

of Poultry Chapel. In so doing he left a crowded church for an empty one. His friends thought he had made a mistake. At first it seemed as if they were right. The career, which had hitherto been bright and beautiful as a summer sky, was shadowed by dark difficulties. But a courage that refused to acknowledge defeat, a perseverance that knew no rest until its object was attained, and an ability that won for itself admiring homage, enabled Dr. Parker to triumph over all obstacles. The Poultry Chapel was sold, and the magnificent City Temple was built. When it was opened, in May, 1874, the sunshine came back again, and in its light the great preacher has dwelt ever since, enjoying a popularity which only grows with advancing years. Something of what he has done in and for London is known to every reader. To quote the words of an eminent English divine: "Crowded congregations for a quarter of a century have listened, Sunday by Sunday, to a ministry that has made the hard streets of London to spring with flowers, and that has distilled like dew on souls worn and wearied with the strain of city life." During these long years, the pastor of the City Temple has guided, comforted, and strengthened a multitude of souls in paths of righteousness and peace. The world is his parish in a large sense, for travelers from every part of the globe flock to his ministrations, and they carry away inspirations which can not fail to lift their lives to higher levels of character and activity.

Dr. Parker's personality is a puzzle to many people. His eccentricities of thought and style lead them to judge him harshly. Such critics forget that he has dared to be himself, and that, as Edmund Burke found out long ago, "all greatness is irregular." His epigram, flash, sparkle, and fireworks come naturally to him, and have of late, at least, been severely subordinated to the highest purposes of the pulpit. He has been called the High

Priest of pulpit smartness, whose sermons are so entertaining as to be christened the "Sunday Punch." But we have yet to learn the merit of dulness in speaking to the people, although some worthy sermon-makers seem to think there is such a merit. There is, undoubtedly, a tendency in our day to a cheap smartness both in the pulpit and in the press; but Dr. Parker is saved from it, both by the greatness of his ability and the consecration of his life. Preaching is a passion with him—not an amusement. In the autobiographical chapter to which we have already alluded, he cries: "I love to preach. I preach because I breathe. O Savior! Lamb of the Eternal God! keep me near Thy Cross, and make me bold in Thy name."

Much of Dr. Parker's power comes from his concentration. This one thing he does—he preaches. No temptation draws him aside from the great work of the Christian teacher. He frankly tells his people that he will not be hampered by such vexatious duties as attending committee-meetings and visiting seat-holders who require unreasonable attention. The strain of pulpit preparation leaves him no time or strength for other duties, important enough in their own place, but subordinate, in his judgment, to the equipment of mind and body for preaching. He lays special emphasis on the contribution physical health makes to pulpit force. For years he walked to the church from his house, and took a cold-water bath in the vestry. He will not speak to his dearest friend before going into the pulpit, so particular is his care of his marvelous voice. The writer has seen him write on a slip of paper the hymns to be sung and the mode in which the service was to be conducted, rather than speak his instructions. These things have been called mannerisms, and severely criticized. But they are part of Dr. Parker's method, and he goes his own way, regardless of the condemnation heaped upon his eccentricities. The kindness of his heart and the largeness of his sympathy are known to all who have come into contact with him. It may seem strange, but nevertheless it is true, that the bigness of his brain is equalled by the bigness of his heart. For his brether, he ever holds out a cordial welcome and a helping hand. His readiness to respond to any appeal is only limited by the multiplicity of his engagements. The man is as great as the preacher.