

Some years ago the Rev. W. Osborne, who is now pastor of a flourishing Baptist Church at Eastbourne, supplied me with the following reminiscence of the Rev. James Spurgeon of Stambourne :—

The day preceding that on which he entered on college work in London, Mr. Osborne preached at Stambourne for old Mr. Spurgeon, who was then an octogenarian, and showed the strongest possible partiality for Dr. Watts's hymns. This deep-rooted prejudice on the part of the old gentleman was a trait in his character with which the neighbours and regular hearers were familiar ; but it was something of which the young preacher had never heard even the slightest whisper. Mr. Osborne arrived at Stambourne, he entered the chapel, to receive the first intimation of a coming disagreement when a member of the congregation expressed a hope that the hymns were selected, and that all were of Dr. Watts's composition. On turning to the book it was at once seen that the unlucky youth had missed his way in each selection, every hymn being the production of an unappreciated poet, for none would suit the old gentleman but those of Isaac Watts. Time was pressing, however, and the hymns were allowed to pass ; but as the service went on, the effects of the strange verses on the mind of the old pastor