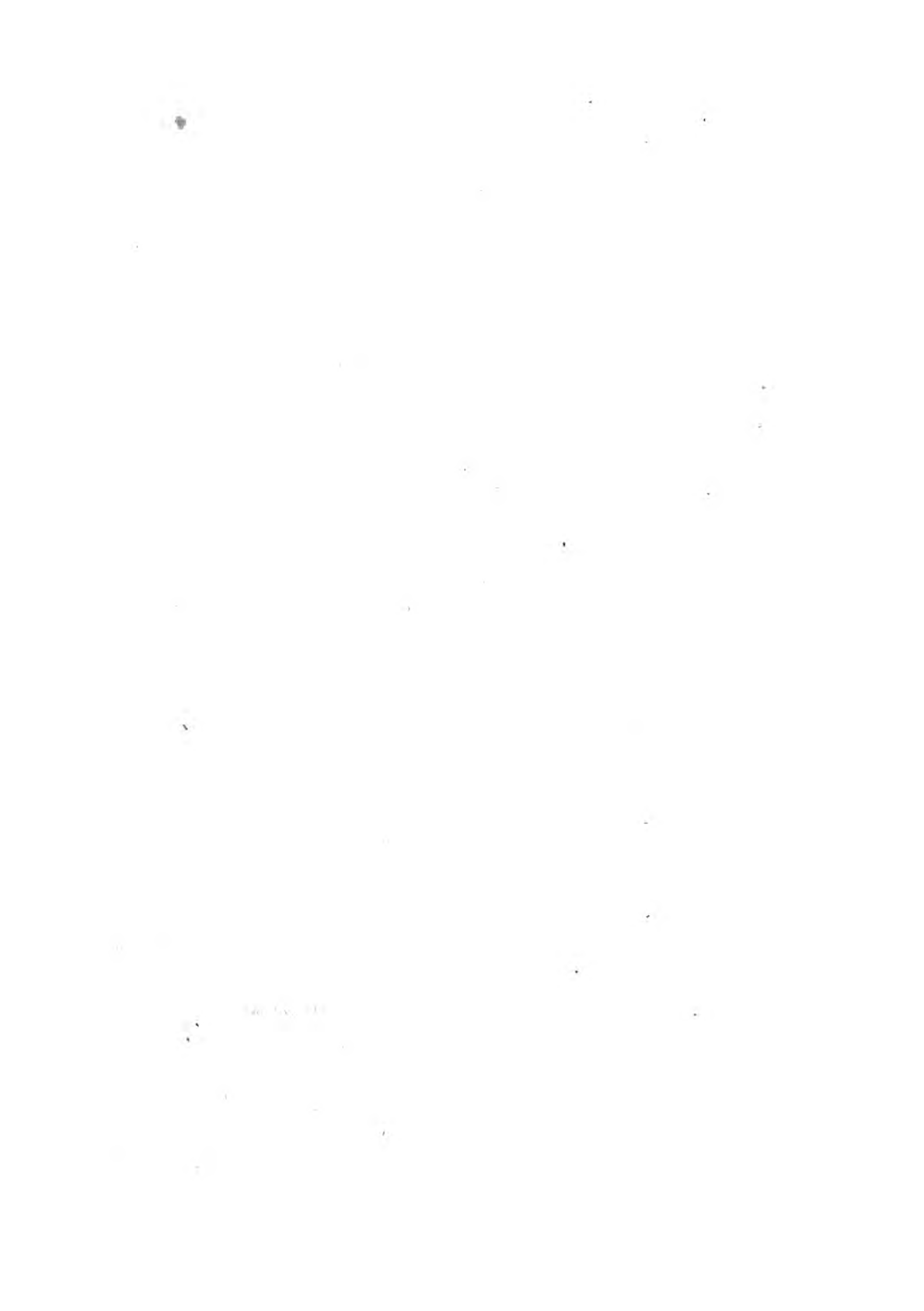
LONDON :

PRINTED BY C. WHITTINGHAM,
Dean Street ;

AND SOLD BY W. BUTTON AND SON, PATER-NOSTER ROW; M. GURNEY,
HOLBORN; AND I. JAMES, BRISTOL.

PRICE ONE SHILLING.





A

SERMON,

8c. 8c.

MY YOUNG BRETHREN,

MOST affectionately do we congratulate you on your present happy situation, in that Seminary of useful learning, for the support of which we are now assembled. The importance of learning you feel, the society by which you are patronised perceive, and we all acknowledge. At these anniversary meetings, the advantages of learning have been variously represented, and placed in the most striking points of view. To what has been ably advanced, on this topic, I can add nothing. Permit me, therefore, to lead your thoughts to another subject. Let me request your serious attention to a few plain remarks, on *The utility of religious experience to those who sustain the honourable character of Christian Ministers*. The observations, which I beg leave to lay before you, on this most important subject, will be grounded on those words of Solomon,

PROVERBS XVI. 23.

The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth.

The advantages of experience, and more especially in the interesting concerns of Religion, which is of an experimental nature, are numerous and great. The influence of Divine Truth, on the mind, the conscience, and the heart, is infinitely beneficial to him who feels it, and may, in various respects, operate to the advantage of other men ; *for the heart of the wise teacheth his mouth.*

Let us

- I. Explain the terms here employed.
- II. Illustrate the sentiment which the text conveys ; and
- III. Deduce a few practical consequences which naturally arise out of the subject.

I. We are to explain the terms:—the *wise*—the *heart* of the wise—the *mouth* of the wise—the heart of the wise *teacheth* his mouth.

By the *wise* is meant a *good* man ; a man of genuine religion, whose mind is enlightened, whose conscience is pacified, whose will is bowed

to divine authority, whose affections are spiritualized, and whose actions are regulated by the word of Truth;—a man who has just ideas of his own interest, and who steadily pursues it; for wisdom includes knowledge and prudence;—a man who knows wherein happiness consists, who is acquainted with the means which must be used in order to attain it, and who, in the proper use of those means, seeks felicity suited to his intellectual and moral nature, boundless as his wishes, and durable as his being;—a man who falls in with the plan of God; who discerns things which differ, and practically prefers those which are most excellent; who is disposed to make the best of whatever occurs; who, in the midst of danger, acts with caution; who remarks incidents, and improves by them; and who, by a steady faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, a lively hope of eternal glory, and a spirit of habitual devotedness to God, is prepared for all events. Such a man is wise, emphatically wise, wise in the best sense of the term, wise to salvation. He is endowed with *the wisdom which is from above.*—*The heart of such a man teacheth his mouth.*

The *heart*, as distinguished from the mind, is the seat of the affections, as the mind is the seat of intellect. When the soul is in a proper state, these correspond. The thoughts of the mind,

and the feelings of the heart, harmonize. But it is a lamentable consideration that some, who seem to speculate much, feel but little. They play with doctrines. Important truths float on the surface of their minds, without penetrating their hearts. But the heart is the proper seat of religion. When, however, we oppose feelings to barren speculation, we mean not to intimate that there are any feelings of a religious nature unconnected with sentiment. No: the hopes and the fears, the love and the hatred, the sorrows and the joys, of a wise man, are influenced by the truth. All his devout affections are excited by his faith. Yes, all the various exercises of the heart, so far as they are of the essence of religion, are effects of the Divine Word. Just views will produce holy tempers; and the heart, animated by proper dispositions, will teach the mouth.

The *mouth*, we scarcely need observe, is the medium of communication. It is the curious instrument of intellectual conveyance. By this invaluable organ, the possession of which gives man a peculiar dignity, the thoughts of one are quickly imported to another. Who constructed this ingenious machine? *Who made man's mouth?* God, —God, only wise;—God, who doth nothing in vain;—God, who designed man for social service, and qualified him for his work.

The heart of the wise *teacheth* his mouth. It furnisheth the mouth with something to communicate ; inclines the mouth to utter what the heart feels ; and exerts a beneficial influence on the manner in which the mouth speaks.

Having made these brief introductory remarks, we proceed to what we have principally in view, which is,

II. To illustrate the doctrine of the text. *The heart of the wise teacheth his mouth.*

The observations which we have just submitted to your notice, apply to the three principal branches of ministerial duty,—SOCIAL PRAYER,—PUBLIC PREACHING,—and FRIENDLY VISITS. We begin with,

1. SOCIAL PRAYER.

A minister is to lead the devotions of the people ; but how can he properly discharge this part of duty, if he be not himself devout ? Now the heart is the seat of devotion. God, who is a spirit, and who requires us to worship him in spirit and in truth, looks to the heart. What an awful charge did the prophet Ezekiel exhibit against some in his day ? *They come unto thee as the people cometh,*

with their mouth they show much love, but their heart goeth after their covetousness.—This people, said Jesus Christ, when speaking of the Pharisees, *draw nigh unto me with their mouth, and honour me with their lips, but their heart is far from me.* When this is unhappily the case, devotion is forced. Such unnatural service is a yoke by no means easy, and a burden which is far from being light. But when the heart is properly engaged, religious exercises are peculiarly delightful. *The heart teacheth the mouth.*

When Reverence of God, arising from a view of his glorious majesty, penetrates the heart, the mouth will naturally utter the language of adoration. When the beauty of the Divine Character fills the soul with delight, words expressive of sacred pleasure will employ the tongue. When the bosom glows with holy gratitude to the bountiful Bestower of every good and perfect gift, the language of praise will dwell upon the lips. When the breast, on which we smite, is conscious of deep depravity, of aggravated guilt, and of extreme danger, we shall want no other monitor to teach the mouth to say, *God be merciful to me, a sinner.* Then shall we feel the importance of Christ's mediation, and treat the Saviour with profound regard. When our desires to obtain pardoning grace, or sanctifying influences, are ardent, suitable forms of

petition will generally present themselves. When the heart is really and strongly interested, words will flow from the mouth. They who know not how to pray, are insensible to their wants. Does the man who is perishing with hunger, feel a difficulty in making known his necessities, to those from whom he expects relief? no: when our desires are vigorous, words will not be wanting. The heart properly touched, will suggest suitable expressions. When benevolence to men warms and expands the soul, the generous language of intercession will be used. When the spirit of devotion lifts the soul to heaven, the passions will inspire with a species of elevated diction.

How desirable is it, then, my brethren, to have the heart engaged, when we attempt to approach God in solemn prayer and praise? But, alas! who has not reason to lament, that, oftentimes, those affections which should soar above the world, and rise to that exalted Being in whom they ought to centre, cleave unto the dust? Then the mind is contracted, and prayer is restrained; for, by reason of darkness, we know not how to order our speech before the great object of worship. This painful experience, however, confirms the remarks we have made, or, rather the observation of Solomon in the text, that *the heart of the wise teacheth his mouth*. If you, my brethren, have, at any

time, as no doubt you have, felt and lamented a want of reverence, of humility, of gratitude, of joy, of earnest desires after spiritual blessings, and of animated benevolence to men, when engaged in prayer; you are better qualified to express the feelings of your fellow christians who are thus exercised, and in this respect, also, your heart will teach your mouth. If it be, as I trust it is, your supreme desire to worship God, in a manner acceptable to him, delightful to yourselves, and profitable to those with whom you may engage in this holy exercise, you will aim to cultivate a devout spirit. Let us illustrate the words of our text in regard to

II. PUBLIC PREACHING.

This is the principal work of a Christian Minister, to the proper performance of which religious experience is of indispensable necessity. Your heart, my brethren, will teach your mouth, as it will furnish you with sentiments to convey by it—powerfully induce you to communicate your thoughts—and have a beneficial influence on your manner of speaking.

1. *Your heart will* FURNISH YOUR MOUTH WITH SENTIMENTS TO CONVEY.

If your hearts are deeply interested in religion, *you will make a PROGRESS in divine knowledge.* It is the duty of every believer to increase in the knowledge of God, to leave the first principles of christianity, and to go on unto perfection: but it is reasonably expected that a minister, whose life is wholly devoted to the service of God, should make a greater advancement than Christians of private character, whose time and talents are variously employed. Now the degrees of intellectual improvement, other things being equal, will bear some proportion to the order of religious affection. That which is tasted with the highest relish, will be pursued with the closest application: but if we have little savour of divine knowledge we shall not seek it with avidity. Suppose two young gentlemen, at school, are engaged in the study of astronomy, or of any other science; and that they possess equal talents, as well as equal opportunities of obtaining information; but that they are differently affected towards their pursuits. The one loves the science; his heart is in it; every step he takes in the path of knowledge augments his delight, and quickens his desire after higher improvement. The other studies merely because it is his duty; he must please his tutor; he must gratify his friends; but he has no soul for his books; no pleasure in his learning; his lessons are a task. Which of the two, think you, will make the greater progress in a given time? Every one will be ready to reply,

“He whose heart is in his studies.” So in regard to divinity, the noblest of all sciences, the science of salvation, the science of God. Suppose two ministers, of equal parts, of equal learning, and of equal opportunities for increasing in knowledge; but whose hearts are differently affected towards their pursuits. The one reads the Bible, because he must preach from it; he composes sermons, because, when he appears before his people, he must have something to deliver; he studies, because, if there be no variety in his thoughts, or in his diction, his hearers will be soon disgusted. The other loves the word of God more than his necessary food. He delights in the Supreme Being, and wishes to see more of his glory. He rejoices in the Lord Jesus Christ, and desires to be better acquainted with the attributes of his nature, the excellence of his character, the importance of his office, the perfection of his work, and the dimensions of his love. He glories in the truth, by which his mind is informed, his conscience is pacified, and his heart is inspired with immortal hopes. The more he knows of the facts, the doctrines, the precepts, the promises, the predictions of scripture, the more pleasure he feels. Every accession to his knowledge, is an addition to his happiness. He lives, moves, and exists in his proper element. Which of these two ministers may be expected to make the greater progress? The question has been already answered. The point admits of no dispute.

In this respect, then, *the heart of the wise teacheth his mouth.* It animates him in his pursuit, and multiplies his researches. On the proper state of the heart, in regard to divine knowledge, much depends. Religion makes its appeal to the heart. To the heart, principally, its holy influences are directed. The purification of the heart is one of its grand objects. To persons whose hearts are right in the sight of God, many encouraging promises are addressed. *Then shall ye know, if ye follow on to know the Lord.—He that doeth the will of God, shall know of the doctrine whether it be true.* This leads me to remark,

That, *some things, in religion, can be KNOWN ONLY BY EXPERIENCE.* If you would know human nature, you must study your own hearts; and to know the heart of a Christian, you must experience the power of religion in your own souls. To ascertain the bitterness of repentance, you must taste its wormwood, and its gall. To form just ideas of the joys of faith, you must feel them. To be acquainted with the pleasures of devotion, you must enter into the spirit of religion. To be able successfully to describe the mutual contest between the flesh and the spirit, in the soul of a believer, experience is necessary. To qualify you to expose that false peace which ariseth from ignorance of the divine law; to shew what relief the testimony of God, concerning

his Son Jesus, affords those who have no other dependance; and to lay open the deceitfulness of the human heart, in its various operations, experience is indispensibly requisite. The nature, the rise, the progress, and the evidences, of the divine life in the soul, are best illustrated when the evangelical preacher derives his aid from the rich fund of his own experience. *The unction, which the wise man hath received from the Holy One, teacheth him all things, the secret of the Lord is with him, and he will show him his covenant.* Hence, in the view of a wise man,

Experience renders those things CERTAIN respecting which the mere speculatist may remain in doubt.

The great evil of sin, the preciousness of Christ, the utility of the divine word, and the advantages of genuine devotion, are interesting topics of frequent discussion in the pulpit. On all these topics, *the heart of the wise teacheth his mouth.* He knows that sin is evil, for he has been deeply humbled under a sense of its consummate folly, as justly exposing him to everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord; of its black ingratitude, as committed against the God of all grace; and of its flagrant injustice, considered in itself, as a violation of that divine law which is holy, just, and good. Sin is his greatest enemy. The sin

that dwelleth in him is the cause of his most bitter sorrows. He knows that Christ is precious to those who believe; for he is precious to his own soul. He has seen his need of Christ, the suitability of the Saviour to his own miserable circumstances, and the ground of encouragement to trust in him for salvation. Whether, or not, Christ is precious to those who believe, is not with him a matter of mere speculation. It is not a doubtful point. Experience hath decided it. *The heart teacheth the mouth.* He is certain that the word, when mixed with faith, is profitable; for it was the word, as the grand instrument in the hand of the Spirit, that convinced him of his ruined state; and that taught him the way of escape from the wrath to come. The word first alarmed his fears, and then excited his hope. He has nothing but the word of the Lord to keep him from sinking into all the wretchedness of desperation. He knows that it is good to draw near to God; for he has experienced the advantages of devotion. He has sought, and obtained, mercy. With the established connexion between asking and receiving, he is well acquainted. He has cast his burden upon the Lord, and has been sustained by him; and can, therefore, speak of the tendency of devotion to yield relief to the oppressed mind. He has felt the salutary influence of prayer, in purifying, expanding, and elevating his soul; and can, therefore, recommend

it as an admirable mean of religious improvement.

Once more:

That knowledge which results from experience, makes the deepest IMPRESSION on the mind, is RETAINED with the least difficulty, and is the most easily RECOLLECTED.

We may read the finest description of a storm at sea that genius ever drew, but it will not make that deep and lasting impression which is left upon the mind in consequence of our having been tossed on the tempestuous ocean. We may commit to memory a judicious account of the nature, the causes, and the effects, of repentance; but we shall be more likely to forget what we have thus learned, than what we have actually felt. Experience, which is a source of knowledge, will suggest the ideas which it hath enabled us to form. This leads me to remark, that,

2. *The heart will not only furnish you with sentiments to impart, but will, also, MOST POWERFULLY INDUCE YOU TO COMMUNICATE THEM.*

The friend, the master, the parent, the minister, who have entered deeply into the spirit of religion,

will naturally wish to convey to others the ideas of their own minds, and to excite in others the feelings of their own hearts ; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth will speak. When the heart indites good matter, the tongue will be as the pen of a ready writer. It will be prompt to utter, and fluent to express, what experience has taught. It is almost impossible not to speak of those things which greatly interest the heart. Strong feelings require communication. When the affections are engaged, silence is oppressive. You cannot but speak of those things which you have not only heard and seen, but also felt. Knowing, by sad experience, what an evil and bitter thing it is to sin against God, you will expostulate with those who practise iniquity with greediness. Knowing in whom you have believed, and feeling Christ precious to your own souls, you will speak of him to your fellow sinners. The love of Christ will constrain you to sound forth his praise. Perceiving the transcendent excellency of the Gospel, the power of God to your salvation, you will recommend it to the attention, the esteem, the acceptance of others. Yes, tender compassion for the souls of men, lively gratitude to God, strong affection to the Lord Jesus Christ, exalted delight in the word of his grace, and ardent zeal for the divine honour, will not suffer you to be dumb. The feelings of

your hearts will burst forth in an animated address to men. If, while you muse, the fire kindle, you must speak with your tongue. If, in a moment of dejection, you say, "I will not make mention of the Lord; nor speak any more in his name;" when *his word is in your heart as a burning fire, shut up in your bones*, you will be *weary with forbearing*, and unable to stem the torrent of your feelings. Unless a man can, in some sense, say, "Necessity is laid upon me: yea, woe is me if I preach not the Gospel;" let him not think of the Christian Ministry, for there is no rational motive to engage in this important work where there is not such experience. If I thought there were a student, in this academy, destitute of an experimental acquaintance with religion, and whose heart, therefore, cannot teach his mouth, to him I would most earnestly say, Turn your attention to law, or medicine; to science, or commerce; to agriculture, or any of the mechanic arts; to any pursuit in which, without attempting to perform an unnatural part, or to support a borrowed character, you may provide things honest in the sight of all men, and prove yourself a useful member to society; rather than aspire after the honour of obtaining the pastoral office in a Dissenting Church, in which you will do no good, enjoy no felicity, secure no emolument

equal to the time you will employ, and the talents you will exert. But hoping better things of you, my brethren, I proceed to observe, that,

3. *The heart will* INFLUENCE THE MANNER IN WHICH YOU WILL SPEAK ON DIVINE TOPICS.

There is an amazing difference in the manner in which men generally speak of those things which they have experienced, and of those to which their experience has not extended. Suppose two persons, whose natural tempers are equally affectionate, visit an afflicted friend, to whom they are equally attached; if the one have been in similar distress, there will be something in his voice, in his accent, in his countenance, in his whole manner, that will arrest the attention, and interest the heart of the sorrowful; which the other, whom experience has never instructed, will in vain attempt to imitate. So, in regard to the manner of preaching, the difference is frequently perceptible. We will illustrate this remark by the following particulars.

He, whose *heart teacheth his mouth*, will speak with *becoming* SERIOUSNESS, and not with the levity of a mere speculatist.

Let others endeavour, by ludicrous stories, ill-timed strokes of wit, and antic gestures, to provoke the risibility of an audience, he, whose heart is really interested in his work, will aim, *by manifestation of the truth, to commend himself to every man's conscience, in the sight of God.* Let others delight the imagination merely, he will try to reach the heart. Let others studiously display their parts, and their learning, to excite the applause of a listening multitude, his grand object is, by winning souls for Christ, to obtain the approbation of his God. When a man who enters into the soul of religion, addresses the ignorant, the guilty, the depraved, the lost, the impressive seriousness of his manner will shew that he is in earnest. Recollecting his own past situation, when he stood trembling on the verge of a tremendous precipice, he cannot trifle with those who are in danger of falling into the pit. When he directs his discourses to those who, through grace, have believed; —when he endeavours to comfort the distressed, to succour the tempted, or to reclaim backsliders; he will be serious. Whether he appeals to the reason, to the conscience, or to the passions of men, when he speaks from the fulness of his heart, he cannot but be serious. When the important concerns of religion lie with weight upon his mind, to trifle will be impossible.

The man whose *heart teacheth his mouth*, will speak with DECISION, though not with arrogance. Whatever diffidence of his talents he may feel, or whatever doubts he may entertain on some disputed points, yet when speaking on the most interesting topics of religion, his manner will be decided. When he can truly say "that which we have seen, and heard, and felt, and handled, declare we unto you," his manner will not be accompanied with sceptical hesitation. *Knowing the terrors of the Lord*, he will earnestly *persuade men*. *Tasting that the Lord is gracious*, he will, with a firm tone, speak of his *marvellous kindness*. The language of doubt will not escape his lips, when discussing subjects on which experience has taught him. No: he will naturally express himself, in such cases, as one who knows that what he says is both true and important. Hence the authority which the consciences of hearers often feel.

When *the heart teacheth the mouth*, there will be, not only an earnestness, but a PATHOS, an AFFECTION, a SAVOUR, an ENERGY, which cannot be counterfeited, as they arise from the heart only.

My brethren, with how much more propriety might it be said of a Christian Minister, than of a Roman Advocate, that "to be an orator he must be a good man?" When the affections receive a

divine touch, thoughts are vigorous, and language glows : but when our hearts are hard as adamant, and our passions cold as death, the imagination is feeble, conceptions are languid, and our words are frozen. Hence arises the necessity of entering into the spirit of the subjects which we discuss, if we would speak of them with pleasure to ourselves, and so as to arouse and fix the attention of the hearers. When you feel the importance of the theme on which you discourse, corresponding affections are excited, and they give energy to diction. At such times, my brethren, you seem to reign over your audience. Hence that inartificial eloquence which is generally felt ; and which, while it captivates the uninformed, gratifies the uncontaminated taste of the most refined. An experimental acquaintance with the power of religion, is, in this view of it, of more importance than words can represent, or imagination can conceive. Some idea, however, may be formed of it, by reflecting on the pleasure with which we sometimes hear ministers, who have nothing to recommend them, but—what are, indeed, of the highest moral value—their piety, their benevolence, and their zeal. They speak from the fulness of their hearts, and discover an earnest desire, not to display themselves, but to glorify God, to extend the boundaries of the Redeemer's holy empire, and to be instrumental in peopling the mansions of heaven, by

souls whom they have plucked out of the fire. They possess no literary stores, no metaphysical acumen, no brilliancy of genius; but, what is far better, they have a lively concern to be useful. Hence, though they dwell, principally, on the most common topics, and treat them in the most common way, the solemnity, the seriousness, the unaffected simplicity, the genuine affection, and the holy savour with which they speak, create a powerful interest in every breast. Their artless eloquence steals, with an irresistible force, into the hearts of the audience. The religious passion, which the subject inspires, darts and vibrates from the speaker to the hearer, till one general glow is felt.

When the heart speaks, more, oftentimes, is understood than expressed. Jesus, beholding the city of Jerusalem, *wept over it*, saying, "*If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! . . . but now they are hid from thine eyes.*" This is the burst of affection. The language seems abrupt, and broken. Imagination is left to supply, what, owing to the fulness of the heart, the tongue could not utter.—Finally,

A consciousness of the purity of your motives will dignify your address, and raise you nobly

superior to those unhappy men who have no determinate object in view, or who seek only their own advantage.

Ah! how awful is the state of those who preach what they have never felt, and recommend what they have no wish to practise! How much is that minister to be pitied, who dares not touch on certain points, lest, in some odious picture which he draws from life, he himself should be recognized by the congregation; or lest conscience, performing a faithful part, should thus address the preacher, in the words of Nathan to David, "*Thou art the man!*" But happy, thrice happy, the minister, whose soul, like the face of Moses, after conversing with his God, sparkles with celestial fire. This, reflected on his sermons, will spread the brightest lustre over them.

But it is time to speak, as we proposed,

3. OF FRIENDLY VISITS.

That you will visit your people, I take for granted. The propriety of paying them friendly visits, on suitable occasions, I will not, therefore, attempt to prove. That religion will often be the subject of conversation, we suppose.—What I wish you to consider, is, the benefit you will derive from expe-

rience in discoursing with different classes of persons ;—with those who are distressed in mind under their first convictions of sin ;—with those who are discouraged from making a religious profession, though proper subjects for Divine Ordinances ;—with those who, after having made a profession, are in painful doubt respecting their interest in the blessings of salvation,—and with such as are exercised with the common afflictions of life. In your general intercourse with men, let your heart teach your mouth ; for when the heart is properly disciplined, and the passions are under the guidance of reason and religion, it is most wise to speak as we feel. This is the most easy, safe, pleasant, honourable, and advantageous, mode.

We now draw to a close, by specifying,

III. A few practical consequences which we should derive from this view of the subject.

1. From what has been said, you, my brethren, will see *the evil of resting satisfied with mere speculation*. This, alas ! is a danger to which ministers are peculiarly exposed. In the daily habit of thinking on divine topics, in a professional way, they will, unless they are eminently watchful, become gradually in a great measure, insensible to

their power. To avoid an evil, so much to be deprecated, be sedulously attentive to the state of your own heart. Whatever subject you contemplate, with a view to public discussion, see that it has its proper influence on your own souls. Preach it over first to yourselves, for your benefit as christians. Place it in the most striking points of view; seize its true spirit; and pray God to impress it on your minds, consciences, and hearts. Doctrines that are merely speculative, should not be brought into the pulpit; for there are none of this description in the Bible. Every divine truth is designed, and adapted, to produce some valuable effect. Never, therefore, rest satisfied, unless *the word of God work effectually in you, as it doth in all them that believe*. Pray to Him, who made your hearts, and who hath revealed his truth, that he would be graciously pleased, by the means of his truth, to fill your hearts with holy, pious, and benevolent affections.

2. *Pay attention to your experience.* See that it be the result of *truth*. Never confound impulses and reveries, with the natural operation of Divine Truth. Trace every feeling of your heart to its proper *source*. If you are dejected, inquire the reason. If you are joyful, explore the cause of your pleasurable emotions. Attend, also, to the *effects*, as well as to the causes, of your feelings.

Nothing can be more insipid, than a religious journal specifying only that, on such a day, the writer was cast down in spirit, and, on another elevated to the skies. To render accounts of experience really useful, the springs of sorrow, and of joy, must be laid open, and their respective influence displayed.—Treasure up, among your choicest mental stores, the remarks which you make on your own experience. These will, gradually, form a rich magazine, to which you may often have recourse. Your own experience you may frequently preach, when modesty will not suffer you to bring yourselves forward, by adopting the language of Laban, “I have learned by experience.”—Take care, however, never to make your own experience any thing like a general standard; for though, as face answereth to face in a glass, so does the experience of one believer correspond, in the general outlines of it, with that of another; yet, in a thousand particular cases, they will differ; and who are we, that we should attempt to limit the Holy One of Israel, by confining him to one method of procedure?—Finally,

3. As the truth produces no spiritual effect, but as an instrument in the hands of that adorable agent by whom it was indited, and authenticated, *Take care not to grieve the Holy Spirit*, by acting from improper motives—by pursuing wrong ends

—by indulging evil tempers—by entering on any sinful course—by a careless discharge of duty—by relying on his agency without the use of proper means—or, by trusting to your own labours, without depending for success on his gracious influence. —I will close by one word of advice, on which, however, it must be acknowledged, it is very difficult uniformly to act ;—EXERT YOUR VERY BEST ENDEAVOURS, AS THOUGH ALL THE SUCCESS WHICH YOUR HEARTS CAN DESIRE RESTED SOLELY ON YOUR OWN EFFORTS ; AND, WHEN YOU HAVE DONE ALL, DEPEND AS ABSOLUTELY ON THE BLESSING OF GOD, AND ON THE WORK OF HIS SPIRIT, AS IF YOU HAD DONE NOTHING.

THE END.

C. WHITTINGHAM, Printer, Dean Street.

A

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