

sermons by so distinguished a preacher did not fail to excite much interest in the district where he is best known. Little Tom Eaves, who at different times has given Mr. Thackeray so much valuable information, assured us, on his return from a recent visit to Edinburgh, that the eminent publishers who have sent forth this volume, were content to give for its copyright a sum which, for a volume of sermons, was quite extraordinary—as much, in fact, as Sir Walter Scott received for *Marmion*. Mr. Caird's book is sure to have many readers. Many educated people in England will feel curious to know what sort of preaching is at a premium in the Scotch Church, where many things are so different from what they are among us. And we think we have been able to trace one or two indications in the volume, that Mr. Caird had an English audience in view. On at least two occasions we find the word *Sunday* ("a *Sunday* meditation," "*Sunday-school* teachers") where we are mistaken if most Scotch preachers would not have employed the word *Sabbath*, which is in almost universal use north of the Tweed. But in Scotland, no doubt, Mr. Caird will find the great majority of his readers. Numbers of people who have listened to the fiery orator will be anxious to find whether the discourses which struck them so much when aided by the accessories of a wonderfully telling manner, will stand the severer test of a quiet perusal at home. So here is Mr. Caird's volume.

Here, then, we have the spent thunderbolts, motionless and cold. Here we have the locomotive engine, which tore along at sixty miles an hour, with the fire raked out and the steam gone down. Here, in short, we have the sermons of the great Scotch pulpit orator, stripped of the fire, the energy, the eloquent voice, the abundant gesticulation, which did so much to give them their charm when delivered and heard. There is but one story told as to the share which *manner* has always had in producing the practical effect which has been felt in listening to all the great orators, from Demosthenes to Chalmers. Manner has always been the first, second, and third thing; and Mr. Caird could not publish his manner. We can examine his sermons calmly, and make up our mind about their merits deliberately, now. To do so was quite impossible while we were hurried away by the rushing eloquence of the living voice.

No doubt, then, this volume will disappoint the less intelligent class of Mr. Caird's admirers, who expect to be as deeply impressed in reading these discourses as they were in hearing them. No words standing quietly on the printed page can possibly have the effect of the same words spoken by the human voice, with immense feeling, and with all the arts of oratory. To expect that they should have an equal effect is to expect that the sword laid upon the table should cut as deeply as it did when grasped in a strong and skilful swordsman's hand. Mr. Caird's manner we know is a remarkably effective one; and of course the better the speaker's manner, the more his speech loses by being dissociated from it.

Still, after making every deduction, they are noble sermons; and we are not sure but that, with the cultivated reader, they will gain rather than lose by being read, not heard. There is a thoughtfulness and depth about them which can hardly be appreciated, unless when they are studied at leisure; and there are many sentences so felicitously expressed that we should grudge being hurried away from them by a rapid speaker, without being allowed to enjoy them a second time. And Mr. Caird, we feel as we read his pages, has succeeded in attain-

ing a great end: he has shown that it is possible to produce sermons which shall be immensely popular, and popular with all classes of people; while yet all shall be so chaste and correct that the most fastidious taste could hardly take exception to a single word or phrase. In Mr. Caird's sermons there is nothing extravagant or eccentric either in thought or style. There is nothing unworthy of the clergyman and the scholar. There are no clap-trap expectations to excite attention; nothing merely designed to make an audience gape; nothing that possibly could produce a titter. The solemnity of the house of God is never forgotten. Mr. Caird has no peculiar views, no special system of theology; he preaches the moderate and chastened Calvinism of the Church of Scotland,—precisely the doctrine of the Thirty-Nine Articles. He does not tell his hearers that the world is coming to an end; he finds nothing about Louis Napoleon in the Book of Revelation; he does not select queer texts or out-of-the-way topics for discussion. It is no small matter to have proved in this age of pulpit drowsiness on the one hand, and pulpit extravagance on the other, that sound and temperate doctrine, logical accuracy, and classical language are quite compatible with great popularity. It is pleasant to find that discourses which are thoroughly manly and free from sentimentalism or cant prove attractive to a class which is too ready to run after such preachers as Mr. Charles Honeyman; and that sensible and judicious views, set forth in a style which is always scholarly and correct, and enforced by a manner in which there is no acting, howling, ventriloquism, or gymnastic posturing, can hold vast crowds in a rapt attention, which would please even that slashing critic of the pulpit, *Habitans in Sirco*. Wide as the pole apart is such popularity as that of Mr. Caird from such popularity as that of Mr. Spurgeon and his class. It is very often with contempt and indignation that people of sense listen to "popular preachers." No doubt such preachers may be well fitted to please and even to profit the great multitude who have little sense and no taste at all; but it is a fresh and agreeable sensation to the reviewer when he discovers a man whose eminence as a preacher is the sequel to a brilliant career at the University; whose sermons indicate a mind stored with the fruits of extensive reading and study; who shrinks instinctively from whatever is coarse or grotesque; who is perfectly simple and sincere without a trace of self-consciousness; in whose composition there is nothing spasmodic, nothing aiming to be subtle and succeeding in being unintelligible; and who seems so far as it is possible to judge, to be actuated by an earnest desire to impress religious truth upon the minds of his hearers. And, indeed, when we think what is the great end of the preacher's endeavors, we feel that all mere literary qualities and graces are of no account whatever when compared with the presence of that efficacious element in the sermon which makes it such as that it shall be the means of saving souls.

By this time, we doubt not, our readers are impatient of our remarks, and would like to hear Mr. Caird speak for himself. We proceed to give a more specific account of the contents of the volume.

It contains eleven sermons, the fourth being divided into two parts, intended, we presume, to be preached at different times; and a glance at the Table of Contents at once makes us suspect that the sermons have, with a view to publication, been materially changed from what they were when they were preached. Sermons

in Scotland, as in England, have a sort of average length, from which they do not deviate materially except on extraordinary occasions. But while Mr. Caird's first sermon occupies forty pages, the second occupies only twenty-five, the fourth twenty, and the fifth thirteen. The first sermon is thus three times as long as the fifth, and twice as long as the fourth. So if the fifth sermon be of the standard Scotch length of three quarters of an hour, the first would occupy in the delivery two hours and a quarter. Or if the first sermon is to be taken as the standard, the fifth would crumble up into the "just fifteen minutes."

The subject of the first sermon is *The Self-evidencing Nature of Divine Truth*; its text is, "By manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." (2 Cor. iv. 2.) It is a scholarly and masterly production; but the thought which forms its staple is more severe than is usual in Mr. Caird's discourses. It is, in short, a view, set out with consummate tact and ingenuity, of the internal evidence of the truth of the Christian religion. We should ask our university men and our clergy to read this sermon the first. They will find in it a strict and unerring logic, great skill in simplifying and illustrating abstract ideas, and a style which could scarcely be improved. But when we pass to the discourse which stands next in order we find much clearer indications of the power of the popular orator.

It is on *Self-Ignorance*: the text, "Who can understand his errors." (Psalm xix. 12.) We almost wonder in reading the former sermon how Mr. Caird can be so popular; but when we read this, more especially if we have heard Mr. Caird preach, and can imagine the fashion in which he would deliver many passages, we have less difficulty in understanding the matter. Here is the introduction, which would attract attention at once:

"Of all kinds of ignorance, that which is the most strange, and, in so far as it is voluntary, the most culpable, is our ignorance of self. For not only is the subject in this case that which might be expected to possess for us the greatest interest, but it is the one concerning which we have amplest facilities and opportunities of information. Who of us would not think it a strange and unaccountable story, could it be told of any man now present, that for years he had harbored under his roof a guest whose face he had never seen—a constant inmate of his home who was yet to him altogether unknown? It is no supposition however, but an unquestionable fact, that to not a few of us from the first moment of existence there has been present, not beneath the roof, but within the breast, a mysterious resident, an inseparable companion, nearer to us than friend or brother, yet of whom after all we know little or nothing. What man of intelligence amongst us would not be ashamed to have had in his possession for years some rare or universally admired volume with its leaves uncut? or to be the proprietor of a repository filled with the most exquisite productions of genius, and the rarest specimens in science and art, which yet he himself never thought of entering? Yet surely no book so worthy of perusal, no chamber containing objects of study so curious, so replete with interest for us, as that which seldom or never attracts our observation—the book, the chamber of our own hearts. We sometimes reproach with folly those persons who have travelled far and seen much of distant countries and yet have been content to remain comparatively unacquainted with their own. But how venial such folly compared with that of ranging