

first question is "What is true?" Finding the truth he believes it with his whole mind, heart and strength and with winning ways, gentle voice, and moistened eye he offers it, lovingly, to those who are hungering for it; but towards those that mock the truth or despise it, he turns in sublime defiance, setting down his foot, with the unmovable decision of his non-conformist forefathers on *doctrine* and dealing staggering blows with his two-edged sword which is the Word of God. "We ought to preach the Gospel" says Spurgeon, "not as our own views at all, but as the word of God. If we had been entrusted with the making of the Gospel we might have altered it to suit the taste of this modest century, but never having been employed to originate the good news but merely to repeat it we dare not step beyond the record. What we have been taught of God we teach. . . . He that hath God's word let him speak it faithfully, and he will have no need to answer gainsayers except with a "Thus Saith the Lord."

Beecher, on the other hand, as the apostle of *Sentimentalism*, asks as his first question, "Where is the beautiful?" He is therefore at constant war with Doctrine. "We talk" he says "a great deal about the doctrines of religion but the *doctrines* of the christian religion are of no more value than the doctrines of the Brahmins except in the thing they do. . . . The value of a doctrine is to be measured by what it will do as the value of an apple tree is to be estimated by the quantity of apples that it bears from year to year." And when you come to ask Beecher what he means by faith, the article that distinguishes a dead from a living church, he replies in the following misty, sentimental style; "Faith is the sense of a Person present who is transcendent over any ordinary companionship; the consciousness of an intelligent Person of a living Providence: and of the going out of

your nature to it. So that you live not by sight but by the invisible, by the supereminent Power that controls all things, not talking about it but living it, so that men see and feel that you do it, *that* is beautiful and it inspires every body with admiration." The last clause of this sentence (it inspires every body with admiration) reminds us of the story told of Dr. Blair and his colleague Dr. Erskine. In the forenoon Dr. Blair preached about virtue, and having described a perfectly virtuous man concluded in the style of Beecher as given above, "If such a man visited this earth all everywhere would bend down and do him homage." The pulpit in the afternoon belonged to Dr. Erskine who in point of doctrine stood to Blair as Spurgeon does to Beecher; and he in a very quiet way, looking in the direction of Dr. Blair's pew, said, "Such a perfectly virtuous man as was described to us this morning visited this earth, and men instead of running to do him homage, cried out "Crucify Him."

If you ask Spurgeon what Christianity is he will tell you it is a *doctrine*—the Cross of Christ, a doctrine, however that is never barren of fruit. If you ask Beecher what Christianity is he will tell you it is a *life*—a life that has no pith without the doctrine. Here are Beecher's words in a recent utterance. "I should have most serious fear for the future of religion and the church if I did not believe that religion is not a set of doctrines but a style of life and of manhood. I am certain that the beauty of the ideal of that manhood," and so on and so on.

Faith, whether old or new, must be judged by its fruit. The faith that Mr. Spurgeon holds is the faith of the Reformers, the faith of the Puritans. And its fruits lie scattered over centuries of the Church's history in deeds of heroic contendings, and martyr suffering. And with regard to Mr. Spurgeon and his place to-day, not simply