

heart he has none ; he shows no signs of being himself deeply impressed with the weight of his subject, and therefore must needs fail to impress others. He told us, indeed, not to criticise the man and his manner, but to listen to his message—and from some preachers the advice could be received and followed ; holy and humble men of heart, men who lose sight of themselves and are absorbed in their theme, who tell us “even weeping” that of which their own hearts are full ; such men constrain us to receive the Word from their lips as if it came from Heaven. But with Mr. Spurgeon this is impossible ; he is too much at his ease, too free and “rosy-lipped,” too flippant, too self-confident, to allow us for a moment to forget the man who is standing before us. With every desire to be charitable, one feels it very difficult to believe that he is in earnest. At the same time one must make allowance for his position and rather pity than condemn so young a man, carried away by the applause of the multitude, and continually tempted by the desire of praise.

But I fear there are graver counts than these to be laid to his charge. Mr. Spurgeon’s favourite way of handling his subjects, it is well known is the dramatic. He brings before you the persons of the sacred narrative, and you hear them, as it were, speaking by his mouth. And a very profitable way, no doubt it is when carefully and reverently employed ; but how when all care and all reverence are utterly discarded ? Can it profit any one, for instance, to carry away the idea of St. Paul, which many doubtless carried away the other night ; to imagine the Apostle a second rate debater, great in his own line, coarse and cunning and confident, grinning at the Corinthians, and exulting when he can catch them tripping ? Yet this is Mr. Spurgeon’s representation. “Yes,” says Paul, “you’re mighty clever in detecting my faults, suppose you look a little at your own—examine yourselves !” with a shout of defiance, and a shake of the fist in their imaginary faces.

If this is bad enough, how much worse is it when the person brought upon the stage is no less than the Holy One of God, and his words, spoken as man never spake before, are travestied and defiled by the preacher’s flippancy and irreverence !

Is it God’s work, or whose work is it, to call forth the laughter (!) of an assembly by an off-handed dialogue between Christ and Nicodemus—“Now, then, I’ll puzzle ye—read me my riddle if you can !” Poor Nicodemus scratches his head, and “I can’t make it out,” says he, &c. Or course the drama would not be complete without specimens of the Judge upon His throne, the cries of the damned, &c., and accordingly these were freely and broadly introduced.

As for the doctrinal views of this preacher, they are such as might be expected, and are only less dangerous than his profaneness of speech. “Are you at peace with God ? Do you feel that you are ? Can you say that you are ? Then you are all right—no fear of you !”

In accordance with this, a string of sarcasms is levelled at certain “gentlemen who preach what they call (!) *duty faith*” (probably, those who teach the necessity of a faith that worketh by love) and they are told that “they are quite welcome to their doctrine, Mr. Spurgeon would