

principle, he would enter upon a course of clear and powerful reasoning, rendered equally attractive and astonishing by the delectable purity and beauty of his style. In this latter case, the sentences were finished with such exquisite care, that he appeared to have selected not merely the most appropriate, but the only words which served his purpose, and yet delivered with such freedom and ease, that they seemed the first which came into his mind. As he proceeded, he increased in animation and strength of utterance; in his application of the principles he had advanced, or the doctrine he had discussed, he grew more intense and ardent; and when he had risen to a certain pitch of holy excitement, his brow would expand, his countenance brighten, and, drawing back his majestic form in the pulpit, he would come forward again, charged with the fulness of his message to his hearers, and address them in tones and language which made every heart vibrate. But it was not with his lips only that he spoke; his eloquence was more intellectual and spiritual than audible sounds could make it. His speaking eye told volumes. Whether beaming with benignity, or lighted up with intelligence, or blazing with intense and hallowed feeling, that eye indicated sentiments and emotions which words were not made to express.

It is impossible to describe the impression which many of his most powerful sermons produced; the glow, the rapture, the delight, with which they were heard; the breathless silence which prevailed in the assembly, so that even the ticking of the clock became an awful sound. His appeals were beyond measure affecting, and his pleadings most urgent. With all the disadvantages of a weak voice, and sometimes with a rapid and hurried utterance, he soared to the greatest heights of human eloquence. He carried his hearers with him, as by an irresistible impulse, and induced in many of them an aspiration after the same heaven to which he was tending, and an admiration of the same God and Saviour whom he loved and adored.

His preaching was eminently calculated to enlarge the mind, as well as to affect the heart; and his hearers were conscious of an increase of mental capacity as they followed him in the vast range of his contemplations. The extent of his views was truly astonishing, but represented in so lucid a manner as to be distinctly visible to all attentive observers. Notwithstanding the frequent magnificence of his style, there was so much simplicity united with it, that the poorest and most unlettered of his hearers were able to profit by his discourses. They could not, it is true, quote many passages from them, in the words in which he uttered them; but they were

conscious of emotions which they never felt before, or had suffered to languish in their bosoms; or they gained ideas, which they could clothe in their own language when they conversed with each other; while from the plainer passages and more familiar discourses they derived so much instruction, that they were scarcely behind their more intelligent brethren in their love and admiration of the preacher.

He sometimes ended abruptly, and sat down just when his hearers most wished him to proceed; when he had enkindled in their breasts a love of holiness and truth, or had impressed them deeply with the importance of eternal things, or displayed the love of God in Christ, or unveiled to them the glories of the spiritual temple, in which God dwells with his people, and they with him, for ever.

There were two other qualities in Mr. Hall's preaching to which I will just allude; one is, the earnestness of his manner; and the other, the incessant variety of his matter. The first must have been remarked by most persons who have heard him. It attended him in all his public ministrations, and gave him an immense advantage over the feelings of his hearers. They saw that he had something to communicate to them of surpassing interest; something which had absorbed his whole soul, and in which their own safety and happiness were deeply involved.—Whether he warned the impenitent, or consoled the faithful; whether he urged the sinner to *flee from the wrath to come*, or the saint to persevere in his heavenly course; whether he directed the self-condemned to the blood of expiation, or cheered the fainting spirit with the promises of the gospel; whether he wielded the thunders of the law, or whispered the mild accents of merciful invitation, or exhorted his hearers in general that with *full purpose of heart they should cleave unto the Lord*; he appeared to be equally in earnest, equally intent upon doing good, and making a right impression upon all who heard him. He obviously spoke from the heart, and as in the presence of God; while nothing trifling or irrelevant escaped him, to diminish the effect of such an impression.

The rich variety which pervaded his discourses, was quite as remarkable as the other characteristics of this great preacher. It has not been so universally attributed to him as some of his other excellencies, because his occasional hearers were obviously not in a situation to judge of its extent. Those who heard him once, or twice, or twenty times only, could form but a very imperfect conception of it; while his regular and constant hearers, who attended him through a long course,