

age and character; what is suitable to the subject, the hearers, the place, and the occasion. On this idea, he should adjust the whole train and manner of his speaking.

What degree of conciseness or diffuseness is suited to popular eloquence, it is not easy to determine with precision. A diffuse manner is generally considered as most proper. There is danger, however, of erring in this respect; by too diffuse a style public speakers often lose more in point of strength than they gain by fullness of illustration. Excessive conciseness indeed must be avoided. We must explain and inculcate; but confine ourselves within certain limits. We should never forget, that however we may be pleased with hearing ourselves speak, every audience may be tired; and the moment they grow weary, our eloquence becomes useless. It is better in general, to say too little, than too much: to place our thought in one strong point of view, and rest it there, than by showing it in every light, and pouring forth a profusion of words upon it, to exhaust the attention of our hearers, and leave them languid and fatigued.—*Dr. Blair.*

PULPIT ELOQUENCE.

The following extract is from an Abridgement of Christmas Evans' advice to a young minister:—

Now we come to the subject on which you requested my advice, viz.: the manner of preaching that is likely to be most effectual.

On this subject it is difficult to prescribe rules that will answer the desired effect. After you have read all that *Dr. Blair, Williams, Fuller*, and the Bishop of Cambray, have said, and after all you have read of the eloquence of Demosthenes and Cicero, you may lose the spirit of the word. In searching for the form, you may lose the life.—Where there is no heart there is no life—where no life is there is death. You should preach the gospel of the grace of God plainly and affectionately. Do not lock up this box of precious ointment, and do not open any poisonous box of formalities and superstitions. I have heard some men of the greatest talents and learning attempting to preach according to the rules laid down by learned men, as dry in the pulpit as Mount Gilboah, without affecting themselves or any of their hearers.

The whole mystery in the rules of eloquence is this—you must feel the importance of your subject. If you wish to make your hearers feel, you must feel yourself. You must reach your own heart before you reach the heart of others. Unfeeling, loud speaking has a tendency to harden instead of softening the heart. The more you feel, the louder you may speak. Do not speak loud unless you feel warm. I am no advocate for speaking fast, but a man of warm feeling must either speak fast or loud in order to give vent to his feelings so as to affect others. What is lost in power is made up in velocity; or what is lost in velocity must be made up in power. But never attempt to raise steam without fire, and never kindle strange fire on the altar of God. Let the steam arise in proportion to the intensity of the heat in the boiler, but when the boiler is very hot, don't confine the steam. *Let go*, but if you would learn the whole mystery of this art, go to the