

confess my ignorance, for I do not know of any one. Think of it. You can count up your *thousands* of Mr. Spurgeon's printed sermons. What fecundity! Put these into volumes of the size of Mr. Phillips Brooks's last collection, that entitled "Twenty Sermons," and you have a tale of some *one hundred* substantial books! And the market of the world still unabatedly hungry for further supply from the same redounding source! For the space of one whole human generation, the production, with the issue, of these discourses, has gone on—and the producer yet a comparatively young man of only fifty-three years of age! We need not draw on the "hope of unaccomplished years" to say that here is a phenomenon to which the whole past history of the Christian pulpit scarcely furnishes a parallel. Twenty-five years still to follow of this prodigious productiveness is not too much to hope for—and at the end of that period, what an accumulated visible result in print of one man's labor in the preaching of the Gospel of Christ! Two hundred good-sized volumes of sermons the offspring of a single brain! How will Voltaire's miraculous less than one hundred tomes of collected works, eked out with innumerable odds and ends of letters, dwindle in the comparison of count, of volume, and, why should we fear to add, of weight and value!

This suggestion of literary parallel reminds one that Mr. Spurgeon is author as well as preacher. Already, in fact, apart from sermons, he has written books enough to bear, in bulk, no insignificant relation to Voltaire's long-wondered-at multitudinous production. And what a man of affairs Mr. Spurgeon has been besides! If he had written nothing and preached nothing, but had only created and organized the beneficent institutions that have, so to speak, spontaneously sprung up at the signal of the sound of his feet as he passed along—these alone would have been considered, and would have seemed worthy to be considered, not simply an adequate, but a remarkable, account to render of the sustained and continuous effort of a long life-time. I must not be diverted to expatiate here on Mr. Spurgeon the man; for it is of the preacher Mr. Spurgeon that I am properly limited to speaking. But that the preacher whom we study is such a man as he is, it would be mere blindered narrowness not at least incidentally to remember—a man, namely, who, in point of breadth, of depth, of intensity, and of probable duration, of influence for good on the human race, is not surpassed, perhaps not equalled, by any peer of his belonging to his own generation.

You must judge sermons as sermons. What are sermons? They are popular harangues or addresses, having it for their object to make Christians, or to make better Christians, of their hearers or readers. That, nothing more, nothing less, nothing else, is what sermons are. That is, true sermons, ideal sermons, sermons accordant with the Scripture conception of preaching. Apply this standard of judgment, and