

give way before the audacious claims of science advanced against religion, and you will find them so good that you will hardly wish better. Read them as food to personal piety, and you will feel them wholesome and strengthening. Still it is a fact that intelligent, vigilant, skilled antagonism and fence against modern—the most modern—infidelity is a very marked characteristic of many among Bersier's published sermons. In truth take, for instance, his sixth volume, and the proportion of the virtually apologetic or controversial element is so considerable that you would feel compelled to pronounce excessive such a proportion assumed uniformly to prevail throughout the general tenor of Bersier's pastoral preaching. An assumption, however, like that would no doubt do him injustice. It is fair to suppose that, in choosing for publication from among his ordinary discourses, the author would, by a natural and a wise instinct, be led to pitch by preference, in a disproportionate number of cases, upon such as might be conjectured to have an intellectual added to their spiritual interest.

Mr. Spurgeon is, in this respect, an almost solitary exception among ministers that publish their sermons. Somewhat in contrast with what is true in the case of the Frenchman, the Englishman's audience of the press seems to be made up of average ordinary persons endowed with an appetite that may be relied upon for commonplace spiritual nurture. That Mr. Spurgeon's audience should be predominantly such is not because that great popular preacher is not himself a thinking man, quite as capable as other thinking men, of wrestling with intellectual and spiritual doubts and fears. It is not because he cannot at need compose in a close-woven, most vital, tissue of style, tense with thought and with reason. This, in occasional, not infrequent utterances of his, he (when out of his pulpit, as sometimes, also, when in) abundantly shows that he can do. It is rather because Mr. Spurgeon, whether wisely or not, chooses to make his sermons, even his printed sermons, for the most part unconscious of the unsettlement in belief that he knows to be everywhere rife around him.

Not so, in this last respect, was it with Bersier. Bersier, in his sermons, was frankly sensitive to the intellectual life of his time. As he felt, so in his pulpit he confessed, the sympathy of his generation. He had—at least one seems compelled to believe that he had—his own intimate personal need of satisfactory reconciliation between reason and revelation. He found his solution, and his solution found, he thought it wise—as, for *him*, the present writer holds that it was truly wise—to supply to his fellows.

It is time, no doubt, that generalization now be elucidated with instance. But I pause a moment to dispose first of a thought which, with some readers, may have been started by my conjecture (it was, of course, however confident, no more than conjecture) as to the working in Bersier's mind of his natural noble ambition to achieve great things in the pulpit; and his accompanying consciousness that, for the achieving of things

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