

for an instant at the close of one of his divisions, and simultaneously, but for an instant, the vast audience as with one will, moves, coughs, or clears the throat, and resumes the attitude of earnest expectation and attention. So his sermons proceed, and so they end—they were generally long, as we measure sermons in these days, not often under the hour, but we never remember to have heard anyone complain of the length of Mr. Binney's sermons—and so the audience disperse, carrying with them the remembrance of the noble utterances to which they had listened, to take a place in their minds for weeks and months, it might be for a lifetime.

We have said that Mr. Binney's sermons were generally long, not always; he dared when he had nothing to say, to say it and close; there were times when, from indisposition, absence from home, extra engagements, or other causes, he was not able to prepare as he was wont; upon such occasions he did not fill up the time with idle inanities or unpertinent exhortations, as some are wont to do, but he made his sermon short. Happy the people who have such a minister! Of course, and naturally, he was unequal: hearers for the first time were often disappointed; it was so with ourselves; we heard him twice on one Sabbath, both special sermons, for the Home or Colonial (we forget which) Missionary Society, and we did not like the sermons, but when our attendance became regular, and we were accustomed to his manner and style of thought, it was but rarely that we did not find his sermons simply delightful. Was he eloquent? Yes, and No. As eloquence is generally understood, the rich rolling sentences, the piling of word upon word, the careful converging to a centre of streams of illustration or simile, and the final, grand rhetorical burst. No! But spontaneously, instinctively carried away by the grandeur of his theme and the loftiness of his own conception of it.—Yes! Often have the bursts of such eloquence swept across the living sea at the Weigh House, and stirred the hearts of his hearers to the deepest depths. His great power, however, as we apprehended it, was in the marvellous combination of analysis and imagination that he exhibited. Take any text from which you have heard twenty sermons preached, and listen to Mr. Binney on the same subject, and you would wonder at the depths of meaning he would make manifest, and the new views of truth that he would unfold; nothing strained, every thought perfectly natural and consecutive, but with a fulness of which you previously had had no conception, clothed, at times, with a perfect gorgeousness of imagination.

He was keenly logical, no one could detect more readily a flaw in his opponent's argument, or feel one in his own, than Mr. Binney; he used to say, that in writing out his positions and conclusions, he always felt as if an opponent was looking over his shoulder; a phase of mind which would be morally fatal to some men, and even in him resulted at times in a balancing of arguments, which, by some was mistaken for a want of conviction. But on the other hand, this made him irresistible in his conclusions and enabled him to tear to pieces with the happiest humour, and the keenest sarcasm, all the pretensions of sacerdotalism or ecclesiasticism.

We have spoken of humour; we fancy that he often repressed the rising humour in the pulpit; but sometimes it would come out, and the odd saying, or the grotesque word-picture, would send the ripple of a smile over the mass of upturned faces. He was a keen observer and an active participator in the events of the day, while not a "political parson," as they are coarsely termed. He took a strong interest in the questions of the time, and his sermons were full of allusions to them. The death of the Duke of Wellington, the destruction of the Royal Exchange, the opening of the Great Exhibition of 1851, and the great Chartist gathering of 1848, were each, with many other similar events, the occasion of powerful discourses. The last-named (which was never published), preached on the Sunday, the day before the memorable 10th April, when all London was in a ferment, expecting nothing less than an attempt at revolution, and the Duke of Wellington was called upon to place the city in a state of defence—was preached from Isaiah viii. 12, and was a noble utterance, worthy alike of the man and the influence he wielded. We well remember the morning that the news came of the Battle of the Alma—it