

He is thoroughly in earnest from the fact that he preaches himself. His converts, therefore, are likely to mistake being Spurgeonized for being Christianized; for the Christianity he preaches is not so much vital Christianity as it is Christianity passed through the vitalities of his own nature, and essentially modified and lowered in the process. To understand, then, the kind of influence he exerts, we have simply to inquire, What kind of a man is Mr. Spurgeon?

The answer to this question is given on every page of his sermons. He has no reserves, but lets his character transpire in every sentence. He is a bold, eager, earnest, devout, passionate, well-intentioned man, with considerable experience in the sphere of the religious emotions, full of sympathy with rough natures, full of mother wit and practical sagacity, but, as a theologian, coarse, ignorant, narrow-minded, and strikingly deficient in fine spiritual perceptions. These qualities inhere in a nature of singular vigor, intensity, and directness, that sends out words like bullets. Warmth of feeling combined with narrowness of mind makes him a bigot; but his bigotry is not the sour assertion of an opinion, but the racy utterance of a nature. He believes in Spurgeonism so thoroughly and so simply that toleration is out of the question, and doctrines opposed to his own he refers, with instantaneous and ingenuous dogmatism, to folly or wickedness. "I think," he says, in one of his sermons, "I have none here so profoundly stupid as to be Puseyites. I can scarcely believe that I have been the means of attracting one person here so utterly devoid of one remnant of brain as to believe the doctrine of baptismal regeneration." The doctrine, indeed, is so nonsensical to him, that, after some caricatures of it, he asserts that it would discredit Scripture with all sensible men, if it were taught in Scripture. God himself could not make Mr. Spurgeon believe it; and doubtless there are many High Churchmen who would retort, that nothing short of a miracle could make them assent to some of the dogmas of their assailant. Indeed, the incapacity of our preacher to discern, or mentally to reproduce, a religious character differing in creed from his own, makes him the most amusingly intolerant of Popes, not because he is malignant, but because he is Spurgeon. If he had learning or largeness of mind, he would probably lose the greater portion of his power. He gets his hearers into a corner, limits the range of their vision to the doctrine he is expounding, refuses to listen to any excuses or palliations, and then screams out to them, "Believe or be damned!" In his own mind he is sure they will be damned, if