

he exhibits in his later sermons not only keen flashes of insight, as he always did from the beginning, but much patient reflection, with greater maturity of thought and juster views of life.

5. He has shown a growing fondness for *historical* subjects, and great ingenuity in deducing from them interesting and wholesome lessons. This also is an adaptation to the changing taste of the times. Men who are averse to abstract thought often take great interest in facts and persons. The Bible abounds in these, and sermons upon Scripture scenes and characters will more readily command attention now than discussions of abstract doctrine. There is also a growing demand for well-managed expository preaching. Mr. Spurgeon has shown great gifts in this respect, not so much in his regular sermons as in the expository remarks with which he accompanies the reading of Scripture. These have been noticed by many persons as of extraordinary interest and value, and are often said by himself to have demanded more time in preparation than his sermons. Much of the fruits of this study may be seen in another form in the "Treasury of David." But it seems much to be desired that he should have many of these running expositions taken down, and published with the passages to which they refer.

6. He has always made many brief quotations. The chief sources are the Bible and the Lyonn-book, the Puritan divines and modern religious biographies. Of late years he is observed to quote more freely from secular poets, especially from Coleridge and Tennyson.

7. Mr. Spurgeon has extraordinary power of illustration. He draws chiefly from nature and common life, from history, biography and newspapers, and from Scripture. His volume called "Feathers for Arrows" presents merely the overflow from a large collection of illustrations jotted down as they occurred to him, and which he has found no occasion to use in all the vast

amount of his speaking and writing. This is really a wonderful fact.

8. His applications are exceedingly pointed and personal, frequent, urgent and importunate. He has somewhere remarked, "Where the application begins, the sermon begins."

In general, Mr. Spurgeon's power is not in single great sermons, but in a constant succession of good sermons. This also suits our time, in which men are rather impatient of "great efforts," but want always something easy to listen to and practically helpful.

III. Several things are also noteworthy in the arrangement of Mr. Spurgeon's discourses.

1. His sermons are nearly all textual or topical-textual, only now and then strictly topical. Even when interpreting loosely, he holds himself to those specific aspects of truth which the text, as he interprets it, presents; and the sermon throughout is colored by its text. From this practice his preaching derives an inexhaustible variety. He shows a perfectly wonderful fertility in developing a single seed of thought or expanding an image.

2. His plans are often quite ingenious, yet almost always simple. A few years ago it would have been necessary to say that his sermons exhibited an unpleasant sameness of general structure, but of late there has been greater variety of plan. It is quite possible that in this and some other respects the great preacher has profited by the preparation of his own "Lectures to My Students." A wise man is very apt to teach himself in teaching others.

3. He usually applies each point as he goes, but sometimes applies the whole at the end. Yet he never makes mere general exhortation in closing. When the distinct points of discussion or application are finished, the preacher quits promptly. If the earlier divisions have been much expanded, the last is apt to be greatly shortened, so as to bring the whole service within certain pretty exact limits. This is quite important now, not only because the age is restless, but because everybody car-

Mr. Spurgeon's sermons are according to the method of Mr. Spurgeon, and scarcely