

C. H. SPURGEON'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

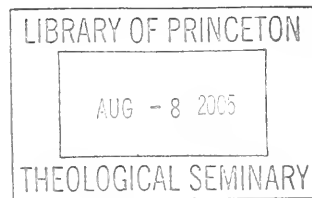
THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
CHARLES H. SPURGEON

COMPILED FROM
HIS DIARY, LETTERS, AND RECORDS

BY
HIS WIFE
AND
HIS PRIVATE SECRETARY

*"The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips; he walked with
Me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity"*—MALACHI II 6

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C. H. SPURGEON'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

CHAPTER LX.

The Tabernacle Opened.

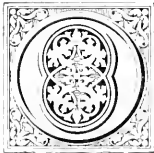


I WOULD PROPOSE THAT THE SUBJECT OF THE MINISTRY IN THIS HOUSE, AS LONG AS THIS PLATFORM SHALL STAND, & AS LONG AS THIS HOUSE SHALL BE FREQUENTED BY WORSHIPPERS, SHALL BE THE PERSON OF **JESUS CHRIST**. I AM NEVER ASHAMED TO AVOW MYSELF A CALVINIST; I DO NOT HESITATE TO TAKE THE NAME OF BAPTIST; BUT IF I AM ASKED WHAT IS MY CREED, I REPLY, "IT IS JESUS CHRIST." MY VENERATED PREDECESSOR, DR. GILL, HAS LEFT A BODY OF DIVINITY, ADMIRABLE & EXCELLENT IN ITS WAY; BUT THE BODY OF DIVINITY TO WHICH I WOULD PIN & BIND MYSELF FOR EVER, GOD HELPING ME, IS NOT HIS SYSTEM, OR ANY OTHER HUMAN TREATISE; BUT CHRIST JESUS, WHO IS THE SUM & SUBSTANCE OF THE GOSPEL, WHO IS IN HIMSELF ALL THEOLOGY, THE INCARNATION OF EVERY PRECIOUS TRUTH, THE ALL-GLORIOUS PERSONAL EMBODIMENT OF THE WAY, THE TRUTH, & THE LIFE.

When I sometimes have such statements as these flung in my teeth, "This man was never educated at College; he came into the ministry totally unprepared for it in literary attainments; he is only fit to address the poor, his preaching is not polite and polished; he has had but little classical instruction; he cannot read many languages;"—I say, Precisely so; every word of it is true, and a great deal more to the same effect might be said. If you go on to say,—“This man takes a daring project in hand, and succeeds in it,”—I answer, Just so; I will agree to all you say, but I will remind you that “God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in His presence.” On this wise I will put it, and with the apostle Paul I will become a fool in glorying.—What have your College men done that is comparable to this work? What have the wisest and most instructed of modern ministers accomplished in the conversion of souls compared with the blessing which has rested on the labours of the unlettered boy? It was God's work, and God chose the most unlikely instrument, that He might have the more glory. And He shall have the glory;—I will not take any of it to myself by pretending to an education I have not received, or an attainment I do not possess, or an eloquence which I never coveted. I speak God's Word, and God, I know, speaks through me, and works through me, and unto Him be the glory of it all! . . .

I frequently hear in conversation such remarks as this, “It is no use trying to raise a self-supporting cause in such a place as this; there are none but poor people living in the neighbourhood.” If there is a site to be chosen for a chapel it is said, “You would never be able to keep a minister there; it is no use trying to do so in such a district.” You know that, in the City of London itself, there is now scarcely one Dissenting place of worship. The reason for giving up most of the chapels, or transferring the church to the suburbs, is that all the respectable people live out of town, and, of course, they are the folk to look after. They will not stop in London, they will go out a few miles, and take villas; and, therefore, the best thing is to use the endowment, which belonged to the old chapel, in building a new place of worship somewhere in the suburbs where it can be maintained. “No doubt,” it is said, “the poor ought to be looked after; but we had better leave them to an inferior order of workers,—the city missionaries will do for them, or we can send them a few street-preachers.” But as to the idea of raising a prosperous cause where all the people are poor, there is hardly a minister who would attempt it.

Now, my experience of the poor of Christ's flock teaches me that all this kind of talk is folly. If there are any people who love the cause of God better than others, I believe it is the poor, when the grace of God takes real possession of their heart. In this place, for instance, I believe that we have but very few who could be put down among the rich. There have been some persons of position who have cast in their lot amongst us; but, still, the mass who did the work of building this house, and who have stood side by side with me in the battle of the last seven years, must be reckoned among the poor of this world. They have been a peaceable people, a happy people, a working people, a plain people; and I say, “God bless the poor!” I would have no fear whatever in commencing a cause of Christ, even though the mass were poor; for I am persuaded that the rich, who are truly the people of God, love to come and assist in such a case. If you cast out the poor, you cast out the Church's strength, and you give up that which is, after all, the backbone of the Church of Christ—C. H. S., in sermon preached at the *Metropolitan Tabernacle shortly after the opening.*



ON December 18, 1859, we commenced our third series of services at Exeter Hall, which ended on March 31, 1861. A few of my remarks upon leaving that place may fitly be quoted here* :—“In the providence of God, we, as a church and people, have had to wander often. This is our third sojourn within these walls. It is now about to close. We have had at all times and seasons a compulsion for moving: sometimes, a compulsion of conscience; at other times, a compulsion of pleasure, as on this occasion. I am sure that, when we first went to the Surrey Music Hall, God went with us. Satan went, too, but he fled before us.

* As Mr Spurgeon had written this portion of his life-story, it has been inserted in his *Autobiography* just as he wrote it, with the addition of other matter which seemed necessary to the completeness of the narrative.

That frightful calamity, the impression of which can never be erased from my mind, became, in the providence of God, one of the most wonderful means of turning public attention to special services; and I do not doubt that—fearful catastrophe though it was,—it has been the mother of multitudes of blessings. The Christian world noted the example, and saw its after-success; they followed it, and to this day, in the theatre and the music-hall, the Word of Christ is preached where it was never preached before. Never could it be more manifestly seen than in that place, that the gospel, when proclaimed simply and earnestly, is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

“In each of our movings we have had reason to see the hand of God, and here particularly; for many residents in the West End have in this place come to listen to the Word, who probably might not have taken a journey beyond the river. Here, God's grace has broken hard hearts; here have souls been renewed, and wanderers reclaimed. ‘Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory due unto His Name.’ And now we journey to the house which God has in so special a manner given to us, and this day would I pray as Moses did, ‘Rise up, Lord, and let Thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate Thee flee before Thee.’

“‘But what enemies have we?’ say you. We have multitudes. We shall have to do battle in our new Tabernacle with that old enemy of the Church, the scarlet beast. Rome has built one of its batteries hard by our place, and there is one who styles himself ‘Archbishop of Southwark.’ Then we shall have another enemy, almost as our next-door neighbour,—infidelity. *There*, has been one of its special places for display. Yet, comparatively speaking, infidelity is but a very puny adversary; it is not half so cunning as Popery, and hath nothing like its might. But worse than this, we shall have to deal with the indifference of the masses round about us, and with their carelessness concerning gospel truth, and with the prevailing sin and corruption; how shall we deal with all this? Shall we invent some socialistic system of reform? Shall we preach up some new method of political economy? No! the cross, the old cross is enough; this is the true Jerusalem blade, that divides like the razor of old with which Tarquin's augur cut the pebble. We will preach Christ as the sinner's Saviour, the Spirit of God as applying Christ's truth to the soul, and God the Father in His infinite sovereignty saving whom He wills, and in the bounty of His mercy willing to receive the vilest of the vile; and there is no indifference so callous, no ignorance so blind, no iniquity so base, no conscience so seared as not to be made to yield, when God wills it, before the might of His strength. So again I pray, ‘Rise up, Lord, and let these Thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate Thee flee before Thee.’ ‘Rise up, *Lord!*’ O God the Father, rise up! Pluck Thy right hand out of Thy bosom,

and let Thine eternal purposes be accomplished! O God the Son, rise up; show Thy wounds, and plead before Thy Father's face, and let Thy blood-bought ones be saved! Rise up, O God the Holy Ghost; with solemn reverence, we do invoke Thine aid! Let those who have hitherto resisted Thee, now give way! Come Thou, and melt the ice; dissolve the granite: break the adamant heart; cut Thou the iron sinew, and bow Thou the stiff neck! Rise up, *Lord*.—Father, Son, and Spirit,—we can do nothing without Thee; but if Thou wilt arise, Thine enemies shall be scattered, and they that hate Thee shall flee before Thee."

Under the date, January 6, 1861, there stands in our records the following solemn declaration, signed by the Pastor, and officers, and leading friends:—"This church needs rather more than £4,000 to enable it to open the New Tabernacle free of all debt. It humbly asks this temporal mercy of God, and believes that, for Jesus' sake, the prayer will be heard and the boon bestowed,—as witness our hands."

At the end of February, the programme of the opening services announced that about £3,000 was still required, and contained the following appeal and intimation:—"The Committee beg the renewed assistance of all their friends in this their crowning effort, and they wish it to be distinctly understood that no persuasion will prevail upon their Pastor to use the building for public worship on the Sabbath until the whole of the liabilities are discharged. Shall the house be closed a single Sunday? We believe in our gracious God, and trust that He will so influence His people that, by the end of the second week, or before the Good Friday has passed away, all will be accomplished; in which case, we shall meet there for regular worship on Lord's-day, March 31.* The proceeds of collections, after payment of contracted liabilities, will be needed for the completion of the front boundaries, the fitting up of the schools, furnishing the students' class-rooms, and other works which the Committee have not as yet commenced. Feeling it to be highly objectionable to run into debt, they have left many matters to be finished when the funds shall be forthcoming, and they are sanguine that, before these preliminary meetings are over, this great temple of the Lord will have been finished in every department."

It was most appropriate that the noble building, which had been erected for a house of prayer, should be opened with a meeting for prayer. Accordingly, at seven o'clock in the morning of Monday, March 18, 1861, more than a thousand persons assembled in the Tabernacle. The Pastor presided, and among those who

* The following entry in the Tabernacle church book shows that the faith of the Committee was well founded, and that their anticipations were exactly realized:—"Our Pastor preached twice on Friday, March 29, and on that evening, after the service, the remaining sum needed was raised, and we entered our glorious sanctuary free of debt on Sunday, March 31."

took part in the proceedings were representatives of the deacons and elders of the Church and students of the College. Fervency and intense earnestness marked every petition.

On Monday, March 25, at 7 a.m., Rev. George Rogers presided over the second prayer-meeting, and addressed the brethren in a sweet and savoury manner upon "The House of God, the Gate of Heaven." At three o'clock the same afternoon, the first sermon in the Tabernacle was preached by the Pastor from Acts v. 42: "And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ;" and in the evening, Rev. W. Brock, of Bloomsbury Chapel, discoursed upon Philippians i. 18: "Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." It was remarked at the time how well the two sermons were adapted to one another, although the ministers were quite unaware what text each had selected.

The following evening, more than three thousand of the contributors to the Building Fund assembled in the Tabernacle, under the presidency of Sir Henry Havelock. The Pastor had undertaken, in the month of January, to bring in £1,000, at the opening of the building, in addition to all that he had previously raised; and in the course of the meeting he announced that he had paid in £1,500, others had brought the total up to £3,700, so that the building was free from debt, although they still needed about £500 for various matters which could wait until the money was in hand. The architect (Mr. Pocock), and the builder (Mr. W. Higgs), were heartily thanked for their joint skill and liberality, and both gentlemen expressed their gratitude for the vote of appreciation.

The next night, the ministers and members of neighbouring churches, to the number of about four thousand, gathered under the chairmanship of Dr. Steane, to express their congratulations to the church at the Tabernacle on the completion of the beautiful and spacious structure. In the course of his address, the chairman first asked the ministerial brethren present, and then the whole congregation, to rise and so signify to Mr. Spurgeon how much they loved him, and how devoutly they wished him "God speed." This spontaneous outburst of sympathy was gratefully acknowledged by the Pastor, who said that, while his own church had naturally raised most of the money for the new building, there was hardly any church in London which had not had some share in the work.

On "Good Friday," March 29, the Pastor preached in the morning from Romans iii. 24, 25: "Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood," and in the evening, from the Song of Solomon, ii. 16: "My Beloved is mine, and I am His." It was a fitting finale to these services to be able to announce that the whole sum required had been given, and the building, free from debt, was ready for Divine worship on the following Lord's-day. That Sabbath

evening, March 31, the Pastor preached from 2 Chron. v. 13, 14; and vii. 1—3; and speaking upon the glory of the Lord filling the house, uttered a prophecy which has been abundantly fulfilled in every particular:—"Let God send the fire of His Spirit here, and the minister will be more and more lost in his Master. You will come to think less of the speaker, and more of the truth spoken; the individual will be swamped, the words uttered will rise above everything. When you have the cloud, the man is forgotten; when you have the fire, the man is lost, and you only see his Master. Suppose the fire should come here, and the Master be seen more than the minister, what then? Why, this church will become two, or three, or four thousand strong! It is easy enough for God to double our numbers, vast though they are even now. We shall have the lecture-hall beneath this platform crowded at each prayer-meeting, and we shall see in this place young men devoting themselves to God; we shall find ministers raised up, and trained, and sent forth to carry the sacred fire to other parts of the globe. Japan, China, and Hindustan shall have heralds of the cross, who have here had their tongues touched with the Divine flame. Through us, the whole earth shall receive benedictions; if God shall bless us, He will make us a blessing to multitudes of others. Let God but send down the fire, and the biggest sinners in the neighbourhood will be converted; those who live in the dens of infamy will be changed; the drunkard will forsake his cups, the swearer will repent of his blasphemy, the debauched will leave their lusts,—

"Dry bones be raised, and clothed afresh,
And hearts of stone be turned to flesh."

On Monday evening, April 1, Rev. John Graham, of Craven Chapel, preached from 2 Thess. i. 12; and the next night, the great building was crowded by London Baptist brethren. Sir S. Morton Peto, Bart., presided; and the Pastor, in welcoming the assembly to the Tabernacle, said:—"This chapel belongs not specially to me or to my church, but to the whole Baptist denomination. I feel to-night as if I were rendering up the trust-deeds to the proper proprietors,—acknowledging that this house belongs not to any man, but, first, to the God of the whole world, and, next, to those who hold the pure primitive ancient apostolic faith. We believe that the Baptists are the original Christians. We did not commence our existence at the Reformation, we were Reformers before Luther and Calvin were born; we never came out of the Church of Rome, for we were never in it, but we have an unbroken line of succession up to the apostles themselves. We have always existed from the very days of Christ; and our principles, though sometimes veiled and forgotten, like a river which may travel underground for a little season, have always had honest and holy adherents. Persecuted alike by Romanists and Protestants of almost every sect, yet there has never existed a Government holding Baptist principles which has persecuted others; nor, I believe, has any body of Baptists ever held it to be

right to put the consciences of others under the control of man. We have ever been ready to suffer, as our martyrologies will prove; but we are not willing to accept any help from the State, or to prostitute the purity of the Bride of Christ by any alliance with earthly Governments."

Later in the evening, the Pastor, in urging the Baptist brethren present to more earnest efforts for the spread of their principles, said:—"I have been the means of commencing two new churches within the last eighteen months, and I hope to start some more. I wish we could, as a body, open fresh places, and give our services for six months, taking it in turn until we worked the cause up. I do not think there is the slightest reason why we should not double our numbers in the next two years; it seems to me that we have obtained such a hold upon the public mind that we only want to bring our principles out, and we shall greatly increase. I know they will say that we are getting desperately Baptistical;—we must be that, we shall never tell upon the age until we are. We must hold inviolable the essential unity of the Church of Christ; we must stand to it that all God's people are one in Him; but why should we lower our standard any more than any other denomination? What is there about believers' baptism that we should be ashamed of? What is there about the history of our church, the power of our ministers, our poets, our divines, that we should be ashamed of? When we know that we have borne the palm in poetry with John Milton, in allegory with John Bunyan, and stand second to none in the ministry with Robert Hall, I think we have no reason whatever to be ashamed. Let us come straight out, determined that we will conceal no part of the truth. I am glad that we have here brethren representing different views amongst us. Here am I, a strict Baptist as to membership, and believing in open communion; some of our brethren are strict in membership and also in communion; others are neither strict in membership nor in communion. I think I am nearest right of any, but you all think the same of yourselves, *and may God defend the right!*"

After this denominational gathering, it was most fitting that, the following evening, an equally large company of friends should meet together "for the purpose of hearing addresses on Christian unity, and testifying to the essential union of all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ." The chairman was Edward Ball, Esq., M.P., one of the Pastor's Cambridgeshire friends, who had witnessed his early efforts to serve the Lord, and lovingly watched his career from Waterbeach and onwards to the Metropolitan Tabernacle.

On Thursday evening, April 4, Dr. Octavius Winslow preached from the words, "It is finished;" on Lord's-day, April 7, the Pastor occupied the pulpit both morning and evening, and presided at the first communion service held in the Tabernacle; the next night, a family gathering of our own church was held under the presidency

of the Pastor's father, Rev. John Spurgeon; and on the Tuesday evening, Rev. Hugh Stowell Brown, of Liverpool, preached on "Christian Baptism," and the Pastor conducted the first baptismal service, concerning which Dr. Campbell wrote, in *The British Standard*, April 12:—

"The probable effects of the Metropolitan Tabernacle become the subject of interesting speculation. While these effects will be great and glorious, they will form no exception to the course of human affairs. Imperfection attaches to everything that appertains to man. The building will inevitably form a powerful magnet, especially to young people in all quarters of the city, who will hardly endure the old-fashioned churches and chapels of their fathers. The result will be to confer on it a leviathan monopoly. This monopoly will operate in two ways: it will bring multitudes from the world to Christ,—an event in which we shall most sincerely rejoice. It will also draw multitudes from the churches to the water,—an event in which we do not rejoice. This Metropolitan Tabernacle, we believe, will do more to make proselytes than all the other Baptist chapels in London united. It will lift the thing into respectability, and even dignity. It will become an object of ambition with sentimental young women and poetic young men to be plunged into a marble basin, so beautiful that it might adorn a palace, and so spacious that dolphins might play in it! Then, Mr. Spurgeon knows well how to go about this matter; his noble catholicity has not sufficed wholly to eliminate his baptismal bigotry. His manly eloquence will most powerfully minister to the triumph of the polished marble. He showed last Sabbath evening that, while prepared to die for the gospel, he is not less prepared to fight for the water. . . .

"On the evening of Tuesday, the ordinance of baptism, by immersion, was administered to some twenty people. It was eminently fitted to produce very serious consequences in families and churches. First came a sermon from a man of great mental power and pulpit efficiency,—Mr. H. S. Brown, of Liverpool. The argument and the appeal being over, then followed the illustration by the skilful hand of Mr. Spurgeon. What can stand against an attack so formidable, made on a congregated mass so little capable of self-defence? Pity the poor simple souls who eagerly rushed into the snares of the fowlers! Such was the anxiety to be present, that it is reported that actually between six and seven thousand tickets were issued! Mr. Spurgeon, indeed, on Sunday evening stated that no more tickets would be distributed, since more had received them already than could be accommodated, and that it would be the wisdom of many to keep away. The night, we make no doubt, has been one of havoc among those who were, not only not 'rooted and grounded,' but not even taught the first principles of the doctrine of Baptism.

"The interest of the thing was overpowering. We doubt if it was a whit inferior to that of taking the veil in the Church of Rome. There was the young

orator, the idol of the assembly, in the water, with a countenance radiant as the night; and there, on the pathway, was Mrs. Spurgeon, a most prepossessing young lady,—the admiration of all who beheld her,—with courtly dignity and inimitable modesty, kindly leading forward the trembling sisters in succession to her husband, who gently and gracefully took and immersed them, with varied remark and homied phrase, all kind, pertinent to the occasion, and greatly fitted to strengthen, encourage, and cheer. Emerging from the water, there were two portly deacons, in boxes at



NEW PARK STREET CHAPEL AS IT IS NOW (1896).

the side of the steps, with benignant smile, to seize their hands, and bring them up, throwing cloaks over them; two other deacons received them at the top of the steps, and other two politely led them backward to the vestry. It was quite an ovation, an era in the history of the neophytes. It had really not been wonderful if all the ladies in the place had been candidates for such distinction. We have ourselves seen several who were there, whose heads seem completely turned. Pseudo-Baptist ministers, whatever their piety or ability, have no chance with Mr. Spurgeon in multiplying members. They operate only in one element, he in two: to him, the

land and the water are alike productive. We shall not be surprised if, in seven more years, his church be doubled,* and the Metropolitan Tabernacle prove insufficient to accommodate even the members and their families. The largest chapel in the world, it will have the largest church. What then?"

In the same article, Dr. Campbell thus referred to one of the many misleading paragraphs which continued to be inserted, from time to time, in various newspapers:—

"The services of a Christian minister may, as a rule, be safely estimated by the light in which he is viewed by an ungodly world. If it exalt him, there is something wrong. It only 'loves its own.' But, if it pour out upon him the vials of its calumny, falsehood, and scorn, the presumption is, that he is faithful to his God, and the friend of his race. The most splendid illustration of the last century was Whitefield. . . . In our own times, the counterpart of Whitefield is Mr. Spurgeon. Regard being had to the changed and softened character of the times, he has been abused, slandered, libelled, and lied against quite as much. The London correspondent of a very able Scottish journal, professedly conducted on Christian principles, had the audacity, so late as last week, to write as follows:—'Sympathetic Aberdonians need not trouble themselves to make up any more money-boxes for Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle. All the debts have been paid, and the chapel was opened on Sunday evening. As the Tabernacle is Mr. Spurgeon's own property, pew-rents and all, he will probably be able to enjoy his "privilege" of riding in a carriage to the end of his days. This being the case, it is sincerely to be hoped that he will now finally dissociate the work of the gospel from the pursuit of mammon.'

"Now, the great fact alleged in the foregoing is an unmitigated falsehood; and, as to cupidity, it were quite as just and true to charge Mr. Spurgeon with the guilt of murder as with the worship of mammon! No man in this great metropolis preaches one-third so much for all Evangelical sects, on behalf of all sorts of charitable objects, and he *uniformly preaches for nothing!*

"'But the carriage,' says the correspondent. Well, the plain one-horse vehicle,—what of that? Living where his health requires him to live, a few miles in the country, in a very plain and far from commodious habitation, some conveyance is absolutely necessary to his great and unceasing toils. Is that to be denied him? To economize a little horse-power, would you abridge his leviathan labours for the cause of God and the souls of men? It is a curious fact that the miserable malignants of a former day brought it as a charge against Wesley and Whitefield, and in our own times against Collyer and Hill, that they kept a carriage! This suggests the economist

* In much less than seven years after the opening service, the church-membership had been more than doubled, and "the members and their families" could not have found sitting accommodation in the building if they had all tried to be present at any one time.

who wished the ointment to have been sold for the poor, 'not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag.' But enough: 'Wisdom is justified of her children.' All good and upright men 'glorify God' in Charles Haddon Spurgeon. They desire for him life and length of days, with a continuance of all his gifts and all his graces, and an increase of favour with God and man. He is still in the morning of life; and we trust he may have before him at least half-a-century of usefulness and honour ere he be called to the Upper World to take his place—among prophets, apostles, martyrs, and evangelists, who have turned many to righteousness,—to shine as a star for ever and ever.'

On Wednesday, April 10, a great communion service was held,—probably the largest since the day of Pentecost,—in order to set forth the essential oneness of the Church, and the real fellowship in the body of Christ which is the privilege of all her members. The following afternoon and evening, addresses were delivered upon the distinguishing doctrines of Calvinism,—Election, Human Depravity, Particular Redemption, Effectual Calling, and Final Perseverance; and on the Friday evening, Henry Vincent, Esq., gave a brilliant oration on "Nonconformity," Sir John Burgoyne, Bart., G.C.B., presiding.

At the first church-meeting held at the Tabernacle, on Monday evening, May 6, seventy-two persons were proposed for membership, and the Pastor wrote in the church-book as follows:—

"I, Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the least of all saints, hereby set to my seal that God is true, since He has this day fulfilled my hopes, and given according to our faith. O Lord, be Thou praised world without end, and do Thou make me more faithful and more mighty than ever!

"C. H. SPURGEON."

The following inscription, also in the Pastor's handwriting, is signed by himself, the deacons, the elders, and a large number of the church-members, beginning with "Susie Spurgeon":—

"We, the undersigned members of the church lately worshipping in New Park Street Chapel, but now assembling in the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington, desire with overflowing hearts to make known and record the lovingkindness of our faithful God. We asked in faith, but our Lord has exceeded our desires, for not only was the whole sum given us, but far sooner than we had looked for it. Truly, the Lord is good, and worthy to be praised. We are ashamed of ourselves that we have ever doubted Him; and we pray that, as a church, and as individuals, we may be enabled to trust in the Lord at all times with confidence, so that in quietness we may possess our souls. In the Name of our God we set up our banner. Oh, that Jehovah-jireh may also be unto us Jehovah-shammah and Jehovah-shalom! To

Father, Son, and Holy Ghost we offer praise and thanksgiving, and we set to our seal that God is true."

This entry closes the records in the church-book for the seven years from 1854 to 1861. It is worthy of note, as showing the unparalleled growth of everything connected with the work, that the two previous church-books had respectively lasted from 1757 to 1808, and from 1808 to 1854; while the next one, commenced on May 7, 1861, ended on January 11, 1866, and the following volumes were generally filled in about five years. All are large thick quartos, uniform in size, and the complete series formed one of the most precious treasures saved from the disastrous fire on April 20, 1898.

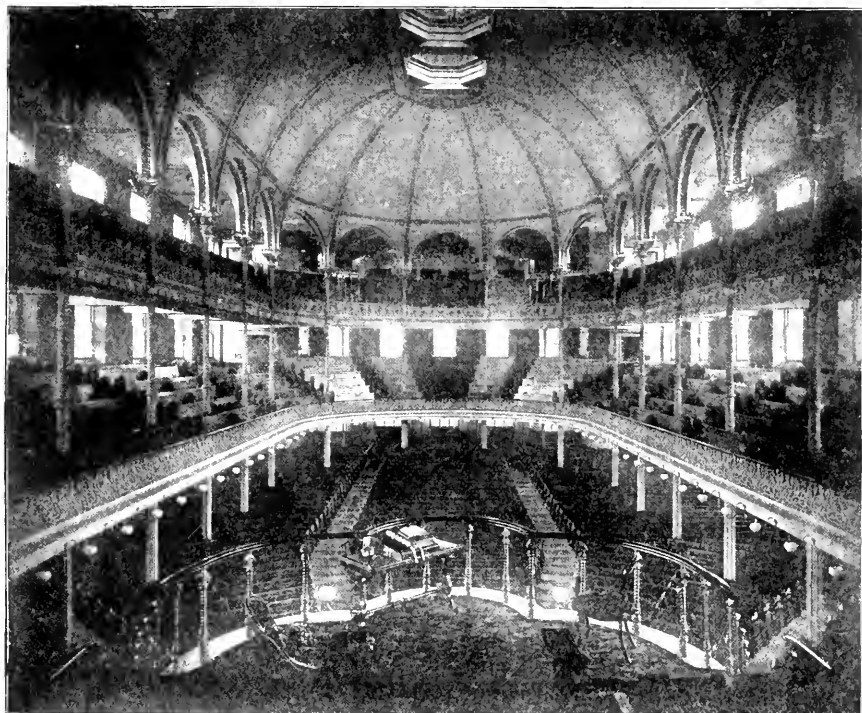
During the month of May, 1861, four more church-meetings were held, at which seventy-seven additional members were proposed, and at the communion service on June 2, a hundred and twenty-one persons were received into full fellowship. This large increase was thus gratefully recorded at the church-meeting on June 18:—"It was unanimously resolved that a record of our gratitude to God for His graciousness toward us should be made in the church-book. With our whole hearts, as a highly-favoured church and people, we magnify and extol the lovingkindness of our God in so singularly owning the Word proclaimed among us, by giving so many souls to be added to our number. To God be all the glory! Oh, that we may be more than ever devoted to His honour and service!"

The Tabernacle is so well proportioned that many persons fail to realize its vast size. The building is a rectangle, measuring outside the walls 174 feet in length, and 85 feet in width; inside, the extreme length, including the vestries, is 168 feet; the main auditorium being 146 feet long, 81 feet broad, and 62 feet high. Estimates as to the seating accommodation of the Tabernacle have varied considerably; but the actual number of sittings that could be let, previous to the fire, was 3,600, and about 1,000 persons could occupy seats on the flaps in the aisles and other parts of the building. Many hundreds of additional hearers could find—and for thirty years did find—standing-room in the great house of prayer, so that the preacher had regularly before him, Sabbath by Sabbath, between five and six thousand immortal souls listening to his proclamation of the Word of life.

As an instance of the misleading notions that people have entertained concerning the capacity of large public buildings, it may be mentioned, on the authority of *The Builder*, May 4, 1861, that the Surrey Gardens Music Hall, which was supposed to hold 10,000 or 12,000 people, had a sitting area of 19,723 feet, while that of the Metropolitan Tabernacle was 25,225 feet!

At the annual church-meeting, on January 22, 1862, the Building Committee's audited balance-sheet was presented and adopted. It showed that the total expenditure up to that time had been £31,332 4s. 10d., all of which had been met.

The two largest items in the account were—purchase of land, £5,000; and contract for the main building, £20,000. Among the receipts, the highest amounts were—collectors' accounts, £7,258 5s. 2d.; donations and subscriptions, £9,034 19s. 2d.; per Pastor C. H. Spurgeon, £11,253 15s. 6d.



THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE.—VIEW FROM THE PULPIT

After the Tabernacle was built, an earnest endeavour was made to retain New Park Street Chapel for the Baptist denomination, and to make it, if possible, the abode of another church. For some years, preaching was carried on, a brother supported, and considerable expenses incurred; but it was clear that a self-sustaining interest was not to be gathered in the neighbourhood. Mr. John Collins, now of Lynnington, worked very hard, and enjoyed much of the Divine blessing; but those who were converted under him had a pardonable tendency to gravitate towards the mother-church at the Tabernacle, and it became evident beyond all question that it

was useless for us to retain so large a building in such a situation, and so near our own. The property consisted of the chapel, schools, and almsrooms; and it was agreed, and arranged with the Charity Commissioners, that it should be sold, and the proceeds used for new schools and almsrooms.

In the *Memorials of William Higgs*, there is an interesting paragraph concerning this transaction:—"When the date of the auction was fixed, Mr. Higgs was requested to attend at the mart for the protection of the sale. He had before valued the property at a given sum, saying that he did not think it likely to fetch very much more. But, to the surprise of those friends who were also present, when this sum was reached, he himself put in a bid at a still higher figure, and ran up the amount until the property was knocked down to him at a price considerably greater than that which he had in the first instance named. He was, of course, joked a little about his bargain, but he quietly replied that no doubt it would prove a good one. And so it did; for, not very long afterwards, he went to Mr. Spurgeon with the news that he had sold the place at a profit of £500, adding that he had brought the money with him, as he could not, himself, think of keeping it."

CHAPTER LXI.

Deacons and Elders : Pastors and Teachers.



C. H. SPURGEON AND HIS DEACONS. 1850.

Deprive the Christian Church of her deacons, and she would be bereaved of her most valiant sons; their loss would be the shaking of the pillars of our spiritual house, and would cause a desolation on every side. Thanks be to God, such a calamity is not likely to befall us, for the great Head of the Church, in mercy to her, will always raise up a succession of faithful men, who will use the office well, and earn unto themselves 'a good degree, and great boldness in the faith.'—C. H. S.



SINCE I came to London, I have seen the last of a former race of deacons,—fine, gentlemanly men, rather stiff and unmanageable, not quite according to my mind, but respectable, prudent grandees of Dissent, in semi-clerical dress, with white cravats. The past generation of deacons is to be spoken of with reverence in all places where holy memories are cherished; but, out of them all, my friend, counsellor, and right hand, was Thomas Olney. Never did a minister have a better

deacon, nor a church a better servant. He was for sixty years a member, for thirty-one years a deacon, and for fourteen years treasurer of the church. He was ever remarkable for his early and constant attendance at the prayer-meeting and other week-day services. He had a childlike faith and a manly constancy. To believe in Jesus, and to work for Him, were the very life of his new and better nature. He was eminently a Baptist, but he was also a lover of all good men. The poor, and especially the poor of the church, always found in him sincere sympathy and help. His name will be had in lasting remembrance.

Among my first London deacons was one very worthy man, who said to me, when I went to preach in Exeter Hall and the Surrey Gardens Music Hall, "I am an old man, and I cannot possibly go at the rate you young people are going; but I don't want to hang on, and be a drag to you, so I will quietly withdraw, and go and see how I can get on with Mr. Brock." I think that was the kindest thing that the good man could have done, and that it was probably the best course for himself as well as for us. I went over to see him, some time afterwards, and he asked me to take my two boys that he might give them his blessing. He said to me, "Did I not do the very best thing I could have done by getting out of the way, and not remaining to hinder the work? I always read your sermons, and I send in my subscriptions regularly." Dear good man, he died the next day.

At the meeting of the Tabernacle church, in connection with the opening of the new building, it was my privilege to present testimonials to two of the deacons who had then been for more than fifty years members of the church. The resolutions had been unanimously passed at the previous annual church-meeting, and they were appropriately illuminated and framed. They were as follows:—

"That we desire to record our devout gratitude to our Heavenly Father for His continuing to us, as a church, the eminently judicious and valuable services of our esteemed and beloved senior deacon,

JAMES LOW,

who has been a member of this church for a period of 50 years,
and a deacon for 25 years.

We desire also to express to our beloved brother our hearty congratulations that God has so long spared his valuable and useful life, and granted him grace to serve the Church of Christ so faithfully and so well.

May that Master, whom he has so long served,
graciously continue to our brother His special and comforting presence,
and give him in his future life much nearness of communion with Him, and at a distant period an abundant entrance into His Kingdom and glory!"

“That this church desires to record its devout gratitude to Almighty God for that abundant grace which has preserved our dear and honoured brother,

THOMAS OLNEY,

as a consistent, useful, and beloved member of this church

for the lengthened period of 51 years ;

and while to the grace of God all the varied excellences of our brother are to be ascribed, the Pastor, officers, and church-members cannot refrain from returning unfeigned and hearty thanks to our brother for his indefatigable labours as deacon for 22 years, and for his most valuable services as treasurer.

No man can be more truly worthy of the esteem of his Christian brethren, and we most earnestly invoke a blessing upon him, upon our beloved sister the partner of his life, and upon his godly family, which is by so many ties united with us as a people.

We trust that, in that great house of prayer, over every stone of which he has watched so anxiously, he may be spared to see the largest wishes of his heart fulfilled in the gathering of immense assemblies, the salvation of many souls, and the daily increase of our numbers as a church ”

(When “Father Olney” was taken home, in 1869, his much-loved Pastor was just recovering from an attack of small-pox, and therefore was unable to visit him in his last illness, or to conduct his funeral service, but had to be content with writing the following letter to his son, Mr. Thomas H. Olney :—

“Nightingale Lane,

“Friday, Nov. 26, 1869.

“My Dear Mr. Olney,

“It seems so strange to be so near to you, and yet to be virtually in another land. It would have seemed an idle tale if anyone had told me that I should not be at your father's death-bed. Nevertheless, it is well,—well especially for him to whom a longer sojourn here would have meant pain, weakness, and failure of mind, while his departure means a glory too resplendent for us to imagine it.

“I quite think that, if you can get Mr. Brock, it will be just what *he* himself would have desired in my absence. I have sent to the deacons my request to have the pulpit hung with black, for his death is as much a bereavement to us all as anything could be.

“My dear friend, I devoutly pray to God to incline your heart to be henceforth to me all that your father has been till he fell asleep. Not that you have not ever been the soul of goodness ; but now he is gone, you must undertake more publicly

the responsibilities which in private you really have borne; and if the Lord accounts me worthy to have in Thomas Olney the same tender friend that I have had in Thomas Olney, senr., my pathway in life will be smoothed, and my labour cheered. The Lord be with you! My devoutest wishes are for your best happiness.

“Yours most truly,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”

Mr. T. H. Olney accepted the position of treasurer; year by year, he has been re-elected by the church; and the following letter shows how faithfully he has fulfilled the duties of the office:—

“Westwood,

“Beulah Hill,

“Upper Norwood,

“June 26, 1883.

“Dear Friend,

“The cheque reached me safely this morning. Many thanks for all your care of the finances, and for your extreme punctuality in payment. If the cheque did not come at the exact time, I should think the Monument had walked over to Fountain Court, and killed the Chancellor of my Exchequer. I can only pray, ‘God bless Thomas Olney and all he undertakes!’

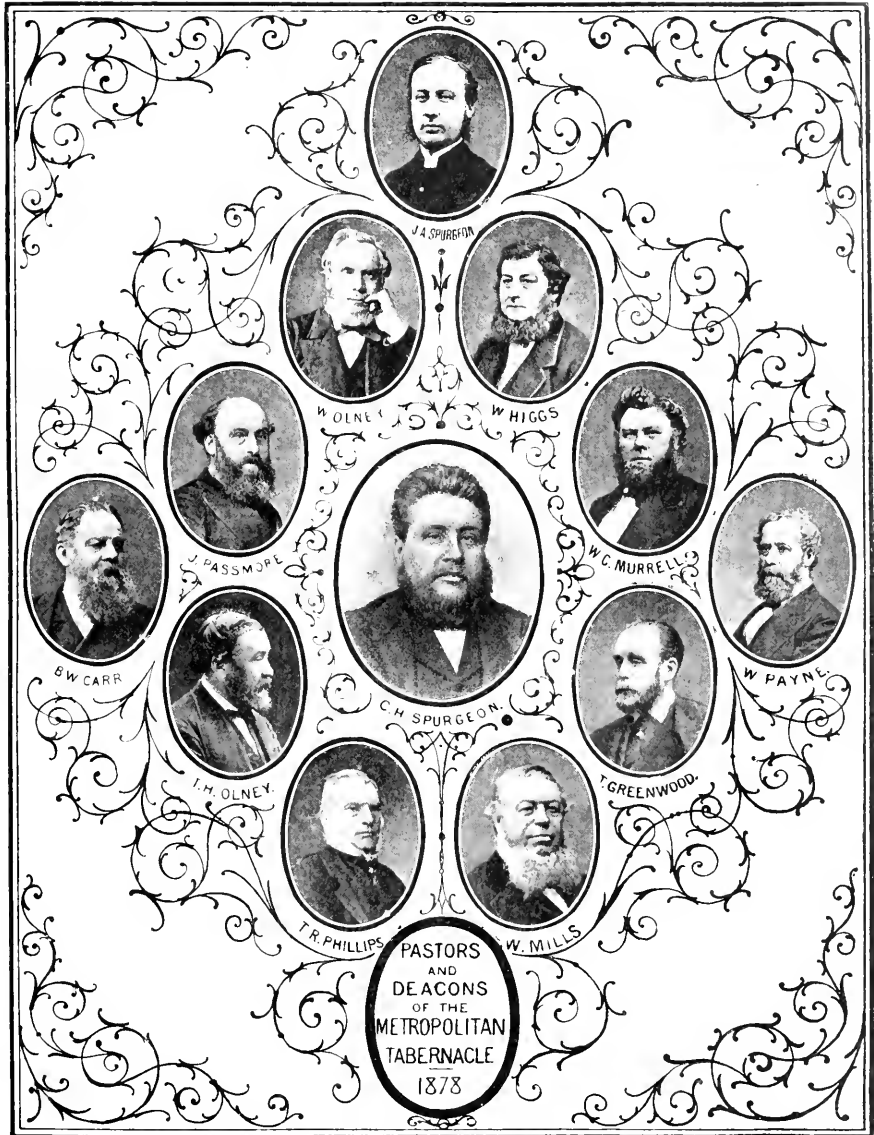
“Yours most lovingly,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”

Fountain Court was Mr. Olney's City address.)

My present staff of deacons consists of peculiarly lovable, active, energetic, warm-hearted, generous men, every one of whom seems specially adapted for his own particular department of service. I am very thankful that I have never been the pastor of a dead church, controlled by dead deacons. I have seen such a thing as that with my own eyes, and the sight was truly awful. I recollect very well preaching in a chapel where the church had become exceedingly low, and, somehow, the very building looked like a sepulchre, though crowded that one night by those who came to hear the preacher. The singers drawled out a dirge, while the members sat like mutes. I found it hard preaching; there was no “go” in the sermon, I seemed to be driving dead horses.

After the service, I saw two men, who I suppose were the deacons,—the pillars of the church,—leaning against the posts of the vestry door in a listless attitude, and I said, “Are you the deacons of this church?” They informed me that they were the only deacons, and I remarked that I thought so. To myself I added that I understood, as I looked at *them*, several things which else would have been a riddle. Here was a dead church, comparable to the ship of the ancient



mariner which was manned by the dead. Deacons, teachers, minister, people, all dead, and yet wearing the semblance of life.

"The helmsman steered, the ship moved on,
Yet never a breeze up blew;
The mariners all gan work the ropes,
Where they were wont to do;
They raised their limbs like lifeless tools,—
We were a ghastly crew."

All my church-officers are in a very real sense my brethren in Christ. In talking to or about one another, we have no stately modes of address. I am called "the Governor,"—I suppose, because I do not attempt to govern; and the deacons are known among us as "Brother William," "Uncle Tom," "Dear Old Joe," "Prince Charlie," "Son of Ali," and so on. These brethren are some of them esquires, who ought also to be M.P.'s; but we love them too well to dignify them. One day, I spoke rather sharply to one of them, and I think he deserved the rebuke I gave him; but he said to me, "Well, that may be so; but I tell you what, sir, *I would die for you any day.*" "Oh!" I replied, "bless your heart, I am sorry I was so sharp; but, still, you did deserve it, did you not?" He smiled, and said he thought he did, and there the matter ended.

One of my deacons made a remark to me, one night, which would have mortally offended a more sensitive individual than I am. It was the first Sabbath in the month, the preaching service was over, and we were just going down to the great communion in the Tabernacle. I enquired how many new members there were to be received, and the answer was, "Only seven." In an instant, my good friend said, "This won't pay, Governor; running all this big place for seven new members in a month!" He was quite right, although a Christian church is not "run" on exactly the same lines as a business undertaking; but I could not help thinking, at the time, that it would not have done for some deacons to make such an observation to certain ministers of my acquaintance; or if the remark had been made, it would have been attended with very serious consequences. I know one pastor who is very decidedly of opinion that the Lord never made anyone equal in importance to a Baptist minister (that is, *himself*); but it so happened that one of his church-officers had the notion that a deacon is a being of a still higher order, so it was not very surprising that the time came when they could no longer work together harmoniously.

On going into the Tabernacle, one day, I gave directions about some minor alterations that I wished to have made, not knowing at the time that I was cancelling the orders given by the deacon who had the main care of the building resting upon him. When he arrived, in the evening, he saw what had been done, and at once asked who had interfered with his instructions. The reply was, "the Governor, sir." The spirit of unquestioning loyalty at once asserted itself over any temporary

annoyance he may have felt, and he said, "Quite right; there must be only one captain in a ship;" and, for a long while, that saying became one of our most familiar watchwords. I have often been amazed at the devotion of our brethren; I have told them, many a time, that, if they would follow a broomstick as they have followed me, the work must succeed. To which Mr. William Olney, as the spokesman for the rest, has answered, "Yes, dear Pastor; but it is because we have such absolute confidence in your leadership that we are ready to follow you anywhere. You have never misled us yet, and we do not believe you ever will do so."

After one long illness, which kept me for many weeks out of the pulpit, I said to the deacons, "I am afraid you will get quite tired of your poor crippled minister;" but one of the least demonstrative of the brethren replied, "Why, my dear sir, we would sooner have you for one month in the year than anyone else in the world for the whole twelve months!" I believe they all agreed with what he said, for they have often urged me to go away for a long sea voyage, or to rest for a year, or for several months at the least; but I have always had one answer for them:— "It is not possible for me to leave my work for any lengthened period until the Lord calls me home; and, besides, there is a Scriptural reason why a minister should not be away from his people for more than six weeks at a time." "What is that?" they asked. "Why, don't you remember that, when Moses was up in the mount with God for forty days, Aaron and the children of Israel turned aside to the worship of the golden calf?"

I had one most touching proof of a deacon's loving self-sacrifice and generosity. During a very serious illness, I had an unaccountable fit of anxiety about money matters. There was no real ground for apprehension, for my dear wife and I were scrupulously careful to "owe no man anything," and there was no pecuniary liability in connection with the Lord's work under my charge which need have caused me the slightest perplexity. I had fallen into one of those curious mental conditions that are often the result of extreme pain and weakness, in which the mind seems to lay hold of some impalpable object, and will not let it go. One of the brethren came to see me while I was in that sad state, and after trying in vain to comfort me, he said, "Well, good bye, sir, I'll see what I can do." He went straight home, and before very long he came back to me bringing all the stocks and shares and deeds and available funds that he had. Putting them down on the bed where I was lying in great agony, he said, "There, my dear Pastor, I owe everything I have in the world to you, and you are quite welcome to all I possess. Take whatever you need, and do not have another moment's anxiety." Of course, as soon as I got better, I returned to my dear friend all that he had brought to me under such singular circumstances. Even if I had needed it, I could not have taken a penny of it, for it seemed to me very much as the water from the well of Bethlehem must have

appeared to David. Happily, I did not require any part of the amount so freely placed at my disposal, but I could never forget the great kindness of the brother who was willing to give all that he had in order to allay the groundless fears of his sorely-afflicted minister.

When I came to New Park Street, the church had deacons, but no elders; and I thought, from my study of the New Testament, that there should be both orders of officers. They are very useful when we can get them,—the deacons to attend to all secular matters, and the elders to devote themselves to the spiritual part of the work; this division of labour supplies an outlet for two different sorts of talent, and allows two kinds of men to be serviceable to the church; and I am sure it is good to have two sets of brethren as officers, instead of one set who have to do everything, and who often become masters of the church, instead of the servants, as both deacons and elders should be.

As there were no elders at New Park Street, when I read and expounded the passages in the New Testament referring to elders, I used to say, "This is an order of Christian workers which appears to have dropped out of existence. In apostolic times, they had both deacons and elders; but, somehow, the church has departed from this early custom. We have one preaching elder,—that is, the Pastor,—and he is expected to perform all the duties of the eldership." One and another of the members began to enquire of me, "Ought not we, as a church, to have elders? Cannot we elect some of our brethren who are qualified to fill the office?" I answered that we had better not disturb the existing state of affairs; but some enthusiastic young men said that they would propose at the church-meeting that elders should be appointed, and ultimately we did appoint them with the unanimous consent of the members. I did not force the question upon them; I only showed them that it was Scriptural, and then of course they wanted to carry it into effect.

The church book, in its records of the annual church-meeting held January 12, 1859, contains the following entry:—

"Our Pastor, in accordance with a previous notice, then stated the necessity that had long been felt by the church for the appointment of certain brethren to the office of elders, to watch over the spiritual affairs of the church. Our Pastor pointed out the Scripture warrant for such an office, and quoted the several passages relating to the ordaining of elders: Titus i. 5, and Acts xiv. 23;—the qualifications of elders: 1 Timothy iii. 1—7, and Titus i. 5—9;—the duties of elders: Acts xx. 28—35, 1 Timothy v. 17, and James v. 14; and other mention made of elders: Acts xi. 30, xv. 4, 6, 23, xvi. 4, and 1 Timothy iv. 14.

"Whereupon, it was resolved,—That the church, having heard the statement made by its Pastor respecting the office of the eldership, desires to elect a certain

number of brethren to serve the church in that office for one year, it being understood that they are to attend to the spiritual affairs of the church, and not to the temporal matters, which appertain to the deacons only."

I have always made it a rule to consult the existing officers of the church before recommending the election of new deacons or elders, and I have also been on the look-out for those who have proved their fitness for office by the work they have accomplished in their private capacity. In our case, the election of deacons is a permanent one, but the elders are chosen year by year. This plan has worked admirably with us, but other churches have adopted different methods of appointing their officers. In my opinion, the very *worst* mode of selection is to print the names of all the male members, and then vote for a certain number by ballot. I know of one case in which a very old man was within two or three votes of being elected simply because his name began with A, and therefore was put at the top of the list of candidates.

My elders have been a great blessing to me; they are invaluable in looking after the spiritual interests of the church. The deacons have charge of the finance; but if the elders meet with cases of poverty needing relief, we tell them to give some small sum, and then bring the case before the deacons. I was once the unseen witness of a little incident that greatly pleased me. I heard one of our elders say to a deacon, "I gave old Mrs. So-and-so ten shillings the other night." "That was very generous on your part," said the deacon. "Oh, but!" exclaimed the elder, "I want the money from the deacons." So the deacon asked, "What office do you hold, brother?" "Oh!" he replied, "I see; I have gone beyond my duty as an elder, so I'll pay the ten shillings myself; I should not like 'the Governor' to hear that I had overstepped the mark." "No, no, my brother," said the deacon; "I'll give you the money, but don't make such a mistake another time."

Some of the elders have rendered great service to our own church by conducting Bible-classes and taking the oversight of several of our home-mission stations, while one or two have made it their special work to "watch for souls" in our great congregation, and to seek to bring to immediate decision those who appeared to be impressed under the preaching of the Word. One brother has earned for himself the title of my hunting dog, for he is always ready to pick up the wounded birds. One Monday night, at the prayer-meeting, he was sitting near me on the platform; all at once I missed him, and presently I saw him right at the other end of the building. After the meeting, I asked him why he went off so suddenly, and he said that the gas just shone on the face of a woman in the congregation, and she looked so sad that he walked round, and sat near her, in readiness to speak to her about the Saviour after the service.

That same brother did a very unusual thing on another occasion. A poor fallen woman accosted him in the street, and in an instant he began to plead with her to leave her sinful ways, and come to Christ. Rain came on while he was talking to her, so he rapped at the door of the nearest house, and asked if he might stand in the passage while he spoke and prayed with a poor soul under conviction of sin. The good woman invited him into her front room, and when he thanked her for her kindness, he took the opportunity of asking her also if she knew the Lord. I believe he had the joy of leading both of them to the Saviour, and bringing them to join the church at the Tabernacle. Eternity alone will reveal how many have thus been arrested and blessed by a wise and winning word spoken in season, and accompanied by earnest prayer and clear Scriptural teaching concerning the way of salvation. Others of the elders have also exercised a most gracious ministry in various parts of the metropolis, and in the home counties, through the agency of the Tabernacle Country Mission and Evangelists' Association. Many churches, that are now self-supporting and flourishing, were started in a very humble fashion by the brethren connected with one or other of these two useful Societies. The labours of the elders in visiting the sick, seeking to reclaim the wandering, pointing enquirers to the Saviour, and introducing candidates to the fellowship of the church, are recorded in the Lord's Book of Remembrance, and are gratefully recollected by their Pastor and fellow-members.

(One of the ministers who took part in the services in connection with the opening of the Tabernacle was Pastor James Smith, whose portrait was given in Volume II., page 3. Not many months afterwards, he was laid aside by serious illness. A letter of condolence and sympathy was sent to him from the church, in which it was said:—"Many of us remember your useful and honoured ministry when you went in and out before us, and sought to feed the flock; all of us know you by your valuable writings, and to this day we hear of instances of conversion wrought by means of your sermons in our midst. We therefore all of us feel a true union of heart towards you, and devoutly pray that every covenant mercy may rest upon you and your family in this hour of affliction and sorrow."

The venerable minister was greatly cheered by this token of love from his former church. He lingered for more than a year, and in October, 1862, Mr. Spurgeon went to see him, and on the following Sabbath, thus reported to the friends at the Tabernacle how he found him:—"I saw, this week, one whom many of you greatly respect,—the former Pastor of this church, Mr. James Smith, of Cheltenham,—a name well known by his innumerable little works which are scattered everywhere, and cannot fail to do good. You will remember that, about a year ago, he was struck with paralysis; one half of his body is dead, but yet,



M. ROMANG.



F. COCKRELL



W. PERKINS.



B. CORRICK.



S. R. PEARCE.



M. LLEWELLYN.



J. T. DUNN



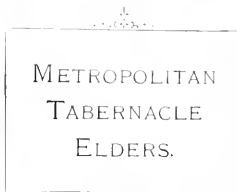
G. J. MARSHALL.



E. BINGLE.



G. E. ELVIN.



METROPOLITAN
TABERNACLE
ELDERS.



G. BANICK.



G. COURT.



C. CORNELL



S. JOHNSON.



A. WOOLLARD



G. S. EVERETT.



J. J. CORSAN.



G. CROKER



W. BOWLER



J. WARD

when I saw him on the bed, I had not seen a more cheerful man in the full heyday of strength. I had been told that he was the subject of very fearful conflicts at times; so, after I had shaken hands with him, I said, 'Friend Smith, I hear that you have many doubts and fears.' 'Who told you that?' he enquired, 'for I have none.' 'Do you never have any?' I asked. 'Why, I understood that you had many conflicts.' 'Yes,' he said, 'I have many conflicts, but I have no doubts; I have many wars within, but I have no fears. Who could have told you such a thing? I hope I have not led anyone to think so. It is a hard battle, but I know the victory is sure. After I have had an ill night's rest,—of course, through physical debility,—my mind is troubled, and then that old coward, Satan, who would, perhaps, not meddle with me if I were strong, attacks me when I am weak. But I am not afraid of him; don't you go away with that opinion, he does throw many fiery darts at me, but I have no doubt as to my final victory.' Then he said, in his own quaint way, 'I am just like a packet that is all ready to go by train,—packed, corded, labelled, paid for, and on the platform, waiting for the express to come by, and take me to glory;' and he added, 'I wish I could hear the whistle now; I had hoped I should have been carried to Heaven long ago; but, still, it is all right.' He also said to me, 'I have been telling your deacon, George Moore, that I am not only *on* the rock, but that I am cemented *to* the rock, and that the cement is as hard as the rock itself, so there is no fear of my perishing; unless the rock falls, I cannot fall; unless the gospel perishes, I cannot perish.'"

He had not to wait much longer for the home-call, as the following entry in our church-book, under the date of December 15, proves:—

"The church was informed that our late Pastor and beloved brother, Rev. James Smith, of Cheltenham, had fallen asleep in Jesus yesterday. The members, therefore, joined in expressions of sympathy with the bereaved family, and they were glad to hear that, a few days previously, the sum of £50 had been forwarded to him by friends in connection with the church to aid him in his time of affliction.")

CHAPTER LXII.

Deacons and Elders : Pastors and Teachers *(Continued).*

I do not think that, in the course of the next twenty years, you, as a church, will have such a choice of pastors as you have had during the last twenty years. If I should die, it may be so, I suppose; but I do not think that anything but death would get me to go away from this spot. I hardly agree with ministers, when they get beaten, showing the white feather, and resigning their charge. I feel that I am captain of a vessel, and if there should be a Jonah in the ship, I shall, as gently and in as Christian a spirit as possible, pitch him out; I shall not thin, because Jonah is there, that therefore I ought to leave, but I will stand by the ship in ill weather as well as in sunshine. I know that, by God's grace, I was called to this place; and if God's grace and providence shall move me, well and good; but nothing else ever will. I have not the slightest doubt but that, as our numbers shall increase in answer to earnest prayer, the Spirit of God will be poured out yet more abundantly upon minister and people, and that we, being bound together yet more closely in ties of affection and of hearty co-operation, shall go from strength to strength in glorifying God and serving one another. Why should not this ancient church become as glorious in the future as it has been in the past?—C. H. S., in address at meeting of Tabernacle church shortly after the opening of the new building.

It was very important that, during the short active lifetime of our Saviour,—a little more than three years. He should confine His operation to a comparatively small district, so as to produce a permanent result there which would afterwards radiate over the whole world. He knew what was best for men, and therefore He restricted Himself to a very narrow area; and, my brethren and sisters, I am not sure that we are always wise when we want a great sphere. I have myself sometimes envied the man with about five hundred people to watch over, who could see them all, know them all, and enter into sympathy with them all, and so could do his work well. But, with so large a number as I have under my charge, what can one man do?—C. H. S., in exposition of Matthew xv. 21.



AFTER the Tabernacle was opened, the church continued to grow so rapidly that it was found necessary, from time to time, to provide the Pastor with suitable helpers in his many-sided service. The following entries in the church-book show the different steps that were taken before a permanent appointment was made:—

November 24, 1862.—“ Our Pastor stated that he thought it desirable that we should revive the office of TEACHER, which had formerly existed in this church, but had fallen into disuse. In looking over our church history, he found that, during the pastorate of Mr. William Rider, Mr. Keach had laboured in the church under the name and title of Teacher, so that, upon the decease of Mr. Rider, a Pastor was at once on the spot in the person of the mighty man of God who had for twenty years been recognized as a Teacher among us. Again, in the pastorate of Benjamin Keach, the church elected Mr. Benjamin Stinton to assist the Pastor as a Teacher, and it again happened that, on the removal of Mr. Keach, Benjamin Stinton succeeded to the pastorate, and the church was spared the misery of long

remaining without a Pastor, or seeking some unknown person from abroad. The Teacher, without dividing the unity of the pastorate, would, in the judgment of our Pastor, be a valuable aid for the edification of the saints in the matter of word and doctrine. Our Pastor also remarked that, when the Holy Spirit manifestly made a man useful in the church, and bestowed on him the real qualifications for an office, it seemed but fitting and seemly that the church should humbly recognize the gift of the Lord, and accept the brother in the Lord's name.



PASTOR JOHN COLLINS.

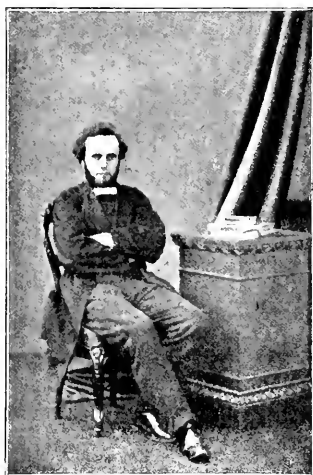
“Our Pastor proceeded to remark that our Brother John Collins had commended himself, by his useful labours and teaching at New Park Street, to the love and esteem of all who knew him, and he should feel exceedingly happy if the church would acknowledge our excellent brother by calling him officially to do what he was already actually doing. The Pastor thought that, in this way, in future years, the church might have a number of useful preachers in her midst, and it might please the Great Head of the Church thus to provide for us a succession of Pastors from among our own brethren. Of course, the office of Teacher did not involve, of necessity, that the person holding it should be chosen to the pastorate; but, since the Lord had thus provided for the church in years gone by, it was right to act upon the precedent, and to expect that He would again raise up a Keach or a Stinton from our midst.

“Several brethren having expressed their hearty concurrence in the remarks made by our Pastor, and also their confidence in our Brother Collins, the church

unanimously agreed to appoint John Collins to the office of Teacher. Our brother was then called in, and informed of the office he had been appointed to fill by the vote of the church, which he accepted with all humility, asking our prayers, and pledging himself anew to serve the Lord and His people."

September 10, 1863.—"A letter was read from our Brother Collins, on behalf of the church at Southampton of which he had been chosen Pastor, requesting his dismissal to their fellowship. It was agreed that the request should be complied with, and that he should be released from the office of Teacher, with best wishes for his future success."

March 3', 1864.—"Our Pastor stated that the office of Teacher had not been filled up since Brother Collins had been chosen Pastor of the church at Southampton, and that he was very desirous that it should be occupied by an efficient brother who would labour with him in the gospel. The oversight of so large a church rendered some assistance necessary to the Pastor, and he therefore proposed that our Brother



PASTOR THOMAS NESS.

Thomas Ness, towards whom he entertained the most affectionate regard, be appointed Teacher, to assist the Pastor by visitation and other work as need should arise. Several of the brethren expressed their hearty approval, and spoke in the warmest terms of Mr. Ness, and of his suitability for the office. It was therefore unanimously agreed to by the church, and our Brother Ness signified his acceptance of the office.'

October 19, 1865.—“Our Pastor having alluded to the personal loss he would sustain by the removal of our Brother Thomas Ness to the pastorate of the church at Stepney Green Tabernacle, and many of the officers and brethren connected with various departments of evangelistic labour in the church having also testified to the faithfulness, love, and zeal of our beloved brother, it was agreed that a general meeting of the church be held in order that all the members might, as a united body, join in a testimonial of their high esteem and affection, and give public expression to the church's warmest prayers for the Divine blessing on his future labours.”

These experiments having failed, in each instance because the brother was called away to another field of labour, nearly two years were allowed to elapse before any further effort was made to relieve the Pastor from part at least of his ever-increasing burden of labour and responsibility. On October 16, 1867, a special church-meeting was held, of which the church-book contains the following record :—

“For nearly fourteen years, we have, as a church, enjoyed a most wonderful and uninterrupted prosperity, so that our present number of members is now more than 3,500,—a number far too great for the efficient oversight of one man. Although our deacons and elders labour abundantly, yet there is much work which no one can do but the Pastor, and which one Pastor finds himself quite unable to perform. The mere examination of candidates, and attending to discipline, entail most laborious duties. Moreover, the Pastor's labours in Exeter Hall, the Surrey Gardens Music Hall, our own large Tabernacle, and the Agricultural Hall, have been most exhausting, and yet he has taken little rest, being perpetually occupied in preaching the Word, having proclaimed the gospel throughout England, Scotland, and Wales, and having journeyed for the same purpose to Geneva, Paris, Holland, and Germany.

“In addition to all this, numerous Institutions have grown up in connection with our church, of which the chief are the College and the Orphanage, both of which require much care and industry in their right management. The Pastor conducts a Magazine which greatly aids him in raising funds, but which involves much writing. He publishes a sermon every week. He has been one of the foremost in founding the London Baptist Association, and serves on its Committee, and accepts his share of work for other public Societies. Last of all, he has been for some months laid prostrate by severe illness, and will probably be attacked in the same manner again very speedily unless some little respite can be afforded him. He is not afraid of work, but he does not wish to commit suicide, and therefore asks for help.

“The following resolution was then proposed by Deacon William Olney, seconded by Elder Dransfield, supported by Brethren Nisbet, Miller, and Stringer, and carried unanimously :— That, in the opinion of this church, the time has now arrived when some permanent help should be obtained to assist our beloved Pastor in the very arduous work connected with the pastorate of so large a church ; also that we consider the most likely person to discharge this duty to the comfort of our Pastor, and the lasting benefit of the church, is our Pastor's brother, the Rev. J. A. Spurgeon. It is therefore resolved that an invitation be given to the



PASTOR J. A. SPURGEON.

Rev. James A. Spurgeon to give as much of his time as he can spare from his present engagements to assist our Pastor in any way considered by him most advisable for the advantage of this church, for a period of three months, with a view to his being permanently engaged afterwards, if it is thought advisable at the expiration of that period ; also that it be an instruction to our deacons to make any financial arrangement necessary to carry out this resolution.'

“It was also proposed by Deacon Thomas Cook, seconded by Elder Hanks, and carried unanimously :— That we desire to acknowledge with devout gratitude the goodness of our Heavenly Father in the rapid and continuous growth of our church, numbering now 3,500 members ; also that our beloved Pastor has been enabled to discharge the duties of the pastorate without assistance for the period of

fourteen years with ever-increasing zeal and devotedness. These matters claim at our hands adoring gratitude and renewed consecration to the work of the Lord."

"At the adjourned church-meeting, held on October 22, in the absence of our Pastor in consequence of a return of his illness, the chair was taken by Brother W. Olney.

"The resolution passed at the last meeting was read, and Mr. J. A. Spurgeon, being present, expressed his willingness to undertake the duties, as defined in the resolution, for the next three months.

"The rest of the evening was spent in prayer for God's blessing on our brother in his new relation to the church, and for the speedy recovery of our beloved Pastor."

The probationary period having proved satisfactory, another special church-meeting was held on January 9, 1868, of which the church-book contains this record:—

"On behalf of the deacons and elders, the Pastor reported that, believing the engagement of Mr. J. A. Spurgeon to be a matter of the utmost weight, they had frequently deliberated upon it, and had forwarded to him the following letter:—

"To the Rev. James A. Spurgeon,

"Dear Sir,

"When, in the providence of God, our much-loved Pastor was laid aside from his incessant toils by a severe illness, we were all convinced that assistance was needed in conducting the pastorate of our very large church. Our Pastor not only concurred in this judgment, but pressed it upon us to find him a suitable helper. Our thoughts were at once directed to yourself as in every way the fittest person to render the necessary aid; we mentioned our views to the church, and with remarkable unanimity you were requested to render to your brother all the assistance you could for three months, with a view to a more lengthened engagement. In that unanimity we think we see the finger of God, and we trust that to you it may be a great encouragement, and a full assurance that you will be heartily welcomed by a loving people.

"As we have now every reason to believe that you will be elected for a permanence with even greater cordiality, we, the officers of the church, are anxious, before the election, to communicate with you as to the exact position which you are invited to occupy. We write as the representatives of the whole church, and with the full concurrence of the Pastor, and we trust that no expressions which we may use will be regarded by you as for a moment implying the slightest distrust, or as meant to hamper you in your position among us; we write with the utmost affection and respect to you personally, but with the greatest plainness, in order to avoid questions in the future. You will, we are sure, as a wise man, understand the

importance of the step we are taking, and the need that everything should be done to secure the future peace and prosperity of the church. We will, with great brevity, define the modifications under which you are elected as Assistant-pastor of the church in the Metropolitan Tabernacle.

"We wish you to have and enjoy among your ministerial brethren all the status and position of a Co-pastor, and we shall regard you as such, understanding the term with the exceptions hereafter mentioned.

"We have enjoyed, through the Divine blessing, so large a measure of prosperity under your beloved brother's presidency, that we could not, under any circumstances, wish to interfere with the precedence which we all most cheerfully accord to him in our councils and works. We wish him to act among us as though he were the sole Pastor, and we are sure that you will not find it irksome to consider yourself as rather his assistant than as co-ordinate with him. Next to him, we shall esteem you; and in his absence, we shall wish you to preside at our meetings as our Pastor, and we shall gladly render to you all the brotherly respect which is due to your office and character.

"We do not invite you to become the preacher of the church; we wish to leave the pulpit entirely in the hands of our beloved Pastor, who feels himself fully able to discharge all the duties of public ministry among us, and to whom the Lord has given such acceptance among us as will not soon fall to the lot of any other man. If you will relieve him in that matter, from time to time, as often as he may request you so to do, this is all we shall expect of you. In order that no legal difficulty or other dispute may arise, we think it expedient to ask of you a brief note to the effect that you will not consider yourself as having any claim to occupy the pulpit, or any rights of possession such as are supposed to belong to ministers in ordinary cases.

"We ask your aid mainly in pastoral work, in visiting the sick, in seeing enquirers, in attending at church-meetings, and in such other works as naturally fall to the lot of a Pastor. Your brother has many great works in hand, and you have already so efficiently aided him in our College, and in the Orphanage, that we are sure that you will in all other things afford him such brotherly assistance as he may from time to time require. Our earnest prayer is that to us you may be a great blessing, leading on the entire church, both by your example and precept, in the path of earnest labour for the Lord, who has redeemed us by His most precious blood.

"Further, we affectionately and respectfully request you to agree that, should circumstances arise which, in the judgment of the Pastor alone, or the Pastor and the majority of the deacons and elders, or a majority of the whole of the church-officers, should render it desirable for you to cease from holding office among us, you will

resign upon having twelve months' notice, or the immediate payment of one year's stipend.

"In the lamentable event of our Pastor's decease during your lifetime, you will consider that event as being, *ipso facto*, a notice of your own removal in twelve months, and you will resign in that time, or before that period upon the payment as before mentioned, unless by a majority of the deacons and elders it should be thought expedient for you to continue in your office.

"Your position is not to entitle you to succeed our Pastor in his office, nor are you to consider yourself as having any status in preference to any other preacher who may become a candidate for the pulpit. We trust that the emergency may not arise; but, if it should, you will, of course, be as eligible as anyone else to be appointed by the vote of the church to the full pastorate; but we shall trust to your Christian honour and discretion that you will make no undue use of your position to compass such an election, but will leave the officers of the church entirely free to use their best discretion in bringing fitting candidates under the consideration of the church. You will, we trust, excuse our being so express upon this point; for, with the fullest confidence in yourself, we yet feel ourselves as put in trust with a most weighty business, and desire to discharge that trust with such fidelity that none may hereafter call us to account.

"The deacons of the church are requested to make such provision for you from the church funds as shall be agreed upon between our Pastor and deacons and yourself.

"Finally, in the name of the deacons assembled in their session of December 27th, 1867, and the elders gathered together, Dec. 30th, we offer you our most hearty brotherly love, and wish you abounding grace to walk among us in all holiness, fidelity, zeal, and happiness, to the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ and the building up of His Church."

"(Signed for the deacons and elders.)"

"The Pastor then read the following reply, which had been received from Mr. J. A. Spurgeon:—

"33, Elgin Crescent,

"Notting Hill,

"January 6th, 1868.

"Dear Brethren,

"I heartily concur in your definitions of my future position, and accept them with the earnest prayer that I may in that post be greatly blessed to the building up of the church, and to the salvation of souls. Agreeable to your request, I expressly state that I shall not consider myself entitled to any such power over the pulpit as is usually connected with the office of Pastor. After my desire to glorify

God, my sole object in relinquishing my previous independent position is to aid my brother as he may desire me, and certainly in no wise to supersede him in anything.

"I think it is in my heart by nature, and I am sure it is by grace, most cheerfully to give him that precedence which by birthright, talents, and position is so justly his due. I can yield to no one in my high esteem for him, and I feel that it is my privilege to be *first in love* to him, so that it is rather a joy than a fetter to be thus associated with him.

"It is with trembling as well as rejoicing that I look forward to my future work with you. I am, however, cheered by the thought that I shall be sustained by your prayers, and shall find in your counsels and brotherly love a growing strength and comfort. I believe that our aim and motive, our faith and Lord, are *one*; so may our action and spirit ever be, is the prayer of—

"Yours, to serve in the Lord,

"JAMES A. SPURGEON."

"To the Officers of the Church at the Metropolitan Tabernacle."

"Proposed by Brother Olney, seconded by Brother Cook, and unanimously agreed:—That the church hereby endorses and adopts the first letter most heartily, and being thoroughly satisfied with the reply, elects Mr. James A. Spurgeon to become Co-pastor upon the terms and modifications laid down and accepted in the two letters."

"Proposed by Brother W. Olney, seconded by Brother Hackett, and unanimously agreed:—That we desire to record our hearty thanks to our beloved Pastor for the untiring labour and service which he has given us so many years, and also that there is embodied in the letter to Mr. J. A. Spurgeon those sentiments which exactly meet the views and wishes of us all, and we are glad to know that, in this important step, we have his hearty approval and sympathy. We gladly welcome our Brother James A. Spurgeon to the office he has been called to, praying that the increased strength given to the pastorate among us may result in a larger and richer blessing than we have hitherto enjoyed."

In *The Metropolitan Tabernacle, its History and Work*, a chapter, written by Pastor J. A. Spurgeon, contains the following paragraph:—"Amongst the officers of the church, foremost stands *the Pastor*, who, though its servant, is so to rule, guide, and discipline it as God shall help and direct by His Holy Spirit. In connection with the church at the Tabernacle, two such officers are now labouring. It is a trite remark that, if two men ride a horse, one must sit behind, and he who is in the front must hold the reins and drive. Co-pastorships have been sources of discomfort or blessing as this principle has been understood. Wherever it may have been disregarded, it is not (by the grace of God) likely to be so in the case in hand.

Where one of the two brothers has been so instrumental in creating the necessity for additional help, from the very fulness of blessing resulting from his labours; and is, moreover, so superior in talent, influence, and power,* it is a privilege to follow in the order of nature and birth which God, from the first, had evidently designed."



MRS. BARTLETT.

Mr. Spurgeon used often to say that his best deacon was a woman,—alluding to Mrs. Bartlett. In the summer of 1859, one of the teachers of New Park Street Sunday-school was going away for a month, and asked Mrs. Bartlett to take charge of her class during her absence; but, on presenting herself at the school, the superintendent (Mr. Thomas Olney, Junr., as he was then called,) directed her to the senior class. There were only three young women in attendance that afternoon, but in the course of the month the number had so increased that she was asked to continue as teacher. She did so, and before long the class had outgrown its accommodation, an experience which was again and again repeated until it was finally settled in the lecture-hall of the new Tabernacle, where there were some 600 or 700 regularly present. When Mrs. Bartlett was "called home," in 1875, it was estimated that between 900 and 1000 members of her class had joined the church at the Tabernacle, and Mr. Spurgeon thus wrote concerning his esteemed helper:—

"Mrs. Bartlett was a choice gift from God to the church at the Tabernacle, and the influence of her life was far-reaching, stimulating many others besides those who

* * We are not responsible for the affectionate prejudices of our coadjutor. We think he over-estimates his brother, but the error is too inveterate with him for us to hope to reason him out of it.—C. H. S.

by her means were actually led to the Saviour. We miss her sadly, but her spiritual children are with us still; they have stood the test of years, and the most searching test of all, namely, the loss of her motherly counsel and inspiring words. She did not build with wood, hay, and stubble, for the edifice remains, and for this let God be glorified.

"She was a woman of intense force of character. She believed with all her heart, and therefore acted with decision and power. Hence, she did not constantly look to the Pastor for help in her appointed service; but, beginning in a small and quiet way, toiled on till everything grew around her to large proportions. She took small account of difficulty or discouragement, but trusted in God, and went on as calmly sure of success as if she saw it with her eyes. When anything flagged, she only seemed to throw out more energy, waited upon God with more fervency, and pushed forward with the resolve to conquer. Deborah herself could not have been more perfectly God-reliant than Mrs. Bartlett was. She did not beat the air, or run at an uncertainty, but such expressions as 'I know God will help us. It must be done; it shall be done; sisters, you will do it!' were just the sort of speeches that we expected of her. She flamed in determined earnestness at times when only fire could clear a path, and then there was no withstanding her, as her class very well knew

"To her resolute will, God had added by His grace an untiring perseverance. On, and on, and on, year by year, she went at the same duty, and in the same way. New plans of usefulness for the class were opened up by her as she saw them possible and prudent, but the former things were never dropped for fresh ideas, and novel methods were not devised to the superseding of the well-tried plans. Her talk was always concerning 'the old, old story,' and never of new-fangled doctrines or imaginary attainments. She kept close to the cross, extolled her Saviour, pleaded with sinners to believe, and stirred up saints to holy living. Of her theme she never tired, nor would she allow others to tire. She looked as if it was treason to grow cold; her glance indicated that, to be indifferent about the Redeemer's Kingdom, was a shameful crime. From first to last of her long leadership of her class, she appeared to be almost equally energetic and intense.

"It pleased God to make our sister an eminently practical woman. She was no dreamer of dreams, but a steady, plodding worker. She never wasted two minutes of her Pastor's time with marvellous methods, and miraculous plans; she instinctively saw what could be done, and what should be done, and she did it, looking to God for the blessing. Her class has raised large sums for the College, and has done actual service in more ways than we have space to tell, for she trained her disciples into a band of labourers, and kept them all at it to the utmost of their abilities. Her addresses were always practical: never speculative, or merely

entertaining. She aimed at soul-winning every time she met the class, and that in the most direct and personal manner. In pursuing this object, she was very downright, and treated things in a matter-of-fact style. The follies, weaknesses, and temptations of her sex were dealt with very pointedly ; and the griefs, trials, and sins of her class were on her heart, and she spoke of them as real burdens. Her talk never degenerated into story-telling, or quotations of poetry, or the exhibition of singularities of doctrine ; but she went right at her hearers in the name of the Lord, and claimed their submission to Him.

"Amid all her abounding labours, Mrs. Bartlett was the subject of frequent pain and constant weakness. She had the energy of vigorous health, and yet was almost always an invalid. It cost her great effort to appear on many occasions, but then she would often succeed best, as she pleaded with her hearers, 'as a dying woman' to be reconciled to God. 'Out of weakness . . . made strong,' was her continual experience ; in fact, much of her power lay in her weakness, for the observation of her pains and feebleness operated upon the sympathetic hearts of her young friends, and made them the more highly appreciate the counsels which cost her so much effort and self-denial. She has met many of her spiritual children above, and others are on the way to the sweet meeting-place. We are thankful for the loan we had of such a woman, thankful that she was not sooner removed as sometimes we feared she would have been, thankful that she has left a son to perpetuate her work, and thankful most of all, that there is such a work to be perpetuated."

On the monument over her grave in Nunhead Cemetery, is the following inscription, which was written by Mr. Spurgeon :—

"In affectionate memory of
LAVINIA STRICKLAND BARTLETT,

Who departed to her blissful home, August 21, 1875, in her 69th year.

The Pastors, Deacons, and Elders of the Church in the Metropolitan Tabernacle unite with her Class and the students of the College in erecting this memorial to her surpassing worth. She was indeed 'a mother in Israel.' Often did she say, '*Keep near the cross, my sister.*'"

CHAPTER LXIII.

Notable Lectures and Addresses, 1857—1878.

I have read of an old painter, who lived in that district of London which was called Harp Alley. He had been so accustomed to paint red lions on sign-boards for inns that, when he was once requested by the landlord of a public-house to paint an angel as an advertisement for his establishment, he asked, "Wouldn't a red lion do as well?" "No," replied the publican; "there are three of your red lions near here already, and I don't want another; I must have an angel, I have fixed on that as my sign." "Well," said the painter, "I will do the best I can, and you shall have an angel if you like, but it will be marvellously like a lion after all." Now, dear friends, I have been so long preaching sermons here that I feel, when I come to the Surrey Music Hall, that I cannot do anything else but preach; and even though I may essay to deliver a lecture, or a speech, it will have to be wondrously like a sermon after all—C. H. S., *in introduction to lecture on "A Christian's Pleasures."*



THE first lecture given by Mr. Spurgeon, of which a full report has been preserved, although it has not yet been published, was the one delivered at the Surrey Gardens Music Hall, on Tuesday evening, December 29, 1857, under the title, "A Christian's Pleasures." It was a bright, lively talk specially suited to the festive season, and contained much earnest warning and solid instruction. After speaking upon the so-called pleasures which are absolutely forbidden to a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, and of others which, though innocent, are utterly absurd and insipid, the lecturer thus referred to certain amusements concerning which there is a great dispute whether Christians ought to indulge in them:—

"Some persons ask, 'What do you think about dancing?' Well, I never hear the subject mentioned without having an uncomfortable feeling in my throat, for I remember that the first Baptist minister had his head danced off! I am sure I should have to be off my head before I should indulge in that pastime. The usual associations of the ball-room and dancing parties are of such a character that it is marvellous to me how Christians can ever be found taking pleasure in them. A safe rule to apply to all occupations is,—'Can I take the Lord Jesus Christ with me if I go there? If not, it is no place for me as one of His followers.'

"Then I may be asked, 'What do you think of games of chance?' Well, I always draw a distinction between games that require the exercise of skill and those that largely depend upon chance, as in the shuffling of cards and the throw of the dice. Some games are to be heartily recommended because they tend to sharpen

the mental faculties; I do not think the most precise Christian ought to object to draughts or chess,—if not played for money,—for they help to develop and improve our powers of thought, and calculation, and judgment. Sometimes, when I am weary with my work, I take down my Euclid, and go over a few propositions; or I work out some of Bland's equations,* just by way of amusement. That kind of exercise is as much a recreation to me as running out in the fields would be to a boy at school.

“In my opinion, games of skill are not objectionable; but every Christian should object to games of chance. Generally, they are played for gain, and hence they excite covetous desires, and so break the tenth commandment. With regard to the great proportion of games of chance, we hardly need discuss the question. The time has now arrived when all England ought to be heartily sick of every form of gaming. It used to be a comparatively harmless thing for ladies and gentlemen to spend all the evening over a pack of cards, or a box of dice, without any money being at stake; but we have had such practical proof that the worst crimes have sprung from this apparently inoffensive practice, that every Christian mind must revolt from it. Besides, I have always felt that the rattle of the dice in the box would remind me of that game which was played by the soldiers at the foot of Christ's cross, when they cast lots for His vesture, and parted His garments among them. He who sees His Saviour's blood splashed on the dice will never wish to meddle with them.

“The mere fact that there is any question about a certain course ought to be sufficient to make us avoid it. Have you never noticed that, when people come to ask you whether a thing is right or not, they usually mean to do it themselves? Frequently, a person comes to me with some scruple of conscience; but the questioner has generally made up his mind what he is going to do before he receives my answer. More than one young person has said to me, ‘Mr. Spurgeon, I want to ask your advice about a very important matter. You are my minister, and I want you to tell me whether you think I ought to marry So-and-so;’ but, whatever counsel I may give in such cases, I am quite certain they have usually determined what they are going to do, so often I give no advice at all. Possibly you remember the case of the minister who, on one occasion, was asked by a woman whether she should marry a certain man. ‘Well,’ said he, ‘the best thing you can do is to go out, and listen to the bells as you walk home.’ As she listened to their tuneful melody, they seemed to say to her,—

“‘Make haste and get married,
Make haste and get married;’—

* *Algebraical Problems, Producing Simple and Quadratic Equations, with their Solutions.* By MILES BLAND, D.D. On the fly-leaf of Mr. Spurgeon's copy of this work he had written, ‘C. H. Spurgeon, 1848.’ The volume bears manifest marks of having been well used, page after page being ticked off as ‘done.’ In one case,—‘wrong?’—is written against the answer given in the book.

so she did, and her husband horsewhipped her three weeks afterwards! Then she went again to her minister, and told him that he had given her very bad advice. 'Why!' said he, 'I never told you to get married; I told you to listen to the bells!' 'So I did,' replied the woman. 'But,' said the minister, 'perhaps you did not hear their message aright; go and listen again.' So she went out, and hearkened once more to the bells;—remember, this was after the horsewhipping;—and this is what they seemed to say then,—

"Never get married,
Never get married."

It is just the same with people who come to ask you about debatable amusements. Whatever you tell them, you may be sure that they have made up their minds beforehand. I would leave all such questions to a Christian's own judgment; but let him always remember that, although a thing may be right to other people, it may be wrong to him; and it is wrong to him if he has any doubts about it. The apostle Paul said, 'Whatsoever is not of faith is sin;' that is, whatever a man cannot do, believing it to be right, is sin to him. If I have any doubt about anything, it is sin to me; though it may not be sinful in itself. Conscience must be the great judge on those points that do not involve morality or immorality; and we thank our God that He has given to each of us who know His Name that inward Monitor, the Holy Spirit, who is infinitely superior to our own conscience, and if we go on our knees, and ask Him for direction, we shall not be mislead as to our amusements or anything else. Our Puritanical forefathers may have been a little too strict; but many, nowadays, have become a great deal too loose. If we became more holy by being more Puritanic and precise, both the Church of Christ and the world at large would have good reason to rejoice."

The remainder of the lecture was devoted to a consideration of the pleasures which true godliness gives, to make up for those it takes away, and an earnest exhortation to all Christians to endeavour to be happy, and so to attract others to the religion which had brought to them so much gladness and joy.

Mr. Spurgeon appears to have regarded this address upon "A Christian's Pleasures" as an informal talk among his own friends rather than a lecture, for when, on January 4, 1859, he took his place at Exeter Hall as one of the lecturers to the Young Men's Christian Association, to speak upon the subject announced,—*De Propaganda Fide*;—he began by saying, "I do not feel in my place here to-night. This is the very first occasion in my life upon which I have ever presented myself before the public as a lecturer,—at least, before any audience worthy of being called a multitude. I have long been in the habit of preaching, and one cannot break through a habit that has been acquired by years of constant practice; and I

feel positively certain that, do whatever I may, I shall have to preach a sermon to-night. I cannot lecture, I told your secretary so; and I tell *you* also the same, so that, when you retire from the hall, you may say, 'Well, I am disappointed, but it is just as he said it would be.'

"With regard to the title of my lecture, it is a very strange one, and some people have said, 'How could Mr. Spurgeon have selected a Latin title for his lecture? What does he know about Latin? He knows a little about Saxon, but he certainly does not understand Latin.' I will just tell you the secret of it: I think there is wisdom in that title. Mr. Shipton asked me, a long time ago, what my subject would be. I said, 'I am sure I cannot tell you.' I very seldom know, twenty-four hours beforehand, the subject of any sermon I am going to preach. I have never been able to acquire the habit of elaborate preparation. I usually begin my sermonizing for the Sabbath-day on Saturday evening. I cannot think long upon any one subject; and I always feel that, if I do not see through it quickly, I shall not be likely to see through it at all, so I give it up, and try another. What my theme for this evening was to be, I did not know, so I thought I would have a Latin title; and then, supposing I did not keep to the subject, people would say I did not understand the Latin, and had made a mistake. I felt sure that, with the title I have chosen, I should have a wide field, because I could either translate it literally, and keep close to the exact words, or else I might use a very free translation, and select almost any topic I pleased."

Dealing with the subject first negatively, Mr. Spurgeon showed that, by the propagation of the faith, he did not mean the nominal Christianization of nations, nor the bringing of large numbers to make a profession of love to Christ, nor the conversion of persons from one sect to another. Then, turning to the positive side of the subject, the lecturer continued:—

"What, then, is the propagation of the faith? I suggest another question. *What is the faith?* Here, a hundred *isms* rise up, and I put them all aside; they may be phases of the faith, but they are not the faith. What, then, is the faith? Strange to say, the faith of Christians is a *Person*. You may ask all other religions wherein their faith lieth, and they cannot answer on this wise. Our faith is a *Person*; the gospel that we have to preach is a *Person*; and go wherever we may, we have something solid and tangible to preach. If you had asked the twelve apostles, in their day, 'What do you believe in?' they would not have needed to go round about with a long reply, but they would have pointed to their Master, and they would have said, 'We believe Him.' 'But what are your doctrines?' 'There they stand incarnate.' 'But what is your practice?' 'There stands our practice. *He* is our example.' 'What, then, do you believe?' Hear ye the glorious answer of the apostle Paul, 'We preach Christ crucified.' Our creed, our body of divinity, our

whole theology is summed up in the person of Christ Jesus. The apostle preached doctrine; but the doctrine was Christ. He preached practice; but the practice was all in Christ. There is no summary of the faith of a Christian that can compass all he believes, except that word *Christ*; and that is the Alpha and the Omega of our creed, that is the first and the last rule of our practice,—Christ, and Him crucified. To spread the faith, then, is to spread the knowledge of Christ crucified. It is, in fact, to bring men, through the agency of God's Spirit, to feel their need of Christ, to seek Christ, to believe in Christ, to love Christ, and then to live for Christ."

After mentioning some of the encouraging signs of the times, and certain dangers against which he felt it needful to warn his hearers, Mr. Spurgeon continued:—"We must confess that, just now, we have not the outpouring of the Holy Spirit that we could wish. Many are being converted; I hope that few of us are labouring unsuccessfully; but we are none of us labouring as our hearts could desire. Oh, that I could have the Spirit of God in me, till I was filled with it to the brim, that I might always feel as Baxter did when he said,—

"I preached as never sure to preach again,
And as a dying man to dying men."

"I pant for that inward agony of spirit which has made men preach the gospel as though they knew they would be wrapped in their winding-sheets when they descended from the pulpit, and that they should stand at the bar of God as soon as they had finished their sermons. And I feel that, as we want an agonizing spirit in the pulpit, our hearers need it, too. Oh, if the Spirit of God should come upon those assembled to-night, and upon all the assemblies of the saints, what an effect would be produced! We seek not for extraordinary excitements, those spurious attendants of genuine revivals, but we do seek for the pouring out of the Spirit of God. There is a secret operation which we do not understand; it is like the wind, we know not whence it cometh nor whether it goeth; yet, though we understand it not, we can and do perceive its Divine effect. It is this breath of Heaven which we want. The Spirit is blowing upon our churches now with His genial breath, but it is as a soft evening gale. Oh, that there would come a rushing mighty wind, that should carry everything before it, so that even the dry bones of the Valley of Vision might be filled with life, and be made to stand up before the Lord, an exceeding great army! This is the lack of the times, the great want of our country. May this come as a blessing from the Most High!"

Towards the close of the lecture, there was the following striking passage concerning war and its influence upon heathen nations:—"There is one thing I must say,—I often hear Christian men blessing God for that which I cannot but reckon as a curse. They will say, if there is war with China, 'The bars of iron will be cut in sunder, and the gates of brass shall be opened to the gospel.' Whenever

England goes to war, many shout, 'It will open a way for the gospel.' I cannot understand how the devil is to make a way for Christ; and what is war but an incarnate fiend, the impersonation of all that is hellish in fallen humanity? How, then, shall we rouse the devilry of man's nature,—

"Cry, Havoc, and let slip the dogs of war,"—

and then declare it is to make straight in the desert a highway for our God,—
 A HIGHWAY KNEE-DEEP IN GORE? Do you believe it? You cannot. God does overrule evil for good; but I have never seen yet—though I look with the cautious eye of one who has no party to serve,—I have never seen the rare fruit which is said to grow upon this vine of Gomorrah. Let any other nation go to war, and it is all well and good for the English to send missionaries to the poor inhabitants of the ravaged countries. In such a case, our people did not make the war, they did not create the devastation, so they may go there to preach; but for English cannon to make a way in Canton for an English missionary, is a lie too glaring for me to believe for a moment. I cannot comprehend the Christianity which talks thus of murder and robbery. If other nations thus choose to fight, and if God lets them open the door for the gospel, I will bless Him; but I must still weep for the slain, and exclaim against the murderers. I blush for my country when I see it committing such terrible crimes in China, for what is the opium traffic but an enormous crime? War arises out of it, and then men say that the gospel is furthered by it: can you see how that result is produced? Then your eye must be singularly fashioned. For my part, I am in the habit of looking straight at a thing,—I endeavour to judge it by the Word of God,—and in this case it requires but little deliberation in order to arrive at a verdict. It seems to me that, if I were a Chinaman, and I saw an Englishman preaching in the street in China, I should say to him, 'What have you got there?' 'I am sent to preach the gospel to you.' 'The gospel! what is that? Is it anything like opium? Does it intoxicate, and blast, and curse, and kill?' 'Oh, no!' he would say,—but I do not know how he would continue his discourse; he would be staggered and confounded, he could say nothing. There is a very good story told of the Chinese that is quite to the point. A missionary lately went to them with some tracts containing the ten commandments; a Mandarin read them, and then sent back a very polite message to the effect that those tracts were very good indeed, he had never read any laws so good as those, but there was not so much need of them in China as among the English and the French; would the missionary have the goodness to distribute them where they were most wanted?"

Mr. Spurgeon concluded by earnestly appealing to the unconverted at once to believe in Jesus, and by exhorting Christians to put into practice what they had heard about propagating the faith. His closing words were:—"I wanted to make this lecture practical. If there is but a little practical result from it, I shall rejoice

far more in that than in all this great assembly and in your many plaudits. If you will remember the world's dire necessities,—if you will ponder the tremendous value of a soul,—if you will think about the dread, immeasurable eternity, to which men are hastening,—if you will recollect that the Name of Christ is every day blasphemed,—if you will bethink you that false gods usurp the place of the God of the whole earth,—and if, with these thoughts in your mind, you will go forth into daily life to propagate the faith as it is in Jesus Christ,—if, with prayer, with holy living, with a godly example, and with earnest walking, you shall all of you be missionaries for Christ, then I will be well content, and unto God shall be the honour and glory for ever. Amen.”

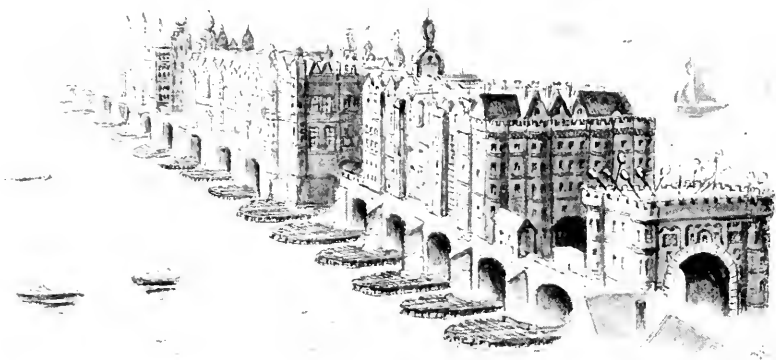
One of the most notable of Mr. Spurgeon's early lectures was delivered at the Camberwell Institute upon “Seraphic Zeal, as exhibited in the life of George Whitefield.” Numbers xxv. 13, “he was zealous for his God,” was the lecturer's motto; and he spoke, first, upon the nature of Whitefield's zeal; secondly, upon the effects of his zeal; and then gave anecdotes and general particulars of the great evangelist's life. He presented the manuscript notes of the lecture to his son Thomas, by whose kind permission the following extract is inserted here:—“Years on years, Whitefield continued his arduous labours, never resting. In the intervals of preaching, he was riding, or walking, and composing sermons. He wrote letters, conversed with enquirers, visited gaols and sick-beds,—attended to the Orphan House, published various works, preached during his voyages,—and at all times, even till the hour of death, was earnest and fervent. He was, as he said, tired *in* the work, but not tired *of* it; and he desired to preach once more, and then to die. He had his wish, for he preached from ‘Examine yourselves, &c.’ and then died at six, the next morning, of asthma, at fifty-six years of age. It is wrong to say, ‘Preaching killed him,’ for fifty-six is as good an age as the average of men may expect to live to* ; and if he had never preached, he might have died quite as soon.”

On December 26, 1860,—three months before the Metropolitan Tabernacle was completed,—Mr. Spurgeon delivered in the lecture-hall a lecture upon “South-wark.” It is published by Messrs. Passmore and Alabaster, and therefore need not be described in detail; but the following extracts appear worthy of a place in this volume:—

“In 1163, a certain excellent man, named Peter of Colechurch, erected a bridge of elm across the River Thames, and he, in 1176, commenced that edifice which stood for six and a-quarter centuries, and was considered to be the wonder of its time,—Old London Bridge,—a bridge which some of you have seen, though I

* Mr. Spurgeon was himself “called home” at the age of fifty-seven.

did not; the houses were taken away long before our time. Old Peter of Colechurch seems to have dedicated his life to building that bridge; and then, with a sort of poetic inspiration on his mind, he desired that he might be buried in the church or chapel in the middle arch of the bridge,—the right place for a good man to be buried, in the very centre of his work. I have often said,—Let me die while I am labouring for Christ; and I should not desire a better place for my burial than hard by the spot where I have worked for my God, and been the means of doing good to the souls of men.”



OLD LONDON BRIDGE, WITH "TRAITORS" HEADS ON TOWER.

“ The tower on the Southwark side of the bridge had most singular garnishings upon the roof. The regular school-book historians will tell you that, on the tower, the heads of traitors were exposed. Now, it so happens, that men who are traitors one day become heroes by-and-by; and some men, who were execrated, and put to death for attempts which were only blamed because they were not successful, need yet to have their true histories written. Let none of us be desirous of fame while we live. If fame be worth having at all, it is the fame of an Oliver Cromwell, who

comes out glorious a hundred years after his death. That thing which is called fame gets all the better for keeping; and, in due time, people respect a man all the more for the calumny through which he has passed.

"Southwark is the borough of Baptists. In Walter Wilson's *History of Dissenting Churches*, I find mention of eighteen distinct communities of Baptists, and there is scarcely one of the other churches which was not 'infested' by these troublesome persons, as some people considered them. In 1642, there was a famous disputation in Southwark between Dr. Featley and four Baptists. The Doctor published his own version of the case, with the title of 'The Dippers Dipt; or, the Anabaptists ducked and plunged over head and ears at a disputation at Southwark.' There was a lane called Dipping Alley, Fair Street, Horsleydown, because there was erected there a baptistery, which was used by several congregations. . . . John Bunyan preached in the old chapel in Zoar Street; with a day's notice, he could get 1,200 people early in the morning, or 3,000, with proper intimation to the public. Mr. Wesley preached in a chapel in Snow's Fields, which had been built for a Unitarian Baptist; but there was a great secession, and the cause does not seem to have ever prospered. The members of the church in Snow's Fields excluded Wesley from their Society, and became perfectionists; he was succeeded by Thomas Charlton, who became a Baptist. . . . Near here, tolled the curfew-bell. Here martyrs for baptism were burned. This is the stronghold of religious liberty, and the very centre of our denomination. There are ten Baptist churches within the liberties of our borough, while we now stand upon its margin."

The week before the Tabernacle was opened, Mr. Spurgeon paid a visit to Aberdeen, in connection with the Young Men's Christian Association. On Tuesday afternoon and evening, March 12, 1861, he preached twice in the Music Hall to crowded congregations, and the following morning he met between 150 and 160 gentlemen at a breakfast, at which the Earl of Kintore presided.

The subject of Mr. Spurgeon's address was, "Success in Life;" and he spoke upon it, first, as it concerned secular matters, and, then, as it related to religious affairs. There were several autobiographical passages, such as the following:—"We must be careful as to the line of life we select, our pursuit must be in keeping with our constitutional tendencies. A man born to be a mechanic would never succeed as a poet; and the man with the poetical afflatus would not be successful as a financier. Each man has powers that adapt him to certain work; and he ought to look out for that occupation which will be most congenial with his own disposition. I know that, if I had been bred a collier or a ploughman, I would still have been a preacher, for I must speak. I feel something like Elibu, when he said, 'I will speak, that I may be refreshed.' I do not regard preaching or speaking as a task

or a labour; it is more like a cure for dulness. I feel that there is something I want to get rid of, so I unburden myself by telling it to others.

"When you have chosen your pursuit in life, stick to it. Having had a great many young men under training, I have met with some who are—

· · Everything by turns, and nothing long.'

Some men in business are just the same; but I would rather be a cobbler, and stick to my last, than change my calling often, and so be noted for nothing in particular. If a tree is transplanted seven times, it will be a miraculous tree if it brings forth fruit. The man who is first this thing, and then that, is like a dog hunting six hares at one time, he is certain to catch none. David was a man of great influence, and we must trace all his spiritual power to the Spirit of God; but, with respect to what he accomplished, we may learn a lesson from his own words, 'One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after.' That concentration was the source of much of his power. Now, if your energies are allowed to run out in many channels, they will be dissipated, and we shall see no result in the stream of your life; but if you have only one channel for all your powers, it will be deep if not broad, and there may go the galley with many oars, and from it shall proudly float the banner of success.

"We have in England some cart-rut ministers. They have got into grooves, and there they remain; they think the ruts should never be filled up, and that the wheels of the waggon should always keep in them. I do believe, if the management of our roads had been left to some of these good men, in place of railways, we should not even have got the length of the four-horse coach yet. These brethren are exceedingly wise; and when they see one take an independent course, they say, 'This is a very rash and a very hazardous thing.' Well, I have been very rash in my time, and I mean to be so again. I find that the best method, in such cases, is to act as David did when his brother said to him, 'I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle.' David went forth to meet Goliath, taking his sling and his five smooth stones from the brook, and when the youthful shepherd came back, bearing in his hand the giant's head dripping with gore, that was the best answer to his brother's accusation. If you have work to do, do not stay to vindicate yourself; the work itself will be your vindication. / Remember how it was with Peter and John; when they were brought before the high priest and the rulers, and their accusers saw the man who was healed standing with them, 'they could say nothing against it;' and I find that our brethren, when they see that God's blessing is resting upon us, and that God is with us, are usually willing to be with us, too.

"It was my lot to go through two or three years of the most virulent abuse, and I thank God for it. I felt it very hard to bear, but I fell upon my knees before

God, and told Him that, when I gave Him everything else, I gave Him my character, too. If I had known that, by faithfully serving Christ, I must ruin my reputation, I think I should not have paused for a single moment. I felt quite sure that, if my reputation should be lost here among men, it would be safe with my Lord; for, at the day of judgment, there will be a resurrection of reputations as well as of bodies. Yet it is very hard to bear up under constant slanders; only one good thing comes of it, you can find out your weak points, for your enemies will discover your faults if your friends do not. But if I have God with me, I do not care who may be against me. I remember that once, in London, a man took off his hat, bowed to me, and said, 'The Rev. Mr. Spurgeon,—a great humbug!' I took off my hat, too, and said, 'I am much obliged to you, sir, for the compliment; I am glad to hear that I am a great anything.' We parted very amicably, and I have not had the pleasure of meeting him since. . . .

"Do not think of waiting until you can do some great thing for God; do little things, and then the Master will bid you go up higher. Eleven years ago, I was addressing Sunday-school children, and these alone. Ten,—nine years ago, I was preaching in little insignificant rooms here and there, generally going out and coming back on foot, and occasionally getting a lift in a cart. It has often happened that, when I have been going out to certain villages, the brooks would be so swollen that they could not be crossed in the usual way, so I would pull off my shoes and stockings, wade through up to my knees, then try to make myself tidy again as I best could, and go on to the little chapel to preach, and return home in the same way. Now, I am perfectly sure that, if I had not been willing to preach to those small gatherings of people in obscure country places, I should never have had the privilege of preaching to thousands of men and women in large buildings all over the land. If one wishes to be a steward in God's house, he must first be prepared to serve as a scullion in the kitchen, and be content to wash out the pots and clean the boots. Remember our Lord's rule, 'Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.'"

An interesting reminiscence of this visit to Aberdeen is preserved in Dr. W. G. Blaikie's Memoir of Dr. David Brown (Hodder & Stoughton, 1898). Dr. Brown found Mr. Spurgeon in an anteroom, surrounded by a number of people who were full of high expectation of the treat they were about to enjoy. One of the Pastor's London friends, who had accompanied him, told Dr. Brown that, if he could not have a few minutes' quiet meditation, his address would be a failure. Accordingly, the room was cleared; but the great preacher seemed in sore distress of mind, as though he could not get along with his subject. Even in the hall, he was manifestly out of sorts, and groaning in spirit. Dr. Brown told him that he would hold up his

hands in prayer. "Thank you for that," was the prompt and cordial answer; and twice he repeated the words, "Thank you for that; thank you for that." The address proved to be a brilliant one; and when, at the close, friends came to express their admiration and gratitude, Mr. Spurgeon, turning to Dr. Brown, remarked, "You owe it all to him."

Mr. Spurgeon has himself recorded, and used as an illustration in inviting sinners to the Saviour, an incident of quite a different character, which occurred on one occasion when he was going to deliver a lecture at the City Hall, Glasgow:— "I went, at the hour appointed, to keep my engagement, and the Provost of Glasgow went to the hall with me; but the policeman said that he could not let us in, for we had no tickets, and his orders were to admit none without them. That was a pretty state of things. So the Lord Provost said, 'But you must let us in.' The policeman replied that he could not, no matter who we were. I said, 'This is the Lord Provost;' but the policeman said he did not know that, neither did he care who he was; he should not let us pass against rules. He had his directions from the inspector to let nobody in, and he was sure no Lord Provost would wish him to disobey orders. Then the Lord Provost said, 'But this is Mr. Spurgeon; and he has to deliver the lecture.' But the man answered, 'I cannot help that. I have my orders, and he shall not come in without a ticket.' What do you think we did? Did we take 'No' for an answer? Not so; we meant to get in, so we talked and parleyed and reasoned; but he, like a good policeman, did his duty, and would take no pleas from us which were contrary to his instructions. At last, he was condescending enough to let us send our cards in to the inspector, and straightway we were admitted. Now, if we had taken 'No' for an answer, and had gone away, I should have had to this day the repute of having gathered the people together to disappoint them. I knew I had a right to go in, and I meant to get in; and you must do the same. Even though your sin should proscribe you, and the law should denounce you, and the officer of justice should refuse you, and say, 'You cannot come in, no sinner comes this way,' yet insist upon it that you are a creature and a sinner, that the gospel is sent to every creature, and specially invites sinners, and therefore you mean to go in to the feast of grace, whoever may oppose. Stand to it that you will enter; and, as surely as God is true, if there be this resolve and perseverance in you, you shall enter in to the banquet of love, you shall inherit eternal life, and rejoice for evermore."

CHAPTER LXIV.

Notable Lectures and Addresses, 1857—1878 (*Continued*).



"A GORILLA LECTURING ON MR. SPURGEON.

"We are now to be entertained by Mr Spurgeon's lecture on the gorilla, but, in after ages, — according to the development theory,—we shall doubtless have a gorilla lecturing on Mr Spurgeon" — *Extract from the speech of the Rt. Hon. A. H. Layard, M.P., at Mr. Spurgeon's lecture on "The Gorilla and the Land he Inhabits"*



ON October 1, 1861, Mr. Spurgeon gave, in the Tabernacle, a lecture which was destined to attract more public attention than any which he had previously delivered. It was entitled, "The Gorilla and the Land he Inhabits," and was largely concerned with the volume, then recently published, and severely criticised,—*Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa*, by Paul B. Du Chaillu (John Murray). A. H. Layard, Esq., M.P., presided, and by his side sat M. Du Chaillu. In introducing his subject, Mr. Spurgeon said :—

"Mr. Chairman, and my very good friends, I am very glad to see you here, though you have taken me very much by surprise. I was reckoning upon a quiet

evening with a moderate audience, but you have crowded this vast house, and I regret to say there have been great multitudes turned away from the doors. We are doomed to disappointments, but such as these one can afford to endure with equanimity. Perhaps the question will be asked, Why do you deliver a secular lecture? I answer that the question itself is rather late, since it is a time-honoured custom for our ministers occasionally to offer instruction to their congregations in this pleasant and friendly form, and the present is very far from my first attempt in this direction. Casting aside all priestly pretences as mere superstition, I meet you as my friends and fellow-labourers every Sabbath-day, and I then endeavour to stir you up to holy labour; and now to-night, on a common week-evening, we meet by way of recreation to talk cheerfully upon an entertaining subject. We want common things treated religiously, and there may be almost as much good achieved by books and lectures on ordinary topics, thoroughly imbued with a religious spirit, as by sermons or theological treatises. All my Heavenly Father's works are my text-books, and, as a preacher, I have a right to select my subject from either of the great books of Creation or Revelation. But more; it is the growing conviction of my mind that the human animal will have some sort of amusement or other; and that, if we do not give him the right sort, he will certainly seek the wrong. God has made nature not only for our necessities, but for our pleasures. He has not only made fields of corn, but He has created the violet and the cowslip. Air alone would be sufficient for us to breathe, but see how He has loaded it with perfumes; bread alone might sustain life, but mark the sweet fruits with which nature's lap is brimming. The colours of flowers, the beauties of scenery, the music of birds, the sparkling of gems, and the glories of the rainbow and aurora, all show how the great Creator has cared for the lawful gratification of every sense of man. Nor is it a sin to enjoy these gifts of Heaven; but it would be folly to close one's soul to their charms. Now, in matters of truth, there is an analogy with nature. Those glorious doctrines which we daily preach are as the bread of Heaven, the needful and delicious food of our souls; but other truths, great facts of nature, are as the flowers and the birds, they may not *feed* the spirit, but they are not therefore to be neglected, since they gratify and gladden the mind. Certain is it that the masses will have amusement of some sort; everyone can see that. It is of no use for me to stand up in the pulpit constantly, and say to men who have no fear of God before their eyes, 'You must not frequent the public-house and the theatre,' for their reply will be, 'We want something to excite us, some recreation after our hard day's work,'—a speech not quite so unreasonable as the censorious may imagine. Well, what have I sought to do in that matter, and what has that to do with the present gathering?

"My esteemed friend, Mr. Haynes, a member of our congregation, has a considerable number of dissolving-views which he has had painted, and by the aid

of which he lectures to young people upon different interesting subjects. There is a College in connection with this Church, in which young men are trained for the ministry, and others are enabled to get a gratuitous education to fit them for the battle of life. In connection with this College is a weekly popular lecture, and every Friday night we allow the public the liberty of coming in at the small fee of twopence each; and month after month we have our lecture-hall full of people, who are willing to come and listen to lectures upon history, science, and nature, all of them having an eye to spiritual good as well as to secular education. I have been pleased to see the man in a fustian jacket giving us his company, and to see men, who do not come into the Tabernacle to hear a sermon, yet listening to my lecture upon 'bats, moles, and hedgehogs,' or whatever else may have been the theme. My audience can bear witness that I always give them some weighty gospel matter; yes, even when 'on a bat's back I do fly.' I know that some of them have found their way up from the lecture-hall into the Tabernacle, there to hear that which is necessary for the conversion of men. Mr. Haynes always lends me his views whenever I want them, and I, out of gratitude to him, said, 'I will do anything I can to repay you.' He said, 'Let me paint a set of slides on the gorilla, and you give us a lecture.' 'Very well, I replied, 'I will do it, and then, afterwards, I shall have the gorilla slides, and lecture to my own good people upon them at a small charge.' 'Certainly,' said he, 'anything I have is not only for the benefit of the Band of Hope, but for the general good of the cause; help me to pay for my slides, then you can use any of them.' For my own part, I have a good conscience towards God in this matter, for my only object in life is to benefit my fellow-men. I feel that the best way to lift up the lost and degraded from the horrible pit and the miry clay, in a spiritual sense, is to preach to them Jesus Christ and Him crucified; but this need not prevent me from using all measures possible to promote social reform; and I firmly believe that lectures upon useful and scientific subjects, in which a lecturer is able to throw out hints about dress, cookery, children, cleanliness, economy, temperance, and the duties of the household, or to exclaim against the tally system, the pot-house, begging, and puffery, may be very useful."

After carefully examining the volume written by the traveller, and considering the evidence *pro* and *con*, Mr. Spurgeon thus announced his decision concerning it:—"I do verily believe, in spite of all that has been said, that M. Du Chaillu's book is matter of fact. It is not written so carefully as a scientific man might write it, nor so orderly and regularly as the author might re-write it, if he had another seven years to do it in; yet I believe that it is true, and that he himself is worthy of our praise as one of the greatest modern discoverers,—a man who has done and dared more for science, and, I think I may add, more for the future spread of religion, than most men of his time."

Coming to the gorilla,—a stuffed specimen of which was on the platform,—the lecturer said:—"He is an enormous ape, which claims to approach the nearest to man of any other creature. How nearly he approaches, I leave you to judge. True, his claim to be our first cousin is disputed, on behalf of the koolo-kamba, by several very learned men. If we should, therefore, admit you (addressing the gorilla) to be man's first cousin, we fear that the koolo-kamba might institute a suit at law to claim equal rights, and so many cousins would be far from convenient. Besides, I have heard that, if we should admit this gentleman to be our cousin, there is Mr. Darwin, who at once is prepared to prove that our great-grandfather's grandfather's father—keep on for about a millennium or two,—was a guinea-pig, and that we were ourselves originally descended from oysters, or seaweeds, or starfishes. Now, I demur to that on my own account. Any bearded gentleman here, who chooses to do so, may claim relationship with the oyster; and others may imagine that they are only developed gorillas; but I, for my own part, believe there is a great gulf fixed between us, so that they who would pass from us to you (again turning to the gorilla) cannot; neither can they come to us who would pass from thence. At the same time, I do not wish to hold an argument with the philosopher who thinks himself related to a gorilla; I do not care to claim the honour for myself, but anyone else is perfectly welcome to it.

"Seriously, let us see to what depths men will descend in order to cast a slur upon the Book of God. It is too hard a thing to believe that God made man in His own image; but, forsooth, it is philosophical to hold that man is made in the image of a brute, and is the offspring of 'laws of development.' O infidelity! thou art a hard master, and thy taxes on our faith are far more burdensome than those which Revelation has ever made. When we have more incredulity than superstition can employ, we may leap into infidel speculation, and find a fitting sphere for the largest powers of belief. But who can deny that there is a likeness between this animal and our own race? . . . There is, we must confess, a wonderful resemblance,—so near that it is humiliating to us, and therefore, I hope, beneficial. But while there is such a humiliating likeness, what a difference there is! If there should ever be discovered an animal even more like man than this gorilla is; in fact, if there should be found the exact *facsimile* of man, but destitute of the living soul, the immortal spirit, we must still say that the distance between them is immeasurable."

After giving an account of the country which the gorilla inhabits, and of the manners and customs of the natives of that region, Mr. Spurgeon concluded:—"As for sending missionaries among them, they are ripe and ready for them. They received M. Du Chaillu with the greatest kindness and courtesy, and they even prayed the traveller to tell the white men to send missionaries to them; and where they have teachers, they gladly receive them. If missionaries can be sent

to Africa in sufficient numbers, there are happy days in store for that land. What will be the effect upon the world when Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands to Christ? . . . I am pleased to say that my friend, M. Du Chaillu,—if he will allow me to call him so,—wherever he has been, has sought to open the way for missionary efforts, and has been the missionaries' friend everywhere; and there is this to be said of him, he has always regarded the day of rest even in his most toilsome journeys, insomuch that the natives could not make it out, and when they had some very difficult tasks to be performed, and found that M. Du Chaillu *would* rest, they proposed that he should put it off for three weeks, and then rest three days instead of one, so that they might get over their work while there was a necessity for it. He opened his Bible on Sunday, and read to them, selecting the simple words of Christ, and seeking to instil into their ears, if he could not into their hearts, that Divine teaching which has made glad the world."

At the time of the delivery of the "gorilla" lecture, M. Blondin was performing at the Crystal Palace, and some wag wrote to him a letter purporting to come from Mr. Spurgeon. He sent it on to the Pastor, who endorsed it thus,—“This was received by M. Blondin, and is a specimen of the genus ‘hoax’;”—and then put it away for future reference. The envelope contained the following epistle:—

“Metropolitan Tabernacle,

“Newington,

“Oct. 5, 1861.

“M. Blondin,

“Sir,

“In consequence of the overflowing attendance at my Tabernacle, on Tuesday evening last, when I gave a lecture on the gorilla, it has occurred to myself, and to my brethren the Managers of the Tabernacle, that to engage your services for an evening (say, next Wednesday) for the following programme, would result in mutual benefit. *You must meet me at the Tabernacle, on Tuesday next, at 12 o'clock, to confirm or to alter the proposed order of entertainment, which I flatter myself will be highly gratifying to all concerned.*

“Programme.

“At 6 o'clock on Wednesday evening, Oct. 9th, M. Blondin to ascend from the platform in the Tabernacle, by an easy spiral ascent, five times round the interior, to one of the upper windows, opposite to ‘The Elephant and Castle,’ thence by an easy incline in at the first-floor window of that inn, and return the same way to the platform. The admission to be, as at the ‘gorilla’ lecture, 6d., 1s., and 2s. 6d.

“Yours sincerely,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”

The lecturer could well afford to laugh at this clumsy attempt to hoax M. Blondin; but some of the newspaper attacks upon him, with reference to the "gorilla" and other lectures, were of such a character that they could not be reproduced here. One friend was sufficiently influenced by them to write an expostulatory letter to Mr. Spurgeon, and thus evoked the following reply:—

"Clapham,

"October 22nd, 1861.

"My Dear Sir,

"I have been dumb under the cruel rebukes of my enemies, and the ungenerous reproofs of pretended friends. I have proved hitherto the power of silence, and although most bitterly tempted, I shall not change my custom, or venture a syllable in order to stay these mad ravings. But your brotherly note deserves one or two words of answer.

"(1.) Have I well weighed what I have done in the matter of these lectures? Aye,—and so weighed it that neither earth nor hell can now move me from my course. I have a life-work to perform, and towards its completion, through evil report and good report, I speed my way.

"(2.) You imagine that my aim is merely to amuse, and you then speak very properly of 'stooping.' Indeed, if it were so, if I had no higher or nobler aim in view, it would be *stooping* with sorrowful emphasis; but, *then*, think you that the devil would care to roar at me? Why, surely, it would be his best policy to encourage me in forsaking my calling, and degrading my ministry!

"(3.) 'Is the Master's eye regarding His servant with pleasure?' Yes, I solemnly feel that it is; nor am I conscious of any act, or motive,—the common infirmity of man excepted,—which could cause me to incur Divine displeasure in connection with that which is, to me, *the* work of my life.

"(4.) With regard to *laughter*,—you and I may differ upon this matter, and neither of us be quite infallible in our judgment. To me, a smile is no sin, and a laugh no crime. The Saviour, the Man of sorrows, is our example of morality, but not of misery, for He bore our griefs that we might not bear them; and I am not John the Baptist, nor a monk, nor hermit, nor an ascetic, either in theory or practice. Unhallowed mirth I hate, but I can and do enjoy my Father's works, and the wonders of Creation, none the less, but all the more, because I am a Christian. At any rate, I hold my own views upon this point; and, during eleven years of ministry, I have seen no ill effect, but very much good from my preaching, although the charge has always been laid at my door that I sometimes provoke the risible faculties.

"(5.) Concerning 'sowing to the flesh,' I have *not* done so in these lectures, but have rendered honest and hearty service to my Lord, and believe that spiritual fruit has already been reaped.

“(6.) As to the grief of friends, let them, as well as myself, be ready to bear the cross; and let them not attempt to evade reproach by weeping where no tears are needed. I have given no cause to the enemy to blaspheme, or only such blessed cause as shall be renewed with greater vigour than ever.

“And now for my explanation;—I have, in connection with my Church, a College for young ministers, which is a work of faith as to temporals, and a labour of love on my part in the highest sense of the term. There are about 150 young men, who are getting an education with a view, in most cases, to preaching the Word in the streets, villages, and towns of this land. Their studies are such as their capacities can receive, and the ministering brethren are mainly given to the searching of the Word; while reading it in the original is the ambition of each. In the course of instruction there are lectures, delivered by myself, a regular lecturer, and other gentlemen. We have had about twenty lectures on English History. I have given lectures on Sabbath-school teaching, Preaching, Church Discipline, Ethnology, &c., &c. The Rev. George Rogers has lectured on Books and Reading Habit and Instinct, on Ministerial Prerequisites, and on other matters. Various brethren have taken up other topics; and, having attended all the lectures, I can testify that the best spirit has pervaded all, and each lecturer has laboured, not merely to instruct, but to do spiritual good.

“My present course is upon Natural History. For the lectures already delivered, especially the abused ones, I have had the thanks of the members passed spontaneously and unanimously; and I believe the lectures have been as acceptable to the audience as any which were ever delivered. We who have seen the wonders of wisdom in anatomy, providential adaptation, and creating perfection, have gone home praising and blessing God. We have laughed, doubtless; and we have wept, too; but, with an audience of 150 young men, and a considerable company of men and women of the working-class, what would be the use of dull, drowsy formality? Last Friday week, the ‘shrews’ lecture came in due course, and I thought it might be useful to give a few words as to the value of love and kindness in Christian families, for which words I have had grateful acknowledgment. We went home, and I have not heard of one of the audience who did not feel that it was an evening well and profitably spent. Many Christian people gave me a hearty shake of the hand and glowing thanks.

“But, lo! to our utter amazement, one morning we discovered that the lecture was considered vulgar, coarse, and I know not what. The gentlemen of the press had nothing else just then to do, so they said, ‘Let us abuse Spurgeon, no matter whether he deserves it or not.’ Since this abuse, I have asked scores who were there if anything had been said for which one might be sorry, and all have answered, ‘No, nothing was said at all deserving censure, or anything but

approval.' Think you that my hearers are all so degraded as to tolerate conduct such as a lying press imputes to me? O my brother, you do ill to judge a servant of the Lord from the lips of his foes, and one, too, who has had abuse enough on former occasions without having given cause of offence, which renders it inexcusable that brethren should readily believe reports concerning him!

"This work of my Institution is of God; lectures are a part of the necessary plan, they do good, I have a call to this work, so all this opposition is a spur to increased zeal. I would the Lord's people cared more than they do for these young preachers, for I feel sure that God the Holy Spirit will raise up from our midst many who shall do exploits in His Name. To this work am I called, and the Lord is with me in it. Void of offence towards God and man, trusting for acceptance to Him who has washed away my sin, shall I flee because my conduct is misunderstood and my words are misconstrued? Nay, verily, Jehovah-nissi! And now let hell roar, and saints themselves forsake. Time and eternity will clear the character of one who has given up even his good name to his Master, without reserve.

"Yours wearily,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

"P.S.—Get the 'gorilla' lecture; read it, and see if there be any evil in it; yet *it is the least religious* of them all.—C. H. S."

The vote of thanks and sympathy, referred to in the above letter, together with the Pastor's grateful acknowledgment of it, are thus recorded in the Tabernacle church-book:—

"At the church-meeting, held October 14, 1861, from which the Pastor was absent through illness, the following resolution was proposed, seconded, and carried unanimously:—'That the members of this church, constantly refreshed by the gospel ministry of their beloved Pastor, and deeply obliged to him for the lectures he gives upon secular and social subjects, have noticed, with sincere regret, and heartfelt sympathy with him, the scandals heaped upon his name by the public press, and beg to express to him their most loving confidence, their strong desire to endure with him a full share of his reproach, and their full determination, by God's help, to bear him constantly on their heart in prayer.'

"Church-meeting, October 28, 1861.—Our Pastor expressed his thanks to the church for the vote of sympathy with him passed at the church-meeting on October 14, and rejoiced in the fact that all the members had remained steadfast notwithstanding the virulent attacks made upon him."

In November, 1861, Mr. Spurgeon lectured on "Illustrious Lord Mayors." After pointing out that history had usually been written "from the terrace of the

palace, or in the shadow of parliament," he said:—"It strikes me that the Guildhall of London is, perhaps, the best spot in the world from which to look down upon the history of former times. Here, kings have banqueted, councils have assembled, bishops have held their courts, and the crowds have rioted, and each of these has left behind tracings upon the historic roll. Indeed, London of old was England in miniature, just as Paris is France. The Lord Mayor's office may well typify the king in the constitution; the aldermen and common-councillors are not unlike a parliament; at the same time, London, as a city, has always had so strong an element of democracy, that the masses are fairly in the picture; and our ancient City has been so connected with religion, that even a bishop might be content to view the history of England from the windows of the Guildhall."

All lovers of London should read the complete lecture if they can, for it contains a most interesting account of the City and its chief magistrates from the year 1189, when Henry Fitz-Alwyne began his mayoralty, which lasted twenty-four years, down to John Wilkes, and his notorious *North Briton* newspaper, the publication of which the Government of the day vainly sought to stop. Considerable notice is taken of Sir William Walworth, who was Lord Mayor in 1374, and whose act in killing Wat Tyler is said (though the authority is doubtful,) to be the origin of the dagger in the City arms. Of the so-called "rebel"—whose real name was Walter Hilliard, a brick and tile maker at Dartford, Mr. Spurgeon says:—"I believe that Wat Tyler has never had sufficient honour done to his memory. He was a patriot, and is only infamous because he was unsuccessful. The Kentish men rallied at his call, they marched to Maidstone, and opened the prison doors in order to set free their friend, John Ball, a priest, fanatical and enthusiastic enough, but not half so bad as some paint him. History will yet have more to say about John Ball. This man had been excommunicated for holding the doctrine that all men are equal, which was a very horrible heresy in the judgment of the Church of Rome. He was elected chaplain to the Kentish host, and a warlike chaplain I have no doubt he made. Taking for his text the couplet,—

"When Adam delv'd, and Eve span,
Who was then a gentleman?"—

he inveighed with all his might against the oppressions of the lords, and the haughtiness of the high and mighty ones who taxed and insulted the people. His teaching, you will remember, is described by his enemies; and, therefore, although it may have been rather extreme in its Radicalism, we have no ground to suppose that he preached anarchy. He believed that the king was put down by the council as much as the people were; and if they could but deal with him alone, they would no doubt find him a noble-hearted prince. This was the opinion of Tyler's host, who, being armed with mattocks, spades, forks, and scythes, made up in courage for

the absence of better weapons. Bishops and lazy clergy were to be put down, and the hard-working mendicant friars were to be the only religious class. Lawyers were their chief abomination, and a vow was made to cut them up root and branch. So, with John Ball as their chaplain, and Wat Tyler at their head, these people marched away to London. They made a league with one another,—first, that they would be free, come whatever might; that they would make their landlords charge them reasonable rents for their land after they were free; and, lastly, they swore never to obey a king whose name was John, by which they meant that John of Gaunt, whom they thought to be really king, should never have power over them. There is nothing so very dangerous in that compact, nothing so desperately wicked as some of our history books would make us believe."

Dick Whittington, of course, came in for a good share of the lecturer's attention. He had to assure his audience that the nursery tale about the poor boy coming to London, hoping to see the streets paved with gold, was a fiction,—for Dick was the son of Sir William Whittington, a wealthy citizen,—and it was very doubtful if his wonderful cat ever existed; but it was a fact that he was thrice Lord Mayor, and on the last occasion, "he invited King Henry V., to a banquet of the most marvellous kind; indeed, the description given, reads more like a fairy tale than a reality. Vessels of gold and silver were heaped upon the tables, and precious stones reflected the light of the chandeliers. The fires were fed with rich spices, so that the most delicious perfume was shed over the banqueting chamber. The choicest meats, the most exquisite birds, and dainties of the rarest kind were served in superabundance upon the table. Music gladdened the royal ears, so that every sense was provided for; while rich wine flowed from a conduit in the hall. As they were sitting, the queen observed that 'even the fires were filled with perfume.' 'Ah!' said Whittington, 'by your leave, your Majesty, I will make these fires still more agreeable;' and, taking out a packet of bonds, to the amount of £60,000, which the king had given to the different Companies for loans, he threw them on the fire, and the ruddy blaze shone into the face of the astonished monarch."

The lecture included several references to religious matters with which Lord Mayors had been more or less associated; two who came close together were thus strikingly contrasted:—"In the year 1547, that glorious martyr for Christ, Anne Askew, was tried in the Guildhall, and there witnessed a good confession for her Lord. Perhaps you will remember the verse of brave poetry in which she expressed her courage, and refused the offer of pardon, preferring to hold fast her integrity,—

"I am not she that lyst
My anker to let fall
For every dryslynge myst;
My shippe's substancel."

She was burned in Smithfield, and the Mayor shouted, '*Fiat justitia!*' as the

signal for lighting the fire. Let his name perish,—we will not even mention it:—for the memory of the wicked shall rot.

“In 1549, occurs the honoured name of Sir Rowland Hill. This Rowland Hill was the first Protestant Lord Mayor. He sat upon the civic throne in the reign of Edward VI., just when the light of gospel day began to prevail in this land. He was an ancestor of that great and venerable man of God who, in the lifetime of many here present, was a mighty leader to the hosts of God. Good Rowland Hill was another proof that the promise is unto us and to our descendants, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call; for the God who had loved Sir Rowland Hill the ancestor, continued His goodness and His mercy even unto these later generations.

“During the Commonwealth, the Puritan Government was once entertained at a banquet by the City at Merchant Taylors' Hall. The record is curious, and I therefore give it at length:—‘The first business of the day was to hear a sermon at Christ Church, Newgate Street. From thence the procession walked to the hall, through the streets lined by the trained bands, marshalled in the following order,—First, the court of Lord Mayor and Aldermen in their scarlet robes, followed by the Common Council; then the Earl of Essex, the General; the Earl of Warwick, Lord Admiral; the Earl of Manchester; with many of the nobility, attended by several colonels and other officers of the army; then the members of the House of Commons, the Scottish Commissioners, and the Assembly of Divines, who closed the procession.’ It will not be expected that Cheapside exhibited any pageantry on this occasion; but, in its place, we are told that the visitors were diverted by a great bonfire of Popish trumpery and superstitious stuff. It were worth while to have been a dog in Cheapside to have seen that noble army of divines, the glory of their own day, and the wonder of ours. To my mind, London never had so high an honour, before or since, as that which she received when that host of learned, eloquent, holy, and earnest men sat at her table as respected guests.”

On December 6, 1861, Mr. Spurgeon gave a lecture, in the Tabernacle lecture-hall, on “The Two Wesleys.” As it has been recently published by Messrs. Passmore & Alabaster, it need not be referred to at length. Nor is a detailed description required concerning other notable lectures which have appeared in print from time to time. The subjects treated comprised “Counterfeits,” delivered to the Young Men's Christian Association at Exeter Hall, and printed by Messrs. Nisbet and Co. in the series for 1861—2;—Miracles of Modern Times;—Poland;—and George Fox;—all published by Messrs. Passmore & Alabaster. The lecture on Fox was given in Devonshire House, Bishopsgate Street, by request of the Society of Friends, on November 6, 1866.

Among the auditors at the Friends' Meeting-house was Matthew Arnold, who

afterwards wrote to his mother :—" Last night, Lord Houghton went with me and William Forster to Spurgeon's lecture. . . . It was well worth hearing, though from William's getting us places of honour on the bench close behind Spurgeon we did not see or hear him to such advantage as the less-forward public in the body of the hall. It was a study in the way of speaking and management of the voice ; though his voice is not beautiful as some people call it, nor is his pronunciation quite pure. Still, it was a most striking performance, and reminded me very much of Bright's. Occasionally, there were bits in which he showed unction and real feeling ; sometimes, he was the mere Dissenting Philistine ; but he kept up one's interest and attention for more than an hour and a-half, and that is the great thing. I am very glad I have heard him."

The mention of the title, " Sermons in Candles," will bring to the recollection of hearers in various parts of the country the delight they experienced in listening to Mr Spurgeon's lecture upon that subject. After having allowed it to be repeated, with more or less of alteration, for a quarter of a century, he thought the time had come for its publication in a volume ; and, accordingly, it was issued in 1890, the front cover of the popular edition bearing a reproduction of several of the illustrations described inside.



The origin of the lecture is thus explained by Mr. Spurgeon :—" In addressing my students in the College, long ago, I was urging upon them the duty and necessity of using plenty of illustrations in their preaching, that they might be both interesting and instructive. I reminded them that the Saviour had many *likes* in His discourses. He said, over and over again, ' The Kingdom of Heaven is LIKE ; ' ' The Kingdom of

Heaven is LIKE.' 'Without a parable spake He not unto them.' The common people heard Him gladly, because He was full of emblem and simile. A sermon without illustrations is like a room without windows. One student remarked that the difficulty was to get illustrations in any great abundance. 'Yes,' I said, 'if you do not wake up, but go through the world asleep, you cannot see illustrations; but if your minds were thoroughly aroused, and yet you could see nothing else in the world but a single tallow candle, you might find enough illustrations in that luminary to last you for six months.' Now, the young brethren in the College are too well behaved to say 'Oh!' or give a groan of unbelief, should I perchance say a strong thing; but they *look*, and they draw their breath, and they wait for an explanation. I understand what they mean, and do not make too heavy a draft upon their faith by long delays in explaining myself. The men who were around me at that particular moment thought that I had made rather a sweeping assertion, and their countenances showed it. 'Well,' I said, 'I will prove my words;' and my attempt to prove them produced the rudiments of this lecture."

"Spurgeon's Shilling Series" contains a volume entitled *Eccentric Preachers*. In the Preface, the author thus relates how his lecture grew into a book:—"I have published this little volume very much in self-defence. Some years ago, I delivered a lecture on 'Eccentric Preachers,' and a reporter's notes of it were published in one of the newspapers. These, like all such things, were mere pickings and cuttings, and by no means the lecture itself. Gentlemen of the press have an eye to the amusement of their readers, and make selections of all the remarkable anecdotes, or odd sayings, used by a speaker; and when these are separated from their surroundings, the result is anything but satisfactory. No man's speeches or lectures should be judged of by an ordinary newspaper summary; which, in any case, is a mere sketch; and, in many instances, is a vile caricature.

"I thought no more of my lecture till, the other day, I found the mere rags and bones of the reporter set forth in America as an address by myself, worthy to be bound up with my book upon 'Commenting and Commentaries.' Those notes were all very well for a newspaper, but I altogether disown them as my production. It amazes me that the American editor should not have corrected the more obvious mistakes of the reporter, such as calling Peter Cartwright, Peter *Garrett*; and Lady Anne Askew, Lady *Askayne*. Peter Cartwright was an American backwoods preacher, and his name should have been familiar to the American editor; but some publishers are so intent upon getting out their books that they cannot afford time for correction.

"Finding that I had by me the whole of the mutilated lecture, I thought of printing it, to show what I had really spoken; but, upon looking it over, I judged it

to be better to expand it and make it into a small book. I hope the reader will not be a loser by my resolution."

The notes used by Mr. Spurgeon in delivering the lecture were written on the two sides of a single half-sheet of notepaper; the *facsimile*, here reproduced, will show how small was the seed from which the volume grew.

Eccentric Preachers.

From the earliest periods the ministers of the gospel have been unable to please men, some of the Baptist were alike objected to against certain men the change has been that they are eccentric in substance, their falsehoods are riddled - Rowland Hill & his wife were called "drawers".

But what is the change? Their circle has not the usual centre; or, to square the circle, - they are off the square.

Who is to give the centre? The gentlemen who try sermons at 9^o each, the high flyers from Jer can understand, the sublimely dignified, the ritualistic, - or the dull? The centre = not fixed.

Time changes it - Wesley's Span. are preaching.

Preaching in halls & the streets,

Fashion changes it - wearing your own hair.

Iteration becomes longer - Moody's measured

John Moore & c since's now

It is a great pity it should be as to manner.

Various modes reach various men Owen & Binyan,

Robert Hall & Robinson affect persons of differing conditions.

Homely simplicity strikes certain minds best - the figs & Rowland Hill

Who then are these out-of-centre men?

There have been some who have tried to win attention

By ostentation, buffoonery, vulgarity & absurdity,

where this is the case, there has been as real desire to do good, the centre is indeed missed,

we allow that their eccentricity is fatal.

For eccentric twisting of Scripture we have

Wordworth

also nothing to say. Nor for eccentric def,

stone, & mannerism

But, still, who are the out-of-centre men whom one wd naturally mention?

In the Reformation Period, Latimer.

In the Methodist Revival, Berridge.

Later on, Rowland Hill, Dawson, Matthew Willks, &c.

In America, Cantonight, Fuller Taylor, &c. —

If there we may ask — where a more useful body of men
Story of Matt. Willks.

Some are simply natural, & ad not have spoken without being
gratified — Berridge. Shall not a bird sing? South's question to
"the noble"; "Sammy Wicks, & you can neither make folks laugh
nor cry." "Ewas to was shini kol & the horse."

There are boldly truthful Fuller Taylor the rich man from
Lower town: "Is there any other did dinner from Lower town, &c." —
Quinnshaw interrupting Whitfield at Harrowell

Others manly, and not to be hampered. Not putting the plague
forth because it was in the sermon.

Earnest, therefore vivacious, self-forgetting. Riding on
the back of order & decorum.
Chilling off his gloves

Practical resolute — minding only the main thing

Row Hill & Lady Ann Erskine

Methodist breaking painful. Reading a will.

They ought not to be separated from their surroundings.

The battle close — the pack of cards — birds on wall
the preacher & the labourer.

Dramatic element Dawson. Sam Wicks to "win his job."

Is not all this better than halfhearted doubting? Verge of their
Chapel, Cambridge.

Is not the main thing to get good to your souls?

The lecture on "Sermons in Stones," given at the Tabernacle in 1870, was published in 1894 by Mr. J. L. Keys, under the title, "What the Stones Say." The four volumes of *Lectures to my Students* are so well known and so highly appreciated that no details as to their contents need be inserted here. Few works in the whole range of theological literature have been so helpful to aspirants for the ministry or to those who have already begun evangelistic, pastoral, or missionary work.

Among the many unpublished lectures by Mr. Spurgeon are three very memorable utterances; — one delivered in 1862 in connection with the celebration of

the Bi-centenary of the ejection of the two thousand ministers in 1662 ;—another, on “ Bells and Bell-ringing,” given at the Tabernacle, in 1869, with musical illustrations ;—and a third, on “ Ignatius Loyola and the Jesuits.”

If all Mr. Spurgeon's notable public addresses could be collected, they would fill several substantial volumes, and would furnish a large constituency with a mass of interesting reading on a great variety of subjects. In 1878, eighteen “ Speeches at Home and Abroad ” were published by Messrs. Passmore & Alabaster ; and, although they had not the benefit of the speaker's revision, they afford a fairly accurate idea of his utterances at various public gatherings between the years 1861 and 1878. He had begun revising his own copy of the book, and the accompanying *facsimile* will show the extent of his alterations, and also his loyalty to Baptist principles. At the close of his speech at Plymouth, on October 6, 1875, in seconding the vote of thanks to Dr. McLaren, who had been pleading for additional help for needy Baptist ministers, Mr. Spurgeon said :—

“ While we, as a denomination, are poor, the Baptists in England who are not true to their name are, I suppose, among the richest people in the world. I believe the best Wesleyans, certainly the best Congregationalists, very many of the best Church of England people, and all the best Plymouth Brethren, have been baptized. We simply stand out, while the other Baptists, for reasons best known to themselves, slink every man to his tent in the rear, and thus escape the reproach which we have to bear. Baptists who are members of ‘ respectable ’ churches, I do not respect you for having left your brethren and deserted your colours for the sake of being respectable ! We are not ‘ respectable ’ at all because we put faith and baptism into their right places. A man says, ‘ I do not like to be called a Baptist. ’ Sir, there is no Baptist who wants you to be so called ; he does not feel so proud of you as to think it an honour to have his name coupled with yours. The oldest name of all the denominations now extant is certainly that of *Baptist*, which was borne by him who heralded our Master. A Baptist existed, as our Welsh friend said, a long time before there was any Wesleyan, or Episcopalian. Names are small matters, but the principle we contend for is precious. We speak with no bated breath when we maintain the Divine ordinance of believer's baptism : a rite they call it, but that rite involves a thousand other matters, for the view you take of that rite will affect your view of almost every other truth. A gentleman once told me he did not care twopence for baptism. My reply was, ‘ Why don't you give up your twopenny baptism, and have a view of our Lord's teaching which it would be worth while caring for ? ’ Let others do as they will, but be it ours to be faithful to our Lord, and obedient to His commands, for ‘ to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. ’ May the best of blessings attend you ! ”

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LOVE IN ACTION.

While

Baptist
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baptized. We simply stand out, ^{the} The others, for reasons best known to themselves, slink every man to his tent in the rear, and escape ~~some of~~ the reproach ~~that~~ we have to bear. Baptists ^{are} ~~that~~ are members of "respectable" churches, I do not respect you, having left your brethren and deserted your colours for the sake of being respectable! We are not "respectable" at all because we put baptism out of the ~~front~~ into the right place. A man says, "I do not like to be called a Baptist." "Sir, there is no Baptist ~~that~~ who wants you to be; he does not feel so proud of you ~~as~~ think it an honour to have his name coupled with yours." The oldest name of all is John the Baptist, ~~who~~ existed, as our Welsh friend said, a long time before there was any Wesleyan, or anything of the sort; ~~and~~ we speak with no bated breath when we stand right out for the sake of the vindication of a rite, as it is called, but which rite draws with it one third part of the stars of heaven, for the view you take of that rite affects your view of almost every other truth. A gentleman once told me he did not care twopence for baptism. ~~He~~ My reply is, "Why don't you give up ~~the~~ twopenny ~~thing~~, and have a view of ~~it~~ which it would be worth while caring for ~~in~~ which you would maintain?" Brethren, I have heard of some of your misfortunes since I have been here, as well as some of your joys, and I thought nobody would be able to say at Plymouth, you had been better fed than taught. I only hope that to-day you will be half as well fed as you have been taught.

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Let them do as they will, but be it ours to be faithful to our Lord, to be obedient to his commands, for "to obey is better than sacrifice, & to hearken than the fat of rams;" May the best of blessings attend you!

One more extract from this volume may be given, for it illustrates Mr. Spurgeon's readiness to turn everything to account; and he himself, in relating the incident to his students, bade them learn from it never to give out a hymn at any public gathering without being sure of its suitability to the occasion. At the annual meeting of the Congregational Home Missionary Society, held at the Memorial Hall, on May 7, 1878, at which Samuel Morley, Esq., M.P., presided, Mr. Spurgeon was one of the speakers. Apparently, the hymn sung at the commencement of the proceedings had been hurriedly chosen, for it was one of those in the Congregational Hymn Book intended to be used in connection with the "baptism" of infants! The third verse was as follows,—

"Help Thou our weak endeavour
To make Thy gospel known,
*And seal, O Lord, joy ever,
These little ones Thine own!*
Thy Church's nurslings gather
Beneath Thy sheltring wing,
Be Thou their Friend and Father,
Their Saviour, Guide, and King."

Many persons in the audience noticed the inappropriateness of the hymn, and doubtless wondered what their Baptist visitor would have to say concerning it. Mr. Spurgeon privately asked Mr. Morley if there was to be a "christening" that evening; and when he was called upon to speak,—after the cheers which greeted his rising had subsided,—he thus referred to the *contrtemps*:—

"I am not conscious of having done anything to deserve your cheers, but I thank you for them all the same. I must confess, however, to a good deal of disappointment. When you were singing that hymn, I thought that somebody here had had an increase in his family, and that a ceremony in which you are all deeply interested was about to be performed, and I have been musing and meditating to discover why that hymn was given out. I concluded that you had some naughty children, perhaps, in your denomination, who had been crying a good deal, and that we were offering prayer for them. I am sure I sincerely join in the supplication concerning them,—

"Be Thou their Friend and Father,
Their Saviour, Guide, and King,—

and I recommend any one of them who may be present to sing the third verse of the next hymn,—

"Make an unguarded youth
The object of Thy care;
Help me to choose the way of truth,
And fly from every snare."

"I see that all these hymns are 'for the young.' I remember that Cruden, whenever he met with a young minister who did not believe in the doctrines of

grace, made him a present of a Westminster Confession or Catechism, which had on the outside of it, 'For the young and ignorant;' and the next time you want to discuss the subject, I would recommend you to sing the verse I just quoted. I really think, brethren, you will then do very well if, as Mr. Hebditch says, you are so thoroughly Evangelical. I am happy to believe that you are,—though I did not believe it till to-day. I have grown sorrowfully suspicious of a great many of you, and not without good cause, as I think. I am an impartial onlooker from the outside,—although I am wonderfully partial to Evangelical doctrine;—and, therefore, inasmuch as you are Evangelical, and are able truthfully to say so, I ask you to say it whenever you have the opportunity. I always like to act according to Cobbett's rule; he said, 'I speak not only so that I can be understood, but so that I cannot be misunderstood;' and I think that, if ever there was a crisis in your history when you should boldly declare your faith, it has now arrived; and I, for one, shall heartily rejoice if your declaration is so clear that nobody in this world can misunderstand you, but all shall know that you stand by the grand old truths of the gospel as your forefathers stood before you.

"Well, still trying to find some mystical, spiritual reason for this hymn having been sung, I afterwards discovered that Mr. Wilson wished us to sing it on behalf of the new Committee. The light dawned upon me that they were new-comers, just taking charge of the new Society; and I felt that it was a very delightful thing that we should ask the Lord to 'seal for ever' these little ones' as His own. I hope that the new-born Society will grow up, and become very strong. The organization is, as Mr. Morley says, perfect and complete, and I wish it success exceeding abundantly above what you ask or even think."

After this playful introduction, Mr. Spurgeon delivered a powerful plea on behalf of our country churches, and the means to be employed to maintain their efficiency.

Mention must be made here of Mr. Spurgeon's visit to the costermongers of Golden Lane, on Tuesday evening, March 12, 1867, although his message to them was neither a lecture nor an address, but was distinctly a sermon. The leader of the Mission, Mr. W. J. Orsman, and his co-workers, were greatly cheered by this memorable service; and one friend who was present thus recorded his impressions concerning the gathering:—"On the previous Sunday morning, tickets of admission were distributed among the street-dealers of Whitecross Street; and the result was, that by far the majority of those who attended were of this class. A goodly number of the regular attendants at the mission-hall were absent, as they denied themselves for the sake of others. Some of the dealers came with unwashed faces and uncombed hair, but most of the congregation were dressed in their best clothes;

and those who could not recognize them, would hardly think that some were costermongers' wives. . . . At seven o'clock, Mr. Spurgeon ascended the platform, and opened the service with prayer. Then a hymn was heartily sung, and a chapter read and expounded. The preacher's prayer was frequently responded to; and when reference was made to the bodily aches and pains which so many suffered, and the poverty experienced by others, there were many deep sighs. Of course, Mr. Spurgeon arrested their attention, nor did he find any difficulty in making his audience understand what he had to tell them. Street-vendors are very much like other people, only they are more acute than most persons give them credit for. Our honoured friend's easy delivery, rapid flow of words, masculine thought, and earnestness and directness, were thoroughly appreciated; and the little anecdotes, homely illustrations, and forcible 'hits', were much enjoyed. The text was, John iv. 15. 'The woman saith unto Him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw;' and having briefly and plainly stated what the gospel was, the preacher showed how it might be compared to water. Water satisfied the thirst of man; often saved his life; took away filth; put out fire,—the fire of temper, and lust; it softened things, &c. He then encouraged them to believe that, if they desired this grace, they could have it; and, lastly, concluded by showing how he himself had found this 'living water.' After the sermon was ended, over two hundred remained for prayer. For an hour and a-quarter, earnest supplications were offered. Some begged that the brethren would pray especially for them; others, who had never made supplication in their lives before, expressed their wants in deep sighs, or in gentle solemn responses. It is believed that several were convinced of sin during the services, and, certainly, Mr. Spurgeon's appeals will never be forgotten by many who had been unaccustomed to sympathetic, earnest entreaty.

"One curious bit of criticism we heard from several costermongers. A coster's living depends largely upon his 'voice.' He, therefore, knows the value of good lungs, and is a connoisseur in voices. The preacher's voice was eulogized as 'wonderful'—'stunning'—'I never'—and other equally significant phrases. One coster had lost his voice, and probably he envied the preacher's gift."

On several occasions, Mr. Spurgeon addressed large companies of City men by request of those who were interested in their spiritual welfare. On December 4, 1876, about a thousand gentlemen assembled at Cannon Street Hotel, under the auspices of the Stock Exchange Christian Association, and Mr. Spurgeon spoke to them upon the words in 2 Cor. xii. 2: "a man in Christ." On January 11, 1877, he met the clerks of Messrs. Peek, Frean, & Co., at the Drummond Road Biscuit Works, Bermondsey, when the subject of his address was, "Our Relationship to the

Kingdom of God;" but he had an earnest longing to be the means of blessing to others, and therefore wrote the following letter:—

"Nightingale Lane,
"Clapham,
"13¹/₁/77.

"To the members of The Society of Friends meeting at Devonshire House,
"Brethren in Christ,

"I have for some years felt a desire to hold, at times, in our great City, *meetings for business men where I might address them upon the things of God.* Convenient places are few, and the hire of those available would be beyond my personal means.

"It therefore occurred to me that you might perhaps allow me to speak in your Meeting-house, for I know your liberality of mind; and, although personally I am not agreed with you in all points, yet in the greater truths we are one, and even in all things one in the desire to be led of the Spirit, and to live to the glory of God.

"Several Friends have encouraged me in the hope that you would freely lend me your Meeting-house, but I earnestly entreat that those who are in favour of so doing will not imagine that I could or would wish for this favour if it would wound the minds of any Friends.

"I, your brother in the Lord, ask you the loan of your Meeting-house for one hour about mid-day on four days in April or May which may be mutually convenient. If it seem good to you to decline, I shall not need to be assured that your reasons will be kind, for I shall be sure of it; but if you are moved to grant me my desire, I can assure you that I seek not to make converts to a sect, or to a school of thought, much less to any form of outward ordinance; but I desire to bear testimony, as the Spirit enables me, for the gospel of Jesus, with the one aim of leading souls to the Saviour.

"As, through great weariness, I am obliged to rest for a while in the South of France, I must ask your patience if there should be delay in replying to any enquiries which may arise out of this request. May the Spirit of God be over all in your assembly, even as I trust He moveth me in this act!

"Yours in Christ Jesus, in brotherly love,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

The request was granted, meetings were held on May 2 and 7, the subjects being "The Claims of God" and "Faith in Christ." These addresses, like all those previously mentioned, were published by Messrs. Passmore & Alabaster; but a great many others were only printed in contemporary newspapers, or are preserved in manuscript ready for use when required.

The overwhelming national calamity announced to the citizens of London, at midnight, by the solemn tolling of the great bell of St Paul's, was unknown to most of us until we entered this Sanctuary. It was therefore impossible to drape the building with the tokens of our sorrow, nor can the preacher adapt his discourse to this most melancholy occasion. We have already prayed most earnestly for our beloved Sovereign, the widowed Queen of England; may the God of all consolation cheer her lonely heart with that divine comfort w^h He alone can give! With reverent sympathy, we all mourn in her mourning, & weep in her weeping. We are all hereaved in her bereavement & we wish that, by some means, she could really know how intense & how universal is the grief of her loyal & loving subjects, who view her in this hour more as their Mother than as their Queen. To God again we commend the royal widow & household. O Lord, be Thou a present help in this their time of need!

CHAPTER LXV.

Memorable Services at the Tabernacle, 1861—1874.

At this moment, China is open to Christian enterprise; and I honestly avow, if this Tabernacle had not been built, and I had had no larger house of prayer than the place in which I have lately preached, I should have felt in my conscience bound to go to learn the language and preach the Word there; but I now know what to do, I must abide here, for this is *my* place.—C. H. S., in sermon at the Tabernacle, March 29, 1861.

It seems to me, standing here, as if I heard a voice saying to me, "Go thou, therefore, and teach all nations;" and my soul sometimes pants and longs for the liberty to preach Christ where He was never preached before; not to build upon another man's foundation, but to go to some untrodden land, some waste where the foot of Christ's minister was never seen, that there the solitary place might be made glad, and the wilderness might rejoice and blossom as the rose. I have made it a solemn question whether I might not testify in China or India the grace of Jesus, and in the sight of God I have answered it. I solemnly feel that my position in England will not permit my leaving the sphere in which I now am, or else to-morrow I would offer myself as a missionary.—C. H. S., in sermon at the Tabernacle, April 21, 1861.



AMONG the earliest of the memorable services at the Tabernacle was the one held on Lord's-day morning, December 15, 1861. Late on the previous night, the Prince Consort had been "called home;" and in commencing his sermon, Mr. Spurgeon read a few sentences which he had written with reference to that solemn event. His manuscript was preserved, and is reproduced in *facsimile* on the preceding page. He did not feel that he could at that time make further allusion to the Prince's departure, as he had prepared a discourse upon quite a different topic; but the following Sabbath morning he preached, from Amos iii. 6,—“Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?”—a sermon which was published under the title, “The Royal Death-bed.” The introduction contained the following noble tribute to the character and influence of Albert the Good:—

“The evil mentioned in the text is that of calamity, and we might read the verse,—‘Shall there be a *calamity* in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?’—a question exceedingly appropriate at the present time. There *has* been evil in this city; a calamity of an unusual and disastrous nature has fallen upon this nation. We have lost one who will to-day find a thousand tongues to eulogize him; a Prince whose praise is in the mouth of all, and who is in such repute among you that it is needless for me to commend his memory to your hearts. We have lost a man whom it was the habit of some to suspect so long as he lived, he could do little without arousing their mistrust; they were always alarmed by phantoms of intrusion and unconstitutional influence; but now that he has departed, they may sincerely

regret that they could not trust where confidence was so well deserved. Not of lack of homage to his rank, his talents, or his house, could he complain; but from his tomb there might well come the still small voice of memory, reminding us of many causeless suspicions, a few harsh judgments, and one or two heartless calumnies. I was pleased by a remark made by the leading journal of the age, to the effect that the Prince Consort's removal might suggest deep regrets for our thrifty homage and measured respect. He has deserved nothing but good at our hands. Standing in the most perilous position, his foot has not slipped; dwelling where the slightest interference might have brought down a storm of animosity upon his head, he has prudently withheld himself, and let public affairs alone as much as possible. Looking upon the nature of our government, and the position of the throne in our constitution, I can but say, 'Verily it is a heavy calamity for such a Queen to lose such a husband.'

"So dire is this evil, that our troubled hearts are shadowed with dark forebodings of other ills of which this may be the mournful herald; an earthquake has commenced, the mountain trembles, one great rock has fallen, what may come next? We *did* reckon upon war, but we had no forewarnings of a royal funeral; we looked forward with some apprehension to strifes abroad, but not to losses at home. And now we feel that a corner-stone in the royal house has been taken away, and we look forward with sorrow and fear to what may come next, and next, and next. We have great faith in our constitution, but had we not even greater faith in God, we might fear lest the removal of an eminent minister, the taking away of some great men who have stood prominent in our commonwealth, should leave us desolate, without earthly helpers. 'Tis not the fall of yonder stately column which alone has caused us sadness; it is the prophetic finger pointing to other parts of the goodly pile, which has made us full of forebodings of the time when many a noble pillar must lie in the dust. Nor is this all, or the deepest sorrow. We feel this to be an evil upon the city, because of the taking away of a parent from his children, and such children, too,—princes, whom no man may venture to instruct as could a father, princes into whose ears wise words will scarcely enter save through a father's voice,—princes and princesses, who needed to have his prudent counsel to steer them through the various trials of their minority, and to cheer them when they should come into the battles of life. He who, in concert with the Queen, has so well trained them, is taken away; and what his loss may be to their future characters, time only shall reveal. More than this,—and here we touch the tenderest string, and come nearest to the heart of the evil,—Her Majesty has lost her beloved husband, her only equal friend, her only confidant, her only counsellor in her private cares. Save her children, she has lost all at a blow, and she is this day more widowed than the poorest widow in the land. The bereaved wife of the

peasant is too often afflicted by the grasp of chill penury, but she has some equals and friends who prevent the colder hand of regal isolation from freezing the very soul. In our tenderly-beloved Sovereign, we see Majesty in misery, and what if I say, we behold the Empress of sorrow. Just as the mountain-peaks, the first to catch the sunbeams of summer, are the most terribly exposed to the pitiless blasts of winter, so the elevation of sovereignty, with all its advantages in prosperity, involves the maximum of sorrow in the hour of tribulation. What rational man among us would be willing to assume imperial cares in ordinary times; but what must they be now, when household bereavement wrings the heart, and there is no more an affectionate husband to bear his portion of the burden? Brethren, we can only sympathize; we cannot console. Ordinary cases are often within reach of compassion; but the proper reverence due to the highest authority in the land renders it impossible for the dearest friend to use that familiarity which is the very life of comfort.

"This is a calamity indeed! O Lord, the Comforter of all those whose hearts are bowed down, sustain and console our weeping Monarch! Would that Robert Hall, or Chalmers, could arise from the grave, to depict this sorrow! As for me, my lips are so unaccustomed to courtly phrases, and I understand so little of those depths of sorrow, that I am not tutored and prepared to speak on such a subject as this; I do but stammer and blunder where there is room for golden utterance and eloquent discourse. O God of Heaven, Thou knowest that there beats nowhere a heart that feels more tenderly than ours, or an eye that can weep more sincerely for the sorrow of that Royal Lady who is thus left alone! Alas! for the Prince who has fallen upon the high places! From the council-chamber he is removed; from the abode of all the graces he is taken away; from the home of loveliness, from the throne of honour, he is gone; and it is an evil,—such an evil as has never befallen this nation in the lifetime of any one of us,—such an evil, that there is but one death—and may that be far removed!—which could cause greater sorrow in the land."

Singularly enough, the next discourse claiming special notice also related to a great public calamity, namely, the Hartley Colliery explosion. On Thursday evening, January 30, 1862, Mr. Spurgeon preached, from Job xiv. 14,—“If a man die, shall he live again?”—a sermon which commenced thus:—“Once more the Lord has spoken; again the voice of Providence has proclaimed, ‘All flesh is grass, and all the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field.’ O sword of the Lord, when wilt thou rest and be quiet? Wherefore these repeated warnings? Why doth the Lord so frequently and so terribly sound an alarm? Is it not because our drowsy spirits will not awaken to the realities of death? We fondly persuade ourselves that

we are immortal ; that, though a thousand may fall at our side, and ten thousand at our right hand, yet death shall not come nigh unto us. We flatter ourselves that, if we must die, yet the evil day is far hence. If we be sixty, we presumptuously reckon upon another twenty years of life ; and a man of eighty, tottering upon his staff, remembering that some few have survived to the close of a century, sees no reason why he should not do the same. If man cannot kill death, he tries at least to bury him alive ; and since death will intrude himself in our pathway, we endeavour to shut our eyes to the ghastly object. God in Providence is continually filling our path with tombs. With kings and princes, there is too much forgetfulness of the world to come ; God has therefore spoken to *them*. They are but few in number ; so one death might be sufficient in their case, that one death of a beloved and illustrious Prince will leave its mark on courts and palaces. As for the workers, they also are wishful to put far from them the thought of the coffin and the shroud : God has spoken to *them* also. They were many, so one death would not be sufficient ; it was absolutely necessary that there should be many victims, or we should have disregarded the warning. Two hundred witnesses cry to us from the pit's mouth,—a solemn fellowship of preachers all using the same text, 'Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel !' If God had not thus spoken by the destruction of many, we should have said, 'Ah ! it is a common occurrence ; there are frequently such accidents as these.' The rod would have failed in its effect had it smitten less severely. The awful calamity at the Hartley Colliery has at least had this effect, that men are talking of death in all our streets. O Father of Thy people, send forth Thy Holy Spirit in richer abundance, that by this solemn chastisement higher ends may be answered than merely attracting our thoughts to our latter end ! Oh, may hearts be broken, may eyes be made to weep for sin, may follies be renounced, may Christ be accepted, and may spiritual life be given to many survivors as the result of the physical death of those who now sleep in their untimely graves in Earsdon churchyard !"

In closing his discourse, the preacher pleaded for the widows and orphans who were suffering through the terrible calamity ; and, though it was a wet week-night, and many who were present had already contributed to the Relief Fund, the congregation generously subscribed £120.

When Mr. Spurgeon was at Geneva, in 1860, he preached for Dr. Merle D'Aubigné as well as in the cathedral. It was therefore fitting that the Genevan divine should speak to the congregation at the Tabernacle when the opportunity occurred. On Lord's-day morning, May 18, 1862, the Pastor purposely made his discourse somewhat shorter than usual ; and, in closing it, said :—" My dear friend, Dr. D'Aubigné, is here this morning, having been called by the Bishop of London,

according to the order of our beloved Queen, to preach in the Royal Chapel of St. James. In a kind note with which he favoured me, last week, he expressed a desire publicly to show his hearty fellowship with his brethren of the Free Churches of England, and I am delighted to welcome him in the Tabernacle, in the name of this church, and I may venture to add, in the name of all the Free Churches of England. May the historian of the Reformation continue to be honoured of the Lord his God!"



DR. MERLE D'AUBIGNÉ.

Dr. D'Aubigné said :—"When I heard your dear Pastor reading to us the 16th chapter of the Romans, I remembered those words which we find very often in the Epistles of Paul,—'love to the saints,' and 'faith in the Lord.' In that 16th chapter, we find a beautiful exhibition of love to the saints, the children of God. We see that it was written from the Church of Corinthus, in Greece, to the Church in Rome. Observe how many Christians that Church of Corinthus and the apostle Paul knew at Rome! We have a long catalogue of them,—Priscilla, Aquila, Andronicus, and others. I must confess, my dear friends, to my regret, that in this great assembly I know only two or three people. I know your Pastor and my dear friend, Mr. Spurgeon; I know the name, but not the person, of Mr. North, upon my left; and I know the friend who has received me in your great city, Mr. Kinnaird,—'Gaius, mine host,' as the apostle says. But in this great assembly of six thousand men and women, and I hope brethren and sisters in Christ, I do not know anyone else. Well, my dear friends, I would ask you, do you know the names of

many Christians in Geneva? Perhaps you do not know three; possibly, not two; perhaps, only one. Now, that is to me a demonstration that fraternity, or brotherly love, is not so intense in our time as it was in the days of the apostles. In the first century, for a man to give his name to the Lord was to expose himself to martyrdom; and Christians at that time formed only one household in the whole world, in Europe, Asia, and Africa. Let us remember that, and may we, by the Holy Ghost, say that we, who have been baptized with the blood and the Spirit of the Lord, have only one Father, one Saviour, one Spirit, one faith, and we are only one house, the house of the living God, the house of Christ, one house of the Holy Spirit in the whole world; not only in Europe, Asia, and Africa, but in America, in Australia, one house, one family. O my dear friends, let us grow in love to the brethren!

“Then there is another thing, faith in the Lord Jesus. There can be no love to the saved and the redeemed, if there is no true living faith and hope in the Saviour and the Redeemer. Well, I suppose all of you in this great meeting would say, ‘We believe in the Lord, we have faith in Him.’ Yes, but that faith must be sincere, must be living, must come from the heart. I will tell you one word from Rome. Probably all these friends sent some messages by the apostle, but I will tell you one word that was said once in Rome, not in the days of Paul, but at the time of our blessed Reformation. There was, in the latter part of the sixteenth century, a man in Italy, who was a child of God, taught by the Spirit. His name was Aonio Paleario. He had written a book called, *The benefit of Christ's Death*. That book was destroyed in Italy, and for three centuries it was not possible to find a copy; but two or three years ago, an Italian copy was found, I believe, in one of your libraries at Cambridge or Oxford, and it has been printed again. It is perhaps singular, but this man did not leave the Romish Church, as he ought to have done, but his whole heart was given to Christ. He was brought before the judge in Rome, by order of the Pope. The judge said, ‘We will put to him three questions; we will ask him what is the first cause of salvation, then what is the second cause of salvation, then what is the third cause of salvation?’ They thought that, in putting these three questions, he would at last be made to say something which should be to the glory of the Church of Rome; so they asked him, ‘What is the first cause of salvation?’ and he answered, ‘*Christ*.’ Then they asked him, ‘What is the second cause of salvation?’ and he answered, ‘*CHRIST*.’ Then they asked him, ‘What is the third cause of salvation?’ and he answered, ‘*CHRIST*.’ They thought he would have said, first, Christ; secondly, the Word; thirdly, the Church; but no, he said, ‘Christ.’ The first cause, Christ; the second, Christ; the third, Christ; and for that confession, which he made in Rome, he was condemned to be put to death as a martyr. My dear friends, let us think and speak like that man; let every one of us say, ‘The first cause of my salvation is Christ; the second

is Christ; the third is Christ. Christ and His atoning blood, Christ and His powerful regenerating Spirit, Christ and His eternal electing grace, Christ is my only salvation, I know of nothing else.'

"Dear friends, we find in the Epistle to the Romans these words, 'The whole church saluteth you.' I have no official charge; but I may, in a Christian and fraternal spirit, say to you, the Genevese Church, the Church in Geneva saluteth you; and I would say, the whole Continental Church saluteth you, for we know you, and we love you, and the dear minister God has given you. Now we ask from you love towards us; we are doing what we can in that dark Continent to spread abroad the light of Jesus Christ. In Geneva, we have an Evangelical Society which has that object before it, and we are also labouring in other places; we ask an interest in your prayers, for the work is hard among the Roman Catholics and the infidels of the Continent. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all! Amen."

During the terrible distress caused by the Lancashire cotton famine, Mr. Spurgeon preached, on Lord's-day morning, November 9, 1862, a sermon on "Christian Sympathy," from Job xxx. 25: "Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? Was not my soul grieved for the poor?" In appealing on behalf of the people in need, the Pastor urged these five reasons why they should be generously helped:—(1) their poverty was not the result of their own fault; (2) the cause of their suffering was the national sin of slavery; (3) their heavy trials had been borne most patiently; (4) the distress was very widely spread; and (5) gratitude to God should move all who were able to give liberally to those who were in want. The appeal was most effective, for the congregation contributed £776 11s. 11d. towards the Famine Fund,—probably the largest amount ever given from the Tabernacle to any outside object, and exceeding even the sum (£700) realized by the Fast-day service at the Crystal Palace in aid of the Indian Relief Fund.

March 15, 1863, was a memorable morning at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, for Mr. Spurgeon then delivered the discourse which, when published, became No. 500. The text of it was, 1 Samuel vii. 12: "Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us;" and the title was most appropriate, "Ebenezer." It was both autobiographical and historical, and contained many interesting allusions to the Lord's gracious help to both Pastor and people. In the introduction, the preacher said:— "Looking at God's hand in my own life, and acknowledging that hand with some record of thankfulness, I, your minister, brought by Divine grace to preach this morning the five hundredth of my printed sermons, consecutively published week by

week, set up my stone of Ebenezer to God. I thank Him, thank Him humbly, but yet most joyfully, for all the help and assistance given in studying and preaching the Word to these mighty congregations by the voice, and afterwards to so many nations through the press. I set up my pillar in the form of this sermon. My motto this day shall be the same as Samuel's, 'Hitherto hath the Lord helped *me*;' and as the stone of my praise is much too heavy for me to set it upright alone, I ask you, my comrades in the day of battle, my fellow-labourers in the vineyard of Christ, to join with me in expressing gratitude to God, while together we set up the stone of memorial, and say, 'Hitherto hath the Lord helped *us*.'

On such an occasion, it was most natural to contrast the calm, quiet worship at the Tabernacle with the awful turmoil of the tragedy at the Surrey Gardens:—"We have had our sorrows as a church. Shall I remind you of our black and dark day? Death came into our windows, and dismay into our hearts. Did not almost all men speak ill of us? Who would give us a good word? The Lord Himself afflicted us, and broke us as in the day of His anger;—so it seemed to us, then. Ah, God! Thou knowest how great have been the results which flowed from that terrible calamity, but from our souls the memory never can be taken, not even in Heaven itself. In the recollection of that night of confusion, and those long weeks of slander and abuse, let us roll a great stone before the Lord, and let us write thereon, 'Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.' Little, I ween, did the devil gain by that master-stroke; small was the triumph which he won by that piece of malice. Greater multitudes than ever flocked to listen to the Word; and some here, who otherwise might never have attended the preaching of the gospel, remain as living monuments of God's power to save. Of all evil things out of which good has arisen, we can always point to the Surrey Music Hall catastrophe as one of the greatest goods which ever befell this neighbourhood, notwithstanding the sorrows which it brought."

Another reminiscence carried the thoughts of the congregation back to "the boy-preacher's" first service in London:—"The greatness of our work compels us to confess that it must be of God, and of God alone. And, dear friends, we see that it must be so if we consider the little with which we began. Jacob said, as he came back to his own land, 'With my staff I passed over this Jordan; now I am become two bands.' Surely, his becoming two bands must have been of God, for he had nothing but his staff. And do not some few of you, here present, remember one morning when we crossed this Jordan with a staff? Were we a hundred when first I addressed you? What hosts of empty pews! What a miserable handful of hearers! But God has multiplied the people, and increased the joy, till we have become, not only two bands, but many bands; and multitudes this day are gathering to hear the gospel preached by the sons of this church, begotten of us, and sent forth by us to minister the Word of life in many towns and villages throughout

the kingdom. Glory be to God, this cannot be man's work ! What effort, made by the unaided strength of man, will equal this which has been accomplished by God ? Let the Name of the Lord, therefore, be inscribed upon the pillar of our memorial. I am always very jealous about this matter ; if we do not, as a church and congregation, if we do not, as individuals, always give God the glory, it is utterly impossible that He should continue to work by us. Many wonders have I seen, but I never yet saw a man who arrogated the honour of his work to himself, whom God did not leave sooner or later."

The same note of humble and hearty gratitude to God was very prominent in the discourse delivered in the Tabernacle on Lord's-day morning, May 3, 1863, after the Pastor had returned from a preaching tour in Holland :—" I ask for myself, this morning, as your minister, your thanksgivings to be mingled with mine in blessing God for the help which He has vouchsafed to me in the very arduous work of the last fortnight. Praise be to God for the acceptance which He gave me among all ranks of the people in that country ! I speak to His praise, and not to my own ; for this has been a vow with me, that, if God will give me a harvest, I will not keep even an ear of it myself, but He shall have it all. I found, in all the places where I went, great multitudes of people ;—crowds who could not understand the preacher, but who wanted to see his face, because God had blessed his translated sermons to their souls ;—multitudes who gave me the grip of brotherly kindness, and, with tears in their eyes, invoked, in the Dutch language, every blessing upon my head. I hoped to preach to some fifties and hundreds ; but, instead of that, there were so many that the great cathedrals were not too large. This surprised me and made me glad, and caused me to rejoice in God, and I ask you to rejoice with me. I thank God for the acceptance which He gave me among all classes of the people. While the poor crowded to shake hands, till they almost pulled me in pieces, it pleased God to move the heart of the Queen of Holland to send for me, and for an hour and a-quarter I was privileged to talk with her concerning the things which make for our peace. I sought no interview with her, but it was her own wish ; and then I lifted up my soul to God that I might talk of nothing but Christ, and might preach to her of nothing but Jesus ; and it pleased the Master to help me, and I left that very amiable lady, not having shunned to declare to her the whole counsel of God. Gratified indeed was I to find myself received cordially by all denominations, so that, on the Saturday, at Amsterdam, I preached in the Mennonite Church in the morning, and at the Old Dutch Reformed Church in the evening ; the next Sunday morning, in the English Presbyterian Church, and then again, in the evening, in the Dutch Free Church ; sometimes in the great cathedrals, as in the Dom Kirk, at Utrecht, and in Peter's Kirk, at

Leyden, not having the poor only, but the nobility and the gentry of the land, who of course could understand English better than those who have had little or no opportunity of learning it. While going from town to town, I felt the Master helping me continually to preach. I never knew such elasticity of spirit, such bounding of heart in my life before; and I come back, not wearied and tired, though preaching twice every day, but fuller of strength and vigour than when I set out. I give God the glory for the many souls I have heard of who have been converted through the reading of the printed sermons, and for the loving blessings of those who followed us to the water's edge with many tears, saying to me, 'Do thy diligence to come again before winter,' and urging me once more to preach the Word in that land. There may be mingled with this some touch of egotism; the Lord knoweth whether it be so or not, but I am not conscious of it. I do praise and bless His Name that, in a land where there is so much philosophy, He has helped me to preach the truth so simply that I never uttered a word as a mere doctrinalist, but I preached Christ, and nothing but Christ. Rejoice with me, my dear brethren; my loaf of praise is too great for me to eat it all."

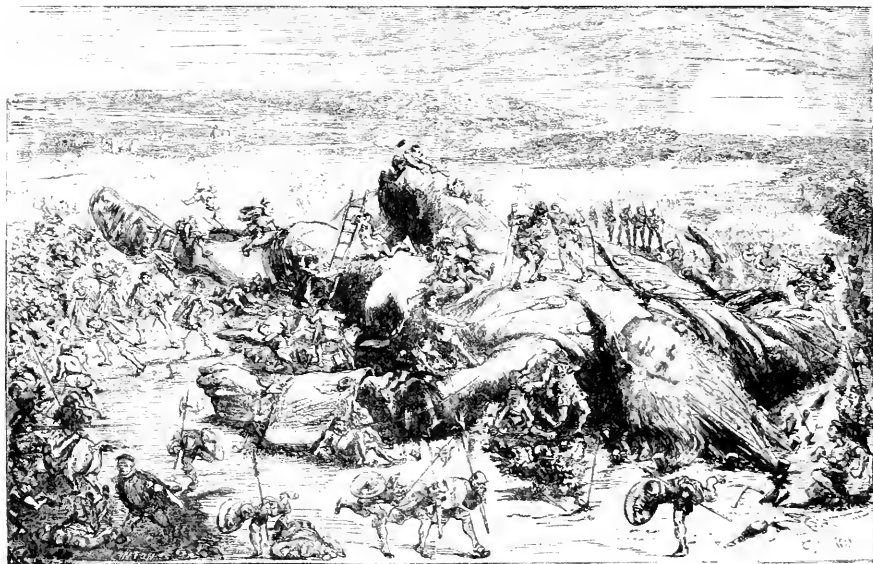
In many respects, the most memorable service ever held in the Tabernacle was the one on Lord's-day morning, June 5, 1864, when Mr. Spurgeon preached his notable sermon on "Baptismal Regeneration," which is now in its 230th thousand, and is still in constant demand. Concerning that discourse, the preacher wrote, more than ten years afterwards:—"It was delivered with the full expectation that the sale of the sermons would receive very serious injury; in fact, I mentioned to one of the publishers that I was about to destroy it at a single blow, but that the blow must be struck, cost what it might, for the burden of the Lord lay heavy upon me, and I must deliver my soul. I deliberately counted the cost, and reckoned upon the loss of many an ardent friend and helper, and I expected the assaults of clever and angry foes. I was not mistaken in other respects; but, in the matter of the sermons, I was altogether out of my reckoning, for they increased greatly in sale at once. That fact was not in any degree to me a test of my action being right or wrong; I should have felt as well content in heart as I am now as to the rightness of my course had the publication ceased in consequence; but, still, it was satisfactory to find that, though speaking out might lose a man some friends, it secured him many others; and if it overturned his influence in one direction, it was fully compensated elsewhere. No truth is more sure than this, that the path of duty is to be followed thoroughly if peace of mind is to be enjoyed. Results are not to be looked at; we are to keep our conscience clear, come what may; and all considerations of influence and public estimation are to be light as feathers in the scale. In minor matters, as well as in more important concerns, I have spoken my mind

fearlessly, and brought down objurcations and anathemas innumerable; but I in nowise regret it, and shall not swerve from the use of outspoken speech in the future any more than in the past. I would scorn to retain a single adherent by such silence as would leave him under any misapprehension. After all, men love plain speech."

A student who was in the Pastors' College in 1864—Mr. Samuel Blow—has preserved this interesting reminiscence of the day following the great deliverance:—"It was the custom of Mr. Spurgeon to revise his sermons on Monday mornings, and then, in the afternoon, to come to the class-room, and question us on history and other subjects in a homely and friendly way. Entering the room, and taking his seat, on this particular occasion, he told us that he had just been revising this special sermon, and he was certain it would cause a great stir and raise tremendous opposition when it appeared in print. He suggested that, instead of going through the usual course of instruction, we might devote the time to prayer, so the whole of that afternoon was spent in supplicating a blessing on the issue and circulation of that remarkable discourse showing the absurdity of the Baptismal Regeneration theory."

Now that a whole generation has passed away since the sermon was delivered, it is difficult to realize the sensation which was caused when it appeared in print, and became generally known. A hundred thousand copies of it were speedily sold, and the circulation was still further increased by the many replies to it which were before long preached and published. Three weeks after its delivery, Mr. Spurgeon preached from Hebrews xiii. 13, "Let us Go Forth;" and in quick succession followed two more special discourses in continuation of the controversy,—“Children Brought to Christ, not to the Font;” and “‘Thus Saith the Lord;’ or, the Book of Common Prayer Weighed in the Balances of the Sanctuary.” All of them had an immense sale, and as each one was issued, it elicited answers from the Church of England side. Mr. Spurgeon collected a hundred and thirty-five sermons and pamphlets, and had them bound in three large octavo volumes; and, doubtless, others gathered together similar signs and tokens of the fray. One such set afterwards came into the Pastor's hands, and he found in it several contributions which were not contained in his own series. They were bound in two substantial volumes, and were evidently the result of the sympathetic labours of an ardent admirer, who recorded his opinions concerning the controversy in the following Preface:—"In 1864, the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon threw down the gauntlet of defiance to the Church of England upon the point of Infant Baptism and Regeneration; when, presto! such a theological battle ensued as was never before seen or heard of. The whole religious world of London flung itself into it;—the press groaned under the infliction;—the pamphlets which followed, *pro* and *con*, in prose and verse, serious and

burlesque, being almost innumerable. Of these, I have collected about a hundred,—including twenty-eight in another volume; and, to commemorate this great baptismal war, I have here, for a frontispiece to my gathering, by a slight improvement, adapted this *Gulliverian* illustration, which, I submit, represents the great Nonconformist



C. H. SPURGEON AS "GULLIVER."

champion in repose after his victory, but playfully offering his Brobdingnagian person to the collected attack of his Lilliputian opponents, smilingly conscious that the slightest further movement on his part—a kick out—or an upraised arm—would annihilate them!"

That Mr. Spurgeon's clerical critics were by no means Lilliputians, is manifest from a glance at the documents they produced in reply to his discourses. The names of many of them are quite unknown to the present generation, but others are remembered as among the doughtiest defenders of the Establishment, including Dean Goode (of Ripon), the Revs. Hugh Stowell, M.A. (Manchester), Hugh Allen, D.D., Joseph Bardsley, M.A., Charles Bullock, Francis Cruse, B.A., and J. H. Titcomb, M.A., together with Pædobaptist Nonconformists, such as Rev. A. McAuslane and many others. Mr. Spurgeon was by no means left to fight the battle alone, for ranged side by side with him were Dr. Brock (of Bloomsbury

Chapel), Dr. Landels (of Regent's Park Chapel), Dr. Haycroft (of Broadmead Chapel, Bristol), and Revs. W. Barker (Hastings), T. W. Medhurst (Glasgow), Arthur Mursell (Manchester), A. A. Rees (Sunderland), Burlington B. Wale (Plymouth), D. Katterns (Hackney), J. W. Genders (Wandsworth), R. A. Bellman, Edward Leach, and Henry Varley, and many others whose names may not have been so well known. In the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, Mr. Mursell gave, in most incisive language, a scathing criticism of an article on "The Anabaptist Caliban," in *The Saturday Review*. That paper at various times assailed Mr. Spurgeon with such virulence that, on one occasion, he made the following significant declaration:—"I always like to have the hatred of *The Saturday Review* and the love of God. No movement can ever hope to be established until it has had both." Remembering the character of many of the attacks made in its pages upon the Tabernacle Pastor in his early days, it is hardly surprising that one of his artist friends altered the word "Saturday" into "Satanic" in the accompanying cartoon.



C. H. SPURGEON AS "GREAT-HEART."

It was a surprise and a disappointment to many friends of Mr. Spurgeon to find that his protest against the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration was, to some extent at least, weakened by a published letter from the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Wriothlesley Noel, M.A., who had himself left the Church of England, and become Pastor of the Baptist Church meeting in John Street Chapel, Bedford Row, and whose *Essay on the Union of Church and State* contained quite as vigorous a condemnation of the clergy as appeared in the sermon to which he objected. It is generally supposed, and was officially stated, on the authority of Mr. Arnold, the late Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, that Mr. Spurgeon's withdrawal from that body was the result of Mr. Baptist Noel's letter; but the following paragraph in *The Sword and the Trowel*, March, 1870, puts the matter in its true light:—

“Our readers may have observed a letter written by us to an American paper explaining the reason why we cannot attend the meeting of the Evangelical Alliance at New York. We had to make the same explanation to the Dutch brethren when the Alliance met at Rotterdam; but, as we have no wish to disturb the peace of the Alliance, we have not agitated the question. It may, however, be as well to state that, about the time when Mr. Noel's letter appeared, objecting to certain expressions used by us in our notorious Baptismal Regeneration sermon, we received a letter from Mr. James Davis, the secretary of the Alliance, setting forth very strongly that our only alternative was either to retract our harsh language, or to withdraw from the Alliance. Knowing Mr. Noel's gentle spirit, we should not have taken much notice of his letter had we not been led to suppose, from the epistle of the secretary, that the Committee of the Alliance were of the same mind; and then, not being able to retract a syllable of our utterances, and being unwilling to embroil the Alliance in our conflict, we withdrew from it. We have since learned that the letter was unauthorized, and several members of the Alliance Committee have expressed regret that we acted upon it. We are in this state of the case absolutely passive; we do not wish to revive any personal question, or cause altercation, only it is clear to everyone that, under the circumstances, neither manliness nor Christian truthfulness will allow us to attend Alliance gatherings while we are practically under its ban.”

Happily, some few years afterwards, Mr. Spurgeon saw his way to rejoin the Alliance, and he remained a member of its Council until he was “called home” in 1892. On many occasions, he spoke at meetings arranged in connection with the Alliance, the most memorable being the great gatherings at Exeter Hall and the Mildmay Conference Hall, in 1888, for united testimony in regard to fundamental truth, just at the time when the “Down-grade” Controversy was at its height, and thousands of lovers of Evangelical doctrine felt the need of a clear and emphatic “declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us.” It is also

noteworthy that, in the circular concerning the formation of the Pastors' College Evangelical Association, Mr. Spurgeon wrote:—"As a convenient summary of faith, we have adopted, with certain alterations and additions, the basis of the Evangelical Alliance, accepting it with the more readiness because so many believers of various churches have been content thus to set forth the main points of their agreement."

The Baptismal Regeneration Controversy afforded Dr. Campbell the opportunity of publishing in *The British Standard* a series of articles, which extended over seventeen weeks, and were afterwards republished in a volume consisting of 330 small octavo pages. In the Introduction, he explained why he had not earlier taken part in the conflict:—"It was known to many that, between Mr. Spurgeon and myself, there had long been an intimate and cordial friendship, proofs and illustrations of which, on my part, had from time to time appeared in the columns of *The British Standard*, and other publications under my control. In his early days, I stood by him, when his advocates in the press were neither numerous nor, with one or two honourable exceptions, efficient, while his adversaries were both unscrupulous and powerful. Some surprise accordingly was felt, by our mutual friends, that I was not among the first to place myself at his side. They were at a loss to account for my seeming apathy; but, in this, they were guided by feeling rather than by judgment; they did not reflect that the state of things was entirely altered. Mr. Spurgeon was no longer a tender sapling that might receive benefit from the friendly shade of an elder tree, but an oak of the forest, whose roots had struck deep in the earth, and whose thick and spreading boughs bade defiance to the hurricane. They forgot that Mr. Spurgeon alone was more than a match for all his adversaries. Besides, a passing newspaper article, however strong or telling, although it might have gratified our mutual friends, would have been of small importance to the cause which I had so much at heart,—the correction and purification of the Liturgy of the Established Church. . . . That subject is vital, not only to her real usefulness, but to her very existence as a Protestant Institution! The universality of the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration will be the sure prelude to her overthrow, and the re-establishment of the Church of Rome, with all her darkness and bondage, misery and wickedness."

The service at the Tabernacle, on Lord's-day evening, July 31, 1864, was a memorable one to Mr. Spurgeon and two of his hearers, and afterwards to many more when he related a singular circumstance which occurred in connection with his sermon that night. A man, living in Newington, had been converted through the Pastor's preaching, and he became a regular worshipper at the Tabernacle. His wife, a very staunch member of the Church of England, strongly objected to his

going; but he continued to attend notwithstanding all that she said. One Sabbath night, after her husband had gone to the service, her curiosity overcame her prejudice, and she herself determined to go to hear Mr. Spurgeon. Not wishing to be known, she tried to disguise herself by putting on a thick veil and a heavy shawl, and sought still further to avoid observation by ascending to the upper gallery. She was very late in reaching the building: so, just as she entered, the preacher was announcing his text, and the first words that sounded in her ears were strikingly appropriate to her case, especially as she declared that Mr. Spurgeon pointed directly at her as he said, "Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another?"* This singular coincidence further impressed her when, in the course of his sermon, the Pastor said:—"While thus speaking about the occasional hearer, an idea haunts my mind that I have been drawing somebody's portrait. I think there are some here who have had their character and conduct sketched out quite accurately enough for them to know who is meant. Do remember that, if the description fits you, it is intended for you; and if you yourself have been described, do not look about among your neighbours, and say, 'I think this refers to somebody else.' If it applies to you, take it home to yourself; and may God impress it upon your conscience, so that you cannot get rid of it! . . . I do not suppose there *is* anybody here disguised as to dress to-night, though such a thing has happened before now; but, whoever you may be, disguised or not, it is no use to try to hide your identity where God's gospel is preached. It is a quick discerner, and will find out the thoughts and intents of the heart. It will search you out, and unmask your true character, disguise yourself as you may."

When the husband reached home, the woman revealed her secret, and said that he must, somehow, have let Mr. Spurgeon know that she was up in the gallery of the Tabernacle. The good man assured her that he was quite innocent, but she would not be convinced. The next day, when he saw the Pastor, he told him what a hard time he was having through his wife's singular experience the previous evening, and then added, "And I have a bone to pick with you on my own account; for if *she* was the wife of Jeroboam, then *I* must be Jeroboam himself, and that is not a very complimentary name to be given to me." The sermon is entitled, "A Hearer in Disguise."

At the Monday evening prayer-meeting at which Mr. Spurgeon related the foregoing incident, he also mentioned the sermon at Exeter Hall, in which he suddenly broke off from his subject, and, pointing in a certain direction, said,

* It is remarkable that an almost exactly similar incident occurred, several years before, when Mr. Spurgeon was preaching at New Park Street Chapel. On that occasion, it was the wife of a very eminent London doctor who wished to hear the young preacher without being recognized; so she also had disguised herself, as she thought, effectually, but she was greatly surprised when she heard the announcement of the text which was so singularly suitable to her: "Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another?"

"Young man, those gloves you are wearing have not been paid for; you have stolen them from your employer." At the close of the service, a young man, looking very pale and greatly agitated, came to the room which was used as a vestry, and begged for a private interview with Mr. Spurgeon. On being admitted, he placed a pair of gloves upon the table, and tearfully said, "It's the first time I have robbed my master, and I will never do it again. You won't expose me, sir, will you? It would kill my mother if she heard that I had become a thief." The preacher had drawn the bow at a venture, but the arrow struck the target for which God intended it, and the startled hearer was, in that singular way, probably saved from committing a greater crime.

A service which became more memorable after several years had elapsed was the one held on Lord's-day morning, August 4, 1867, when the Pastor preached from Job xiv. 14: "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." After the murder of President James A. Garfield, in September, 1881, his widow wrote to Mr. Spurgeon:—"It is choice treasure from my storehouse of beautiful memories, that I sat beside General Garfield in the Metropolitan Tabernacle, one bright summer Sunday morning (August 4, 1867), and listened to your voice. I have this morning re-read from his journal his account of that day. A sentence from it may interest you. After describing his impressions of the great audience, of the preacher, and of the sermon, he adds:—'God bless Mr. Spurgeon! He is helping to work out the problem of religious and civil freedom for England in a way that he knows not of.'"

One passage in the discourse was specially appropriate to the hundreds of Americans, and other strangers from across the seas, who were present:—"The Christian life should be one of waiting; that is, holding with a loose hand all earthly things. Many travellers are among us this morning; they are passing from one place to another, viewing divers countries; but as they are only travellers, and are soon to return to their homes, they do not speculate in the various businesses of Lombard Street or Cheapside. They do not attempt to buy large estates, and lay them out, and make gold and silver thereby; they know that they are only strangers and foreigners, and they act as such. They take such interest in the affairs of the country in which they are sojourning as may be becoming in those who are not citizens of it; they wish well to those among whom they tarry for a while; but that is all, for they are going home, therefore they do not intend to hamper themselves with anything that might make it difficult for them to depart from our shores."

On Thursday evening, April 16, 1868, Mr. Spurgeon preached at the Tabernacle the annual sermon for the Young Men's Association in aid of the Baptist Missionary

Society. His text was, Acts ii. 17: "Your young men shall see visions." As a young man, speaking to young men, the preacher claimed his right to see visions; and amongst the rest was this one of a very practical character:—"Suppose that there should be a number of young men here who know each other very well, young men who have been trained in the same sanctuary, nurtured in the same church, who should meet together to-morrow, or at such other time as shall be convenient, and say to one another, 'Now, we are in business, we have just commenced in life, and God is prospering us, more or less; we are taking to ourselves wives; our children are coming around us; but, still, we trust we are never going to permit ourselves to be swallowed up in a mere worldly way of living; now, what ought we to do for missions?' And suppose the enquiry should be put, 'Is there one amongst us who could go and teach the heathen for us?' As we, most of us, may not have the ability, or do not feel called to the work, is there one out of twelve of us young men, who have grown side by side in the Sunday-school, who has the ability, and who feels called to go? Let us make it a matter of prayer, and when the Holy Ghost saith, 'Separate So-and-so to the work,' then we, the other eleven who remain, will do this,—we will say to him, 'Now, brother, you cannot stop at home to make your fortune or to earn a competence; you are now giving yourself up to a very arduous and difficult enterprise, and we will support you; we know you, and we have confidence in you; you go down into the pit, we will hold the rope; go forth in connection with our own denominational Society, but we will bear the expense year by year among ourselves! Have you faith enough to go trusting that the Lord will provide? Then, we will have faith enough, and generosity enough, to say that your wants shall be our care; you preach for Christ, we will make money for Christ; when you open the Bible for Christ, we will be taking down the shop shutters for Christ; and while you are unfolding the banner of Christ's love, we will be unfolding the calicoes, or selling the groceries; and we pledge ourselves always to set aside your portion, because, as our brother, you are doing our work.' I wish we had such godly clubs as these,—holy confederacies of earnest young men who thus would love their missionary, feel for him, hear from him continually, and undertake to supply the means for his support. Why, on such a plan as that, I should think they would give fifty times, or a hundred times, as much as ever they are likely to give to an impersonal Society, or to a man whose name they only know, but whose face they never saw. I wonder whether I shall ever live to see a club of that kind; I wonder whether such an association will ever be formed by members of this church, or of any of the churches in London. If it shall be so, I shall be glad to have seen a vision of it."

Happily, the Pastor did live to see something closely resembling the realization of his vision. In 1875, the leader of one of the Tabernacle Bible-classes—

Mr. Stephen Wigney—undertook the responsibility of raising £50 a year towards the support of Mr. G. F. Easton, in connection with the China Inland Mission, and year after year, down to the present time, the teacher and his class have continued to raise that amount. More recently, by the introduction of the system of "Missionary circles" and "Carey's penny", the number of Tabernacle missionaries thus maintained has been considerably increased.

Many who are no longer young can recall a notable Tuesday evening,—March 2, 1869,—when Mr. Spurgeon preached in the Tabernacle to several thousands of children. It was remarkable as being one of the very few occasions on which the young people of the congregation and of the Sunday-schools were assembled specially by themselves. The text was, Psalm lxxi. 17: "O God, Thou hast taught me from my youth;" and the sermon was one that boys and girls could easily understand and remember. It contained an unusually large number of anecdotes and illustrations, and in the course of it Mr. Spurgeon put several questions to his youthful auditors, which they answered promptly, and on the whole accurately. A brief extract will show the style of the sermon:—"Why should we go to God's school early? I think we ought to do so, first, because *it is such a happy school*. Schools used to be very miserable places; but, nowadays, I really wish I could go to school again. I went into the Borough Road School, the other day, into the Repository, where they sell slates, and pencils, and books, and all such things. The person who was there opened a box, and said to me, 'Do you want to buy any of these things?' I said, 'What are they? Why, they are toys, are they not?' He answered, 'No, they are not toys: they are used for the lessons that are taught in the kindergarten school.' I said, 'Why, if I were to take them home, my boys would have a game with them, for they are only toys.' 'Just so,' he replied, 'but they are what are used in the kindergarten school to make learning the same as playing, so that little children should play while they are learning.' Why, I thought, if that were so, I should like to go at once! Now, those who go to God's school are made much more happy than any toy can make children. He gives them real pleasure. There is a verse,—I don't know how many of you can repeat it,—I will say the first line; you say the second, if you can.

"Mr. SPURGEON:—'Tis religion that can give'—

"The CHILDREN:—'Sweetest pleasures while we live;'—

"Mr. SPURGEON:—'Tis religion must supply'—

"The CHILDREN:—'Solid comfort when we die.'

"Mr. SPURGEON:—Yes, we made that out very well between us. Then, let us be off to God's school early, because it is such a happy school."

Mr. Spurgeon delivered a similar discourse to a congregation of children on Lord's-day afternoon, February 26, 1871, only on that occasion his subject consisted of Dr. Horatius Bonar's hymn, beginning,—

"I lay my sins on Jesus,
The spotless Lamb of God,"

In the course of his remarks, the Pastor made the following reference to an object-lesson which he had given to the children many years before:—"It is a long while ago since I gave an address on a Sunday afternoon; but I daresay some of you, who are growing into young men and young women, recollect that I brought a large piece of scarlet cloth to show to you. I had asked my dear wife to have it tested, and it had been boiled ever so many times; and it had been soaked in water ever so long before I brought it here. I could hardly tell you how much it had been rinsed, and rubbed, and scrubbed, and boiled. It was red when it went into the copper, and it was quite as red when it came out; the colour could not be taken out of it. I have heard that red rags cannot be made into any sort of paper except that red blotting-paper that we use, for this reason, that men cannot get the colour out. That is just like our sins; they are upon us like bright red stains, we cannot get them out, do what we may, apart from the Lord Jesus Christ; but if we are washed in His precious blood, we become as white as snow. Not only does the crimson colour go, but not so much as a spot remains."

Towards the close of the sermon, Mr. Spurgeon related to the children this interesting reminiscence of his boyhood:—"Now the last wish is,—

" 'I long to be *with* Jesus.' "

That is the best of all. But, dear boys and girls, you cannot sing that in your hearts unless you carry out the first part of the hymn, for we cannot be with Jesus till first He has taken upon Himself our sins, and made us like Himself. I do not think many of you go to a boarding-school, but I know what I used to do when I was at a school of that kind. I wanted to get home for the holidays; and six weeks before breaking-up time came, I made a little almanack. There was one square for every day; and, as the days passed, I used to mark them over with my pen, and make them black. Didn't I like to see them getting blotted! First I said, 'There are only five weeks and six days before the holidays come,' then it was, 'five weeks and five days,' and then, 'five weeks and four days,' and so on, till it was within a fortnight of the vacation, and then I began to feel that it was almost time to go home. You see, I was longing to go home; and that is how you and I will feel when we become like Jesus, we shall long to be with Jesus, where saints and angels sing His praises for ever. But, in order to be able to look at death in that light, we must first lay our sins on Jesus."

Both these discourses are published in neat booklets, which would make most useful presents to children and young people, many of whom might, through reading them, be led to trust the Saviour, and so go—

"To be with Jesus,
Amid the Heavenly throng."

(How vividly this incident in my husband's boyhood recalls a similar one in much later days. He had been working at high pressure for a long time, and was greatly needing a rest. The time for the proposed holiday was fixed far in advance, and he looked forward to it with feverish impatience. It was referred to at all meal-times; and one day he said to me, "Wifey, I wish I had a piece of string marked, and put in some prominent place, so that I could cut off each day as it passes."

I immediately prepared a length of tape, with all the dates plainly written on it, and attached it to the chandelier which overhung the dining-table. It certainly was not an ornament to the room, but it gave him exceeding pleasure to clip off a piece of it day by day; so nobody cared how it looked, if he were gratified. It was very long when first put up, and he took as much delight as a little child would have done in watching it gradually grow shorter.

Friends would stare at it in wonder and curiosity, especially if they happened to be there at dividing time, when the scissors were produced, and with all due ceremony the symbol of the flight of another twenty-four hours was snipped off. Some laughed, some joked, some criticised; but he steadily persevered in his task until only an inch or two of the recording line was left hanging in its place, and we began to make preparations for the long-desired journey.

Alas, for those plans of ours which do not run parallel with God's will! My beloved became seriously ill when but a few days remained on the register, and that pathetic morsel of tape was cut down and removed, amidst tears of disappointment and sorrow for his sake. A sad period of suffering ensued, and one day he said, "Wifey, we will never do that again; it will be better, in future, patiently to wait for the unfolding of God's purposes concerning us.")

Many other memorable services were held in the Tabernacle during the period covered by this chapter, some of which may be mentioned subsequently; but space can only be spared here for a brief notice of the discourse which was delivered by Mr. Spurgeon on June 14, 1874,—the Sabbath before his fortieth birthday. The text was, Deuteronomy ii. 7: "For the Lord thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand; He knoweth thy walking through this great wilderness; these forty years the Lord thy God hath been with thee, thou hast lacked nothing;" and the sermon was largely autobiographical. One of the most characteristic passages was the following:—"The work of some of us has been to preach the gospel; and

if the Lord had given us a few scores of conversions, we would have loved Him for ever; but inasmuch as He has given us thousands upon thousands of converts, how shall we find language with which to praise Him? He has blessed the work of our hands, so that a vast church has been gathered, and many smaller ones have sprung from it; one enterprise has been taken up, and then another; one labour which seemed beyond our power has been achieved, and then another, and yet another; and at His feet we lay the crown. I must confess my Lord's special favour towards me, the very stones in the street would cry out against me if I did not. Brethren, you have had a share in the blessing,—have a share also in the praising. Enemies have arisen, and they have been exceedingly violent, only to fulfil some special purpose of God, and increase our blessing against their will. Sickness has come, only to yield discipline; we have been made weak that we might become strong, and brought to death's door that we might know more of the Divine life. Glory be to God, our life has been all blessing from beginning to end; ever since we knew Him, He has dealt out blessing, and blessing, and blessing, and never a syllable of cursing. He has fulfilled to us the word, 'Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee.'

Of all the memorable services away from the Tabernacle, the most notable were those held on the five Lord's-day mornings, March 24 to April 21, 1867, in the Agricultural Hall, Islington. It is difficult to tell the exact number of persons present,—the estimates ranging from twelve to twenty-five thousand;—but the congregations were the largest that Mr. Spurgeon ever addressed in any building with the exception of the Fast-day service at the Crystal Palace.

Not only were great crowds of hearers attracted, but the Word preached was blessed to very many of them, some of whom joined the neighbouring churches, while others found a spiritual home at the Tabernacle. The text on the first morning was Matthew xxi. 28—32, and in introducing his subject, the preacher said:—"The sight of this vast arena, and of this crowded assembly, reminds me of other spectacles which, in days happily long past, were seen in the amphitheatres of the old Roman Empire. Around, tier upon tier, were the assembled multitudes, with their cruel eyes and iron hearts; and in the centre stood a solitary, friendless man, waiting till the doors of the lion's den should be uplifted, that he might yield himself up a witness for Christ and a sacrifice to the popular fury. There would have been no difficulty then to have divided the precious from the vile in that audience. The most thoughtless wayfarer, who should enter the amphitheatre, would know at once who was the disciple of Christ and who were the enemies of the Crucified One. There stood the bravely-calm disciple, about to die, but all

around in those mighty tiers of the Colosseum, or of the amphitheatre of some provincial town, as the case might be, there sat matrons and nobles, princes and peasants, plebeians and patricians, senators and soldiers, all gazing downward with the same fierce, un pitying look, vociferous in the joy with which they beheld the agonies of a disciple of the hated Galilean, 'butchered to make a Roman holiday.'

Another sight is before us to-day, with much more happy associations; but, alas! it is a far more difficult task this day to separate the chaff from the wheat. Here, in this spacious arena, I hope there are hundreds, if not thousands, who would be prepared to die for our Lord Jesus, if such a sacrifice were required of them; and in yonder crowded seats, we may count by hundreds those who bear the Name and accept the gospel of Jesus of Nazareth; and yet, I fear me that, both in these living hills on either side, and upon this vast floor, there are many enemies of



C. H. SPURGEON PREACHING IN THE AGRICULTURAL HALL, ISLINGTON.

the Son of God, who are forgetful of His righteous claims, who have cast from them those 'cords of a man' which should bind them to His throne, and have never submitted to the mighty love which showed itself in His cross and in His wounds. I cannot attempt the separation. You must grow together until the harvest. To divide you were a task which, at this hour, angels could not perform; but which, one day, they will easily accomplish, when, at their Master's bidding, the harvest

being come, they shall gather together first the tares in bundles to burn them, and afterwards the wheat into Jehovah's barn. I shall not attempt the division, but I ask each man to make it for himself in his own case. I say unto you, young men and maidens, old men and fathers, this day examine yourselves whether you be in the faith.

"Let no one take it for granted that he is a Christian because he has helped to swell the numbers of a worshipping assembly. Let no man judge his fellow, but let each of us judge himself. To every one of you I say, with deepest earnestness, let a division be made by your conscience, and let your understandings separate between him that feareth God and him that feareth Him not. Though no man clothed in linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side, shall go through the midst of you, to set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and cry for all the abominations of this city, let conscience take the inkhorn, and honestly make the mark, or leave the favoured sign unmade, and let each man question himself, this morning, 'Am I on the Lord's side? Am I for Christ, or for His enemies? Do I gather with Him, or do I scatter abroad?' 'Divide! divide!' they cry in the House of Commons; let us say the same in this great congregation this day. Political divisions are but trifles compared with the all-important distinction which I would have you consider. Divide as you will be divided to the right and to the left in the great day when Christ shall judge the world in righteousness. Divide as you will be divided when the bliss of Heaven, or the woes of hell, shall be your everlasting portion."

CHAPTER LXVI.

Some Reminiscences of Foreign Travel.

BY MRS. C. H. SPURGEON.

The everlasting hills, "buildings of God, not made with hands," transcend the noblest works of men, not only in their natural majesty, but in their power to stir the finest feelings of our manhood. One hour alone on some flowery steep, with the snow-clad summits all around, the glacier below, and the world of care far away, is better than a century of the gaities of fashion, or the pomp of state; this we have seen, and do testify.—C. H. S.

Some people never smile. Dear souls! They pull the blinds down on Sunday. They are sorry that the flowers are so beautiful, and think that they ought to have been whitewashed; they almost believe that, if the garden beds were of a little more sombre colour, it would be an improvement. I have known some persons, whom I very greatly respect, talk in this fashion. One good brother, whose shoe-latchet I am not worthy to unloose, said, on one occasion, that when he went up the Rhine, he shut his eyes, and never looked at the rocks, or the old castles, or the flowing river, he was so taken up with higher things! But, to me, nature is a looking-glass, in which I see the face of God. I delight to gaze abroad, and—

"Look through nature up to nature's God."

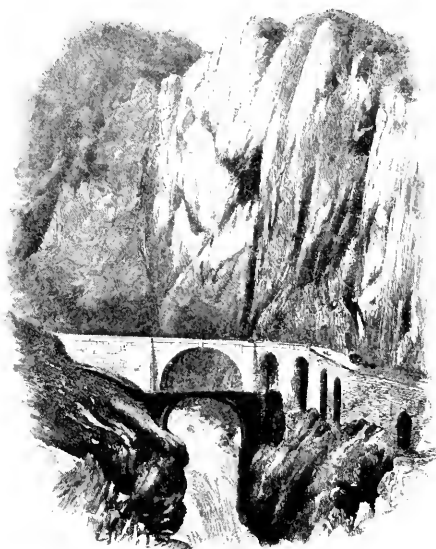
Yet that was all unholiness to him. I do not understand that kind of thing; I have no sympathy with those who look upon this material world as though it were a very wicked place, and as if there were here no trace whatever of the Divine hand, no proofs of the Divine wisdom, and no manifestations of the Divine care. I think we may delight ourselves in the works of God, and find much pleasure therein, and be really brought nearer to God Himself by considering His wondrous works.—C. H. S.



IN "the fifties and sixties," travelling was not so universally indulged in as it is now, and comparatively few tourists crossed our path as we journeyed over mountain, river, or valley. We took our pleasures easily, though not sadly. We did not rush through the Mont Cenis tunnel in a train, or climb the Rigi by the help of an aerial railway, for such triumphs of engineering skill were not then in existence. Those were the days of *diligences* and carriages, of mule-riding or the use of one's own legs; and I believe that, for true enjoyment and lasting impressions of magnificent scenery, either of these modes of progression is to be desired above the present-day fashion of being everywhere whisked along in a train! I have crossed most of the great Alpine passes, and am thankful to retain an indelible remembrance of their sublime and solemn grandeur, because I preferred to toil up the well-made roads whenever it was possible, and stand silently amidst the stupendous heights and depths.

One ten minutes of time, on the St. Gothard Pass, will never be forgotten. I

had walked alone, in advance of the carriage,—my beloved and Mr. Passmore being too comfortably idle to leave their seats,—and, at a turn of the road, I came in sight of the grandest part of the route, the Devil's Bridge.



THE DEVIL'S BRIDGE, ST. GOTHARD PASS.

Not a living creature was visible ; the mighty masses of granite rock towered on each side of me, with the deep and savage gorge between, where the Reuss foamed and boiled, and there in the near distance were the old and the new bridges spanning the awful chasm. I had so often seen pictures of the spot, that I recognized it at once ; but the reality overcame me with awe. I leaned against the side of the rocky pathway, and gave way for a moment to a feeling of utter terror and loneliness. What if the carriage should never appear round that bend of the road ? What if I were really *alone* in that sublime but desolate place ? Then a sudden reaction took place, and I felt so safe, so near to the very heart of God in the midst of His marvellous works, that, to this day, I cherish the realization I there had of the certainty of His presence, and the glory of His power.

Twice we visited Venice together, and all the dreamy delights of our sojourn

there return with their old fascination, by an effort of the will, or a glance at the pages of Mr. Ruskin's *Stones of Venice*.



THE HOTEL IN VENICE WHERE WE STAYED

The glory of "the Queen of the Adriatic" was even then beginning to fade away, but enough remained to win our ardent admiration, and fix its pathetic beauty on our hearts. We were spared the sight of much of that poverty and decay which has overtaken the glorious city in the present day, and "the Bride of the Sea" is enshrined in my memory as a creation of exceeding loveliness, glowing with the prismatic hues of a gorgeous sunset, and enwrapped in a veil of



THE GRAND CANAL, VENICE.

golden mist, just as I last saw her when returning from a trip to the Island of Liddo, on whose shores we had spent a most enjoyable day.

The mention of this island suggests to me a memory of dear Mr. Spurgeon's aptness of illustration, and fertility of thought. He was accustomed to make the most unlikely material reveal to him some hidden meaning, or yield up a latent lesson; yet, it seems to me, he rarely *forced* a metaphor, but quite naturally drew from all inanimate things a gentle whisper of the greatness, and goodness, and graciousness of God. It was so in the instance I am about to relate. As we loitered on this sandy isle, which serves as a breakwater between Venice and the sea, we were entranced by the charming sound of the city's bells, as their music floated across the lagoons, and mingled with the gentle wash of the wavelets as they lapped the shining strand. We thought, as we listened, that the melody was almost celestial; but when we returned, and found ourselves in the very centre of the tumultuous clanging, we altered our opinion, for the sweet sounds were changed to a terrible clash, and the ravishing music had become a maddening din. Each bell seemed to have its own discordant note, while harmony in the whole company of noisemakers was out of the question. It was distance which had lent enchantment to the sound. Afterwards, Mr. Spurgeon wrote:—"The words of poets and eloquent writers may, as a whole, and heard from afar, sound charmingly enough; but how few of them bear a near and minute investigation! Their belfry rings passably, but one would soon weary of each separate bell. It is never so with the Divine words of Jesus. You hear them ringing from afar, and they are sweetness itself. When, as a sinner, you roamed like a traveller at midnight lost on the wilds, how tenderly did they call you home! And now you have reached the house of mercy, you can sit and listen to each distinct note of love's perfect peal, and wonderingly feel that even angelic harps cannot excel it."

There was a most interesting voyage to Hamburg and Heligoland (which Mr. Spurgeon described in detail in the *Sword and Trowel* for 1867), and a memorable visit to Geneva, where we saw the good Merle D'Aubigné in his own home, and my beloved preached in the cathedral, standing in Calvin's pulpit, robed in the black Genevan gown (see Vol. II., page 372). Oh, there was at least one wife who was proud of her husband that day!

In after years, during the long lonely months occasioned by my ill-health, memories of our tours were always fresh and fragrant, and one of the compensations of my sickness was to go over again in thought all the difficulties, and dangers, and delights we had met with in our travels; and this pleasure would be doubled when my husband could spend a little time by my couch, and the talk turned to

these sunny days, and we together recalled our most amusing adventures, and laughed heartily at the blunders and mistakes we either made or mastered. Ah! there were some strange tales to tell; I think I could fill a volume with the memories of those delightful journeys.

The first incident which occurs to my mind, at this moment, was sufficiently embarrassing when it happened, but it furnished us with material for much amusement afterward. We were crossing the Col di Val Dobbia, from Varallo to Gressonay. We reached the summit without any serious mishap, and rested for a while at the little hospice which affords shelter to travellers all the year round. When we left this friendly refuge, our troubles commenced. The path descends precipitously, traversing a snow-field; on our left was a steep slope, and under our feet the path was all loose stones, which made the walking difficult and dangerous, *to us*. We had not gone very far before a baggage-mule lost its footing, and glissaded down the slope,—to its certain death, we thought; but, just before reaching the awful precipice, something caused its body to swerve,—just as a “bowl” will turn when a “bias” has been given to it,—and it stopped on the very edge of the chasm. It was recovered by the men, and brought safely back again; but the accident so alarmed and disconcerted us all that dear Mr. Spurgeon sat down in the snow, and refused to stir a step! “Would he not go back to the hospice on the summit?” we asked. No; he would stay where he was! “Would he not try to descend, with a friend on either side of him?” No; he protested that *he couldn't move!* We coaxed, and pleaded, to no purpose; so we sat down with him in the snow, and tried to realize our position. We were more than 8,000 feet above the level of the sea, on the sharp ridge of a mountain, with only just sufficient time to get down to Gressonay before nightfall. It was a very perplexing situation, and we looked at one another, and then at our well-nigh fainting leader, with dismay. It was such a novel experience, too, for he always enjoyed the mountain passes, and never knew any fear. At last, we did get him to make the effort to start, and we reached Gressonay in safety, though with painful toil to him. I have since thought that the awful night at the Surrey Music Hall was responsible for this strange condition of mind into which he was thrown, and that the delicate organism of his wonderful brain had then sustained so much pressure in some part of it, that any sudden fright, such as the swift descent of the mule down the mountain, would have the power, for a moment or two, to disturb its balance. However this might be, no evil effects ensued, and we made it rather a matter of merriment than of misgiving.

It was in this same valley of Gressonay, some few days after our uncomfortable

entry into it, that a singular and unique testimony to the beauty of Christian character, as seen in dear Mr. Spurgeon, and his travelling companions, was spontaneously offered from a very unexpected quarter. We had found a comfortable resting-place in an hotel at the foot of the Col, and having quite recovered from our late fatigue, we made an excursion, one lovely morning, up the valley, *en route* to the Lys Glacier, guided by our host, M. Delapierre, and his son Ferdinand. We were in the highest possible spirits, delighted with the safe and easy going on a well-paved mule-path, and enjoying to the full the glorious scenery and the fine, bracing air of this valley, 4,530 feet above the sea. My husband, Mr. Passmore, and Mr. Morgan, were riding on in front; and, if I remember rightly, Mr. Spurgeon began to praise God for all the loveliness with which we were surrounded, and called upon us to join him in thanksgiving. This we did, and M. Delapierre, who was leading my mule, regarded his guests with wonder, and turning to me, said, "Mais, Madame, ces Messieurs ne sont pas des hommes, ce sont des anges!" ("But, Madam, these gentlemen are not men, they are angels!") I asked what made him think so, and he waxed eloquent in praise of their gentle and gracious conduct, so different, he said, from the behaviour of all the other travellers he had seen. They had not done or said anything particularly heavenly, but their consistent and Christian spirit had shone out so clearly and brightly, during their stay at the hotel, that this man could not refrain from speaking of the impression it had made upon him. I believe he was perfectly honest in his surprise and admiration, for we were waited upon by him and his son with as much consideration and reverence as if we had truly been celestial visitants in the guise of humanity. We left the place with great reluctance and regret on both sides, promising ourselves to return some day for a prolonged sojourn; but, though this desire was never fulfilled, the hotel at St. Jean de Gressonay was ever after the symbol to us of all that was most delightful and enjoyable in foreign travel.

As I write, the striking of a cuckoo clock reminds me of its faithful service during almost the whole period of our married life, for we bought it at Schaffhausen on our first trip to Switzerland, and it has sung out the hours ever since! I do not know that "Westwood" contains a more cherished relic of the blessed days that are past than this pretty cuckoo clock, and it certainly bears testimony to somebody's good workmanship forty years ago.

Mr. Spurgeon was a most observant traveller, deeply interested in all he saw, and keenly appreciative of Nature in all her moods and humours. He had, too, a great gift for turning to account everything that would help to illustrate or interpret the message which he, as an ambassador for God, had to deliver to sinful men. His

capacity for storing incidents and experiences was marvellous; we used jokingly to tell him that he had shelves in his head, where he laid up all these things, assorted and labelled, and ready for use on the first opportunity! And we were not far wrong; "there's many a true word spoken in jest." It was an education to accompany him in any of his wanderings, and a perfect delight to listen to his conversation, whether grave or gay.

Then, wherever we might be, the sweet devoutness of his spirit was always manifest, and the light of his love to his Saviour shone with a steady radiance. It was never put out of sight, or hidden under the bushel of "inconvenient circumstances." We had family prayer, whether we lodged in some rough inn on the mountains, or in the luxurious rooms of a palatial hotel in a city; and the blessed "abiding in Christ," of which many of us say, "It is high, I cannot attain unto it," was to him the natural atmosphere of his soul;—he lived and breathed in the presence of God.

In some future chapters, I hope to let him tell, in his own sweet words, by his letters home, how his heart was stirred, and his spirit refreshed, and his mind invigorated through foreign travel. But, in the meantime, I must return to my theme, and keep as close as I can to the period about which I am trying to write,—the early days of our married life. I am apt—I hope I may be pardoned,—to make little digressive journeys into the side paths and meadows of memory, tempted by the many forget-me-nots which grow there; but I find that this habit does not facilitate progress along the straight road of history.

One of the loveliest pictures which I keep laid away in my heart is furnished by the remembrance of the beautiful lake of Orta, and what we saw and heard upon its placid waters, when we were loitering among the Alps of Piedmont and Savoy. We were on our way to Varallo, to see the extraordinary Sacro Monte there, and were crossing the lake to Pella, in an open boat, when we became aware that we had, unwittingly, chosen a *festa* day for our journey, and should, in consequence, be indulged by the sight of a remarkably attractive spectacle. Between Orta and Pella, the rocky eminence of the Isola di San Guilio rises sheer out of the deep blue lake. On it is built a large church, and a village nestles under the shadow of its walls. Purely white the church and the houses are, (or were,) and they gleamed in the morning sunshine, and were reflected in the shimmering water in a way which enhanced the singular charm of their position. All around the shores of the lake, quaint hamlets clustered, looking their loveliest, with a background of mountains, and a rearguard of noble trees, while the lake lay like a looking-glass of molten silver in the forefront. This was very delightful; but, as we gazed on the exquisite scene, it developed in interest and grace, for we perceived that, from each

of the villages which dotted the shore, large boats, covered with white awnings, and filled with people, were coming across the lake, and all converging to the church on the rock.

Mr. Spurgeon asked our boatman to lay aside his oars, that we might take time to enjoy the full beauty of the picturesque display. Slowly the boats with their living freight came along, and presently we caught the melody of tuneful voices, rising and falling in measured cadence of holy song. Then we understood that the occupants of the boats were going to worship, and on their way were chanting hymns of praise to God. Such "music across the waters" not only fell upon listening ears, but dropped tenderly into loving hearts, and the effect of the whole scene was indescribably solemn and beautiful.

So deep an impression did it make on me that, even at this distance of time, I have but to lean back in my chair, and close my eyes, and see it all over again, as on that long-ago day, so faithfully does the film of memory reproduce the image of those lovely objects, and reveal them to my inner consciousness. Plainly I see the sapphire lake, the unclouded sky, the surrounding Alps, the vivid green of the wooded shores, the white church on the rock sparkling in the clear, pure atmosphere. I watch the procession of boats with their graceful canopies, I hear the sweet chanting of the people, as they draw nearer and nearer to their sanctuary,—I can enjoy all this over again;—but not without many a heartache can I recall the enraptured look on my husband's face, as the meaning and pathos of this sweet picture moved his soul, and touched his tenderest sympathy. The people, poor, ignorant, and priest-ridden, were assembling to render homage to God; and, though their ritual was unscriptural and unspiritual, they knew no other, and his heart went out to them in compassionate love and longing. Suppose some among them were ready to "seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after Him, and find Him;" there was no one to lead them straight to the Saviour! Think how this soul-winner must have yearned to preach to them the gospel of a free and full salvation! No wonder the hot tears silently chased each other down his cheeks, as he realized their exceeding need, and his own powerlessness to reach and teach them. How tenderly he would have told them of Jesus, the "one Mediator between God and men," and how earnestly would he have besought them to come to the living Christ who alone "taketh away the sin of the world"! The sight of *priests* always stirred his righteous anger; but for the poor misled people, he felt the utmost pity and kindness.

After this incident, we arrived safely at Varallo for the Sabbath; and, as usual, spent a quiet and restful day. Dear Mr. Spurgeon went alone to the Sacro Monte;

and, as he once, when preaching, recalled his impressions of the singular place, I insert them here :—

“ One Sabbath-day, I was staying in an Italian town on the other side of the Alps. Of course, the whole population was Romish. Two or three of us, being Protestants, therefore held a little service for the worship of God in the simple manner which is our wont. After this, I went out for a walk. The weather being hot and sultry, I sought the outskirts of the town, to get to as quiet and cool a spot as possible. Presently, I came to an archway at the foot of a hill, where there was an announcement that any person who would climb the hill, with proper intentions, should receive the pardon of his sins and five days' indulgence. I thought I might, as well as anybody else, have five days' indulgence ; and if it were of any advantage, have it laid by in store.

“ I cannot tell you all I saw as I went, first one way and then another, up that hill. Suffice it to say that there was a series of little chapels, through the windows of which you might look, as one in his boyish days looked through a peep-show. The whole history of our Lord's life, and the circumstances surrounding His passion and death, were here on view ; the groups of figures being modelled in terra-cotta, painted and clothed. The forty-six chapels, which thus tell the story of man's redemption, are dotted all over the hill,—often half-hidden by the beautiful trees which surround them. In the one where Christ's agony in Gethsemane is represented, the figure is as large as life, with the drops of bloody sweat falling to the ground, the three disciples a stone's-throw off, and the rest of the apostles outside the garden wall. Every feature looked as real as if one had been standing upon the actual spot. I scrutinized each group narrowly, and carefully read the Latin text which served as an index, till I reached a part of the hill, where I saw a garden, just like many we have in England, and as I pushed open the door, I faced these words, ‘ Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new sepulchre.’ Walking down a path, I came to a sepulchre ; so I stooped down, and looked in, as John had done centuries before me. There, instead of seeing a semblance of the corpse of Christ, I read in gilded letters these words,—of course, in the Latin tongue,—‘ He is not here : for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.’

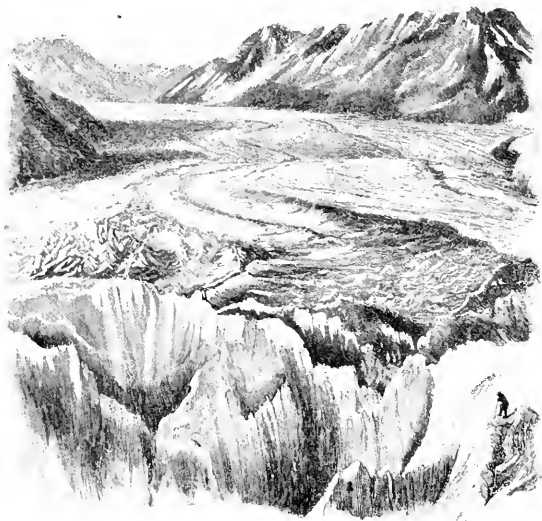
“ Passing on, I came to a structure where our Lord's ascension was represented. On the summit of the hill was a large church, into which I entered. No one was there, yet the place had for me a marvellous interest. High up in the ceiling there swung a roughly-hewn figure of the Lord Jesus Christ, and round it were statues of the prophets, all with their fingers pointing up to Him. There was Isaiah, with a scroll in his left hand, on which was written, ‘ He is despised and rejected of men ; a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.’ Further on stood Jeremiah, and on

his scroll was written, 'Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow, which is done unto Me.' All round the church I read, in great letters that were large enough to be seen, though they were painted on the top of the ceiling, 'Moses and all the prophets spoke and wrote concerning Him.' It was a remarkable sight, one which I shall never forget; it did my heart good to see all these witnesses doing homage to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of men."

There comes to me, also, a bright and pleasant memory of a short sojourn on the Bel Alp, from whence several interesting excursions can be made. We walked up the mountain by a bridle-path from Brieg, and found a most comfortable resting-place in the excellent hotel there provided for travellers. The view was sublime and startling; we seemed to be in the midst of a vast amphitheatre of Alpine peaks and glaciers, and from the plateau before the inn door we could see many of the notable snow-clad giants, "whose sunbright summits mingle with the sky!" Here, Mr. Passmore and I had a fit of Alpine fever, and were consumed by a desire to climb one of the lesser Alps; but we could not prevail on my dear husband to accompany us on our venturesome journey. We decided to try the Sparrenhorn (9,889 ft.), as being comparatively easy of ascent, and therefore suited to the unaccustomed feet of timid climbers. A guide was engaged, and we set off, one fine morning, in the highest spirits, leaving dear Mr. Spurgeon sitting complacently outside the door of the hotel with a book to divert his mind, and a telescope wherewith to watch our progress. We accomplished our task, not without difficulty, and what looked to us like danger; but we gained the summit, and from thence gazed on so sublime a panorama of snow-mountains, and great ice-rivers, that the scene can never be forgotten while life lasts. A great awe overcame us, and we trembled with emotion,—marvelling that such atoms, as we felt ourselves to be, were loved and cared for by the Creator of these colossal witnesses to His power and majesty. Then the call came to descend, and we turned earthward, losing much of our humility, I fear, as we regained the level. Very tired, but very proud of our performance, we reached the hotel; but when we related our adventures, and enlarged upon the perils of the way, we found the chief of the party quite as gratified with himself for having had the wisdom to remain in safety below! When, on leaving the inn, my dear husband inscribed his name in the visitors' book, he added these words, "Ascended the Sparrenhorn *by deputy!*"

After a few days of great enjoyment in this place, we decided to go on further to the Eggischhorn. To carry out this plan, we had to descend to the Great Aletsch Glacier, traversing its frozen waves, and crossing its huge moraines,—those wonderful accumulations of *débris* and dirt, which always disfigure the *surface* of the

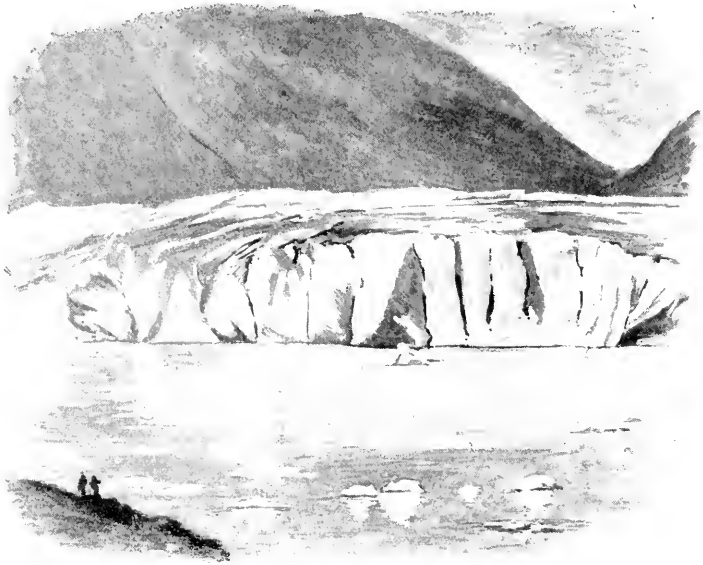
glacier, but are never allowed to sink into its spotless substance, or soil the underlying crystal by a shadow of impurity.



THE GREAT ALETSCHE GLACIER.

Half-way between the Bel Alp and the hotel built on the slope of the Eggischhorn, we reached a mountain tarn, and sat down to rest a while by its cool waters. We were very hungry as well as tired, and seeing a peasant without any visible occupation but the ungraceful one of staring at our needy selves, we persuaded him to descend the mountain to a chalet he knew of, and bring us some bread and milk. It was a *Marah* experience to us when, on his return with a basket which looked as if it might contain good things, he offered us milk too sour to drink, and bread black as a coal, too hard to bite, and quite as bitter as the curdled milk! What did we do? Why, we longed the more eagerly to arrive at the hotel toward which we were travelling! We resumed our journey, and made no more halts till we reached the hospitable table where our hunger was abundantly satisfied. Dear Mr. Spurgeon afterwards commented thus on the incident:—"In like manner, our disappointments on the road to Heaven whet our appetites for the Better Country, and quicken the pace of our pilgrimage to the Celestial City."

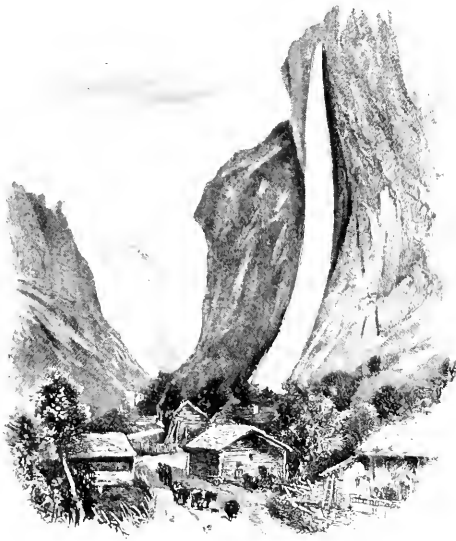
While we were sojourning on the Eggischhorn, Mr. Passmore and I made a pilgrimage to the Marjelen See,—a remarkable lake, fed and surrounded by glaciers.



THE MARJELEN SEE

Its shores were strewn with huge blocks of ice, other mighty masses were floating on its calm cold surface like miniature icebergs ; but the most magical effect was produced by the cliffs on one side,—pure, clear walls of ice rising sheer out of the dark waters to a height of fifty feet ! It was an Arctic wonderland, a most unearthly vision ; and a very small amount of imagination would have transformed those cliffs into the Ice King's palace, and peopled the whole region with snow sprites and frost fairies. I was very sorry my beloved did not see the strange sight, for he would have found treasures of illustration where I could only see a unique exhibition of Alpine marvels. It was considered a very easy walk of two hours to this surprising lake, yet it took us a much longer time than that to reach it, for we were but poor mountaineers, and thought it a long and difficult way ; so, as the day was dying soon after we reached our goal, we had to hasten back, and my weary feet were quickened by the desire I had to share the joy of the journey with my husband. We had, however, a very humiliating experience at the end. Footsore and exhausted, we came in sight of our resting-place. Mr. Spurgeon, Mr. Morgan, and other visitors

were grouped round the door watching for our return, and we hoped to conceal our extreme fatigue, and appear to be coming back with flying colours ; but, alas for us ! there was a short and sharp descent to the plateau on which the hotel was built, and, essaying to run down it, first one, and then the other, slipped and fell prostrate almost at the feet of the amazed spectators ! What sorry and crestfallen creatures we must have looked for about a minute and a-half when we were helped to our feet ! But when it was found that no bones were broken, everybody had a hearty laugh, and my dear husband found no end of amusement in recalling the incident for many a day afterwards.



THE STAUBBACH AND VALLEY OF LAUTERBRUNNEN. (See next page.)

There came a day, however, when my beloved fully shared in all the delights of Alpine travel. We had a memorable journey across the Wengern Alp, when he seemed to bring all his previously-gathered strength into use, and to exercise all the powers of mind and body which he possessed. He walked without weariness, and at such a pace that we could scarcely keep up with him ; never before or since did I see him so active and full of physical energy. He descended the Little Scheideck with the utmost ease and pleasure, using his alpenstock as a vaulting-pole, singing or talking all the way, and delighting us by his stores of knowledge, and his keen

appreciation of the wonders by which we were surrounded. Higher up the mountain, we had sat for a while to watch the ice-avalanches, which were to be seen quite plainly, across an intervening valley, falling every now and then from the great snow-ridges of a mountain opposite to us. They looked, from that distance, like harmless cascades of snow, but their true character was revealed by the thunderous noise of their fall. The sight greatly impressed him, and lifted his spirit Heavenward, and both mind and body answered to the holy influence in a remarkable fashion. He shall tell, in his own words, something of his inner experience at that ever-to-be-remembered time:—

“The day in which I saw most of Creation's grandeur was spent upon the Wengern Alp. My heart was near her God, and all around was majestic: the dread mountains, like pyramids of ice: the clouds, like fleecy wool. I saw the avalanche, and heard the thunder of its fall; I marked the dashing waterfalls leaping into the vale of Lauterbrunnen beneath our feet; but my heart felt that Creation was too scant a mirror to image all her God,—His face was more terrible than the storm, His robes more pure than the virgin snow, His voice far louder than the thunder, His love far higher than the everlasting hills. I took out my pocket-book, and wrote these lines:—

“Yet in all these, how great soe'er they be,
We see not Him. The glass is all too dense
And dark, or else our earthborn eyes too dim.

“Yon Alps, that lift their heads above the clouds,
And hold familiar converse with the stars,
Are dust, at which the balance trembleth not,
Compared with His Divine immensity.
The snow-crown'd summits fail to set Him forth,
Who dwelleth in eternity, and bears,
Alone, the Name of High and Lofty One.
Depths unfathom'd are too shallow to express
The wisdom and the knowledge of the Lord.
The mirror of the creatures has no space
To bear the image of the Infinite.
'Tis true, the Lord hath fairly writ His Name,
And set His seal upon Creation's brow;
But, as the skilful potter much excels
The vessel which he fashions on the wheel,
E'en so, but in proportion greater far,
Jehovah's self transcends His noblest works.
Earth's ponderous wheels would break, her axles so p,
If freighted with the load of Deity.
Space is too narrow for the Eternal's rest,
And time too short a footstool for His throne.
E'en avalanche and thunder lack a voice
To utter the full volume of His praise.
How then can I declare Him? Where are words
With which my glowing tongue may speak His Name?
Silent I bow, and humbly I adore.”

On another occasion, Mr. Spurgeon thus recorded for future use his thoughts

when admiring some remarkable rainbows which typified to him those described by the apostle John in the Book of the Revelation:—

“Looking from the little wooden bridge which passes over the brow of the beautiful waterfall of Handeck, on the Grimsel, one will, at a certain hour of a bright day, be surprised to see a rainbow making an entire circle, surrounding the fall like a coronet of gems, or a ring set with all the brilliants of the jeweller. Every hue is there,—

“‘In fair proportion, running from the red
To where the violet fades into the sky.’

We saw two such bows, one within the other, and we fancied that we discovered traces of a third. We had looked upon such a sight but once before, and were greatly delighted with ‘that arch of light, born of the spray, and coloured by the sun.’ It was a fair vision to gaze upon, and reminded us of the mystic rainbow, which the seer of Patmos beheld, which was ‘round about the throne,’ for it strikes us that it was seen by John as a *complete circle*, of which we perceive but the half on earth. The upper arc of manifest glory we rejoice to behold; but the lower arch of the eternal purpose, upon which the visible display of grace is founded, is reserved for our contemplation in another world.

“When we read, in the first verse of the tenth chapter of Revelation, ‘I saw another mighty angel come down from Heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head,’ it greatly assists the imagination to conceive of a many-coloured circlet, rather than a semicircle. We lingered long watching the flashing crystal, dashed and broken upon a hundred craggy rocks, and tossed into the air in sheets of foam, to fall in wreaths of spray; we should not have tired if we could have tarried for hours to admire the harmonious hues of that wheel within a wheel,—

“‘Of colours changing from the splendid rose,
To the pale violet’s dejected hue;’—

but we were on a journey, and were summoned to advance.”

One more retrospect may well conclude these mere outline sketches from the tablets of memory. We were travelling in Italy, and when driving along the roads, in a certain part of the country, were continually pained by the sight of the superstitious aids to devotion supplied by the Roman Catholic Church to her votaries. Here, was a tiny chapel to the Virgin;—there, a shrine for an idolatrous image;—in many cases, a niche with a crucifix and a lamp burning before it, where prayers might be purchased for the souls supposed to be enduring purgatorial fires. Generally, there were accessories of the coarsest and rudest kind, which we could not look on without repulsion; they all seemed such a dreadful mockery of “our most holy faith” that we tried not to see them as we passed along. But, one day, we came to

a place where was a huge cross by the side of the highway, and on it hung a life-sized, fearful representation of the Beloved of our soul, who poured out His precious blood for our redemption. No harrowing detail of the mighty Sacrifice of Love was omitted, no item of agony forgotten:—I dare not describe the awful sight, it horrified and shocked us, and we turned aside from the revolting spectacle, but not until Mr. Spurgeon had noticed the superscription,—

SPES UNICA,—

in large letters over the bowed head of the figure on "the shameful cross." He caught eagerly at the light thus gleaming through the darkness. "Here," he said, "is truth emblazoned on an idol! Yes, truly, Jesus, our once crucified, but now exalted Lord, is the sole and *only hope* of man. O blessed Christ, Thou art 'Spes Unica' to our soul! We have found a diamond in the mire of superstition; does it sparkle any the less?" So we went on our way, sorrowful, yet praising God for the preciousness of those two words; and, soon, one might have heard us softly singing, as we drove along,—

"Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on Thee

CHAPTER LXVII.

The Absent Pastor's Care for his Flock.



WHENEVER the Pastor had to be away from his people, seeking necessary rest after arduous toil, or restoration after painful affliction, he gave them constant proofs that he still bore them upon his heart as much as when he was labouring in their midst. Some of the choicest letters he ever wrote to the church and congregation under his charge were sent home from foreign lands, whence his thoughts flew back to the much-loved house of prayer where he was wont to keep holy day with the great assembly. Many of these pastoral epistles have been preserved; and one set of them—written early in the year 1874,—may be regarded as a fair specimen of the way in which Mr. Spurgeon continually manifested his earnest desire for the spiritual welfare of all who came within the sphere of his influence.

It will be noted that most of the letters in this series were written to the young people attending the Tabernacle; and, as a quarter of a century has elapsed since they were penned, those who first heard them read, if they are still living, are now in middle life, and doubtless many of them are among the officers and members of the church who are helping to carry on the many departments of Christian work in which their fathers and mothers were engaged before them. The vital matters dealt with in these letters also make them just as suited to the lads and lasses, or the young men and maidens of to-day, as they were to those to whom they were originally addressed; and if the perusal of them, in these pages, shall be made, through the Holy Spirit's gracious operation upon youthful minds and hearts, the means of blessing to present-day readers, the glad tidings will speedily reach the happy dwellers in the glory-land, and cause increased "joy in the presence of the angels of God;" and, surely, no one will rejoice at such a result more than the beloved Pastor himself.

Before giving the special series of communications referred to above, one letter from an earlier period seems worthy of insertion. It was written during one of the journeys described in the preceding chapter; and, though undated, the heading of it indicates where Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon were staying at the time, and consequently gives the clue to the date,—June, 1865.

“ Bel Alp,

“ Canton Valais.

“ My Dear Mrs. Bartlett,

“ With constant thanksgiving, I remember your work of faith and labour of love ; and I pray the Lord to sustain you, and make you still a joyful ‘ mother in Israel.’ Your heart yearns most for the souls under your care ; and, therefore, when I have just thanked you with my whole heart for all you do for me and my Master’s cause, and have asked your continual prayers on my behalf, I will rather write to the class than to you.

“ *To those of them who are saved*, will you present their Pastor’s kindest remembrances, and say,—I beseech you to walk worthy of your high calling? Watchfulness is to be our daily spirit ; we must not sleep in an enemy’s land. Those who go near the brink of precipices may one day fall over them, and familiarity with sin may, sooner or later, lead to the commission of it ; and our God alone knows the misery which a fall may cause to you and to those who love your souls. Our sisters form a numerous and influential part of the church ; and when their hearts are in a thoroughly spiritual condition, they have a wonderful power for good. We want no better band of missionaries than the godly daughters, sisters, wives, and mothers in our midst. When it is well with you, pray for me, and let this be your prayer,—that I may return to you ‘ in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.’ I am now writing far up in the mountains ; the air is cold and bracing, the view is wide and lovely ; the high hills, with their snowy heads, seem just on a level with me ; all is still and calm, and my body and soul are both growing well and strong. Now, in spiritual matters, I want you who belong to dear Mrs. Bartlett’s class to live on the mountain, high up, near to God, far from the world, where your view of Divine truth will be clear and wide ; and I want you there to grow strong and healthy in Heavenly things, that you may do wonders in Christ’s Name.

“ *To those who are unsaved*, how shall I write? I must first pray,—O God, deliver them from their sins, and from Thy wrath ! Last night, the lightning seemed to set the mountains on a blaze ; it flashed from peak to peak, and made the clouds appear like great thrones or furnaces of fire ; the terrible God was abroad, and we were awed with His presence. I could look on cheerfully, and say, ‘ My Father does it all ; but what must it be to have this God for your enemy? Young friends, I beseech you to consider your condition as having an omnipotent God full of anger against you for your sins. May you realize your danger, and seek His face before you feel the terror of His hand ! What a sweet short sentence is that, ‘ God is love !’ Think it over. If Satan tempts you to despair, hold it up before his face. If sins or doubts prevail, remember that ‘ God is love.’ But do not forget that *He is a consuming fire*. He will either consume you or your sins,—you or

your self-righteousness. Jesus felt His Father to be a consuming fire in the day when the Divine wrath fell on Him to the uttermost; if He had to endure it, what will those feel who live and die in sin? May you be led to trust Jesus with your souls *now!* May you all be saved! May we all meet in glory to part no more! Till then, I am,—

“Your earnest minister,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”

A little while before the Pastor left home for his holiday, in January, 1874, he commenced a young people's prayer-meeting, in the Tabernacle lecture-hall, for an hour before the usual Monday evening gathering. The effort was a great success, and even during his absence an attendance of between six and seven hundred was maintained. It was, therefore, only natural that this very hopeful portion of the congregation should receive a considerable share of Mr. Spurgeon's attention while he was away. The four following letters were all addressed to the young people at the Monday six o'clock prayer-meeting:—

“Paris,

“Jan. 16.

“Dear Young Friends,

“I have your welfare continually upon my heart, and therefore thought I would pen a few sentences to you. I was much encouraged by the prayerful attention and deep feeling which I saw last Monday in many of you. It filled me with great hope concerning you. I see that you desire to have your sins forgiven, and to escape from the wrath of God, and I am therefore rejoiced; but I pray God that the signs of grace may not end with these mere beginnings and desires. Buds are beautiful, but we cannot be satisfied with them; they are only good because blossoms often become fruit. Mere blooms on the trees, and no fruit, would be a mockery of expectation. May it not be so with you!

“I am writing in my chamber in Paris at midnight. I could not sleep till I had said to you,—*Put your whole trust in Jesus at once.* All that you want of merit, He will give you; all that you need of help in the Heavenly life, He will bestow. Only believe *Him*. You who are saved, be sure to wrestle with God for the salvation of other young people, and try to make our new meeting a great means for good. You who are unawakened, we pray continually for you, for you are sleeping over hell's mouth; I can see your danger, though you do not. It is therefore time for you to awake out of sleep. I send my earnest love to you all, praying that we may meet on earth in much happiness, and then at last in Heaven for ever.

“Your anxious friend,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”



MENTONE, AS SEEN FROM DR. BENNET'S GARDEN.

" Mentone,

" Jan. 23.

" My Dear Young Friends,

" I am delighted to hear that you came together in such large numbers last Monday in my absence, for I hope it shows a real and deep anxiety among the seekers to find the Saviour, and among the saved ones to plead for others. You do not need the voice of any one man to secure your attention ; the Word of the Lord Jesus, by whomsoever spoken, is life and power. It is to Him that you must turn all your thoughts. Sin has separated between you and your God, and Christ alone can bring you back to your Heavenly Father. Be sure that you remember what it cost Him to prepare the way of reconciliation ; nothing but His blood could have done it, and He gave it freely, bowing His head to death upon the tree. It must have been no light matter which cost the Redeemer such a sacrifice ; I beseech you,

do not make light of it. Hate the sin which caused Him so much agony, and yield to the love which sustained Him under it.

"I hear that in London you have had fogs and rain, here it is all flowers and summer, and the difference reminds me of the change which faith makes in the soul. While we are unbelievers, we dread the wrath of God, and walk in gloom; but when we believe, we have peace with God, and enjoy His favour, and the spring of an eternal summer has commenced. May the Spirit of God, like the soft South wind, breathe upon you, and make your hearts bloom with desires, blossom with hopes, and bring forth fruits of repentance! From Jesus He proceeds, and to Jesus He leads the soul. Look to Him. Oh, look to Him; to Him alone; to Him simply; to Him at once!

"Your anxious friend,

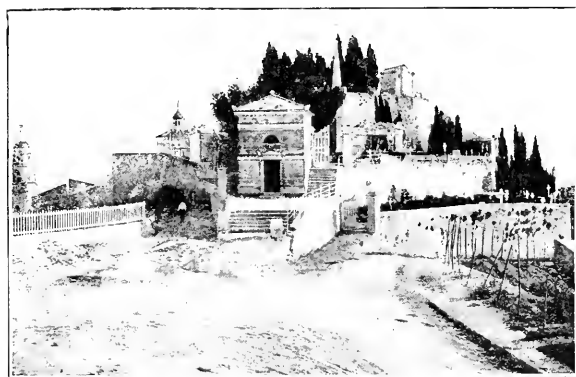
"C. H. SPURGEON."

"Mentone,

"Feb. 5.

"Dear Young Friends,

"I am greatly cheered to hear that you gather in such numbers, and shall be yet more glad when I hear or see that hearts are won for Jesus, and that with your mouths you make confession of Him. I look with so much hope upon you, that it would be a bitter disappointment if I did not hear that some of you are saved in the Lord.



THE CEMETERY, MENTONE.

"I have just limped up a high hill into the cemetery here, and there I saw a text which struck me. *'But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him.'* Noah was her rest, as Jesus must be yours. Just notice that

it is added, 'he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark.' She was too weak to get in, but Noah's kind hand 'pulled her in unto him.' Dear young friends, I pray the Lord Jesus to grasp those of you who are weary and weak, and pull you in. His promises are pulls, His invitations, and those of the kind friends who address you, are so many pulls. Yield yourselves unto them, and be pulled in *unto Him*. No rest is there, East, West, North, or South, for your soul's foot, save in the ark of sovereign grace; but there is rest there. As the dove turned her eye, and then her wing, to the ark, so turn your desires and prayers to Jesus; and as she dropped into Noah's hand, so fall into the hand which was pierced that sinners might live. I pray for each one of you, and have entreated the great High Priest to bear each one of your names before His Father's face upon His own breastplate. May the Lord save, sanctify, and preserve every one of us till the great day of His appearing!

"Your loving Pastor,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

"Mentone,

"Feb. 12.

"Dear Young Friends,

"I am full of delight at hearing of what the Lord is doing among you in saving souls; but will any of you be missed by the gracious visitation? Will the sacred rain leave some of you dry as the mountains of Gilboa? Is Jesus passing by, and will you not cry to Him? Is His grace felt by your brother, your sister, and your mother, and not by you? Unhappy soul, which shall manage to elude the blessed influences which are now abroad among us! Surely, such an one must be dexterous in resisting the Holy Spirit, and desperately resolved to perish! What reason can be urged for such a course? What excuse for such suicide? Let those who are saved, pray much for others who remain hardened.

"I am rejoiced that those of you who have found Jesus are not ashamed to own Him. Why should you be? Only make sure that you are really converted; do not be content with shams. Seek the real thing. Lay hold, not on temporary hope, but on *eternal life*. True faith always has repentance for its twin-brother, love for its child, and holiness for its crown. If you have looked to Jesus for life, be sure that you next look to Him for the pattern of life, so that you may walk as He also walked. As young Christians, you will be greatly tempted; pray, then, to be securely kept, that you may never dishonour your Lord. We shall soon meet, if the Lord will; and till then, my love be with you all. Amen.

"Yours heartily,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

While the young people in general were thus tenderly and affectionately remembered, the boys of the Stockwell Orphanage had the following letter specially written to them :—

“ Mentone,

“ Saturday evening, January 24th, 1874.

“ Dear Boys,

“ I have been much impressed by hearing that death has been to the Orphanage. Are you all prepared, if he should shoot another arrow into one of the houses, and lay another low? I wonder who will be the next! Dear boys, would you go to Heaven if you were now at once to die? Wait a bit, and let each one answer for himself. You know, you must be born again, you must repent of sin, you must believe in Jesus. How is it with you? If you are not saved, you are in great danger, in fearful peril! Be warned, I pray you! I cannot bear to think of one boy going from the Orphanage to hell; that would be terrible indeed. But to rise to Heaven, to be with Jesus for ever; why, this makes it worth while even to die a hundred deaths.

“ I hope my dear friend, Mr. Charlesworth, and all the teachers, and matrons, and nurses, are well; I send them all my kindest regards. I often think about you all. I want to see you all happy here and hereafter. May you grow up to be honourable Christian men; and if God should take any of you away, may we all meet in Heaven! Will you pray a special prayer, just now, that the death of one boy may bring all of you to Jesus to find eternal life? Be diligent in school, be very kind in the houses. Do not cause us pain, but give us all joy, for we all love you, and desire your good.

“ Mr. Charlesworth will, on my behalf, give you a couple of oranges all round, and I will pay him when I come home.

“ Your loving friend,

“ C. H. SPURGEON.”

One letter was addressed to the Bible-classes conducted by Elders Perkins and Bowker :—

“ Mentone,

“ Feb. 5.

“ Beloved Brethren,

“ Peace be to you and the dear friends who conduct your meetings! I am hoping to see a great revival of religion throughout our church and all its agencies, and I want your two classes not only to partake in it, but to lead the way in promoting it.

“ ‘I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong.’ The influence

which a choice band of young believers may have upon our own church and congregation, and the outlying neighbourhood, is exceedingly great. Being yourselves soundly instructed in the faith, you are to aid in building up others, and especially to help in quarrying new stones from the pit of nature. The Spirit of God will rest upon you in answer to prayer, and then you will become vessels fit for the Master's use. This you cannot be without personal holiness and individual consecration; let not these be lacking among you, and then you will not be barren or unprofitable.

"Begin by doubling your own numbers, which I believe could be done if you laid it to heart, and resolved each one to introduce, at the least, one new-comer. Make each meeting full of life, power, prayer, love, and zeal. I confess I am sorry that the Catechism is not still your text-book, for I believe it is a good groundwork, and keeps you near the most important subjects. Discussions upon the new theories of the day drive away the Spirit of God; the old wine is the best.

"Your leaders are men of experience, and have my fullest confidence, and, what is more, my most sincere love. Always support them, and back them up; and then let your motto be, '*Advance*.' Push into the unconquered regions. There ought to be more work done close at home around the Tabernacle. The time for outdoor services will soon be upon us; see what you can do beyond what is yet done. Sunday-schools in many places are pining for want of teachers, and Ragged-schools still more so. Where there is a gap, fill it.

"The Lord be with you! Please pray for me, that I may return strengthened in spirit, and soul, and body.

"With Christian love,

"Yours very heartily,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

Another letter was written to Mrs. Bartlett's class:—

"Mentone,

"Saturday evening,

"Beloved Friends,

"I write to salute you all, and especially your beloved mother in the gospel, my dear friend, Mrs. Bartlett. I hope you are enjoying times of power such as have been so usual with the class. The Lord's own daughters among you—each one a princess, not in her own right, but by marriage to King Jesus,—are, I trust, living in the enjoyment of their high privileges.

"'Why should the children of a King
Go mourning all their days?'

Yours it is to wear a girdle of joy; 'for the joy of the Lord is your strength.' See

to it that your lives are consistent with your high callings, for it ill becomes the daughters of Zion to demean themselves like the children of earth. 'Let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ.' Be watchful for the souls of others, and support by your prayers the earnest efforts of your beloved leader, Mrs. Bartlett.

"For those of you who are unsaved, I have this word,—*'How long halt ye between two opinions?'* Years roll on; and each one spent in alienation from God swells your dreadful account. Have you not sinned enough? Have you not run risks enough, that you must still imperil your souls? An hour even of the toothache is too much; but what is that compared with the disease of sin and the anger of God? Yet these you bear as if they were mere trifles. Will the time of decision never come? Or will you linger till you perish in your sin? 'Remember Lot's wife.' She is a monument of salt; take a little of that salt, and season your thoughts with it. Your graves are yawning for you, hell also enlargeth itself. Flee from the wrath to come; start up, like those who have been asleep upon the brink of death; and 'strive to enter in at the strait gate.'

"Yours lovingly, for Christ's sake,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

The students of the College had this choice epistle from their ever-beloved President:—

"Mentone,

"Saturday evening."

"Beloved Brethren,

"In my absence, I never cease to remember you, because I have you all in my heart, as the hope of the church, and the future benefactors of the world. I trust every man is conscientiously labouring at his studies, never wasting an hour. Your time for study is so short, and so much will be required and expected of you, that I beseech you to quit yourselves like men. Every moment with you is worth a Jew's eye, and its profiting will be a hundred-fold in the future. We have to cope with no mean adversaries. Our antagonists are well equipped and well trained. Our trust is in the Lord alone, and we go forth armed only with a sling and a stone; but we must practise slinging till we can throw to a hair's-breadth, and not miss. It was no unpractised hand which smote so small a target as Goliath's brow. Do not let the devil make fools of you by suggesting that, because the Lord works, you may be idle. I do not believe it of the least among you.

"Brethren, for our Lord's sake, maintain a high degree of spirituality; may the Holy Spirit enable you so to do! Live in God that you may live for God. Let the church see that her students are her picked men. I rely upon you, in my absence,

to help in all meetings for prayer or revival to the utmost of your ability. Nothing would give me greater joy than to hear that, while I am away, the Lord was moving some of you to make up for my lack of service.

"I am much better. Here, 'everlasting spring abides;' and though flowers wither, there are always fresh ones to fill their places. The balmy summer air is as oil to my bones.

"I send my sincere love to you all, and especially to your honoured tutors, and the venerable Principal, to whom be long life, and the same to you all! My dear brother will be to you all that I could have been, and you will pray for him, and also for—

"Your loving friend,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

Last, but not least, the Pastor wrote to his church and congregation the closing epistle of the special series in 1874:—

"Mentone,

"Feb. 12.

"Beloved Friends,

"By the time this letter is read to you, I shall, if the Lord will, be on my way back to you; and my prayer is that I may return 'in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.' Very greatly have I been cheered by hearing of your prayers for me, and still more by the news of the good and great work which the Lord is doing in your midst. It is glad tidings indeed. How grateful I am that dear brethren among you at home have been so highly honoured that God has worked by them so abundantly! I rejoice in their joy. The report of conversions in the families of the members is peculiarly refreshing. God grant that not one family may be unblest!

"I am myself greatly better, and very thankful that it is so, for I long to be an eye-witness and a partaker in the revival work. Oh, that it may go on till not one hearer shall remain unsaved!

"Beloved friends, join all of you heartily in the work, and let none in any way damp it by unloving, unholy, or careless walking. The clouds of blessing will blow away from us if worldliness be allowed to prevail. Sin in the church will be the death of revival, or else the revival will be the death of sin. Let no one among us besmear himself with the blood of souls by a careless conversation in such solemn times as these. May the Holy Ghost quicken us all into newness and fulness of life! God bless you all! So prays,—

"Yours in Jesus,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

As the last letter is so short, and scarcely represents adequately the Pastor's intense love and care specially for his great church and congregation while he was necessarily absent for a while from their midst, another of his communications, of later date, is appended, to make the series more fairly representative and complete :—

“ Mentone,

“ Feb. 13, 1877.

“ Beloved Friends,

“ I have heard, with the utmost satisfaction, of the enthusiasm with which the special services have been taken up by so many of you. It is a token for good which encourages my largest expectations. The anxiety of the church for conversions is, in a very distinct manner, connected with the desired result; for that desire leads to increased prayer, and so secures the effectual working of the Holy Spirit; and it also inspires an ardent zeal which sets believers working for the salvation of those around them, and this also is sure to produce fruit. I look, therefore, for the conversion of many with as much confidence as I look for the ships to arrive at their haven when a fair wind is blowing.

“ To those who are thus earnest for the Lord's glory, I send my heart's gratitude, and for those who are not as yet aroused to like ardour, I put up my fervent prayers that they may no longer lag behind their brethren. Our children are growing up around us, our great city is daily adding to its enormous bulk, and our cemeteries are being gorged with the dead; so long as one soul remains unsaved, and in danger of the unquenchable fire, it behoves every Christian to be diligent to spread abroad the healing savour of the Redeemer's Name. Woe unto that man who conceals the Light while men are stumbling in the darkness! Woe unto him who keeps back the Bread of life in the season of famine! Beloved, I am persuaded better things of you, though I thus speak.

“ Persevering, quiet believers, who in secret implore the Divine blessing, and then regularly give their aid to the continuous worship, service, and intercession of the church, are the strength of the brotherhood, the main body of the hosts of the Lord. Let all such rejoice because their labour is not in vain in the Lord. But we need also dashing spirits who will lead on in continually-renewed efforts; thoughtful, practical men and women who will suggest and commence aggressive movements. We have such among us, but others need to be pressed into the service. One should canvass for the Sabbath-school, another should break up fresh tract-districts, a third should commence a cottage service, and a fourth should preach in a court or alley which has not as yet been visited. Brethren, we must all do all that can be done for Jesus, for the time is approaching when we must give in our account, and our Master is at hand.

"Beloved in the Lord, my joy and crown, walk in all love to each other, in holiness towards God, and in uprightness and kindness towards all men. Peace be with you all!

"May those who have heard the gospel among us, but have not as yet felt its power, be found by the Lord during the services which have been held in my absence! If they have escaped the net when I have thrown it, may some brother-fisher of souls be more successful with them! It is very hard *to think* of one of our hearers being lost for ever, but how much harder will it be for them to endure in their own persons eternal ruin! May the great Lover of men's souls put forth His pierced hand, and turn the disobedient into the way of peace!

"I am most grateful to report that my health is restored, my heart is no longer heavy, my spirits have revived, and I hope to return to you greatly refreshed. Loving friends in Christ, I beg to be continually remembered in your prayers. I send my love to my Co-pastor and true helper, to the deacons, elders, and every one of you in Christ Jesus.

"Yours heartily,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

CHAPTER LXVIII.

The Pastors' College, 1861—1878.

It is a grand assistance to our College that it is connected with an active and vigorous Christian church. If union to such a church does not quicken the student's spiritual pulse, it is his own fault. It is a serious strain upon a man's spirituality to be dissociated, during his student-life, from actual Christian work, and from fellowship with more experienced believers. At the Pastors' College, our brethren can not only meet, as they do every day, for prayer by themselves, but they can unite daily in the prayer-meetings of the church, and can assist in earnest efforts of all sorts. Through living in the midst of a church which, despite its faults, is a truly living, intensely zealous, working organization, they gain enlarged ideas, and form practical habits. Even to see church-management and church-work upon an extensive scale, and to share in the prayers and sympathies of a large community of Christian people, must be a stimulus to right-minded men. It has often done me good to hear the students say that they had been warned against losing their spirituality during their College course, but they had, on the contrary, proved that their piety had been deepened and increased through association with their brethren and the many godly men and women with whom they were constantly brought into contact. Our circumstances are peculiarly helpful to growth in grace, and we are grateful to have our Institution so happily surrounded by them. The College is recognized by the church at the Tabernacle as an integral part of its operations, and is supported and loved as such. C. H. S.



WHEN the Tabernacle was opened, the students migrated from Mr. Rogers' house to the class-rooms in the new sanctuary, and the Pastor took an early opportunity of bringing the work of the College more distinctly before his church and congregation than he had previously done. On Lord's-day morning, May 19, 1861, in reminding his hearers of the object for which the collection had been announced, Mr. Spurgeon said :—" It has been thought desirable that I should state a few particulars relative to our Institution for training young men for the ministry. Some five or six years ago, one of the young men of our church gave promise of being a successful minister if he could but have a good education. With the assistance of two friends, I resolved to take him under my charge, send him to a suitable tutor, and train him for the ministry. So useful was that brother, that I was induced to take another, and another, and another. Hitherto, I have been myself committee, secretary, treasurer, and subscriber. I have not, except in one or two instances, even mentioned the matter to anyone; but have been content to spare everything that I could out of my own income, beyond that which is necessary for the support of my household, in order to educate any suitable young men who came in my way, that they might become ministers of the cross of Christ. There are now seven settled out, all of whom have been eminently successful. They are probably not men who will become great or brilliant, but they have been good and useful preachers. I think there are not other seven in the whole Baptist

denomination who have had so many converts during the years that they have been settled. They have been the means, most of them, in the hands of God, of adding many members every year to the churches of which they are pastors; and most of those churches are not in provincial towns, but in villages. I have therefore been led still further to increase my number of students, and I have now about sixteen young men wholly to support and train. Beside these, there is a very considerable number of brethren who receive their education in the evening, though they still remain in their own callings. With the wider sphere we now occupy as a church, I propose so to enlarge my scheme that all the members of this church and congregation, who happen to be deficient in the plain rudiments of knowledge, can get an education—a common English education, for themselves. Then, if they display any ability for speaking, without giving up their daily avocations, they shall have classes provided for higher branches of instruction. But should they feel that God has called them to the ministry, I am then prepared—after the use of my own judgment, and the judgment of my friends, as to whether they are fit persons,—to give them two years' special tutorship, that they may go forth to preach the Word, thoroughly trained so far as we can effect it in so short a time. I know I am called to this work, and I have had some most singular interpositions of Providence in furnishing funds for it hitherto. At the day of judgment, the world shall know that there has never lived a man upon the face of the earth who has less deserved the calumny of 'seeking to enrich himself' than I have. I shall say no more upon that matter; let the world slander me if it will. I want the money to-day, not for myself in any respect;—I give my services and my time freely, and of my own income all that I can spare. I only want my friends, who feel interested in this work, to assist me, that we may provide men who shall preach the gospel to multitudes who are longing to hear it fully and faithfully proclaimed."

In addition to the public collection for the College, generous gifts were contributed privately, and on July 1, a church-meeting was held, of which the church-book contains the following account:—

"Our Pastor having told the members of his Institution for educating young ministers, and having stated that several of them are now settled in country charges, and labouring with great success, it was unanimously agreed,—That this church rejoices very greatly in the labours of our Pastor in training young men for the ministry, and desires that a record of his successful and laborious efforts should be entered in our church-books. Hitherto, this good work has been rather a private service for the Lord than one in which the members have had a share; but the church hereby adopts it as part of its own system of Evangelical labours, promises its pecuniary aid, and its constant and earnest prayers."

Not long afterwards, Mr. Spurgeon brought the College still more prominently before the notice of the Christian public by means of the following letter :—

“ To Believers in our Lord Jesus Christ,

“ Dear Friends,

“ Not in vain ostentation, as though I would say, ‘Come and see my zeal for the Lord,’ but for sundry weighty reasons, I feel moved to place before you this statement concerning a most important department of Christian labour which the Lord has committed to my charge. This I do in the fear of God, expecting His blessing in the deed, since I have a single eye to His glory and the benefit of His Church. As I have not founded this Institution for training young men for the ministry because any persuaded me to do so, and as I have not continued to labour in it because many have favoured the design, so I should not lay the work aside if, in future, I should meet with no sympathy in regard to it. If it be of men, may it come to nought; but if it be of God, *He* will take care that it shall stand. The work is no mere experiment,—no wild-goose chase after an imaginary good; but the result of many prayers, and a deliberate dedication of the soul, followed up by the practical experience of seven years. Solemnly do I know that this work of training young evangelists has been laid upon me by the Lord. I have espoused the service as my life’s labour and delight,—a labour for which all my other work is but a platform,—a delight superior even to that afforded by my ministerial successes. Give it up, I cannot; and so long as the Lord enables me, I hope to persevere, even though I should have to toil alone, unaided, or even unapproved.

“ This remark is made at the outset, not because I undervalue the sympathy of my brethren in Christ, but to show that the work rests on a firmer foundation than the approbation of men, and is carried on in another spirit than that which depends upon an arm of flesh. Resolute perseverance, based upon a conviction of special call, is not to be overcome unless the Divine power which it invokes should refuse its aid. Questions about the necessity or the propriety of the Institution will, of course, be asked, and the writer is far from denying that liberty to any man; but, meanwhile, that enquiry has long ago been so abundantly answered in the conscience of the person most concerned therein, that the work continually goes on, and will increasingly go on, whatever may be the decision of other minds. When the Lord withholds His aid, the work will cease; but not till then. Faith grows daily, and rests more and more confidently upon the promise and providence of God; and, therefore, the work will rather increase than come to a pause. I do not, therefore, pen these lines because I would look to man, or feel a need of human aid to buttress the Divine. The Institution was never so flourishing as now, and it is no necessity which urges me to tell my brethren what is being done. Whether men, money, or

churches, be required, the Lord will surely supply them; and just now they are brought to us in superabundance, so that there is no need for me to beg for aid.

“ But it would be, to my own soul, an inexpressible source of joy if believers would afford this Institution a place in their fervent prayers. All of us engaged in the enterprise feel our entire dependence upon the Holy Spirit; and, hence, we value, beyond all price, the prayers of the saints. We cannot teach efficiently, our men cannot study to any purpose, and their labours cannot avail to win souls, except as the Lord our God shall pour out His blessing upon us. Oh, that we could win the hearts of some of the King’s intercessors, so that they would plead with our Lord to remember us in mercy! Moreover, if the Christian Church should be moved to take an interest in our affairs, many of God’s people would feel stirred up to give of their substance for the support of the Lord’s young prophets. While we look up to the treasury in the skies for the supply of every need, we know that the means must come through the channel of the saints. It is not consistent with our plan to ask anyone personally, or to request regular pledged subscriptions; yet we think it meet to remind believers of their stewardship, and of their obligation to extend their Master’s Kingdom; and we do not hesitate to declare that no work more deserves their aid than that which the Lord has laid upon us; there is not one more likely to bless the Church, and to gather together the wandering sheep. Of this, however, each one must judge for himself; and, according to the verdict of his conscience, each one must act. None but those who thoroughly appreciate our work will be likely to send assistance. This is as it should be, and as we believe the Lord would have it. Of what value can unwilling subscriptions be in His sight?

“ Some seven years ago, one youthful brother was blessed of God in street-preaching. He was quite uneducated, but had a ready utterance and a warm heart. In conjunction with my beloved friend, Rev. G. Rogers, the task of training the young soldier was undertaken; and, by Divine grace, the brother became a most useful and successful minister of the gospel. From this small beginning has arisen the Pastors’ College at the Tabernacle, in which, at present, 50 men are under constant tuition, and more than 150 receive instruction in the evening. It is not my intention, just now, to detail the various stages of growth; suffice it to say that the hand of the Lord has been with us for good, and the encouragements and rejoicings far exceed the difficulties and trials, although these have been not a few. Financial pinches there might have been if it had been my habit to look only at visible resources; but when I have fallen for an hour into an unbelieving frame of mind, I have been so severely chastened, and withal so tenderly assisted, that I am compelled to forego all complaint or fear. I write it to the honour of my Master,—He has made my cup to run over, and has supplied all my need ‘according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus,’ so that I have had no real financial difficulties at all.

Money has flowed in even before it was required. As to finding the men, they have always offered themselves in larger numbers than I could receive; and in the business of the settlement of the students in pastorates, there has been no difficulty, for they are demanded by the churches even before the brief season of their training has expired. Some eight spheres of labour are at the present moment waiting for the young reapers to go forth. When openings do not occur, we make them; and, by planting new interests in the vicinity of London, we hope to increase the number and strength of the churches of Christ. In every other matter, a straight path has been opened, and direction afforded. God has been with us of a truth.

“At first, I had only intended to send out some one or two brethren; but the increase has been thrust upon me, so that the number of students is not fixed, but may be increased or diminished, as means are given. I may receive a hundred if enabled to do so; or I may lower our numbers to a few if required. Plans also have been suggested, not by forethought, but by experience,—which, after all, is no mean teacher,—and new methods will be followed whenever they commend themselves to my judgment. The reasoning which has formed and fashioned my purpose and action is in a measure as follows:—

“It seems to me that many of our churches need a class of ministers who will not aim at lofty scholarship, but at the winning of souls;—men of the people, feeling, sympathizing, fraternizing with the masses of working-men;—men who can speak the common language, the plain blunt Saxon of the crowd;—men ready to visit the sick and the poor, and able to make them understand the reality of the comforts of religion. There are many such men among the humbler ranks of society, who might become master-workmen in the Lord's Church if they could get an education to pare away their roughness, and give them more extended information; but, in most of our Colleges, the expenses are too great for poor men; indeed, to meet their case, there must be no cost at all to them, and they must be fed, housed, and clothed while under instruction. Why should not such men have help? Why should they be compelled to enter our ministry without a competent knowledge of Scripture and Biblical literature? Superior in some respects already, let them be educated, and they will be inferior in none. It was the primary aim of this Institution to help such men, and this is still its chief end and design; although, of late, we have been glad to receive some brethren of superior station, who put us to no charges, and feeling the education to be of the precise kind they require, are happy to accept it, and maintain themselves. This, however, does not alter our main plan and purpose. Whether the student be rich or poor, the object is the same,—not scholarship, but preaching the gospel,—not the production of fine gentlemen, but of hard-working men.

“C. H. SPURGEON.”

The list of students in the College, at about the time this letter was written, contained the names of men of God who have left their mark upon the age, and whose work as preachers and soul-winners, or as teachers of others, is only second to that of the beloved President himself. Four of those names stand out conspicuously,—David Gracey, who was "called home" one year after Mr. Spurgeon; Frank H. White (now of Talbot Tabernacle, Notting Hill); Archibald G. Brown (now of West Norwood); and Charles Burt Sawday (the present Assistant-pastor at the Metropolitan Tabernacle). At the annual meeting of the Pastors' College in 1898, Mr. Archibald Brown thrilled the audience with his graphic description of a scene of which he was one of the eye-witnesses six-and-thirty years before.



THE LADIES' ROOM, METROPOLITAN TABERNALE.

(The chair on the right is the one used by Mr. Spurgeon at Monday evening prayer-meetings in the Tabernacle.)

"At that date," said Mr. Brown, "the dear Governor—he was always 'the dear Governor' to us,—held his Friday afternoon class in the newly-completed ladies' room at the Tabernacle. One day, as he entered, we noticed that he had brought with him a tall, pale young man; and, as soon as the cheering, which always greeted his arrival, had subsided, he said to us, 'Here, brethren, is a student who knows more than the whole lot of us put together. He is quite able to teach us all, yet he would not let me rest until I promised to take him into the College; give him a hearty

welcome.' That pale young man," added Mr. Brown, "was dear David Gracey." This gifted and gracious brother had been brought up as a Presbyterian; but, while yet a youth, he became a Baptist. Having received a good education in his boyhood, he passed into Glasgow University to be prepared, unconsciously, for the great work which God had in store for him. Brilliant as a student, he would, doubtless, have distinguished himself in the scholastic world, had not higher aims taken possession of his heart. In the providence of God, it happened that



PASTOR FRANK H. WHITE.

Mr. Frank White was sent by Mr. Spurgeon to Glasgow, just about that time, at the request of Mr. John Anderson, to conduct a week's special evangelistic services. Respecting this mission, Mr. White writes:—"I preached every night in large cold 'churches' with varied success. I was too much advertized, and the people expected too much from me, and looked for a sensation, which I neither could nor sought to produce. I believe, however, that souls were saved. It was then that I met and talked long with our dear Mr. Gracey, who was greatly exercised in mind concerning his position. He enquired much about the Pastors' College, which he seemed desirous to enter, and I strongly urged him to do so."

Mr. Spurgeon humorously conferred upon Mr. White, while in College, the title of "Professor of Button-hole Theology,"—in allusion to his constant endeavour to "button-hole" individuals, and lead them to the Saviour;—and among the hundreds of men whom the beloved President helped to prepare for the Christian ministry, there were none who stood higher in his estimation than the two of whom

he always spoke as "Frank White and Archibald Brown." It is noteworthy that the "Fraternal" with which Mr. Spurgeon was identified, during the last year or two of his earthly service, was called by him "the Whitey-Brown brotherhood" because of the active part taken by these two brethren in its initiation and development.

Mr. White has kindly written, for this volume, the following reminiscences of his student-days, and some later notable experiences:—"Early in 1862, Mr. Henry Hull—who was himself a master in the blessed art of soul-winning,—wrote to Mr. Spurgeon with a view to my admission to the Pastors' College. An appointment for an interview was soon made, and with some fear and trembling (for the first and last time,—for I never afterwards trembled in his presence, except with delight,) I stood before the great preacher in his vestry at the Tabernacle. 'The very man I want,' was his hearty exclamation the instant I entered the room. I do not remember anything else he said, except, 'You must go to Paradise Chapel, Chelsea, next Sunday.' Accordingly, to Paradise Chapel I went; and that little riverside sanctuary became a very Eden to me, though its surroundings were often quite the reverse of paradisaical. Only eighteen persons were present at the first morning service at Chelsea; but, by the grace and power of the Lord the Spirit, some eight hundred were baptized before my ministry in that part closed.

"What happy days were those we spent in College, and with what eagerness did we, after the intense strain of the study and work of the week, look forward to those delightful Friday afternoons with the President! Being fewer in number, the intercourse was closer than was possible in after days. How favoured we were even in the ordinary course of things; but what of those special opportunities, such as a six-days' driving tour, which was once my happy lot? The letter of invitation is before me now.

"Dear Mr. White,

"I am expecting you at my house, at 8 a.m. next Monday, to go for a week's drive. I have reserved a seat in the carriage for you, which I could have filled with some other friend, so that you must not feel free to decline under any consideration whatever. Your charges will all be paid, and your company appreciated. Not to have you with me, would grievously afflict—

"Your loving friend,

"C. H. SPURGEON.

"Breakfast at Nightingale Lane at 8;—bound to me till Saturday evening;—may reach home by 6 on that evening."

"Think whether a poor, worn-out, hard-worked student—such as Archibald Brown, or myself,—would be glad to receive such a command, or not. I must leave

it to an abler pen than mine to describe those drives from day to day; but to me, they were indescribably joyous. The very trees of the field clapped their hands; and we were closely examined as to their nomenclature, and then most delightfully instructed as to their peculiarities and characteristics. I wish I could recall some of the dear Governor's conversations as we rode along; but I do remember one thing that he said. We were close by the spot where the Bishop of Winchester fell from his horse, and was killed; and Mr. Spurgeon said that he had just received a letter from a clergyman, who informed him that his bodily sufferings were a judgment from God upon him for speaking against the Church of England. In replying to his unfeeling correspondent, he had asked,—If a swollen hand or foot was to be regarded as a mark of Divine displeasure, what was to be said concerning a broken neck? Needless to say, that question remained unanswered."



PASTOR ARCHIBALD G. BROWN.

Mr. Brown has preserved the following letter inviting him to form one of the party on another of those memorable driving tours:—

“Nightingale Lane,

“Clapham,

“May 23.

“Dear Friend,

“Will you go out with me and others, on June 15, for a week, or two weeks, or three weeks, or a few days, or whatever time you like? We feel that we should like your company, and we think we might do you good. You are

very dear to us : to *me* especially. We shall be very quiet, and jog along with the old greys.

" I pray the Lord to bless and comfort you.

" Yours so heartily,

" C. H. SPURGEON."

Two other letters show what a true yoke-fellow Mr. Brown was to his beloved President, and with what intense affection and esteem Mr. Spurgeon regarded his former student :—

" Nightingale Lane,

" Clapham,

" Loving Brother,

" I thank you much for preaching for me, praying for me, and loving me. I am better, but have had a sharp nip. Lucian says, ' I thought a cobra had bitten me, and filled my veins with poison ; but it was worse,—*it was gout.*' *That was written from experience, I know.* Yet I bless God for this suffering also, and believe that your prophetic card will be truer than Dr. Cumming's vaticinations.

" Yours ever lovingly,

" C. H. S."

" Nightingale Lane,

" Clapham,

" January 29th.

" Three cheers for you, my true-hearted comrade ! The story of your East London gathering of the clans fills me with delight. The Lord be with thee, thou mighty man of valour ! Whether, in striking the Spiritualists, you are hitting the devil or a donkey, does not matter much ; you have evidently hit hard, or they would not be so fierce. I am not able to take much credit for bringing you up, but I am about as proud of you as I dare be.

" I hope we shall have a good meeting on Friday week. It is oil to my bones to see you all.

" Yours always lovingly,

" C. H. SPURGEON,"

The fourth of the notable students of 1862—Mr. Sawday—has kindly forwarded the following letter, which Mr. Spurgeon wrote to his father when the question of a College training for our dear friend was under discussion :—

" Clapham,

" April 12th, '62.

" My Dear Sir,

" I scarcely wonder at your preference of Regent's Park College for your son, but I think you labour under some mistake, for it so happens that

the ground of your choice is just one of the evils which my Institute seeks to remedy.

“The residence of a number of young men in one house encourages and necessarily generates levity; their separation from common social life is a serious injury, and tends to unfit them for the wear and tear of future work among ordinary mortals. When a young man resides in a Christian family, not only is he under the most vigilant oversight, but he never ceases to be one of the people. We are far from putting our men into the way of temptation; on the other hand, we think our arrangement is the most effectual method of preservation. I merely write this because your brief acquaintance with our systems may allow me to suppose that this view of the case has not suggested itself to you.

“Our tutors are sound scholars; but, as we do not aim at any very profound scholarship, we allot but two years to the course. The young men who have left us have been very useful, and the class now in hand will bear comparison with any body of men living.

“I could not, while possessing any self-respect, prepare your son for Dr. Angus; but I shall be delighted to be of any other service to him.

“Yours most truly,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”



PASTOR C. B. SAWDAY.

Mr. Sawday sends this explanation of the letter, and also mentions how the difficulty was happily overcome:—“My dear father was prejudiced against Mr. Spurgeon; and, in his anxiety for me to receive an efficient training for the Baptist ministry, had arranged for my admission to Regent’s Park College. But I had

heard Mr. Spurgeon several times at the Tabernacle, and I pleaded with my father not to insist on my going to Regent's Park, and with Mr. Spurgeon to admit me to the Pastors' College. In those early days, it was no wonder that my father, whose whole religious life was spent among the Wesleyans, should have been unwilling for his son to be associated with so pronounced a Calvinist as Mr. Spurgeon was, and he had conscientious objections against contributing towards my support. The dear Pastor met us both, one Sunday morning, after the service, and ended the matter by saying, 'Well, Mr. Sawday, your son is set on entering my College, and he shall be trained, if necessary, at my own expense.' It is not surprising, therefore, that I feel that I have more cause than many of our brethren for holding in grateful love the memory of our now glorified President."

Mr. Spurgeon could scarcely have imagined that, by this generous offer, he was preparing the way into the ministry for a brother who would, for a third of a century, be greatly owned of God as a winner of souls, and, then, after his beloved President's departure, become the able and loyal assistant of *his* son and successor in the pastorate at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. Yet so it has proved by the unerring wisdom of Him who—

"Moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform."

CHAPTER LXIX.

The Pastors' College, 1861—1878 (*Continued*).

Honorat, in the opening years of the fifth century, retired to the little island, near Cannes, which still bears his name; and attracted around him a number of students, many of whom became such famous missionaries that the Romish Church has enrolled them among her "saints." The one best known to us is Patrick, the evangelizer of Ireland. Christianity was then almost as pure as at the first, and we can well imagine the holy quietude in which, among the rocks of this sunny isle, hundreds of good men spent the years of their preparation for future ministry. With constant meditation and prayer, it must have been a Patmos to them; and when they left its shores, they went forth, full of zeal, to cry, like John the divine, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." In all ages, it has seemed good unto the Lord to gather men around some favoured instructor, and enable them, under his guidance, to sharpen their swords for the battle of life. Thus did Honorat and Columba, in the olden days, and so did Wycliffe and Luther and Calvin, in the Reformation times, train the armies of the Lord for their mission. Schools of the prophets are a prime necessity if the power of religion is to be kept alive and propagated in the land. As we sat under the umbrageous pines by the calm sea, and gazed upon the almost more than earthly scene around, our heart swelled with great desires, and our prayer went up to Heaven that we also might do something to convert the nations ere we go hence, and be no more. If God wills it, we may yet commence new missionary operations, and we mean, on our return, to call our men together to pray about it.—C. H. S., in "*Notes from Mentone*," 1877



THE following account, in Mr. Spurgeon's own words, was always regarded by him as "the best history" of the Pastors' College; and it is, for that reason, the most suitable record to appear in his "Standard Life." With the particulars and portraits published in Vol. II., Chapter XLVI., and the further reminiscences supplied here and in the previous chapter by former students, it furnishes the fullest and most reliable information concerning the important Institution which the peerless President often called "his firstborn and best beloved."

The Pastors' College (commenced in 1856) has unceasingly been remembered of the God of Heaven, to whom all engaged in it offer reverent thanksgiving. When it was commenced, I had not even a remote idea of whereunto it would grow. There were springing up around me, as my own spiritual children, many earnest young men who felt an irresistible impulse to preach the gospel; and yet, with half an eye, it could be seen that their want of education would be a sad hindrance to them. It was not in my heart to bid them cease their preaching; and, had I done so, they would, in all probability, have ignored my recommendation. As it seemed that they would preach, though their attainments were very slender, no other course was open but to give them an opportunity to educate themselves for the work.

Two friends, Mr. Winsor and Mr. W. Olney, both deacons of the church, promised aid, which, with what I could myself give, enabled me to take one student

(Mr. T. W. Medhurst), for whom I sought to find a tutor. In Mr. George Rogers, then the Pastor of the Independent Church, Albany Road, Camberwell, God sent us the very best man. He had been preparing for such work, and was anxiously waiting for it. This gentleman, who remained until 1881 our principal tutor, is a man of Puritanic stamp, deeply learned, orthodox in doctrine, judicious, witty, devout, earnest, liberal in spirit, and without juvenile in heart to an extent most remarkable in a man of his years. My connection with him has been one of uninterrupted comfort and delight. The most sincere affection exists between us, we are of one mind and of one heart; and what is equally important, he has in every case secured not merely the respect but the filial love of every student.

Encouraged by the readiness with which the first students found spheres of labour, and by their singular success in soul-winning, I enlarged the number, but the whole means of sustaining them came from my own purse. The large sale of my sermons in America, together with my dear wife's economy, enabled me to spend from £600 to £800 a year in my own favourite work; but, on a sudden, owing to my denunciations of the then existing slavery in the States, my entire resources from that "brook Cherith" were dried up. I paid as large sums as I could from my own income, and resolved to spend all I had, and then take the cessation of my means as a voice from the Lord to stay the effort, as I am firmly persuaded that we ought under no pretence to go into debt. On one occasion, I proposed the sale of my horse and carriage, although these were almost absolute necessities to me on account of my continual journeys in preaching the Word. This my friend Mr. Rogers would not hear of, and actually offered to be the loser rather than this should be done. Then it was that I told my difficulties to my people, and the *weekly offering* commenced; but the incomings from that source were so meagre as to be hardly worth calculating upon. I was brought to the last pound, when a letter came from a banker in the City, informing me that a lady, whose name I have never been able to discover, had deposited a sum of £200, to be used for the education of young men for the ministry. How did my heart leap for joy! I threw myself then and henceforth upon the bounteous care of the Lord, whom I desired with my whole heart to glorify by this effort. Some weeks later, another £100 came in from the same bank; as I was informed, from another hand. Soon afterwards, a beloved deacon of the church at the Tabernacle began to provide an annual supper for the friends of the College, at which considerable sums have from year to year been contributed. A dinner was also given by my liberal publishers, Messrs. Passmore and Alabaster, to celebrate the issue of my five hundredth weekly sermon, at which £500 were raised and presented to the funds. The College grew every month, and the number of students rapidly advanced. Friends known and unknown, from far and near, were moved to give little or much to my work, and so the supplies

increased as the need enlarged. Then another earnest deacon of the church, espoused as his special work the weekly offering, which has been, for many years, a steady source of income. There have been, during this period, times of great trial of my faith; but, after a season of straitness, never amounting to absolute want, the Lord has always interposed, and sent me large sums (on one occasion, £1,000) from unknown donors. When the Orphanage was thrust upon me, it did appear likely that this second work would drain the resources of the first, and it is very apparent that it does attract to itself some of the visible sources of supply; but my faith was firm that the Lord could as readily maintain both Institutions as one, and He has done so.

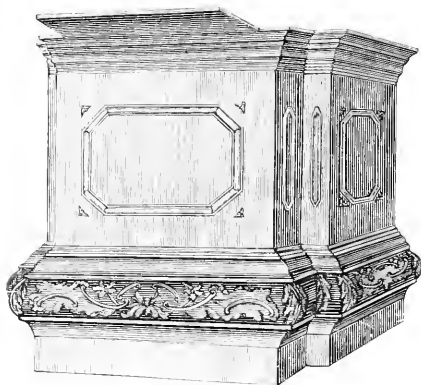
Pecuniary needs, however, have made up but a small part of my cares. Many have been my personal exercises in selecting the men. Candidates have always been plentiful, and the choice has been wide; but it is a serious responsibility to reject any, and yet more so to accept them for training. When mistakes have been made, a second burden has been laid upon me in the dismissal of those who appeared to be unfit. Even with the most careful management, and all the assistance of tutors and friends, no human foresight can secure that, in every case, a man shall be what we believed and hoped. A brother may be exceedingly useful as an occasional preacher, he may distinguish himself as a diligent student, he may succeed at first in the ministry, and yet, when trials of temper and character occur in the pastorate, he may be found wanting. We have had comparatively few causes for regret of this sort; but there have been some such, and these have pierced us with many sorrows. I devoutly bless God that He has sent to the College some of the holiest, soundest, and most self-denying preachers I know, and I pray that He may continue to do so; but it would be more than a miracle if all should excel. While thus speaking of trials connected with the men themselves, it is due to our gracious God to bear testimony that these are not worthy to be compared with the great joy which we experience in seeing so many hundreds of brethren still serving the Lord according to their measure of gift, and all, it is believed, earnestly contending for the faith once delivered unto the saints; nor is the joy less in remembering that many have sweetly fallen asleep after having fought a good fight. At this hour, some of our most flourishing Baptist churches are presided over by pastors trained in our College, and, as years shall add ripeness of experience and stability of character, others will be found to stand in the front rank of the Lord's host.

The College was for some little time aided by the zealous services of Mr. W. Cubitt, of Thrapston, who died among us, enjoying our highest esteem. Mr. Gracey, the classical tutor, a most able brother, is one of ourselves, and was in former years a student, though, from possessing a solid education, he needed little instruction

from us except in theology. In him we have one of the most efficient tutors living, a man fitted for any post requiring thorough scholarship and aptness in communicating knowledge. Mr. Fergusson, in the English elementary classes, does the first work upon the rough stones of the quarry, and we have heard from the men whom he has taught in the evening classes speeches and addresses which would have adorned any assembly, proving to demonstration his ability to cope with the difficulties of uncultured and ignorant minds. Mr. Johnson, who zealously aids in the evening, is also a brother precisely suited to the post which he occupies. These evening classes afford an opportunity to Christian men engaged during the day to obtain an education for nothing during their leisure time, and very many avail themselves of the privilege. Nor must I forget to mention Mr. Selway, who takes the department of physical science, and by his interesting experiments and lucid descriptions, gives to his listeners an introduction to those departments of knowledge which most abound with illustrations. Last, but far from least, I adore the goodness of God which sent me so dear and efficient a fellow-helper as my brother in the flesh and in the Lord, J. A. Spurgeon. His work has greatly relieved me of anxiety, and his superior educational qualifications have tended to raise the tone of the instruction given.

(Mr. Spurgeon does not here mention his own important part in the training of his students, but one of them—Pastor W. D. McKinney, now of Ansonia, Connecticut, U.S.A.,—has written the following graphic description of the ever-memorable Friday afternoon classes:—

"*Friday afternoon* came at last. The old, familiar clock pointed to three; the door opened on the stroke of the hour, the beloved President appeared, and walked up to the desk,—Dr. Gill's pulpit,—while hands clapped, feet stamped, and voices



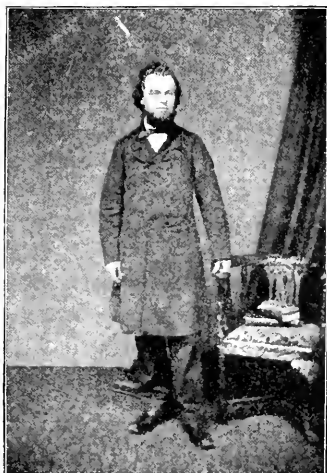
DR. GILL'S PULPIT



VICE-PRESIDENT J. A. SPURGON



PROFESSOR DAVID GRACEY



PROFESSOR A. FERGUSSON.



PROFESSOR W. R. SELWAY.

EARLY TUTORS OF THE PASTORS' COLLEGE.

cheered till he had to hold up his hand, and say, 'Now, gentlemen, do you not think that is enough? The floor is weak, the ceiling is not very high, and, I am sure, you need all the strength you have for your labours.'

"In those days, the President was in his prime. His step was firm, his eyes bright, his hair dark and abundant, his voice full of sweetest music and sacred merriment. Before him were gathered a hundred men from all parts of the United Kingdom, and not a few from beyond the seas. They were brought together by the magic of his name, and the attraction of his personal influence. His fame had gone out into all lands. His sermons were published in almost all languages. Many sitting before him were his own sons in the faith. Among his students he was at his ease, as a father in the midst of his own family. The brethren loved him, and he loved them.

"Soon, the floods of his pent-up wisdom poured forth; the flashes of his inimitable wit lit up every face, and his pathos brought tears to all eyes. It was an epoch in student-life to hear him deliver his *Lectures to my Students*. What weighty



THE DESK-ROOM, PASTORS' COLLEGE (WHERE THE LATER "LECTURES TO MY STUDENTS" WERE DELIVERED).

and wise discourse he gave us on the subject of preaching! How gently he corrected faults, and encouraged genuine diffidence! What withering sarcasm for all fops and pretenders! Then came those wonderful imitations of the dear

brethren's peculiar mannerisms,—one with the hot dumpling in his mouth, trying to speak; another, sweeping his hand up and down from nose to knee; a third, with his hands under his coat-tails, making the figure of a water-wagtail. Then the one with his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat, showing the 'penguin' style of oratory. By this means, he held the mirror before us so that we could see our faults, yet all the while we were almost convulsed with laughter. He administered the medicine in effervescing draughts.

"After this, came the wise counsel, so kind, so grave, so gracious, so fatherly; then the prayer that lifted us to the mercy-seat, where we caught glimpses of glory, and talked face to face with the Master Himself. Afterwards, the giving out of the appointments for the next Lord's-day took place; the class was dismissed for tea, and then came the men who wanted advice. Some were in trouble, others in joy; and the President listened patiently to all their tales; anon he would laugh, and then he would weep. At last, he is through, 'weary in the work, but not weary of it.' His cheery voice gradually dies away as he ascends the stairs to his 'sanctum.' We did not grieve as we parted from him; for we knew that, God willing, on the next Friday afternoon, we should once more see his bright, genial face, and hear his wit and wisdom again.")

In dealing with aspirants for the ministry, I have constantly to fulfil the duty which fell to the lot of Cromwell's "Triers." I have to form an opinion as to the advisability of aiding certain men in their attempts to become pastors. This is a most responsible duty, and one which requires no ordinary care. Of course, I do not set myself up to judge whether a man shall enter the ministry or not, but my examination merely aims at answering the question whether the Pastors' College shall help him or leave him to his own resources. Certain of our charitable neighbours accuse me of having "a parson manufactory," but the charge is not true at all. I never tried to make a minister, and should fail if I did; I receive none into the College but those who profess to be ministers already. It would be nearer the truth if they called me "a parson-killer," for a goodly number of beginners have received their quietus from me; and I have the fullest ease of conscience in reflecting upon what I have so done. It has often been a hard task for me to discourage a hopeful young brother who has applied for admission to the College. My heart has always leaned to the kindest side, but duty to the churches has compelled me to judge with severe discrimination. After hearing what the candidate has had to say, having read his testimonials and seen his replies to questions, when I have felt convinced that the Lord has not called him, I have been obliged to tell him so.

I had a curious experience with one applicant. His Pastor had given him an

open letter, warmly commending him to me as a man called to the ministry ; but, in another communication, sent to me by post, the minister wrote that the young man was not at all likely ever to become a preacher, and that he had only written the recommendation because the candidate's father was his chief deacon, and he feared to offend him by telling him the truth. I felt that it was quite unjust to put upon me the onus of refusing the young man ; so, when he arrived, I gave him the epistle I had received, and left him and his father to settle the matter with their Pastor in the best way they could.

Physical infirmities raise a question about the call of some excellent men. I would not, like Eusthenes, judge men by their features ; but their general physique is no small criterion, and I feel assured that, when a man has a contracted chest, with no distance between his shoulders, the all-wise Creator did not intend him habitually to preach. If He had meant him to speak, He would have given him, in some measure, breadth of chest sufficient to yield a reasonable amount of lung force. A man who can scarcely get through a sentence without pain, can hardly be called to "cry aloud, and spare not." Brethren with defective mouths and imperfect articulation are not usually qualified to preach the gospel. The same rule applies to brethren with no palate, or an imperfect one. I once had an application for admission to the College from a young man who had a sort of rotary action of his jaw, of the most painful sort to the beholder. His Pastor commended him as a very holy man, who had been the means of bringing some to Christ, and he expressed the hope that I would receive him, but I could not see the propriety of it. I could not have looked at him, while he was preaching, without laughter, if all the gold of Tarshish had been my reward, and in all probability nine out of ten of his hearers would have been more sensitive than myself. A man with a big tongue which filled up his mouth and caused indistinctness, another without teeth, another who stammered, another who could not pronounce all the alphabet, I have had the pain of declining on the ground that God had not given them those physical appliances which are, as the Prayer-book would put it, "generally necessary."

One brother I have encountered—one did I say?—I have met ten, twenty, a hundred brethren, who have pleaded that they were quite sure that they were called to the ministry—because they had failed in everything else ! This is a sort of model story :—"Sir, I was put into a lawyer's office, but I never could bear the confinement, and I could not feel at home in studying law. Providence clearly stopped up my road, for I lost my situation." "And what did you do then?" "Why, sir, I was induced to open a grocer's shop." "And did you prosper?" "Well, I do not think, sir, I was ever meant for trade ; and the Lord seemed quite to shut up my way there, for I failed, and was in great difficulties. Since then, I have done a little in a life-assurance agency, and tried to get up a school, beside selling tea ; but my

path is hedged up, and something within me makes me feel that I ought to be a minister." My answer generally is, "Yes, I see; you have failed in everything else, and therefore you think the Lord has especially endowed you for His service; but I fear you have forgotten that the ministry needs the very best of men, and not those who cannot do anything else." A man who would succeed as a preacher would probably do right well either as a grocer, or a lawyer, or anything else. A really valuable minister would have excelled in any occupation. There is scarcely anything impossible to a man who can keep a congregation together for years, and be the means of edifying them for hundreds of consecutive Sabbaths; he must be possessed of some abilities, and be by no means a fool or a ne'er-do-well. Jesus Christ deserves the best men to preach His gospel, and not the empty-headed and the shiftless.

I do believe that some fellows have a depression in their craniums where there ought to be a bump. I know one young man who tried hard to get into the College; but his mind had so strange a twist that he never could see how it was possible to join things together unless he tied them by their tails. He brought out a book; and when I read it, I found at once that it was full of my stories and illustrations; that is to say, every illustration or story in the book was one that I had used, but there was not one of them that was related as it ought to have been. This man had so told the story that it was not there at all; the very point which I had brought out he had carefully omitted, and every bit of it was told correctly except the one thing that was the essence of the whole. Of course, I was glad that I did not have that brother in the College; he might have been an ornament to us by his deficiencies, but we can do without such ornaments; indeed, we have had enough of them already.

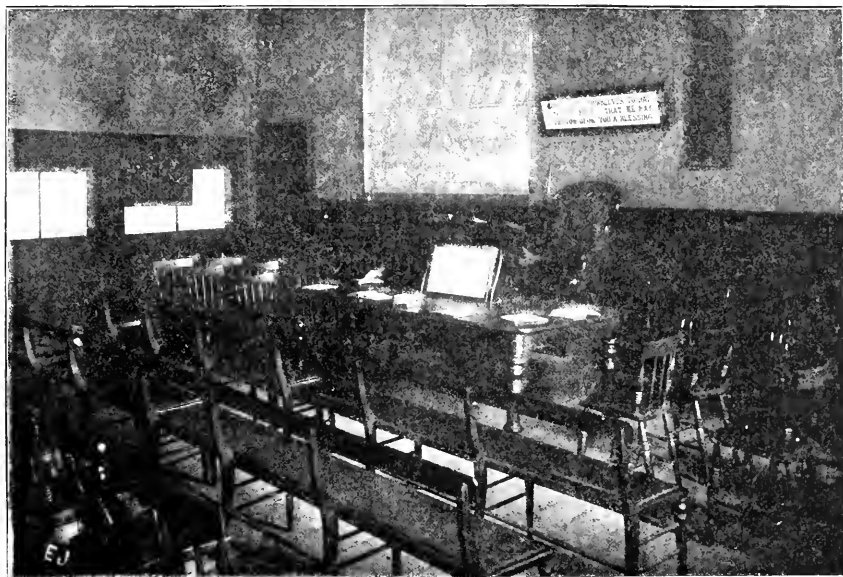
One young gentleman, with whose presence I was once honoured, has left on my mind the photograph of his exquisite self. That face of his looked like the title-page to a whole volume of *conceit* and *deceit*. He sent word into my vestry, one Sabbath morning, that he must see me at once. His audacity admitted him; and when he was before me, he said, "Sir, I want to enter your College, and should like to enter it at once." "Well, sir," I said, "I fear we have no room for you at present, but your case shall be considered." "But mine is a very remarkable case, sir; you have probably never received such an application as mine before." "Very good, we'll see about it; the secretary will give you one of the application papers, and you can see me on Monday." He came on the Monday, bringing with him the questions, answered in a most extraordinary manner. As to books, he claimed to have read all ancient and modern literature, and after giving an immense list, he added, "This is merely a selection; I have read most extensively in all departments." As to his preaching, he could produce the highest testimonials, but hardly thought they would be needed, as a personal interview would convince me of his ability at once. His

surprise was great when I said, "Sir, I am obliged to tell you that I cannot receive you." "Why not, sir?" "I will tell you plainly. You are so dreadfully clever that I could not insult you by receiving you into our College, where we have none but rather ordinary men; the President, tutors, and students, are all men of moderate attainments, and you would have to condescend too much in coming among us." He looked at me very severely, and said with dignity, "Do you mean to say that, because I have an unusual genius, and have produced in myself a gigantic mind such as is rarely seen, I am refused admittance into your College?" "Yes," I replied, as calmly as I could, considering the overpowering awe which his genius inspired, "for that very reason." "Then, sir, you ought to allow me a trial of my preaching abilities; select me any text you like, or suggest any subject you please, and here, in this very room, I will speak upon it, or preach upon it without deliberation, and you will be surprised." "No, thank you, I would rather not have the trouble of listening to you." "Trouble, sir! I assure you it would be the greatest possible pleasure you could have." I said it might be, but I felt myself unworthy of the privilege, and so bade him a long farewell. The gentleman was unknown to me at the time, but he has since figured in the police court as too clever by half.

Beside those brethren who apply to me for admission to the College, I am often consulted by others who wish me to say whether I think they ought or ought not to preach, and I have more than once felt myself in the position of the Delphic oracle, —not wishing to give wrong advice, and therefore hardly able to give any. I had an enquiry from a brother whose minister told him he ought not to preach, and yet he felt that he must do so. I thought I would be safe in the reply I gave him, so I simply said to him, "My brother, if God has opened your mouth, the devil cannot shut it; but if the devil has opened it, I pray the Lord to shut it directly." Some time afterwards, I was preaching in the country, and, after the service, a young man came up to me, and thanked me for encouraging him to go on preaching. For the moment, I did not recall the circumstances, so he reminded me of the first part of my reply to his enquiry. "But," I said, "I also told you that, if the devil had opened your mouth, I prayed the Lord to shut it." "Ah!" he exclaimed, "but that part of the message did not apply to me."

From quite the early days of the College, I arranged for a regular course of lectures on physical science; and many of the brethren have thanked me, not only for the knowledge thus imparted, but also for the wide field of illustration which was thereby thrown open to them. The study of astronomy, as illustrative of Scriptural truth, proved specially interesting. The science itself was very helpful to many of the students. I remember one brother who seemed to be a dreadful dolt; we really thought he never would learn anything, and that we should have to give him up in

despair. But I introduced to him a little book called *The Young Astronomer*; and he afterwards said that, as he read it, he felt just as if something had cracked inside his head, or as if some string had been snapped. He had laid hold of such enlarged ideas that I believe his cranium did actually experience an expansion which it ought to have undergone in his childhood, and which it did undergo by the marvellous force of the thoughts suggested by the study of even the elements of astronomical science. Another student, who evidently had not paid very special attention to the lecturer, wondered whether that star, which always hung just over his chapel, was Jupiter! Of course, the result of his foolish question was that "Jupiter" became his nickname ever afterwards, even though he was not "a bright particular star" in our College constellations.



MR. SELWAY'S LECTURE-ROOM (ALSO USED FOR MEN'S BIBLE-CLASS), METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE.

I have often noticed one thing in some who have seemed unable to understand even the elements of science; the Holy Spirit has taught them the Word of God, and they are clear enough about that. When we have been reading a chapter out of some old Puritanic book, or when we have been diving into the depths of theology, those brethren have given me the smartest and sharpest answers of the whole class. When we have been dealing with things experimental and controversial, I find that

those men have been able to vanquish their opponents at once, because they are deeply read in the Word of God. The Spirit has taught them the things of Christ, if He has not taught them anything else.

One night, Mr. Selway, in the course of the experiments with which he enlivened his lectures, playfully turned a little jet of water on to one of the students, little dreaming what would be the consequences of the harmless pleasantry which had amused successive batches of the men who had listened to him in the room just at the back of the lower platform in the Tabernacle. In an instant, the young man, who was sitting near the table on which stood the glass tubes, jars, and other apparatus used by the lecturer, swept the whole mass to the floor in a terrific crash before anyone could be aware of his intention, much less prevent him from carrying it into effect. It was a sad exhibition of an ungovernable temper which, I greatly fear, in after years, cost the student far more than the price of the destroyed apparatus which he was required to replace. Mr. Selway, who was a singularly calm, self-possessed individual, simply said, "That young *gentleman* will some day be sorry for what he has done;" and then proceeded with his lecture,—of course, without any more experiments that evening!

Bad as this display of passion was, there was one student who did something which, in certain aspects, was worse, for there was an element of deliberation about it which was absent on the other occasion. It has long been our rule that each brother should read in the College at least one discourse which he has himself composed, and which his comrades are expected to criticise. Any attempt at plagiarism would, therefore, be manifestly unfair; and, if detected, would meet with well-merited condemnation. One man, when it came to his turn, was actually reckless and foolish enough to take one of my printed sermons,—I suppose condensed,—and to read it as though it had been his own composition; and he had to thank his brethren that he was not instantly expelled from the Institution. Several of them at once recognized the discourse; and, as soon as the time for criticism arrived, proceeded to pull it to pieces most mercilessly. They found fault with the introduction, the divisions, the subdivisions, the illustrations, the application,—with everything, in fact, except the doctrine:—I think that was all right! I was so pleased with the critical acumen displayed that I forgave the offender; but I let it be distinctly understood that, for the future, any student repeating the offence, whether with my sermon or anyone else's, would be forthwith dismissed in disgrace.

As a rule, the men who have come to the College have been so anxious to make the best use of their time while with us, that they have laboured at their studies most diligently; but, occasionally, we have had a lazy student who has

tried to shirk his class and other work. One who, in his day, was a conspicuous instance of this lack of appreciation of the privileges placed within his reach, had an experience which ought to have made him both a sadder and a wiser man, though I am not sure that it had either effect. When the other brethren, who resided in the same house, were preparing their lessons, he so often interrupted them with questions about the translation of simple words with which he ought to have been perfectly familiar, that one of them determined to try to cure him of the practice. On that particular occasion, he came to enquire the meaning of the Latin word "*omnibus*," "Oh!" said the young wag, "that's easy enough; *omni*—twenty-six, and *bus*—to carry; *omnibus*, a vehicle to carry twenty-six persons! You know that you constantly see the notice in the omnibus, 'licensed to carry twenty-six persons.'" The next morning, it so happened that Mr. Gracey asked the lazy man to translate the very passage which contained the word "*omnibus*." In due course, he gave the rendering which had been supplied to him, with a result that can be better imagined than described.

If he was not diligent in one respect, he was certainly industrious in another direction, and he managed to get engaged to three ladies at once! As soon as I knew of it, I sent for him, and told him that he must make his choice, and I hoped the other two would sue him for breach of promise. I never heard that they did so, and probably they were well rid of a man who could trifle with them in such a fashion. He appeared to do well for a time in the ministry, but he afterwards left the Baptist denomination, and therefore is not now numbered in our ranks.

Occasionally, I have given the students a little exercise in extempore speaking, in order to develop their facility of utterance if unexpectedly called upon for a sermon or address. Various topics are written on slips of paper, these are placed in a hat, and each brother is expected in turn to draw one out, and to speak straight off on the subject stated. Of all these efforts, the most successful that I remember related to the word Zacchæus, which fell to the lot of one who, as soon as he had glanced at it, said:—"Mr. President and brethren, my subject is Zacchæus, and it is therefore most appropriate to me; for, first, Zacchæus was little of stature, so am I; secondly, Zacchæus was very much 'up a tree,' so am I; thirdly, Zacchæus 'made haste, and came down,' and so will I;" and thereupon the speaker resumed his seat. The students called to him to go on; but I said, "No; he could not add anything to such a perfect little speech without spoiling it." Certainly, he was a better judge of the suitability of a subject than another of the students, who went to preach at Portsmouth shortly after the training ship *Eurydice* went down off the Isle of Wight with over three hundred souls on board. Thinking that he would "improve the occasion," he announced, as the theme of his discourse, Psalm cvii. 30: "*So* He bringeth them unto their desired haven." A more inappropriate text, under the

circumstances, could scarcely have been selected; but even a good man, with right intentions, may make blunders which, to other people, are utterly unaccountable.

At one of our closing meetings at the College, before the brethren went away for their vacation, I said that I was a poor man, or I would give every student a present, and I told them what I would have selected if I had been rich. I remember one brother to whom I said that I would give him a corkscrew, because he had a good deal in him, but he could not get it out. "As to you, my brother," I said to another student, "I should give you a sausage-stuffer, for you need to have something put into you." There was one friend to whom I should have liked to present a canister of Chapman and Hall's gunpowder. He was to have two pounds of it, and someone was to set it alight exactly at the second head of his discourse. Of course, the brethren were amused at the idea, but I advised them to read Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, where the historian records that Bishop Hooper, and others who were burned, had friends who came with bags of gunpowder, to put under their arms when they were going to the stake. I did not want the students to be made to die, but to be made thoroughly alive, and I promised to talk to my wife about supplying dynamite as well as books to poor ministers, so that they might be stirred up, and made a blessing to their hearers.

I have had some amusing experiences with deacons in search of a minister. One wrote to ask if I would send a student who could "fill the chapel." I replied that I had not one big enough, and added that I thought it was the business of the people to try to gather the congregation, but that I could send a brother who would do his best to fill the pulpit, and preach the gospel faithfully. In his next letter, the deacon explained that this was just what he and the church wanted, only he had failed to express his meaning clearly.

At one place, where a student—a brother of no little ability,—had preached with considerable acceptance, he was informed that, if he had been a bigger man, he would have been invited to the pastorate! I really could not blame him when I heard that, in reply to this very foolish objection, he said to the deacons, "If Mr. Spurgeon had known that you wanted bulk instead of brains, he would have sent you a bullock!" He might have told them that, in looking for quantity, instead of quality, they might, possibly, find themselves burdened with the support of a donkey!

The officers of a small church in the country applied to me for a minister; but the salary they were prepared to pay was so small that, in reply to their request, I wrote:—"The only individual I know, who could exist on such a stipend, is the angel Gabriel. He would need neither cash nor clothes; and he could come down from Heaven every Sunday morning, and go back at night, so I advise you to invite him." The corresponding deacon of another church, which was needing a Pastor, sent me

such a long list of the qualifications that must be possessed by the man whom they could look up to as their leader, that I recommended him to take a large sheet of brown paper, and cut out a minister of the size and shape desired, or else to seek to secure the services of the eminent Dr. So-and-so, who had been for a good many years in glory, for I could not think of anyone else who could fulfil the conditions that such an important church and diaconate seemed to regard as indispensable. Like one of the other deacons, he also wrote again; and his second letter being more reasonable than the first, I was able to recommend a brother with whom the church appeared to be perfectly satisfied.

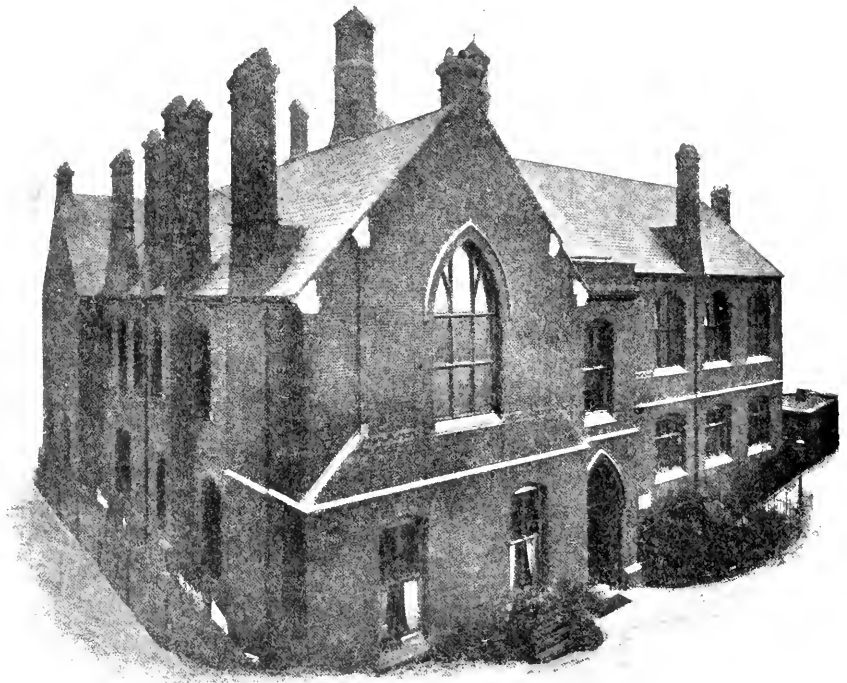
(Probably every member of the Pastors' College brotherhood could supplement the beloved President's store of stories with his own reminiscences of his "Alma Mater." Some brethren have kindly done so, and most of their communications will be found in the chapter on "Pure Fun" in the latter part of the present volume. But there is just one series of Mr. Spurgeon's sayings to his students which must find a place here,—namely, the farewell words spoken to them on leaving College, or on removing to another pastorate. The gracious and gifted William Anderson, when he was going from Warkworth to Reading, received the apostolic injunction, with a new meaning attached to it, "Give attendance to Reading." Mr. Dobson relates that the parting message to him was:—"Go to Deal, and fight the De'il. Hit him hard; I owe him no love." To Harry Wood,—a devoted brother whose hair was so bright that his fellow-students used playfully to gather round him to warm their hands at the fire,—the dear President wrote from Mentone a loving letter which concluded:—"You are so well known to me that I think I see you,—especially your distinguished head of hair,—and I look you in the face with a tear of love in separation, and say, '*God bless you, Wood! Go, and blaze away for your Lord.*'"

Mr. Welton has thus recorded the remarkable message given to him, in 1867, when he accepted his first pastorate at Thetford:—"I want you to go under an operation before you leave. I am going to *put out one of your eyes, to stop up one of your ears, and to put a muzzle on your mouth.* Then you had better have a new suit of clothes before you go, and you must tell the tailor to make *in the coat a pocket without a bottom.* You understand my parable?" "I think so, sir; but should like your interpretation." "Well, there will be many things in your people that you must look at with *the blind eye*, and you must listen to much with *the deaf ear*, while you will often be tempted to say things which had better be left unsaid; then, remember *the muzzle.* Then all the gossip you may hear, when doing pastoral work, must be put into *the bottomless pocket.*"

Several students, at different periods in the history of the College, on being sent out as pioneers to start new churches, received this singular charge:—"Cling

tightly with both your hands ; when they fail, catch hold with your teeth ; and if they give way, hang on by your eyelashes !” Mr. Saville went to Carlisle with these words ringing in his ears, and he obeyed them all too literally. With true heroism, he would not let his dear President know the hardships he was enduring for Christ's sake and the gospel's ; but someone, who discovered the plight he was in, wrote about his trials and sufferings ; and as soon as the tidings reached Mr. Spurgeon, substantial help was sent to him.

Perhaps the most pathetic farewell of all was the one spoken to Mr. E. H. Ellis, who was leaving for Australia, in March, 1891. Referring to “The ‘Down-grade’ Controversy,” Mr. Spurgeon said, “Good bye, Ellis ; you will never see me again, *this fight is killing me.*” *A month later, the fatal illness commenced !*



THE PASTORS' COLLEGE, TEMPLE STREET, SOUTHWARK.

For about fourteen years after the opening of the Tabernacle, the College classes were held in various rooms below the great sanctuary ; but as the number of

students continued to grow, the accommodation became increasingly inadequate to the requirements of the work. Mr. Spurgeon was always on the look-out for a suitable site for buildings specially adapted for the purpose; and years before any ground was available, he began putting aside such amounts as he could spare, ready for the time when they would be needed. Various legacies, left to him personally, amounting in the aggregate to some thousands of pounds, were devoted to this object; so that, when the final effort was at last made, it was accomplished with comparative ease. The total cost of the building and furnishing was £15,000, all of which was paid; and when the property was put in trust, only a sufficient sum was invested to pay the rates and keep it in repair, as the President objected on principle to any larger amount being left as an endowment of the College. Without making mention of his own generous gifts, Mr. Spurgeon thus relates how the rest of the funds came to him, and tells of his gratitude at the completion of the commodious and greatly-needed new premises:—"The way in which the money was raised was another instance of Divine goodness. £3,000 was given as a memorial to a dear and lamented husband. £2,000 was a legacy to the College from a reader of the sermons. The ministers who had been formerly students came to our help in a princely fashion. Large amounts were made up by the unanimous offerings of Tabernacle friends, on days when the Pastor invited the members and adherents to be his guests at the College. In answer to prayer, the gold and the silver have been ready when needed. How our heart exults, and blesses the Name of the Lord!"

The freehold of the ground was purchased of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and Mr. Spurgeon often referred to the courtesy with which they treated him during the negotiations. In his own characteristic fashion, he told the brethren, at one of the annual Conferences, that he had secured the parson's garden, behind the Tabernacle, as the site for the new College, and he was going to cultivate it for him by growing Dissenters on it! When the buildings were finished, they were solemnly dedicated to the holy service for which they had been erected, by a prayer-meeting in every room, the President leading the devotions in each separate department, and then asking one of the tutors or students to follow him in pleading for the Lord's blessing on all the work to be carried on within those walls. The full answers to those fervent supplications will only be known in eternity. In addition to the special purpose for which the College was built, it is also the place where the annual Conferences are held, the headquarters of the Colportage Association, the home of a large portion of the Tabernacle Sunday-school and Bible-classes; and after the disastrous fire in April, 1898, it proved a most welcome and providential shelter for the burned-out church and its many societies and agencies.

Not long after the College buildings were erected, a deputation from the local

authority met Mr. Spurgeon by appointment to decide the amount at which the new premises were to be rated. While conducting the gentlemen through the different rooms, the President briefly narrated the history of the Institution, and recounted various instances in which the money necessary for carrying on the work had come directly in answer to prayer. The chairman of the deputation, who evidently did not believe that the funds came in any such way, said, "That is your idea, Mr. Spurgeon; but the fact is, certain good people have confidence in you, and therefore they send you contributions for your College and Orphanage." "Yes," replied the Pastor, "there may be some truth in that remark; but if the good people did not think of me, God would send the devil with the money rather than let His cause suffer." No further reference was made to the matter until the gentlemen had finished their investigations, and consulted as to the value to be fixed for rating purposes, when the chairman, speaking for his colleagues, said to Mr. Spurgeon, "We have been greatly interested in all that we have seen and heard, and we look upon this College as a valuable addition to the educational advantages of the parish. We should be very glad if we could let it go without being rated at all; but we have a duty to perform to the public, so that is not possible. We have agreed to fix the amount at —, which we think you will consider satisfactory; and, personally, I think it is such a capital Institution that I shall be glad if you will accept ten pounds towards its maintenance." The President thanked him very heartily, and then added, "You said that it was the *good* people who gave me the money; I hope that adjective applies to you?" "Oh, dear no!" replied the gentleman, "certainly not;" and his companions appeared very surprised at the whole transaction.

Afterwards, whenever anyone wanted to raise the question of the rating of the College, he always said, "Well, if you like to go to see Mr. Spurgeon about it, you may; my last visit cost me ten pounds, and I am not going again, and I should advise you to leave the good man alone. He is a benefactor to the whole district, and ought to be encouraged, and not hindered."

Until the year 1865, no statistics were collected from the brethren educated in the College; and even since that time, it has not been possible to get all the ministers to send in returns regularly, so that the figures tabulated have been below instead of above the truth. To the end of 1878, over five hundred students had been trained in the Institution, of whom twenty-five had been "called home." Of the four hundred and fifty then engaged as Baptist pastors, evangelists, and missionaries, less than three hundred filled up the statistical forms, which showed that, during the year, they had baptized 3,600 persons; and during the fourteen years there had been a net increase to the churches of 33,319 members. The sons of the College had already found their way into all the four quarters of the globe, and the

beloved President's prayer that the missionary spirit should be increased among the brethren was being graciously answered, for some of them had gone forth to India, China, Japan, Africa, Spain, Italy, the West Indies and South America, beside a considerable contingent in the Australasian and Canadian colonies and the United States.

This chapter would scarcely be complete without specimens of Mr. Spurgeon's letters to the students while in College or after they had entered the ministry. The first, preserved by Pastor C. L. Gordon, exerted a powerful influence upon the men to whom it was written :—

“Nightingale Lane,

“Clapham,

“September 11th, 1865.

“Beloved Brethren,

“I am called away from you this afternoon ; and I should much regret this if it were not that it has come into my heart to suggest to you to spend our usual time in prayer, instead of in teaching and learning. My heart is often heavy with trials, arising out of the College work, which is so dear to me that I am perhaps unduly anxious over it. I am bowed to the very dust when I fear that any brother is erring in doctrine, lacking in grace, or loose in behaviour. I have as little to lament as it is possible there should be where we are all such imperfect creatures. But, my brethren, I would fain have you all the best men living ; and when you are not, I am distressed exceedingly. Just now, one brother, by his general self-indulgent habits, has lost the respect of his people, and must move. I do not want to inflict a curse on another congregation, and I do not want to cast him off. Between these two courses, I am perplexed. Pray for me, for him, for all the brethren, and for yourselves.

“In your society, I always feel so much at home that I must appear to you to be all happiness and mirth. Alas ! it is not so ; I am happy in the Lord, and blest in Him ; but I am often a poor cast-down mortal, groaning under the burden of excessive labour, and sad at heart because of the follies of those whom I hoped to have seen serving the Lord with zeal and success. Do give me your warmest consideration in your supplications. Believe me when I assure you that you are, for Christ's sake, very dear to me. Do not be led away from the faith which you all professed when you entered the College. Cling to the two great collateral truths of Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility. Live near to God, and love the souls of men. I make some sacrifices for your sake ; but I count them gain, and my work for you is a delight. But do plead for more grace to rest on us all, and upon those settled in the ministry. Levity of conduct in my brethren brings heaviness of heart to me ; and what is inconsistent pleasure to them, is terrible agony to me. Oh, how can the ministers of God be smoking and drinking when

souls are dying, and talking lightness and wantonness when sinners are perishing? It must not be so among us. May the Lord prevent it! Seeking ever your soul's best interest, and desiring your fervent prayers,

“I am, dearly-beloved brethren,

“Your affectionate brother,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”

The next epistle is as timely and important now as when it was penned, during the dear President's small-pox illness:—

“Clapham,

“Dec. 2, 1869.

“My Dear Friend,

“Being debarred from serving the Lord by my own public ministry, it has been laid upon my heart to endeavour to stir up my brother-ministers to use increased diligence while they are permitted the great pleasure and privilege of preaching the Word. I pray that every word I write may be approved of God, and may be, by the Holy Ghost, rendered serviceable to you.

“It has struck me painfully that, for some little while, a somewhat listless spirit has fallen upon many of the churches, and perhaps upon the ministers also. A short time ago, we heard more than we do now of special services, revival meetings, and aggressive efforts upon the world; perhaps these may still be in full and vigorous operation among your people, but in many places it is not so; the pace of holy work has slackened, and the church is falling back into that dreary routine which is easily reached, but is deadly in its consequences. Meanwhile, our direct enemies, the Romanizing Anglicans, have taken up the weapons which we have laid aside, and are making most ostentatious, and it is to be feared most successful, use of them. They are evidently wise in their generation, for they not only borrow from Rome, but they copy from us. Is this intended by our Lord to irritate us to renewed activity? Does He thus chide us by causing us to see how others burn with zeal, and in their arduous compass sea and land to make proselytes? Does He not thereby say to us, ‘Behold how these men are quick to adopt all methods; are ye, My servants, dull of understanding?’

“Despite the mischief done by wild excitement, there can be no question that the Holy Spirit does very graciously bless means prayerfully adopted by His servants for arousing the churches and ingathering sinners. Many pastors can bear witness that persons, who have remained undecided under their ordinary services, have been led to surrender their hearts to Jesus at some special meeting. If God had but blessed such efforts in the smallest degree, we ought to repeat them; but as He has, in many cases, eminently¹ smiled upon them, our duty is clear as the sun,

Will you not, then, if you have hitherto omitted to do so, give serious heed to the suggestion that you should hold a series of services for calling in the careless population around, and for leading to decision, under the power of the Holy Spirit, those who have heard in vain? To secure the ear of the outside world, let all proper means be used. If the people will not come into our chapels, let earnest services be held out of doors, or in halls, barns, or theatres, or wherever else they will come. Let our members be exhorted to assist us in drawing in the outlying masses. To win attention, it may be, in some cases, best to call in other labourers. Certain individuals, whose gifts are of a special character, are better adapted than the best of pastors may be for evangelizing and exhortation; we ought to feel no difficulty in accepting the aid of such brethren. A new voice may attract ears that have grown dull of hearing under us. A change with a trusty brother may be good for both congregations, and for both preachers. We would by any means save some, and therefore no stone should be left unturned. Perhaps, if you are within easy reach of town, the most acceptable aid might be rendered to you by some of our London ministers; if such be your desire, a letter addressed to our dear friend, Mr. Frank White, might bring you into contact with suitable brethren.

“My dear brother, how soon you and I will be laid aside from our service! Our grave is preparing; is our work done? If mine be accomplished, I tremble as I think how poverty-stricken my life has been, compared with my opportunities; and I pray to have my years lengthened, that I may render a better account of my stewardship. Your own feelings are probably much the same. Let us not allow the confession to evaporate in mere regret; but let us, in the fear of God, seek to be more diligent in the future. Meanwhile, if we loiter, death does not; our hearers are perishing before our eyes; and the millions are passing into eternal misery as fast as time can bear them. Impelled by the love which brought our Master from His throne, and made Him a sacrifice for men, let us bestir ourselves. To us has He committed the Word of reconciliation. We are ambassadors for Christ. Let us not bring contempt upon our office and the gospel by a want of zeal; but, by the good Spirit of the Lord, let us resolve to be instant in season and out of season.

“Our private prayers, my brother, must be more frequent and fervent. Could we not, as members of the same College, as well as brethren in the one family in Heaven and earth, enter into a brotherly compact to mention each other in our prayers at least once every day? Could not the months of January and February be specially marked by our reminding our people of our brethren and their labours, that they may join their prayers with ours? The next three months would be a season to be remembered if there should be unusual activity in all our churches, and prevalent intercession from all our members. Brother, what doth hinder us from receiving a great blessing? We are not straitened in God; let us not be straitened

in our own bowels. For the love of our Lord Jesus, and the honour of His Name, let us plead, and labour, and agonize, and believe; and the blessing will come, it shall not tarry.

“Receive assurances of my purest and warmest love, and believe me ever to be,

“Your brother and servant for Jesus' sake,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”

This letter was written to the College men labouring in foreign lands:—

“Clapham,

“Sept. 30th, 1873.

“Beloved Brother,

“I have been requested to salute you in the name of the Conference of brethren in connection with the Pastors' College, and I do so most heartily. Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you! But I must also add the assurance of my own sincere love to you, and my fervent prayer that the Lord may be with you. Oceans divide us in body; but we are one in Christ, and by His Spirit we are knit together in one fellowship. We who are at home have enjoyed a considerable measure of the Divine blessing, although we earnestly desire to see far greater things. Our prayer is, that you who are abroad may be far more successful than we have been; may you yet do great things and prevail! Your trials are peculiar, but your God is all-sufficient. The minds of your people are tinged with the special circumstances of the land where you labour, but the gospel is as suitable to them as to our own countrymen. Hearts are hard in every place, but the Spirit works effectually with the Word, and subdues wills most obdurate, to the obedience of the faith. Be of good courage; your God and ours is faithful to His promise; He will not leave you to be put to shame.

“I am sure, my beloved brother, that your growing experience must have endeared to you the gospel of the grace of God. I feel more and more every day that nothing but salvation by grace will ever bring me to Heaven, and therefore I desire more and more explicitly to teach the grand truths of electing love, covenant security, justification by faith, effectual calling, and immutable faithfulness. Love to souls, as it burns in our hearts, will also lead us to preach a free as well as a full salvation; and so we shall be saved at once from the leanness of those who have no doctrine, and from the bitterness of those to whom creed is everything. We have aimed at the happy *via media*, of a balanced ministry, and succeeding years confirm us in the correctness of our views.

“I pray you, in these evil days, be firm, clear, and decided in your testimony for the truth as it is in Jesus; nothing else will keep us clear of the blood of men's souls. May the Holy Ghost anoint you anew for the struggle which lies before you! By the love which has long existed between us, I beseech you, be faithful unto death.

I reach my hand across the flood, and lovingly grasp yours; and my heart goes with the word,—The Lord bless thee, my brother, and keep thee, and lift up the light of His countenance upon thee, and give thee peace!

“All goes well at the Tabernacle. Our beloved friend, Mr. Rogers, is still among us, enjoying perennial youth in his advanced age. The other tutors are strong to labour. Our brethren are multiplied, and, as a body of ministers, they are such as you may remember with satisfaction. I am obliged to lithograph this letter, because I could not write so many copies; but, in each case, the signature is with my own hand; and I pray you, dear brother, do not look upon the lines as mere official writing. I love you in my heart; accept that love, and the hearty greetings of all our brotherhood at home. Remember us in your prayers, especially remember me. By the memory of happy days in the past, when we looked each other in the face, do not forget us; and, far more, do not forget your allegiance to our common Lord. Blessed be His Name for ever, we live alone for His glory! May He reign gloriously in your congregation! The blessing of the Triune God be with you, dear brother!

“Yours for ever heartily,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”

The students in the College in 1875 received these earnest words from their suffering President:—

“Dear Brethren,

“I feel sure that you have all stuck to your studies diligently; and my prayer is, that the Holy Spirit may sanctify your human acquirements by a double measure of His anointing. Your power lies in His grace rather than in natural gifts or scholastic acquisitions. Without the Spirit, you will be failures, and worse; therefore, pray much, and see to it that your whole selves are in such a condition that the Spirit of God can dwell in you; for in some men He cannot reside, and with some men He cannot work. Let the channel through which the living water is to flow be both clear and clean.

“I feel in an agony when I imagine any one of you going forth to preach unendowed by the Spirit. The Lord alone knows how I have the work of the College on my heart, and what exercises it has cost me; and, verily, if souls are not won, churches are not built up, and Christ is not glorified by you, I have lived in vain as to the master-work of my life. I am not able to discover any motive in my heart for originating and carrying on the College, but a desire to glorify God, and to bless this generation by the promulgation of the pure gospel. For this end you came into the College; do not miss it, any one of you; and yet you will do so, if the Spirit rests not upon you. Be not content till Pentecost is repeated among you.

“Yours very heartily,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”)



“THE KING OF THE COLPORTEURS”

The title, “the king of the colporteurs,” was playfully given by Mr. Spurgeon to Mr. Samuel King, of Warminster, one of the first six men engaged in this service, and who is still a book-agent in connection with the Association, although he has resigned the Colportage work in order to devote all his time to the duties of his pastorate

CHAPTER LXX.

The Men that "Sell the Books."

Every year, in the month of May, the colporteurs employed by the Metropolitan Tabernacle Colportage Association assemble at headquarters, to report progress concerning the work of the previous twelve months, to consult with the Committee as to future service, to praise the Lord for His blessing upon their labours, and to plead with Him for a continuance of His favour. At these annual gatherings, Mr. Spurgeon's address to the men, on the Monday afternoon, was always eagerly anticipated, enthusiastically received, and joyfully remembered and quoted many months, or even years, afterwards. On one of these occasions, the beloved President referred in detail to the various branches of the colporteurs' work, — preaching the gospel, conducting Sunday-schools and Bible-classes, visiting the sick, distributing tracts, advocating the cause of temperance, — and then, as a refrain to each part of his subject, he added, "But, whatever you do, brethren, mind that you *sell the books*." This exhortation so impressed both speaker and hearers that, in all the later years when they met, the expression became a kind of motto briefly describing the colporteurs' main business, and it is therefore perpetuated in the title of the present chapter.



IN August, 1866, Mr. Spurgeon published, in *The Sword and the Trowel*, an article which he had written, entitled, "The Holy War of the Present Hour." That paper was destined to be more memorable than probably even the writer of it anticipated, for not only did it become the means of the formation of the Colportage Association and the Stockwell Orphanage, but it contained such a striking forecast of his position in "The 'Down-grade' Controversy" that, after he was "called home," it was reprinted as "A Chapter of Autobiography." In the article, after describing the "disguised Romanism" which was even then making rapid advances in the country, Mr. Spurgeon showed how he had done what he could to combat the evil by means of the preachers trained in the College, for whom he asked his readers' prayers and support, and then added:—"Next to this, we would urge the propriety of a very large distribution of religious literature bearing upon the Puseyite controversy. Very little has been done in this respect. Tractarianism owed its origin to tracts, as its name implies; why may not its downfall come from the same means, if well used? If several millions of copies of forcible, Scriptural testimonies could be scattered over the land, the results might far exceed all expectation. Of course, controversy would arise out of such a distribution; but this is most desirable, since it is only error which could suffer by the question being everywhere discussed. We should like to see the country flooded, and even the walls placarded, with bold exposures of error and plain expositions of truth. We will take our own share in the effort if any friends should be moved to work with

us ; at the same time, we shall be equally glad if they will do the work alone ; only let it be done, and done well, and at once. If the expense of the tracts should involve a sacrifice, it will be sweet to the true heart to serve the Lord with his substance, and none will desire to offer to Him that which costs them nothing. . . . Brethren in Christ, by the love you bear to the gospel of Jesus, be up and doing for the Lord's cause in the land. If not in these ways, yet by some other methods do meet the enemy of souls, and seek to tear the prey from between his jaws. If every hair of our head were a man, and every man had a thousand tongues, every one should cry out against the Anglican Antichrist. No greater plague can break forth among our people than the plague of Puseyism. If there be any human means unused, by which the flood of Popery may be stemmed, let us use it ; and, meanwhile, with heart and soul let us approach the throne of grace, and cry unto the Lord to maintain His own truth, and put His enemies to confusion."

The following number of the Magazine announced that, in answer to Mr. Spurgeon's appeal, one gentleman had written, offering generous aid in establishing Colportage work. This was E. Boustead, Esq., a member of the church at the Tabernacle, who had become acquainted with the successful service of the colporteurs employed by the Religious Tract and Book Society of Scotland, and who was willing to contribute freely towards the support of a similar agency in England. Accordingly, on September 3, 1866, the Pastor invited a few friends to meet him, to consider the advisability of forming an Association having for its object, "to extend the circulation of the Scriptures, and to increase the diffusion of sound religious literature, in order to counteract the evils arising from the perusal of works of a decided Romish tendency." At that meeting, eight gentlemen were requested to form themselves into a Committee, with power to add to their number, and they at once set to work energetically framing the needful rules and regulations, and arranging their plans, in which they were materially assisted by the Scotch Society.

During the first few months, or perhaps years, the work was necessarily very much of an experiment, and every effort was made to find out the best methods of procedure. At the outset, it was intended to conduct the Association upon Baptist lines, only having agents whose denominational views were akin to those of the Tabernacle members. It was soon found, however, that this restriction was not a wise one ; and, within a year, it was decided to have an undenominational basis, with the proviso that all the colporteurs engaged should be men of sterling Christian character, firmly holding the great Evangelical doctrines. In the beginning, it was proposed to carry on the enterprise with honorary officers only, the responsibilities of the different departments being shared amongst the Committee ; but it was speedily discovered that the undertaking was too heavy to be properly carried out

by gentlemen who were occupied in their various callings during the day, and, almost within the first twelve months, the appointment of the first paid officer of the Association was contemplated. It is a somewhat remarkable coincidence that the only name selected for nomination at that period was that of the present secretary, Mr. Stephen Wigney, who was unaware of the fact until more than thirty years later when, in the providence of God, he was called to fill that important position. Ultimately, in 1872, Mr. W. Corden Jones was elected, and he remained the secretary until he resigned in 1894. On the completion of the Pastors' College, the Colportage *depôt* was transferred to the room still occupied in that building.



METROPOLITAN TABERNAACLE COLPORTAGE DEPOT, COLLEGE BUILDINGS.

From the date of its formation until the death of Mr. Boustead, that gentleman was by far the largest contributor to the work, and in his will he left a very considerable amount for the same purpose. Through his generosity, at one period in the history of the Association, colporteurs were sent to several districts which could only

guarantee £20 a year; but this was merely a temporary arrangement, and in later years it has been found needful to require £40 or £45 to ensure the services of a colporteur. That amount, of course, does not cover the cost of the good man's labour; the deficiency is met by the profit on the books he sells and by contributions to the General Fund of the Association.

Mr. Spurgeon was, from the first, a liberal supporter of the Colportage movement, and by voice and pen he advocated its claims upon the Christian Church. It was always a source of surprise and sorrow to him that the work was not more generally adopted and maintained. He wrote concerning it:—"I believe it to be one of the most efficient and economical agencies in existence; and, as education increases, it will be more and more so. The sale of vicious literature can only be met by the distribution of good books: these can best be scattered, in rural districts, by carrying them to the houses of the people; and, even in towns, the book-hawkers' work greatly stimulates their sale. The colporteur not only endeavours to 'sell the books,' but he visits from door to door; and, in so doing, converses with the inmates about their souls, prays with the sick, and leaves a tract at each cottage. He is frequently able to hold prayer-meetings, open-air services, and Bible-readings. He gets a room, if possible, and preaches; founds Bands of Hope, and makes himself generally useful in the cause of religion and temperance. He is, in fact, at first a missionary, then a preacher, and by-and-by in the truest sense a pastor. We have some noble men in this work."

Mr. Spurgeon always took the deepest interest in the colporteurs, and their annual Conferences were as enjoyable to him as they were to the men themselves. It was with the utmost delight that he listened to the account of their adventures and experiences, narrated in the dialect of their different districts; and he was specially cheered when they related instances of conversion through the reading of his sermons and other published works. Probably, not one of their yearly gatherings was held without many such testimonies being given; and every agent of the Association still treasures his own happy recollections of those who were led to the Saviour by the beloved President's printed words. Out of the scores—or, perhaps, hundreds—of such stories that have been told by the colporteurs, one specimen may be inserted here.

Describing a poor fallen woman, who had been brought to a sense of her sinfulness in the sight of God, and who was afterwards in a despairing condition, the brother said:—"I drew her attention to many of the promises and invitations of the gospel, sold her Mr. Spurgeon's sermon on 'The Gentleness of Jesus,' and asked the Lord to bless the reading of it to her soul. If I could find language sufficiently expressive, I would describe my visit to her on the following

day. Holding the sermon (No. 1,147) in her hand, her voice tremulous with emotion, and her face radiant with happiness, she read upon page 703 the following words:—‘Hearts are won to Jesus by the silent conviction which irresistibly subdues the conscience to a sense of guilt, and by the love which is displayed in the Redeemer’s becoming the great substitutionary sacrifice for us, that our sins might be removed. In this way, conversions are wrought;—not by displays of human zeal, wisdom, or force: “Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.”’ Then, still holding the sermon in her hand, she said to me, ‘Blessed be the Lord for ever, I have found Him; or, rather, He has found me! I am saved, pardoned, forgiven, accepted, and blessed, for Christ’s sake. Now I know what the poet means,—

“‘Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to Thy cross I cling.’”

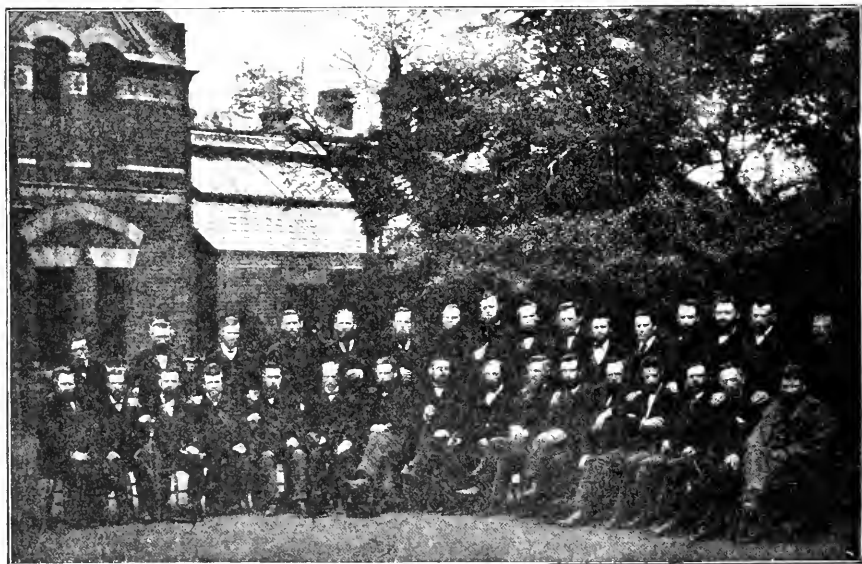
“‘Yes, yes; Jesus died for me, and I live through Him.’”

The colporteur has to be a man who has all his wits about him, and to be ready of resource to meet every emergency. The annual public meetings of the Association, held in the Tabernacle, have been enlivened by the recital of some of the strange or amusing incidents that have happened to the men on their rounds; but, one night, there was a practical illustration of a brother’s quickness to take advantage of an opportunity placed within his reach which, at least, proved his fitness for the position he was called to occupy. Mr. Spurgeon usually asked one of the selected speakers for the Monday evening to come on the platform, with his pack on his back, just as he starts out for his daily tramp. On this occasion, as the colporteur was making his way to the front, the President said to him, “Let the people see how you sell the books.”

The words were hardly uttered before the pack was transferred to the table, opened, a suitable book selected, and the man began addressing the chairman:—“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,—I have a work here that I can very highly recommend you to buy. I can speak well of it, for I have read it, and derived great benefit from it. The author is a particular friend of mine, and he is always glad to hear that the colporteurs sell his books, for he knows that they are full of the gospel. The title of the volume is *Trumpet Calls to Christian Energy*, the author is C. H. Spurgeon, and the price is 3s. 6d.; will you buy it?”

To the great delight of the large and enthusiastic audience, the beloved President entered into the spirit of the situation, paid the man the money, took the book, and then said, “That’s the way to show how it’s done; a colporteur who can sell a writer one of his own works can surely persuade anybody to buy the rest of the books he has in his pack.”

On November 1, 1866, the first agent was appointed; two months later, three were at work; but, for a while, so slow was the rate of progress that another year elapsed before three more men were engaged. From 1873 to 1878, the date at which the present volume of Mr. Spurgeon's "Standard Life" ends,—the advance was rapid and continuous; in the latter year, 94 colporteurs were engaged, their sales for the twelve months amounted to £8,276, and they had, during that period, paid 926,290 visits. The accompanying illustration represents about one-third of the men then employed, as they had assembled at the Stockwell Orphanage in preparation for their annual Conference.



METROPOLITAN TABERNALE COLPORTEURS AND SECRETARY.

CHAPTER LXXI

A Home for the Fatherless.

Never let it be forgotten that, in the mysterious arrangements of Providence, *The Sword and the Trowel* led to the founding of THE STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE. This would be no mean result, if it were all that the Magazine had accomplished; for in that happy home we hope to house a portion of England's orphanhood for many a year to come, receiving the fatherless by an easier door than that which only opens to clamorous competition and laborious canvassing.—C. H. S., in *Preface to "Sword and Trowel"* volume for 1867.

It is striking to see—as you and I did see—a woman of moderate wealth discarding all the comforts of life in order to save sufficient funds to start an Orphanage in which children might be cared for; not merely, as she said, for the children's sake, but for Christ's sake, that *He* might be glorified. The Stockwell Orphanage is the alabaster box which a devout woman presented to her Lord. Her memory is blessed—Its perfume is recognized in all parts of the earth at this moment, to the glory of the Lord she loved.—C. H. S., in *sermon preached at the Tabernacle, November 2, 1884, from the text, "She hath wrought a good work on Me."*



It is very generally known that the Stockwell Orphanage was originated through the gift to Mr. Spurgeon of £20,000 by Mrs. Hillyard, the widow of a Church of England clergyman; but the various circumstances which preceded that noble act of generosity are not so widely known. In the previous chapter, mention is made of the article in *The Sword and the Trowel* for August, 1866, entitled, "The Holy War of the Present Hour." In that paper, after the paragraph advocating the widespread dissemination of religious literature, Mr. Spurgeon wrote:—"Further, it is laid very heavily on our heart to stir up our friends to rescue some of the scholastic influence of our adversaries out of their hands. In the common schools of England, Church influence is out of all proportion to the respective numbers of the Episcopal body and the Nonconforming churches. We have too much given up our children to the enemy; and if the clergy had possessed the skill to hold them, the mischief might have been terrible; as it is, our Sabbath-schools have neutralized the evil to a large extent, but it ought not to be suffered to exist any longer. A great effort should be made to multiply our day-schools, and to render them distinctly religious, by teaching the gospel in them, and by labouring to bring the children, *as children*, to the Lord Jesus. The silly cry of 'Nonsectarian' is duping many into the establishment of schools in which the most important part of wisdom, namely, 'the fear of the Lord,' is altogether ignored. We trust this folly will soon be given up, and that we shall see schools in which all that we believe and hold dear shall be taught to the children of our poorer adherents."

When Mrs. Hillyard read these words, and the further plea for the establishment

also of religious schools of a higher order, they indicated to her the method by which she might realize the fulfilment of a purpose that she had long cherished in her heart. She had felt specially drawn out in sympathy towards fatherless boys, so she wrote to Mr. Spurgeon telling him of her desire, and asking his assistance in carrying it into effect. The Pastor's own mind had been prepared by the Lord for such a proposal through a remarkable experience at the previous Monday evening prayer-meeting at the Tabernacle.

Pastor C. Welton, who was at that time a student in the College, has preserved this interesting record of what happened on that occasion :—"Mr. Spurgeon said, 'Dear friends, we are a huge church, and should be doing more for the Lord in this great city. I want us, to-night, to ask Him to send us *some new work* ; and if we need money to carry it on, let us pray that *the means may also be sent.*' Several of the students had been called to the platform to join with deacons and elders in leading the assembly to the throne of grace, and to plead with God about the matter. While that mighty man of prayer, Mr. William Olney, was wrestling with the Lord, the beloved President knew that the answer had come. Had the Holy Spirit told him ? It seemed so, for, walking lightly across the platform to where I was sitting, he said to me softly, 'It's all right, Welton ; you pray for the conversion of sinners, will you ?' A few days after this Tabernacle prayer-meeting, Mrs. Hillyard wrote to the dear Pastor offering to entrust him with £20,000 for the purpose of founding an Orphanage for fatherless children. Here was *the new work and the money with which to begin it.* It was my conviction thirty years ago, as it is to-day, that the Stockwell Orphanage, as well as the money to found it, came from the Lord in answer to the petitions offered that Monday night. Surely, the Orphanage was born of prayer."

Mr. Spurgeon's name had been introduced to Mrs. Hillyard in an extraordinary way ; the incident does not appear to have ever come to his knowledge, and it was not made public until some years after he was "called home." Speaking at the Orphanage, in June, 1896, Professor Henderson, of Bristol Baptist College, said :—"Mrs. Hillyard and two friends of mine—a husband and wife,—were sitting together here in London ; and, in the course of their conversation, Mrs. Hillyard said to my friend, 'I have a considerable sum of money that I want to employ for beneficent purposes, but I am not competent to administer it myself ; I wish you would take this £20,000, and use it for the glory of God.' My friend, who was a very sensible man, replied, 'I am quite unfit to administer that large amount.' It was pressed upon him, but he resolutely declined to accept the charge of it ; whereupon Mrs. Hillyard said to him, 'Well, if you are not willing to take it, will you advise me as to the disposal of it ?' The recommendation he

gave was, that the money should be put into the hands of a public man, all of whose acts were known to people generally, one who was responsible to the public, and whose reputation depended upon the proper use of any funds entrusted to his keeping. This counsel was approved by Mrs. Hillyard; and now comes the remarkable part of the story. You know that she did not hold quite the same views that we do, and the gentleman to whom she was speaking did not share our intense admiration for Mr. Spurgeon, though he had a kindly feeling towards him, and a high regard for his integrity and uprightness. When Mrs. Hillyard said to him, 'Will you name somebody who fulfils the conditions you have mentioned?' he told me that the name of SPURGEON leaped from his lips almost to his own surprise. Mrs. Hillyard wrote to Mr. Spurgeon about the matter, and you all know what followed from their correspondence."

In reply to the first letter from Mrs. Hillyard, Mr. Spurgeon asked for further particulars of her proposed plan, and offered to go to see her concerning it; she then wrote again, as follows:—

"4, Warwick Villas,

"Spencer Street,

"Canonbury Square,

"Islington,

"Sept. 3rd, 1866.

"My Dear Sir,

"I beg to thank you for responding so kindly to my very anxious and humble desire to be used by the Lord of the vineyard in some small measure of service. He has said, 'Occupy till I come,' and He has graciously given me an unceasing longing to do His will in this particular matter. My oft-repeated enquiry has been, 'What shall I render unto the Lord for all the inestimable benefits He has conferred upon me?' Truly, we can but offer to Him of His own; yet has He graciously promised to accept this at our hands. That which the Lord has laid upon my heart, at present, is the great need there is of an Orphan House, requiring neither votes nor patronage, and especially one conducted upon simple gospel principles, just such an one as might be a kind of stepping-stone to your suggested higher school, and your College; for I think education, to be effectual, should begin at a very early age.

"I have now about £20,000, which I should like (God willing) to devote to the training and education of a few orphan boys. Of course, bringing the little ones to Jesus is my first and chief desire. I doubt not that many dear Christians would like to help in a work of this kind, under your direction and control; and should such an Institution grow to any large extent, I feel sure there would be no cause to

fear the want of means to meet the needs of the dear orphans, for have they not a rich Father? I shall esteem it a great favour if you can call and talk the matter over with me on Thursday next, between the hours of 12 and 4, as you kindly propose; and—

“I remain, dear sir,

“Yours truly obliged,

“ANNE HILLYARD.”

“P.S.—I would leave this matter entirely in the Lord's hand; not desiring to go before, but to follow His guidance.”

A stained-glass window in the Board-room of the Orphanage represents the interview between Mrs. Hillyard, Mr. Spurgeon, and Mr. Higgs, whom the Pastor took with him for consultation with regard to the details of the suggested scheme. As they approached the address given in the lady's letter, the very modest style of the “villas” made them ask one another whether they were being hoaxed, for it did not seem likely that anyone living in such a humble style would have £20,000 to give away. They discovered, afterwards, that it was only by the exercise of the most rigid economy that the good woman had been able to save that large sum. On being admitted to the plainly-furnished room where Mrs. Hillyard received them, Mr. Spurgeon said to her, “We have called, Madam, about the £200 you mentioned in your letter.” “£200! did I write? I meant to have said £20,000.” “Oh, yes!” replied the Pastor, “you did put £20,000; but I was not sure whether a nought or two had slipped in by mistake, and thought I would be on the safe side.” They then discussed the whole question from various points of view, Mr. Spurgeon being specially anxious to ascertain whether the money ought to go to any relatives, and even suggesting that it might be handed over to Mr. Müller for his Orphan Homes. The lady, however, adhered to her determination to entrust the £20,000 to Mr. Spurgeon, and to him alone.

The next letter shows that the project was assuming a definite shape, and that the Pastor and his friends had undertaken the great charge thus providentially committed to them:—

“4, Warwick Villas,

“Spencer Street,

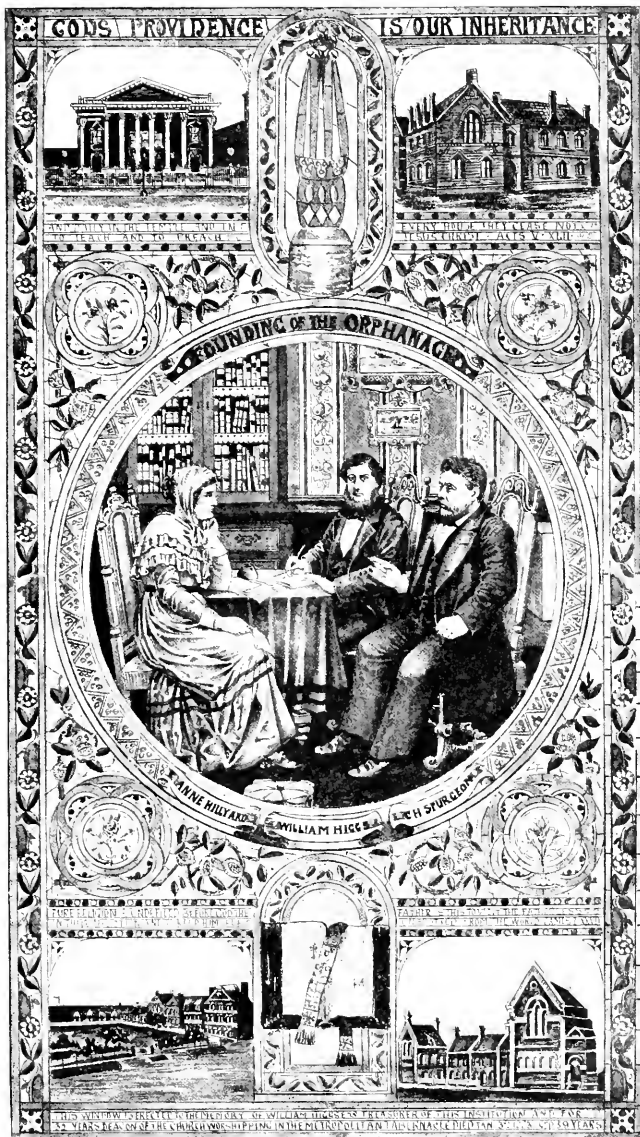
“Canonbury Square,

“Islington,

“Sept. 17th, 1866.

“My Dear Sir,

“I return you many sincere thanks for your great kindness in the prayerful and persevering attention you have given to the matter next my heart, that



MEMORIAL WINDOW IN ORPHANAGE BOARD-ROOM, COMMEMORATING THE FOUNDING OF THE INSTITUTION

is, the making provision, as the Lord enables us, for the necessities, both temporal and spiritual, of some of His own dear little ones. I cannot but trace the hand of God in so marvellously guiding me to one who has not only the will, but the ability, to carry out the plan; and thus my poor petitions have already in a measure been answered. Truly, you have much blessed work already on your hands; yet I feel sure that you will not shrink from this new enterprise. It is the Lord's own cause, and He will give health, and strength, and every other requisite for carrying it on; and thus may He be pleased greatly to extend it under your influence! I am aware that we have undertaken a great responsibility; yet we will not fear, but exercise entire dependence upon Him who is indeed the Father of the fatherless, and able to do far more than we either ask or think; and I have not the shadow of a doubt but, with His smile and blessing, it must and will assuredly prosper.

"I am much pleased to hear that the lady you mentioned will give her willing co-operation. How kind of your good deacons also! Their aid will be most valuable; I had not thought of any other Trustees. I am so glad you think many dear friends will be found to help in this work. I am much encouraged by precious Scriptures: 'Open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it;' and 'According to your faith, be it unto you;' with many others. The choice of a competent master is a very important matter; if you have an interview with the person you mentioned, you will be able in some measure to judge whether he would be likely to suit your purpose. You will, no doubt, decide that there must be discipline exercised,—great firmness, united with much patience and forbearance, the law of love only. Whenever you wish to have an interview with me, if you will kindly send me a line previously, I shall be sure to be at home, and—

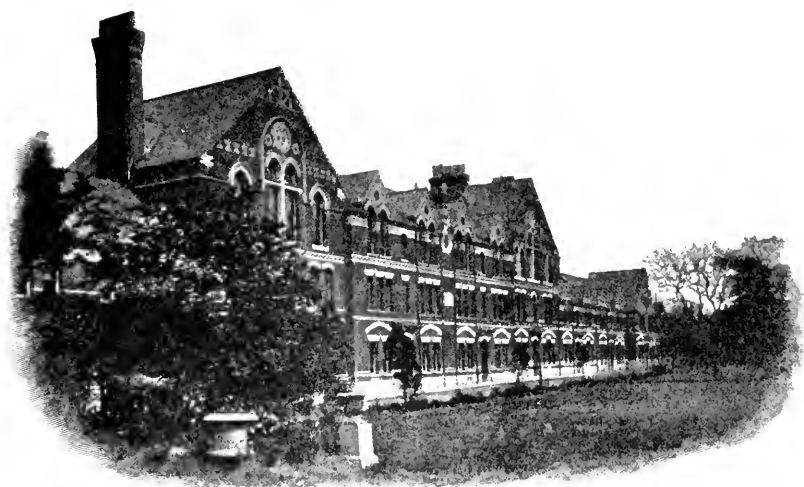
"I remain, dear sir,

"Most truly yours in our Lord,

"ANNE HILLVARD."

A preliminary notice was inserted in *The Sword and the Trowel* for October, 1866; in the following January, the site at Stockwell was purchased; funds commenced to come in, one of the first large contributors being Mr. George Moore, of Bow Churchyard, who gave £250. The sum of £500 was given by Mrs. Tyson, of Upper Norwood,—a lady who long and generously aided both College and Orphanage, and who, in her will, left £25,000 to the latter Institution, and so became its greatest helper. As the £500 was a present from Mr. Tyson to his wife on the twenty-fifth anniversary of their marriage, the house built with it was called "Silver-wedding House;" the next one, given by Mr. James Harvey, was named "The Merchant's House;" the third, presented by Mr. W. Higgs and his workmen, was entitled "The Workmen's House;" then came: "Unity House," the gift of "Father

Olney" and his sons, in memory of Mrs. Unity Olney; "The Testimonial Houses," erected with funds contributed by the Baptist churches of the United Kingdom as a proof of the high esteem in which they held the President; "The Sunday-school House," given by the Tabernacle Sunday-school; and "The College House," a token of love from brethren educated in the Pastors' College. The head-master's house, dining-hall, play-hall, and infirmary, completed the boys' side of the Institution; and, at a later period, a corresponding portion was erected for girls, of which an account may more properly appear in the concluding volume of this work.



THE BOYS' HOUSES, STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE.

Very early in the history of the Institution, Mr. Spurgeon announced the method he intended to adopt in raising the necessary funds. Preaching in the Tabernacle, in 1867, on "Believing to See," he said:—"I hope the day may soon come when the noble example which has been set by our esteemed brother, Mr. Müller, of Bristol, will be more constantly followed in all the Lord's work; for, rest assured that, if we will but 'believe to see,' we shall see great things. I cannot forbear mentioning to you, to-night, what God has enabled us to see of late as a church. We met together, one Monday night, as you will remember, for prayer concerning the Orphanage; and it was not a little remarkable that, on the Saturday of that week, the Lord should have moved some friend, who knew nothing of our prayers, to give five hundred pounds to that object. It astonished some of you that, on the following

Monday, God should have influenced another to give six hundred pounds ! When I told you of that, at the next prayer-meeting, you did not think, perhaps, that the Lord had something else in store, and that, the following Tuesday, another friend would come with five hundred pounds ! It was just the same in the building of this Tabernacle. We were a few and poor people when we commenced : but, still, we moved on by faith, and never went into debt. We trusted in God, and the house was built, to the eternal honour of Him who hears and answers prayer. And, mark



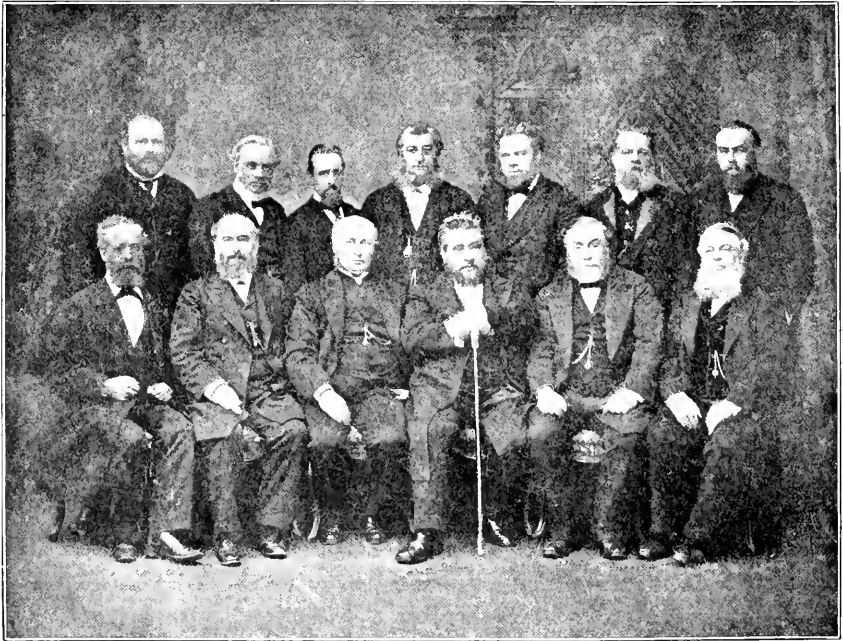
THE INFIRMARY, STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE.

you, it will be so in the erection of this Orphan Home. We shall see greater things than these if only our faith will precede our sight. But if we go upon the old custom of our general Societies, and first look out for a regular income, and get our subscribers, and send round our collectors, and pay our percentages,—that is, do not trust God, but trust our subscribers,—if we go by that rule, we shall see very little, and have no room for believing. But if we shall just trust God, and believe that He never did leave a work that He put upon us, and never sets us to do a thing without meaning to help us through with it, we shall soon see that the God of Israel still lives, and that His arm is not shortened."

Many notable interpositions of Providence have occurred in connection with the building and maintenance of the Institution. One of the earliest and most memorable took place on November 20, 1867, concerning which Mr. Spurgeon wrote, several years afterwards, among his other personal recollections of Dr. Brock:—"We remember when, being somewhat indisposed, as is, alas! too often our lot, we went to spend a quiet day or two at a beloved friend's mansion in Regent's Park. We were dining, and Dr. Brock was one of our little company. Mention was made that the Stockwell Orphanage was being built, and that cash for the builder would be needed in a day or two, but was not yet in hand. We declared our confidence in God that the need would be supplied, and that we should never owe any man a pound for the Lord's work. Our friend agreed that, in the review of the past, such confidence was natural, and was due to our ever-faithful Lord. As we closed the meal, a servant entered, with a telegram from our secretary, to the effect that A. B., an unknown donor, had sent £1,000 for the Orphanage. No sooner had we read the words than the Doctor rose from the table, and poured out his utterances of gratitude in the most joyful manner, closing with the suggestion that the very least thing we could do was to fall upon our knees at once, and magnify the Lord. The prayer and praise which he then poured out, we shall never forget; he seemed a psalmist while, with full heart and grandeur both of words and sound, singularly suitable to the occasion, he addressed the ever-faithful One. He knew our feebleness at the time, and while he looked upon the gift of God as a great tenderness to us in our infirmity, he also seemed to feel such perfect oneness with us in our delight that he took the duty of expressing it quite out of our hands, and spoke in our name as well as his own. If a fortune had been left him, he could not have been more delighted than he was at the liberal supply of our needs in the Lord's work. We sat around the fire, and talked together of the goodness of God, and our heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord. Among the very latest things we spoke of, when we last met on earth, was that evening at our friend's house, and the great goodness of the Lord in response to our faith. While we write the record, our heart wells up with new gratitude for the choice benefit. Surely, if in Heaven the saints shall converse together of the things of earth, this will be one of the subjects upon which two comrades of twenty years may be expected to commune."

A few weeks later, the same anonymous donor dropped into the President's letter-box two bank-notes for £1,000 each,—one for the College, and the other for the Orphanage,—with a letter in which the generous giver said, "The latter led me to contribute to the former." This intimation was specially cheering to Mr. Spurgeon, for he had feared, perhaps naturally, that the new Institution would be likely to impoverish the older one.

In November, 1860, when the President was suddenly laid aside by an attack of small-pox, a friend, who knew nothing of his illness, called and left £500 for the Orphanage; and, a few days later, an anonymous donor, who also was unaware of Mr. Spurgeon's affliction, sent £1,000 for the same purpose. At one meeting of the Trustees, the financial report was, "all bills paid, but only £3 left in hand." Prayer was offered, and the stream of liberality soon began to flow again. On another occasion, the funds were completely exhausted, and the Managers were driven to special supplication on behalf of the work. That very day, nearly £400 was poured into the treasury, and the hearts of the pleaders were gladdened and encouraged.



TRUSTEES AND HEAD-MASTER OF THE ORPHANAGE

The President's usual plan, when supplies ran short, was first to give all he could, and ask his fellow-Trustees to do the same, and then to lay the case before the Lord in the full belief that He would incline His stewards to send in all that was required. As long as he was able to do so, Mr. Spurgeon presided at the meetings of the Trustees, and, afterwards, he was kept informed of their proceedings

by copies of the Minutes while the most important items of business were decided "subject to the approval of the President." In the earlier days, he used personally to see the applicants,—an experience which often proved expensive, for he could not listen to the sad stories of the poor widows without temporarily relieving their necessities, whatever might be the decision concerning the admission of their children. Sometimes, there was a humorous side to the situation, and he was quick to notice it. One day, a woman came with quite a little tribe of boys and girls; and, in reply to the enquiries put to her, said that she had been twice left a widow, and her second husband, whom she had recently lost, had been previously married; and then, separating the children into three groups, she said, "These are his, those are mine, and these are ours." In relating the story afterwards, Mr. Spurgeon used to say that he did not remember any other instance in which possessive pronouns had proved so useful!

In January, 1869, the President wrote, in *The Sword and the Trowel*:—"At the Orphanage, we are still set fast for want of a master. The Lord will, we trust, guide us to the right man; but, out of many applicants, not one has seemed to us to be suitable." Two months later, however, Mr. Spurgeon was able to report:—"Mr. Charlesworth, assistant-minister to Mr. Newman Hall, of Surrey Chapel, has accepted the post of master to the Orphanage. He called in—as we are wont to say—by accident, at the very moment when a letter was handed to us from the previously-elected master declining to fulfil his engagement. Our disappointment was considerable at the loss of the man of our choice; but when we found that this dear friend had been thinking of the work, and was ready to undertake it, we were filled with gratitude to the over-ruling hand of God."

The election of a Pædo-Baptist to such an important position was another instance of the catholicity of spirit that Mr. Spurgeon had manifested in appointing a Congregationalist (Mr. Rogers) to the post of Principal of the Pastors' College, and choosing another member of the same denomination (Mr. Selway) to be the Scientific Lecturer to that Institution. The undenominational character of the Orphanage is apparent from a glance at the table showing the religious views of the parents of the children received. Up to the date covered by the present volume, out of the 527 orphans who had found a happy home at Stockwell, no less than 166 had come from Church of England families, while Baptists were only represented by 121, Congregationalists by 64, Wesleyans by 58, and other bodies by still smaller numbers.

Mr. Spurgeon never had occasion to regret the choice of Mr. Charlesworth for the position which he still holds; and he might have said, at any later period of his life, what he wrote in *The Sword and the Trowel* for March, 1873:—"Our

dear brother, Mr Charlesworth, fills the place of master to our great joy, and to the evident benefit of all the boys." That number of the Magazine also contained the following interesting announcement:—"On Monday, February 24, five of the youths educated at the Orphanage were baptized at the Tabernacle, together with our friend, Mr. V. J. Charlesworth, the master, who gave an address explaining his reasons for being baptized as a believer." Many others of the orphans have followed this example, or united with other branches of the Church of Christ, and are actively engaged in Christian service. Of those who have entered the ministry, three—Messrs. R. S. Latimer, C. W. Townsend, and John Maynard,—were still further indebted to Mr. Spurgeon for the training they received in the Pastors' College. The last-named of the three—the "little Jack" of the Orphanage—went from the College to the Congo, and so took the short route to Heaven. The tablet to his memory, on the house in which he lived while in the Institution, must be, to the boys who read it, a continual reminder of one of their number whose influence, even as a lad, was of a most gracious character. It is a fact also worthy of mention that another of the inmates of the Orphanage in its early days—Mr. F. G. Ladds—after serving for a time as a teacher, has been for twenty years the esteemed and efficient secretary of the Institution.

On one occasion, when there had been an addition to Mr. Charlesworth's family, Mr. Spurgeon, in a tone of apparent seriousness, told the Trustees that he had to call their attention to the fact that the head-master had introduced a child into the Orphanage without the permission of the Managers, and he added that this was not the first time such a thing had happened! One of the brethren, not noticing the merry twinkle in the President's eye, proposed that Mr. Charlesworth should be called in, and questioned concerning the matter, and also that he should be very distinctly informed that such a proceeding must not be repeated! The resolution was probably not put to the meeting, and a truthful historian must record that there were several similar occurrences in after years.

Everyone at all acquainted with the inner working of the Orphanage knows with what affection, mingled with reverence, the children at Stockwell always regarded Mr. Spurgeon. He was indeed a father to the fatherless; and, while no boy ever presumed upon the tender familiarity which the beloved President permitted, every one of them fully prized the privilege of his friendship. There was no mistaking the ringing cheer which greeted his arrival; everybody on the premises instantly knew what that shout meant, and passed round the cheering message, "Mr. Spurgeon has come." In the "In Memoriam" Stockwell Orphanage Tract, issued in 1892, after Mr. Spurgeon was "called home" Mr. Charlesworth wrote, concerning the "promoted" President:—"The children loved him; and his visits always

called forth the most boisterous demonstrations of delight. His appearance was the signal for a general movement towards the centre of attraction, and he often said, 'They compassed me about like bees!' The eagerness with which they sought to grasp his hand, often involved the younger children in the risk of being trampled upon by others; but, with ready tact and condescension, he singled out those who were at a disadvantage, and extended to them his hand. At the Memorial Service, conducted by the head-master, it was ascertained that every boy present had shaken hands with the dear President,—a fact of no small significance! Every visit cost him as many pennies as there were children in the Orphanage. Proud as they were to possess the coin for its spending power, it was regarded as having an augmented value from the fact that it was the gift of Mr. Spurgeon."

Many years ago, a simple incident was related in *The Sword and the Trowel*, which showed how even the most friendless of the orphans felt that he might tell his troubles into the sympathetic ear of the great preacher:—

"Sitting down upon one of the seats in the Orphanage grounds, we were talking with one of our brother-Trustees, when a little fellow, who should think about eight years of age, left the other boys who were playing around us, and came deliberately up to us. He opened fire upon us thus, 'Please, Mister Spurgeon, I want to come and sit down on that seat between you two gentlemen.' 'Come along, Bob, and tell us what you want.' 'Please, Mr. Spurgeon, suppose there was a little boy who had no father, who lived in a Orphanage with a lot of other little boys who had no fathers; and suppose those little boys had mothers and aunts who comed once a month, and brought them apples and oranges, and gave them pennies; and suppose this little boy had no mother, and no aunt, and so nobody never came to bring him nice things, don't you think somebody ought to give him a penny?' 'Cause, Mr. Spurgeon, that's me.' 'Somebody' felt something wet in his eye, and Bob got a sixpence, and went off in a great state of delight. Poor little soul, he had seized the opportunity to pour out a bitterness which had rankled in his little heart, and made him miserable when the monthly visiting day came round, and, as he said, 'Nobody never came to bring him nice things.'"

The narrative, of course, brought "little Bob" a plentiful supply of pocket-money, and was the means of helping others of the orphans who, like him, were motherless and fatherless; and it also served Mr. Spurgeon many a time as an illustration of the way in which a personal appeal might be made effectual. One of the best pleas for the Institution that the beloved President ever issued was dictated to his secretary under the olives at Mentone. It was addressed, "To those who are happily married, or hope to be;" and after allusion to the bliss of a true marriage union, and the consequent sorrow when one of the twain should be removed by death, the writer showed how, often, poverty made the bereavement even more

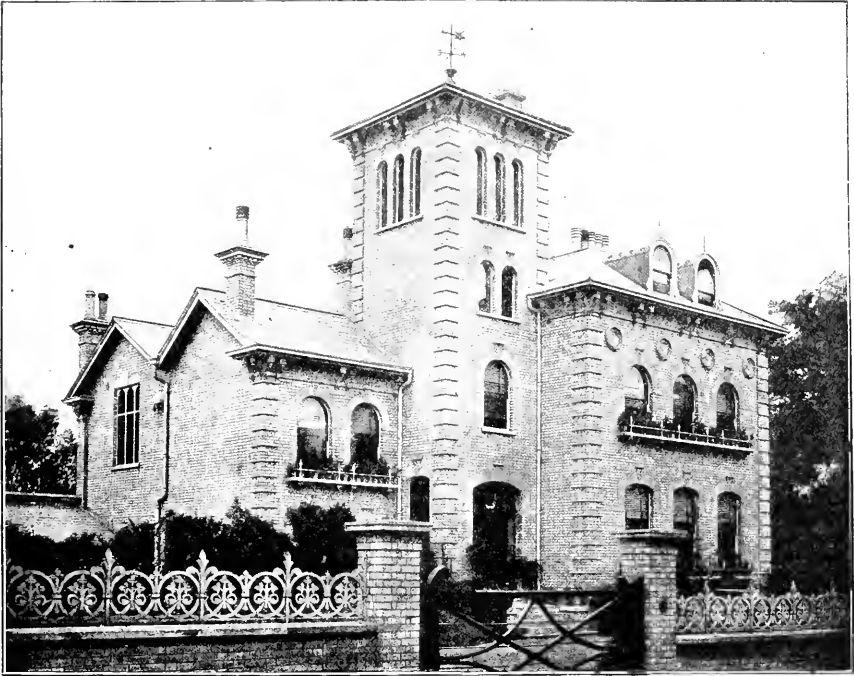
painful, and then pointed out the blessing that a home for the fatherless became to the poor struggling widow suddenly left with a large family. The article contained special references to the Stockwell Orphanage; and it was, in due time, published in *The Sword and the Trowel*. As soon as it appeared, one gentleman sent £100 as a thankoffering from himself and his wife for their many years of happy married life, and other donors sent smaller amounts. The "plea" commenced thus:—"We do not write for those people who are married but not mated. When a cat and a dog are tied together, they seldom sorrow much at the prospect of separation. When marriage is *merry-age*, it is natural to desire a long life of it; but when it is *mar-age*, the thought of parting is more endurable. 'Mr. and Mrs. Naggleton' will be sure to put on mourning should one or other of them decease, but the garb of sorrow will be all the sorrow he or she will know; the black will soon turn brown, if not white, and the weeds will probably give place to flowers. We address ourselves to those who have the happiness of being joined together by wedded love as well as by wedlock." It was a source of much amusement to Mr. Spurgeon to receive, among the other contributions for the Orphanage, as the result of his appeal, a donation "from Mr. and Mrs. Naggleton," who did not, however, give their real name and address!

The article was reprinted in the series of Stockwell Orphanage Tracts, and in that form has continued to benefit the Institution. When it was ready to be issued, it was discovered that the "imp" who is supposed to dwell in the printing-house had changed one word in the title, and made it read, "To those who are happily married, or *ought* to be;" so a new edition had to be prepared. As soon as the booklets made their appearance in the booksellers' windows, they proved to be a source of intense interest, especially to ladies! Mr. Spurgeon heard, with great glee, how one or another would go into the shop, point to No. 4, and say, "I want *that* tract!" He was afraid they would be disappointed with the contents; but, at any rate, he felt that, if they did not find in it exactly what they expected, they would at least learn something concerning the Institution which was so dear to his heart.

Had Mr. Spurgeon been spared to complete this portion of his "Standard Life," he would have included a grateful tribute to the help he had received from his brother and the other Trustees, and the masters, matrons, and teachers responsible for the different departments of the work at the Orphanage, as well as to all those whose generous gifts had enabled it to be carried on so long and so successfully. This he has already done, year by year, in the pages of his Magazine, and at the annual and quarterly gatherings; it is only mentioned here lest anyone should imagine that it had been forgotten.

CHAPTER LXXII.

The New "Helensburgh House," Nightingale Lane.



THE NEW "HELENSBURGH HOUSE" (FRONT VIEW).



WHILE Mr. Spurgeon was so diligently, and in such self-denying fashion, caring for students and colporteurs, widows and orphans, some of his friends thought it was time for a little more comfort to be provided for himself and his household. Many hallowed associations had endeared the old house at Nightingale Lane to its happy inmates; but they were not blind to the disadvantages of their ancient dwelling, and all greatly rejoiced when, in 1869, it was pulled down, and the new "Helensburgh House" was erected in its place. The large amount expended by the dear owner in his many departments of service for the Lord would

have made it impossible for him to meet the necessary outlay, so a few of his most liberal and devoted helpers determined to defray the principal part of the cost, as a token of their loving appreciation of his public ministry and private friendship. The work was entrusted to the charge of Mr. William Higgs, and the plans were drawn by his eldest son, the present Deacon William Higgs, who greatly prizes the volumes given to him by Mr. Spurgeon in recognition of his labours.

Before the new house was ready for occupation, Mr. Spurgeon met the generous donors; and Mrs. Spurgeon, who had been for some time staying in Brighton, came up to London in order to be present at that memorable gathering. In a tiny note-book which has been preserved, the dear Pastor wrote the introduction and outline of the speech in which he expressed his gratitude for the gift he had received. It was a most exceptional thing for him to make, for any occasion, more than a bare skeleton of the address or sermon he was about to deliver, so the high value he set upon the presentation is manifest from the fact that he was moved to compose this most charming prose-poem of thanksgiving for it:—

“It was a law of Abdul the Merciful that no man should be compelled to speak when overwhelmed by kindness. Doth a man sing when his mouth is full of the sherbet of Shiraz, or a prince dance when he wears on his head the crown of Aii with its hundredweight of jewels? Or, as Job saith, ‘Doth the wild ass bray when he hath grass? Or loweth the ox over his fodder?’ As he that marrieth a virgin is excused from war, so he that receiveth a great gift is exempted from a public speech. My heart is as full of thanks as Paradise was full of peace. As the banks of Lugano ring with the songs of nightingales, so my whole being reverberates with gratitude; and there is another, for whom I may also speak, who echoes all I utter, as the cliffs of Meringen prolong with manifold sweetness the music of the horn.

“*From you*,—it comes with double pleasure, like the nuts and the almonds that were carried to Joseph fresh from his father’s tents. From my brethren,—it is a flower dripping with the dew of Hermon, and perfumed with the fragrance of affection. From my fellow-soldiers,—it comes as a cup of generous wine in which we pledge each other for future battles. From my children in the faith,—as a love-token such as a tender father treasures. From the church,—it is offered as a sacrifice of sweet smell, acceptable unto God.

“*A house*,—founded in love, walled with sincerity, roofed in with generosity. Its windows are agates, its gates carbuncles. The beam out of the wall shall talk with me, and the stones shall give me sermons. I shall see your names engraven on every room; and I shall read, in a mystic handwriting, the record that your love was weighed in the balances, and was *not* found wanting.

“*The time of your love*. During my life —not like the poor philosopher, who was starved to death, but who afterwards had a pillar erected in his honour. This

house will be a monument of your generosity, and so it will be a double memorial. Your own presents made it needful. I am like the man who received a white elephant as a gift from his prince, and, with it, a sufficient sum of money to enable him to keep it. The damp and decay in the old house rendered a new one necessary; the other was 'a pleasant place to live out of.'

"*The difficulty of my position.* My dear wife and I have firmly resolved that we will never go into debt for anything, yet you know something of the continual claims upon us in connection with the work of the Lord. You are also aware that, for the sake of my service for the Master here, I have refused to avail myself of many opportunities that I have had of acquiring wealth. You have all heard that I might have gone to America, and, in a few weeks, have obtained more than I am likely to receive in connection with my ministry for many years. Yet I feel that I acted rightly, in the sight of God, in declining all such offers that had been made to me.

"*The fear of making too much of a minister.* There is no intent on my part to rest now that I have a new house. If possible, I shall work harder than before, and preach better than ever."

The latter portion of the notes conveys only a very slight idea of the line of thought that the beloved speaker took; but it may well be imagined how, with such a theme, and such a sympathetic audience, he would "fight his battles o'er again," recounting the great victories which the Lord had already given to him and those whom he addressed as his fellow-soldiers, and pointing out to them other fields in which they might, together, win fresh renown for their glorious King and Leader.

There is a very memorable incident, which is so intimately associated with the history of both husband and wife during this period, that it must be included in "The Standard Life," although an account of it has once before been published. In her volume, *Ten Years After!* Mrs. Spurgeon thus wrote concerning the story of the opal ring and the piping bullfinch:—"This incident got into print somehow, and has been told, with varying incorrectness and sundry brilliant embellishments, in many papers, both in England and America. I think it must have been because my beloved so often spoke of it, and delighted to tell of the tender providence which, in so remarkable a way, gratified his sick wife's lightest wishes. As this book is as much of an autobiography as will ever be written by me, it seems well to give a correct version of the sweet true story in these pages. It was during a time of long and painful suffering that it occurred. Dark days those were, both for husband and wife, for a serious disease had invaded my frame, and little alleviation could be found from the constant, wearying pain it caused. My beloved husband, always so fully

engaged about his Master's business, yet managed to secure many precious moments by my side, when he would tell me how the work of the Lord was prospering in his hands, and we would exchange sympathies, he comforting me in my suffering, and I cheering him on in his labour.

“ One ever-recurring question when he had to leave me was, ‘What can I bring you, wifey?’ I seldom answered him by a *request*, for I had all things richly to enjoy, except *health*. But, one day, when he put the usual query, I said, playfully, ‘*I should like an opal ring, and a piping bullfinch!*’ He looked surprised, and rather amused; but simply replied, ‘Ah, you know I cannot get those for you!’ Two or three days we made merry over my singular choice of desirable articles; but, one Thursday evening, on his return from the Tabernacle, he came into my room with such a beaming face, and such love-lighted eyes, that I knew something had delighted him very much. In his hand he held a tiny box, and I am sure his pleasure exceeded mine as he took from it a beautiful little ring, and placed it on my finger. ‘There is your opal ring, my darling,’ he said, and then he told me of the strange way in which it had come. An old lady, whom he had once seen when she was ill, sent a note to the Tabernacle to say she desired to give Mrs. Spurgeon a small present, and could someone be sent to her to receive it? Mr. Spurgeon's private secretary went, accordingly, and brought the little parcel, which, when opened, was found to contain this *opal ring!* How we talked of the Lord's tender love for His stricken child, and of His condescension in thus stooping to supply an unnecessary gratification to His dear servant's sick one.—I must leave my readers to imagine; but I can remember feeling that the Lord was very near to us.

“ Not long after that, I was moved to Brighton, there to pass a crisis in my life, the result of which would be a restoration to better health,—or death. One evening, when my dear husband came from London, he brought a large package with him, and, uncovering it, disclosed a cage containing a lovely *piping bullfinch!* My astonishment was great, my joy unbounded, and these emotions were intensified as he related the way in which he became possessed of the coveted treasure. He had been to see a dear friend of ours, whose husband was sick unto death; and, after commending the sufferer to God in prayer, Mrs. T—— said to him, ‘I want you to take my pet bird to Mrs. Spurgeon, I would give him to none but her; his songs are too much for my poor husband in his weak state, and I know that ‘Bully’ will interest and amuse Mrs. Spurgeon in her loneliness while you are so much away from her.’ Dear Mr. Spurgeon then told her of my desire for such a companion, and together they rejoiced over the care of the loving Heavenly Father, who had so wondrously provided the very gift His child had longed for. With that cage beside

him, the journey to Brighton was a very short one; and when 'Bully' piped his pretty song, and took a hemp seed as a reward from the lips of his new mistress, there were eyes with joyful tears in them, and hearts overflowing with praise to God, in the little room by the sea that night; and the dear Pastor's comment was, 'I think you are one of your Heavenly Father's spoiled children, and He just gives you whatever you ask for.'

"Does anyone doubt that this bird was a direct love-gift from the pitiful Father? Do I hear someone say, 'Oh! it was all "chance" that brought about such coincidences as these'? Ah, dear friends! those of you who have been similarly indulged by Him *know*, of a certainty, that it is not so. He who cares for all the works of His hand, cares with infinite tenderness for the children of His love, and thinks nothing which concerns them too small or too trivial to notice. If our faith were stronger, and our love more perfect, we should see far greater marvels than these in our daily lives.

"There is not much more to tell. 'Bully's' sweet little life and ministry ended at Brighton; but the memory of the Lord's tenderness in giving him to me, is a life-long treasure; and the opal ring glistens on my finger as I write this paragraph."

The experiences of that trying time need not be described, but mention must be made of the great kindness of Sir James Y. Simpson, who travelled twice from Edinburgh to Brighton to render all the aid that the highest surgical skill could suggest. When the operation was over, Mr. Spurgeon asked Sir James about his fee, and he replied, "Well, I suppose it should be a thousand guineas; and when you are Archbishop of Canterbury, I shall expect you to pay it. Till then, let us consider it settled by love."

After the meeting of donors, mentioned on page 182, Mrs. Spurgeon went back to Brighton until the house was ready to receive its long-absent mistress. The thought and care which her dear husband bestowed upon its furnishing, would surprise even those who think they knew him: nobody but herself ever saw half his grace and goodness. How lovingly and tenderly he "reported progress" as the various articles of furniture were being purchased, the following letter will show:—

"My Own Dear Sufferer,

"I am pained indeed to learn, from T——'s kind note, that you are still in so sad a condition! Oh, may the ever-merciful God be pleased to give you ease!

! have been quite a long round to-day,—if a 'round' can be 'long.' First, to Finsbury, to buy the wardrobe,—a beauty. I hope you will live long to hang your

garments in it, every thread of them precious to me for your dear sake. Next, to Hewlett's, for a chandelier for the dining-room. Found one quite to my taste and yours. Then, to Negretti & Zambra's, to buy a barometer for my very own fancy, for I have long promised to treat myself to one. On the road, I obtained the Presburg biscuits, and within their box I send this note, hoping it may reach you the more quickly. They are sweetened with my love and prayers.

"The bedroom will look well with the wardrobe in it; at least, so I hope. It is well made; and, I believe, as nearly as I could tell, precisely all you wished for. Joe (Mr. Passmore gave this handsome present) is very good, and should have a wee note whenever darling feels she could write it without too much fatigue;—but not yet. I bought also a table for you in case you should have to keep your bed.* It rises or falls by a screw, and also winds sideways, so as to go over the bed, and then it has a flap for a book or paper, so that my dear one may read or write in comfort while lying down. I could not resist the pleasure of making this little gift to my poor suffering wifey, only hoping it might not often be in requisition, but might be a help when there was a needs-be for it. Remember, all I buy, I pay for. I have paid for everything as yet with the earnings of my pen, graciously sent me in time of need. It is my ambition to leave nothing for you to be anxious about. I shall find the money for the curtains, etc., and you will amuse yourself by giving orders for them after your own delightful taste.

"I must not write more; and, indeed, matter runs short, except the old, old story of a love which grieves over you, and would fain work a miracle, and raise you up to perfect health. I fear the heat afflicts you. Well did the elder say to John in Patmos, concerning those who are before the throne of God, 'neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.'

"Yours to love in life, and death, and eternally,

"C. H. S."

There was a very small room, by the side of Mr. Spurgeon's study, which was specially fitted up for his dear wife's use; and nothing had been forgotten which could in any way conduce to the comfort of an invalid almost entirely confined to her couch. Never will the rapture with which he welcomed her home be forgotten, nor the joyful pride with which he pointed out all the arrangements he had made so that her captivity should have every possible compensation and alleviation. There was a cunningly-contrived cupboard in one corner of the room, into which he had gathered all the details of his loving care for her. When the doors were opened, a dainty washing apparatus was disclosed, with hot and cold water laid on, so that no fatigue in ascending and descending the stairways should be necessary, and even

* This table was in constant use for dear Mr. Spurgeon himself during his long and painful illness in 1891

the towels were embroidered with her name. He had thought of *everything*; and there were such tender touches of devoted love upon all the surroundings of the little room that no words can describe her emotions when first she gazed upon them, and afterwards when she proved, by practical experience, their exceeding usefulness and value.

Even when the new house was finished, Mrs. Spurgeon was still detained at Brighton, and her dear husband had, for a while, to occupy it without her. He used often to say, during that time of loneliness, that he and the cat (old "Dick"—whose portrait was given in Vol. II., page 294,) went up and down the stairs *mewing for the mistress*. One day, during that period of waiting, the muse took another form, and Mr. Spurgeon wrote this merry effusion, which he called,—

"A RIGMAROLE, FOR A DEAR OLD SOUL.

"Sweetest and best of the daughters of Eve,—

"To meet you is bliss, and 'tis sorrow to leave; to thy nest by the sea, comes a message from me; the words may be few, but they're faithful and true; their tune and their substance is, *How I love you!* I reach'd London all right, found the folks all at tea, talk'd to them at night, and went home to C———. T. Olney was pleased to give me a ride; not far on the road our trap I espied; we failed to detain it, so turned, and gave chase, and for sev'ral minutes we kept up the race. At last, by our making a horrible noise, in which we were joined by women and boys, we brought it to bay, and found that inside, a fine English worthy was having a ride. It was your dear old Dad, who a pilgrimage had, very foolishly made to this dwelling so sad; where I mourn like an owl, and grumble and scowl, and, like a hyena, am ready to howl, because left alone, without mate or bone.

"It's a very fine day; at least, it has tried, but the rain has said, 'Nay,' and the clouds have denied. Mr. Passmore has been up in the study, his eyes are not bright, and his cheeks are not ruddy. He seems pleased to be asked to stay with the Queen, and on Tuesday, at Brighton, we hope to be seen. I rode up to London, with our Mr. Hood; he shortened the journey, and so did me good. I am sound as a bell, right hearty and well, and I'm off to my place, the gospel to tell.

"Pull both the boys' ears, and give them a kiss; as they grow up in years, may they ripen for bliss! And now, my sweet wife, the joy of my life, waggon-loads of sweet love, and ton weights of affection, all language above, for I love to perfection. May you mend every hour till, in fulness of power, you climb up the hills, forgetting all ills; with a clean bill of health, more precious than wealth, live long to delight my heart and my sight! So earnestly prays your lonely old man, who is counting the days, until see you he can."

This rhyming epistle was evidently written in great haste, and without any

premeditation, just to while away a few minutes, and amuse her whom he "loved to perfection." It may be fittingly followed by a *facsimile* of the first post card used by Mr. Spurgeon, which has a double interest; first, from the up-and-down way in which it had to be read; and, next, because it is a little love-letter intended *pro hono publico*.

Kightingle Lane, Clapham.

Oct. 1, 1870.

My engaged in. to be met your presence is
 dear may be curious with ear of comfort. See the
 wife, there reading the whole to the wbole light
 as eyes my note, of her soon return beauty
 this more the better, Majestys may you and
 is the for I dominious, restored, soul
 the I use. should Long may With health of the
 first one. like you be wives. whole
 day first all the space d to all With love,
 of the new world to be a example your loving
 the upon to know blessing to a worthy husband
 new you that you your children. (DEAL)
 cards, to are she happy to you. (OC 1)
 I write best wife husband, a guide. (75)

Another humorous communication related to the table used in the study of the old house, which was not nearly large enough for the spacious new room required for the ever-growing library. It was given to one of the Tabernacle elders, with this characteristic commendation:—

"WARRANTY OF TABLE.

" Clapham,

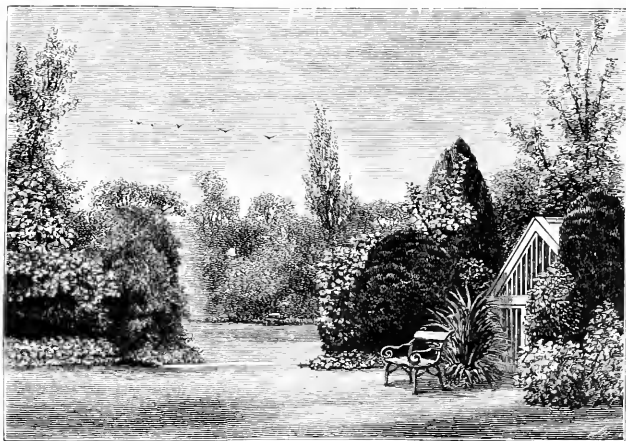
" November 16.

"This is to certify that the table, sent this day to Mr. Goldston, has never been known to turn, twist, dance, fly up into the air, or otherwise misbehave. It has not been addicted to convivial habits, and has never been known to be 'on a roar.' As a most studious piece of furniture, it is sent to a studious man, with the kind regards of—

"C. H. SPURGEON."

The new "Helensburgh House" was, of course, dedicated to God with much

prayer and praise. Mr. Spurgeon always felt that it was a gift from the Lord, through His faithful stewards; and, therefore, all its charms and comforts were accepted as a sacred trust to be employed for his Master's glory. The claims of the dear Pastor's many forms of Christian service were so many, and so constant, that his home could hardly at any period have been called a *private* house; but there were "high days and holidays" when the students would gather in the garden, at the commencement of the Autumn session, or on some other special occasion when they were invited to meet with their tutors and brethren, and to listen to the wit and wisdom of their beloved President. At such times, there were always many loving enquiries for "the Mother of the College;" though, for some years, she had to be content with quietly peeping, from a corner of her bedroom window, at the merry throng down below. On one memorable day, she was carried down, in a chair, to the dining-room, and the students sang for her especial benefit some of their sweet songs of Zion.



A PEEP AT THE NEW GARDEN.

The garden was rearranged under the direction of Mr. Shirley Hibberd, who very ingeniously made the most of a comparatively small area, so that it formed a still more delightful retreat for the oft-weary preacher and toiler when he could steal away for a brief respite from his almost incessant service. Among other alterations, a new lawn was specially prepared, where father and sons, and a few favoured visitors, might play at the old Puritan game of "bowls." It was a healthy and not too tiring exercise; but the chief attraction of it probably was that it had been the favourite amusement of the great uncrowned king of England, Oliver Cromwell, and

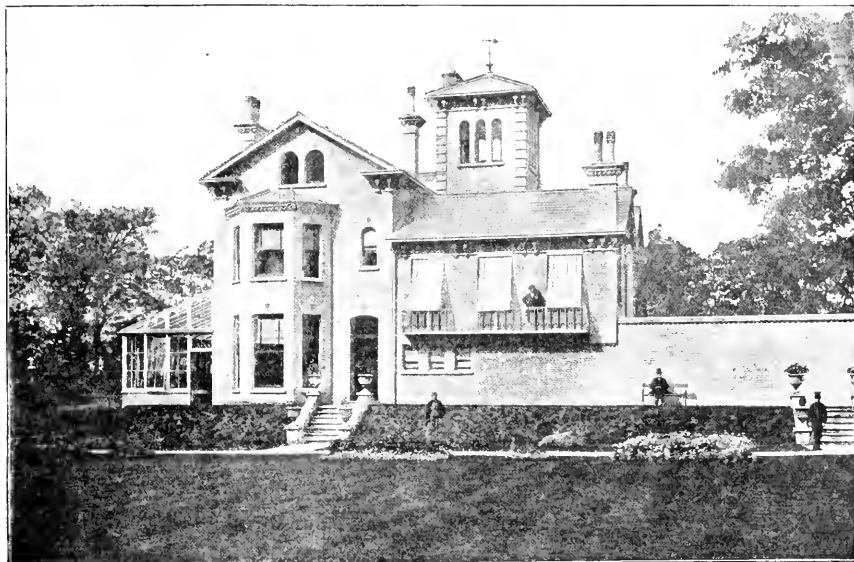
some of the mightiest masters of theology that the world has ever seen. Mr Spurgeon used frequently to say that the expression "the bias of the will" must have been connected in their minds with "the bias of the bowl," and that he would have greatly prized the privilege of witnessing the game as it was played by the Lord Protector and such notable divines as Thomas Goodwin, John Howe, Thomas Manton, John Owen, and other eminent preachers of that golden age of England's civil and religious history.



HUSBAND AND WIFE IN THE NIGHTINGALE LANE GARDEN.

Some time after that part of the garden was newly turfed, it furnished an interesting instance of the latent power of vegetable life. In digging up the ground ready for the levelling process, the men had evidently disturbed certain roots which had been deeply buried beneath the earth; so it came to pass, before long, that horseradish forced its way up in various places, to the manifest disfigurement of the lawn. It was a very troublesome task to eradicate the old tenant of the soil; but the dear preacher saw in it a striking simile of the development of long-hidden evil in the human heart, and of the difficulty of getting rid of it.

Mr. Spurgeon knew how to turn everything to account in his great life-work of preaching the gospel. A simple incident, associated with the new house and garden, furnished him with a most effective illustration for a sermon in the Tabernacle. Long after he had left Nightingale Lane, he recalled the circumstances; and, in urging his hearers, who had found the Saviour, to seek to bring others to Him, he said:—



C. H. SPURGEON ON THE BALCONY OF THE NEW "HELENSBURGH HOUSE"

"In the depth of winter, at a time when I had a balcony to my study, I put some crumbs out upon it, and there came a robin redbreast first, who pecked and ate all he could. I do not know his language, but I fancy I can tell what he said, for he went away, and presently returned with ever so many sparrows and other birds. He had no doubt said to them, 'There are crumbs up there; come with me, and get them.' So they followed him, and they came in greater numbers every day, and I do not know how it was except that they told one another. One day, whether it was the robin or the sparrows, I cannot say, but some of them told a blackbird, and he was a bigger fellow than any of them; when he came, he stood near, for I should think, a minute, and then he spied me inside, and he flew away, for he thought, 'That good man does not like blackbirds.' But he did not know me; for I was pleased to see him, and I should have liked

to see a lot of such birds. So the robin went up to him, and told him that he had been there for the last three or four days, and I had never even threatened him; and then, after being persuaded a little, the blackbird came back, and the robin seemed to me to be quite pleased to think that he had converted his big companion, and brought him back, for they dropped down together on the crumbs, and they had such a joyful feast that they returned to the balcony again and again as long as the wintry weather lasted.

"There are some of you, dear robin redbreasts, who have been here ever so long, eating my Master's crumbs, and you have brought some sparrows to the feast; now try to entice a blackbird, and if there is one blackbird bigger and blacker than the rest, go and bring him, for Jesus says that He will cast out none that come to Him by faith; and you may be sure that it is true, for He is 'a Friend of publicans and sinners.'"

The loving relationship existing between the dear father and his twin-sons is not specially referred to here, as it will be fully described in later chapters written for the present volume by Pastor Charles Spurgeon, and in another, or others, by Pastor Thomas Spurgeon, which will (D.V.) appear in Vol. IV. The accompanying illustration will, however, show how one of the boys employed some of his time, while the *facsimile* of Mr. Spurgeon's handwriting will let all see how pleased he was with "Son Tom's" early display of the artistic talent which was afterwards to be turned to such good account for the benefit of readers of *The Sword and the Trowel*.

If all the notable events that happened in the new "Helensburgh House" were chronicled, a volume, instead of a chapter, would be needed to contain them; so only a small selection can be inserted here. One of the most striking incidents in Mr. Spurgeon's whole life was thus described by him to the students of the Pastors' College gathered under "The Question Oak" at "Westwood" in the year 1890:—

"There is a Divine discipline always going on in the Church of Christ, of which, sometimes, we are not fully aware. I remember one terrible instance, which occurred many years ago, of a man who often tried to annoy and offend me; but that is not a thing that can be done so easily as some suppose. The individual to whom I refer had long attempted it, and failed. At last, one Sabbath, when he had been peculiarly troublesome, I said to him, 'Brother So-and-so, will you come and see me to-morrow morning?' In a very surly tone, he replied, 'I have got my living to earn, and I can't see you after five o'clock in the morning.' 'Oh!' I answered, 'that will suit me very well, and I will be at your service, and have a cup of coffee ready for you to-morrow morning at five o'clock.' I was at the door at the appointed time, ready to let him in; his temper had led him to walk all those miles



Executed by Master Thomas Spurgeon during the Christmas holidays of 1872-3. Copied from a wood engraving in the British Workman, without the ruling of a line. The draughtsman has never had a lesson in drawing, executed this with a pen & Indian ink, without aid from any one. C. H. Spurgeon

out to my house that he might tell me of his latest grievance. It appeared that he had lost £25 for something or other that he had done, he said for the church, but we all felt that it was his own private speculation, and we were not responsible. However, he told me that he could not afford to lose such a large amount, so I counted out five £5 notes, and gave them to him. He looked at me, and asked me this question, 'Do you give me this money out of any of the church funds?' 'No,' I replied, 'I feel that you cannot afford such a loss, and though it is no concern of mine, I willingly give you the money.' I noticed a strange look come over his face, but he said very little more, and I prayed with him, and he went away.

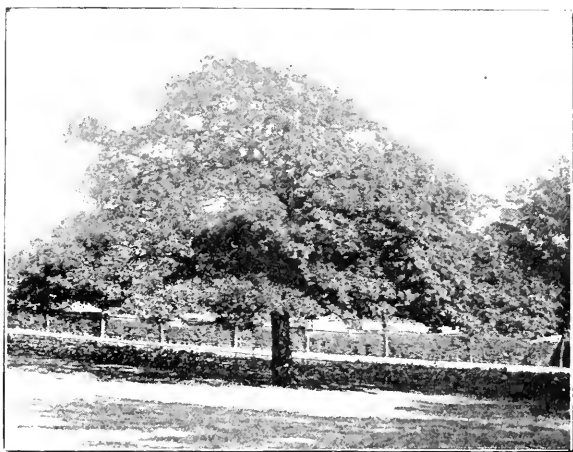
"At five o'clock in the afternoon, the man sent round for my brother to go to see him. When he returned, he said to me, 'Brother, you have killed that man by your kindness; he cannot live much longer. He confessed to me that he had broken up two churches before, and that he had come into the Tabernacle church on purpose to act in the same way, and he had specially sought to put you out of temper with him,—which he never could do,—and he told me that he was a devil, and not a Christian. I said to him, "My brother once proposed to have you as an elder of the church." He seemed very surprised, and asked me, "Did he really think so much of me as that?" I answered, "Yes, but the other elders said that you had such a dreadful temper that there would be no peace in their midst if you were brought in among them.'"

"About the middle of the prayer-meeting, a note was passed to me saying that the poor fellow had cut his throat. I felt his death terribly, and the effect of it upon the people generally was much the same as when Ananias and Sapphira were slain because of their lying unto the Holy Ghost: 'Great fear came upon all the church, and upon as many as heard these things.' I had often spoken of 'killing people by kindness,' but I never wished to have another instance of it in my own experience."

On another occasion, the students assembled under the oak heard from their beloved President the details of a discussion which he once had at Nightingale Lane with Mr. Ruskin under very different circumstances from those described in Vol. II., page 288. One of the brethren asked Mr. Spurgeon the question, "What is your view about the term 'eternal life'?" In reply, he said:—

"I do not think that 'eternal life' means merely eternal existence; nor do I believe that existence and life are the same thing, any more than I believe that death and annihilation are the same thing. I believe that a person may exist in perpetual death, and that he may not really be living at all and yet be continually existing. In that familiar passage in John iii. 36, 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God

abideth on him,' there is no notion of mere existence in the word life, otherwise the whole passage would become meaningless. I never confuse the idea of existence with that of life; but many do, even among those whom one might expect to know better. A tree has a measure of life, an animal has another measure of life, a man has a still higher measure of life, and God has a yet higher measure of life, even that eternal life which He has given to all who believe on His Son, Jesus Christ.



"THE QUESTION OAK" AT "WESTWOOD."

"Mr. Ruskin came to see me one day, many years ago, and amongst other things he said that the apostle Paul was a liar, and that I was a fool! 'Well,' I replied, 'let us keep the two things separate; so, first of all, tell me how you can prove that the apostle Paul was a liar.' 'He was no gentleman, and he was a liar, too,' answered Mr. Ruskin. 'Oh, indeed!' I rejoined, 'how do you make that out?' 'Well,' he said, 'there was a Jewish gentleman came to him, one day, and asked him a polite question, "How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?" (1 Corinthians xv. 35.) Paul began by saying to him, "Thou fool,"—which proved that the apostle was no gentleman; and then he continued, "That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die,"—which was a lie.' 'No,' I answered, 'it was not a lie; Paul was speaking the truth.' 'How do you prove that?' asked Mr. Ruskin. 'Why,' I replied, 'very easily. What is death? Death is the resolution into its original elements of any compound substance which possessed life.' Mr. Ruskin said, 'That is the most extraordinary definition of death that I ever heard, but it is true.' 'Yes,' I replied, 'it is true; and that is what happens to the seed when it dies, it is resolved into its original elements, and the living germ

which is within it becomes the centre and source of the new life that springs from it.' 'Then,' asked Mr. Ruskin, 'what do you mean when you talk of the death of the soul?' 'I mean,' I replied, 'the separation of the soul from God; it was originally with God, and when it is separated from Him, it dies to God, that is its death, but that death is not non-existence. The separation of the soul from the body is the separation from itself of that which quickened it, and it falls back into its original condition.' 'Well,' said Mr. Ruskin, 'you have proved that Paul spoke the truth, but you have not proved him to be a gentleman.' 'At all events,' I answered, 'the apostle was as much a gentleman as you were just now when you called me a fool.' 'So you are,' said Mr. Ruskin, 'for devoting your time and talents to that mob of people down at Newington when you might employ them so much more profitably upon the intellectual and cultured few, like that Jewish gentleman who came to Paul, and others whom I might name.' I replied, 'I always like to be the means of saving people whose souls are worth saving, and I am quite content to be the minister of that "mob" down at Newington, and let those who wish to do so look after the cultured and refined.'

One visitor who came to "Helensburgh House" was certainly not at all welcome, and his coming might have had very serious consequences if the beloved master of the house had not been graciously guided in his mode of dealing with the madman. Mr. Spurgeon happened to be passing the entrance-hall just as someone rapped rather loudly at the door; and, without considering who might be seeking admission in that unceremonious fashion, he opened it. In an instant, a wild-looking man, armed with a huge stick, sprang in, slammed the door, stood with his back against it, and, in a most menacing manner, announced that he had come to kill Mr. Spurgeon! The situation was extremely critical, for there was no way either to escape from the maniac or to summon assistance to get rid of him; so Mr. Spurgeon said, "You must mean my brother, his name is Spurgeon;—knowing, of course, that he could give him timely warning if there was any fear of the man going to Croydon. "Ah!" said the crazy fellow, "it is the man that makes jokes that I mean to kill." "Oh, then, you must go to my brother, for he makes jokes!" "No," he said, "I believe you are the man," and then suddenly he exclaimed, "Do you know the asylum at ——? That's where I live, and it takes ten men to hold me." Then Mr. Spurgeon saw his opportunity, and drawing himself up to his full height, he said, in his most impressive tones, "Ten men! that is nothing; you don't know how strong I am. Give me that stick." The poor creature, thoroughly cowed, handed over the formidable weapon. Seizing it, and opening the door, Mr. Spurgeon almost shouted, "If you are not out of the house this very moment, I'll break every bone in your body." The man quickly fled, someone was at once

sent to give information to the police, and it was a great relief to hear that, before long, the escaped madman was again under restraint.

Mr. Spurgeon used often to describe the encounter he had with one of his neighbours at Nightingale Lane. After a long and painful illness from gout, he was starting for a short drive, in the hope of gaining a little strength, when this gentleman came up to the carriage, and pointing to the dear sufferer's bandaged hand and foot, said, with all the scorn and contempt he could compress into the words, "'Whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth.' I would not have such a God as that." In relating the story, Mr. Spurgeon always said, "I felt my blood boil with indignation, and I answered, 'I rejoice that I have such a God as that; and if He were to chasten me a thousand times worse than this, I would still love Him; yea, though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.'"

Another time, the same gentleman was in rather a different mood, and he then said to the dear Pastor, "I don't believe in shutting myself up with a lot of people in a stuffy building; I like plenty of fresh air, and I worship the God of nature." "Yes," replied Mr. Spurgeon, who knew that his neighbour had a skittle-alley, "your god is made of wood, is he not; and his worship is carried on with a great deal of noise, isn't it? I hear you at your little game before I start for the Tabernacle on a Sunday morning."

Nightingale Lane seems to have been a favourite route for other so-called "worshippers of the God of nature," for, in one of his discourses, the Pastor thus referred to them:—"Those men who talk about natural religion, as far as I know them, have no religion at all. I have noticed that the people who say, 'We can worship God without attending any religious service, or believing in Jesus,' do not really do so. I have sometimes had an opportunity, on a Sunday, of seeing many 'worshippers of the God of nature' come down the lane where I reside. They consist, for the most part, of men who carry cages in which they try to catch birds on the common. There is another very respectable confraternity of men, who go to a place somewhere in that region, where they spend the Sabbath in the bowling-alley, and in pugilistic encounters. These might adopt the cry of our genteel sinners, 'We don't need to go into a church or chapel; we spend our Sunday in the worship of the God of nature.' And very fine worship it is! I usually find that those people who say that they worship 'the God of nature' really worship the god of *fallen* nature,—that is, the devil; not the God of the glorious nature which is spread before us in the roaring sea, the rolling flood, and the verdant meads;—no, for the most part, the men who talk in that fashion know, in their own conscience, that the god they worship is their belly, their own lusts; and they glory in their shame. Do not believe the nonsense you hear from the Sunday League

advocates, when they talk about 'worshipping the God of nature.' Do they do it? Follow any of them into their privacy, and see whether any of this fine devotion of theirs has any existence whatever."

At another service, Mr. Spurgeon thus turned to practical account the wiles of the bird-catchers who carried on their operations not far from his home :—" There is a common hard by the place where I live ; and, on Sundays, Londoners come down by scores, and occupy themselves in this way upon it. They bring with them little birds in cages, and use them to lure other birds from the sky, that they may entrap them. Only the other Sabbath, as I was going to the house of God, I saw a little robin sitting on his perch in a wire cage, and he was diligently whistling so as to attract other birds to the fowlers' snare. I assure you that it was a good lesson to me ; for I said to myself, ' These men know that it is no use for them to frighten the birds ; but if they want to catch them, they must put one of their own kind into a cage, and the little captive, by its song, attracts its fellows.' Suppose one of those fowlers should be stupid enough to put a cat into the cage, it would not allure any robins ; or suppose he was to put in an owl, that sleepy creature would not attract any larks. The arts of the bird-catcher teach us that, when God would save a sinner, He usually takes one of the same sort, first converts Him by His grace, and then sets him to preach, or teach, or sing, or to do something which attracts and allures others.'

That same common also furnished the beloved President with an illustration which he thus related to his students :—" I shall never forget the manner in which a thirsty individual once begged of me upon Clapham Common. I saw him with a very large truck, in which he was carrying an extremely small parcel, and I wondered why he had not put the parcel into his pocket, and left the machine at home. I said to him, ' It looks odd to see so large a truck for such a small load.' He stopped, and looking me seriously in the face, he said, ' Yes, sir, it is a very odd thing ; but, do you know, I have met with an odder thing than that this very day. I've been about, working and sweating all this 'ere blessed day, and till now I haven't met a single gentleman that looked as if he'd give me a pint of beer, till I saw you.' I considered that turn of the conversation very neatly managed ; and we, with a far better subject upon our minds, ought to be equally able to introduce the theme upon which our heart is set. There was an ease in the man's manner which I envied, for I did not find it quite so simple a matter to introduce my own topic to his notice ; yet, if I had been thinking as much about how I could do him good as he had upon how to obtain a drink, I feel sure I should have succeeded in reaching my point.'

There still stands, on Clapham Common, an ancient tree under which

Mr. Spurgeon preached to ten thousand persons on Lord's-day afternoon, July 10, 1859. The accompanying view is reproduced from a photograph recently taken specially for the present volume.



TREE ON CLAPHAM COMMON, WHERE C. H. SPURGEON PREACHED IN 1859.

A fortnight before the above-mentioned date, a violent storm passed over the South of London. The tree here represented was struck by lightning, and a man, who had sought shelter beneath it, was killed. Mr. Spurgeon was greatly impressed by the solemn event, and resolved to preach on the fatal spot, and to make a collection for the widow of the man who had been killed. This arrangement was duly carried out, a waggon beneath the tree serving for a pulpit, and the congregation contributing £27 10s. 4d. for the poor bereaved woman. The sermon appears in full in *The Sword and the Trowel* for May, 1897. The text was taken from Luke xii. 40, "Be ye therefore ready also;" and in commencing his discourse, the preacher said:—

"Happily for us, it is not often that men are struck dead by lightni 7.

Remember all the multitudes of men existing upon the face of the earth, then calculate the number of thunderstorms, and you will see that, after all, many of the fears which disturb our minds in time of tempest and of storm are far more groundless than we are apt to imagine. It is but here and there, and now and then, that the scathing blast smites the earth, and one of our fellow-creatures is launched into eternity. When, however, such a solemn event occurs, we ought to hear in it the voice of God, and listen to what He says to us. I thought, as I passed this tree a short time since, what a sermon it might preach if it could speak! How the rustle of its leaves would forewarn us of the stealthy footsteps of death; and, as it towers upward to the skies, how it might be regarded as a finger directing us to look toward Heaven, and seek the Lord of grace and mercy!"

Mr. Spurgeon's closing words were:—"May the Lord now add His blessing! May He grant, moreover, that a more solemn impression than I can hope to make may be made upon you, as once again you gaze upon this spot! There is, in St. Paul's Cathedral, a little chisel-mark still visible, which you may never have noticed, but which some time may be shown to you. It is the memorial of the death of a man who, being employed at work on the dome, fell down, and was dashed to pieces. What a solemn spot is *that*; and what a solemn spot is *this*! My dear hearers, ere you go away, breathe a prayer for pardon; and, as often as you pass this place, think of your past lives, and of the world to come. It is said that we often walk over our own graves without knowing it, and that we often come to other men's graves and death-places without being aware of it; but *there*, in that tree, stands the monument of the awfully-sudden death of a fellow-creature; and let it be so remembered. May God bless the widow; may He bless the orphans; and may He bless all of you! But, my dear friends, ere we go away this afternoon, will not each one of you pray for himself that his sins may be pardoned? Will you all separate, having come together in vain? I do beseech and pray you to lift up your hearts to God, and every one of you to cry, 'God be merciful to me a sinner!' Look this very instant to Christ Jesus, who died upon the cross. We cannot all hope ever to meet again until the last tremendous day; oh, may we, without one exception, meet then at the right hand of God! Amen."

One of the inmates of the study in the new "Helensburgh House," on certain days of the week, was Mr. John Lewis Keys, who was for a quarter of a century Mr. Spurgeon's secretary and literary assistant, and concerning whom the dear Pastor wrote, in the Preface to Vol. I. of *The Treasury of David*:—"The research expended on this volume would have occupied far too much of my time, had not my friend and amanuensis, Mr. John L. Keys, most diligently aided me in investigations at the British Museum, Dr. Williams' Library, and other treasuries of theological lore.

With his help, I have ransacked books by the hundred ; often, without finding a memorable line as a reward ; but, at other times, with the most satisfactory result." In succeeding volumes Mr. Spurgeon repeated his testimony to the value of Mr. Keys' help in the great task happily completed in 1885 ; and he also mentioned the many courtesies shown to himself, through his secretary, while searching for extracts in Church of England and other libraries.



MR. J. L. KEYS

All Mr. Spurgeon's publications, from 1867 to 1891 passed through the hands of Mr. Keys ; and he not only read the proofs of the sermons, *Sword and Trowel*, Almanacks, and many books issued during that period, but he also contributed several interesting articles to the Magazine ; and he was, for a great part of the time, engaged in evangelistic and pastoral labours at Wimbledon, Whitstable, and Streatham. By Mr. Spurgeon's "promotion to glory," on January 31st, 1892, Mr. Keys lost his best earthly friend ; but, for seven years more, he struggled on, amid failing health and many difficulties, till, on January 7, 1899, he entered into rest.

"Old George," as he was long called, would have been kindly mentioned if his dear master had been spared to complete the present record, and this chapter may fitly be concluded with some particulars concerning Mr. Spurgeon's faithful servant for so many years. After the funeral of Mr. Thorne (father of Mrs. Spurgeon's companion), his butler said to the Pastor, "Ah, sir ! I closed my old master's eyes, and now Pil-garlic's occupation is gone." "Well, George, what do you say to coming to take care of me ?" "Do you really mean it, sir ?" "Yes, of course I do." "Oh !

then I'll dance for joy, for nothing would please me more, and I'll serve you faithfully as long as you will let me stay with you."

Mr. Spurgeon often said that George reminded him of Mr. Pickwick's Sam Weller, and he certainly had many quaint sayings which that worthy might have uttered. If anyone asked him his name, he answered, "George Lovejoy. Don't you know what the apostle says, 'The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy'?" "You're a rum 'un, George," his dear master often said to him; and he would reply, "Yes, sir; there were only two of us came over in three ships, and the other one was drowned." "Well, George, how are you this morning?" was often Mr. Spurgeon's enquiry; and the invariable answer was, "First-rate, sir; as fresh as a salt fish." A glance at the



GEORGE LOVEJOY

accompanying portrait will show that George's hair was much darker than his beard and moustache, which his master playfully suggested was the result of having used his jaws more than his brains; and, on one occasion at least, Mr. Spurgeon said that his name could be properly spelt without using one of the right letters,—thus, *Jawj*.

"No man is a hero to his valet," was never true concerning Mr. Spurgeon. Everyone who came under his influence felt the power of his gracious character; and, while there was never in him any affectation of pride or superiority, all felt instinctively that they were in the presence of a truly noble and kingly man. There was no more sincere mourner, among the tens of thousands at Newington and Norwood in February, 1892, than the faithful "Old George," who had been superannuated through increasing infirmities which he was unwilling to confess; and, after continuing to the bereaved mistress such service as he was able occasionally to render, he also was "called home" on January 6, 1898.

CHAPTER LXXIII.

A Traveller's Letters Home.

Standing where Satan's seat is, in the midst of ten thousand idols, I beseech those who worship God in the spirit to wrestle in prayer for times of refreshing, that all lands may know that Jesus Christ is Lord. How long shall the Name of Jesus be blasphemed by the idolatries of Antichrist? It may be that the times of darkness will last till the children of light cry out bitterly, day and night, by reason of soul-anguish. Then will God avenge His own elect, and that speedily. As I have trodden the Appian Way, I have rejoiced that Jesus, whom Paul preached, is yet alive, and is certain, in due season, to put down His enemies. Already He has desolated the Colosseum, where His faithful martyrs poured forth their blood; the pagan power has fallen, and so also shall the papal, and all other which opposes His Kingdom. Let us proclaim a spiritual crusade, and set up our banners by redoubled prayer. It is certain that supplication produces marvellous results in Heaven and earth; its power is proven in our own personal experience, and throughout the history of the Church. Brethren, LET US PRAY — C. H. S., *in letter from Rome, to Tabernacle church and friends in general*

INTRODUCTION, BY MRS. C. H. SPURGEON.



IN 1868, my travelling days were done. Henceforth, for many years, I was a prisoner in a sick-chamber, and my beloved had to leave me when the strain of his many labours and responsibilities compelled him to seek rest far away from home. These separations were very painful to hearts so tenderly united as were ours, but we each bore our share of the sorrow as heroically as we could, and softened it as far as possible by constant correspondence. "God bless you," he wrote once, "and help you to bear my absence. Better that I should be away well, than at home suffering,—better to your loving heart, I know. Do not fancy, even for a moment, that absence could make our hearts colder to each other; our attachment is now a perfect union, indissoluble for ever. My sense of your value, and experience of your goodness, are now united to the deep passion of love which was there at the first alone. Every year casts out another anchor to hold me even more firmly to you, though none was needed even from the first. May my own Lord, whose chastening hand has necessitated this absence, give you a secret inward recompense in soul, and also another recompense in the healing of the body! All my heart remains in your keeping."

It is marvellous to me, as I survey the yearly packets of letters which are now such precious treasures, how my husband could have managed, amidst the bustle and excitement of foreign travel, to have written so much and so often. I many times begged him to spare himself in this matter, but he constantly assured me that it delighted him to do it; he said, "Every word I write is a pleasure to me, as much

as ever it can be to you ; it is only a lot of odds and ends I send you, but I put them down as they come, so that you may see it costs me no labour, but is just a happy scribble. Don't fret because I write you so many letters, it is such a pleasure to tell out my joy." Every day his dear messages came to me, except, of course, when a long railway journey intervened ;—and, sometimes, as an unexpected gladness, he would post two in one day, that I might be comforted concerning him. On an important tour, like the one recorded in the following chapters, the letters would be illustrated by many amusing pen-and-ink sketches, of people, costumes, landscapes, trees, wells, or anything which particularly struck him. Plans of the rooms he occupied in the various hotels were very frequent, and enabled me better to imagine the comfort or otherwise of his surroundings. At one house at Nice, there was a delightful little platform or terrace opening out of his bedroom, and of this he sent a most elaborate sketch, so that I might share his pleasure in such an unusual addition to a sleeping apartment. "I am like Peter on the housetop," he wrote, "and though no sheet is let down to me, yet have I learned much that the sheet taught the apostle, and I count nothing common or unclean, no view unhallowed, no scenery to be avoided lest it should turn me away from communion with God. He has sanctified sea and mountain, house-top and street to me ; and when my heart is devout, all these are helps and not hindrances to fellowship with Himself. I can little sympathize with those ultra-spiritually-minded people, who are so unspiritual that only the closed eye can enable them to think of their God."

I have said that the letters were "illustrated", but I think *illuminated* would be a better word to use ; for, looking at them after these many years, with overflowing eyes, the little sketches seem to bear a rainbow light within them, and to sparkle with colours which only a devoted love could have blended. They remind me of the patient care bestowed upon the Psalters and Missals of the Middle Ages, when the hand of some pious man toiled day after day to decorate the vellum pages,—simply to prove the love of his heart, and witness to the truth of his devotion. My beloved himself must have entertained some such feeling ; for, at the end of a series of droll representations of women's head-gear which he had noticed in the streets of Botzen, he thus writes, "Now, sweetheart, may these trifles amuse you ; *I count it a holy work to draw them*, if they cause you but one happy smile." That I smiled on them then, and weep over them now, is but a natural consequence of the more complete separation which God has willed for us,—he, dwelling in the land of glory,—I, still tarrying amid the shadows of earth ;—but I verily believe that, when I join him, "beyond the smiling and the weeping," there will be tender remembrances of all these details of earthly love, and of the plenitude of blessing which it garnered in our united lives. Surely we shall talk of all these

things, in the pauses of adoring worship and of joyful service. There must be sweet converse in Heaven between those who loved, and suffered, and served together here below. Next to the rapture of seeing the King in His beauty, and beholding the face of Him who redeemed us to God by His blood, must be the happiness of the communion of saints, in that place of inconceivable blessedness which God has prepared for them that love Him. As Bishop Bickersteth finely puts it, in his description of Heaven.—

"Every sight and sound
Ravished the sense: and every loving heart
Reflected joy to joy, and light to light,
Like crystals in a cave flashing with fire,
And multiplied our bliss a million-fold."

The two following chapters consist of extracts from the daily letters of my husband during his holiday journey to Rome, Naples, and Pompeii. I have given them *verbatim*, only withholding allusions to domestic concerns and personal matters, and condensing to a minimum the sweet love-talk which in great measure helped me to bear the pain of these separations. I have almost grudged to do this; it has been a grief to fold up his precious words and hide their rare beauty from other eyes, for they shed so lovely a light upon his character; but, in many instances, they were too sacred to be reproduced. Every here and there, I have allowed a sentence or two to reveal a glimpse of his great, tender, and true heart, as nothing else could have done; but the rest I have locked up again in the secret chambers of my memory.

The letters themselves are not set forth as examples of elegant style or well-rounded periods, or even of graceful phraseology; they are simply a loving husband's daily notes to his sick wife, a record of his journeyings gladly and faithfully persevered in with the sole object of pleasing her, and relieving her sorrowful loneliness.

I hope they may interest many, and even instruct some. Recent tourists in Italy's classic clime will be pleasantly reminded of their own travels, and be able to trace the progress that has been made during the past twenty-five years in the great work of excavating old Rome, and the buried cities on the Mediterranean shore; and all who read them will, I trust, feel with me that they are worthily enshrined in these pages, which will bear witness to his spotless, beautiful life "till the day dawn, and the shadows flee away."

EXTRACTS FROM MY HUSBAND'S LETTERS.

Our party met punctually at Victoria, and our journey to Dover consisted of parentheses of sunshine and paragraphs of mist. The woods look as if they were expiring amid the tears of nature. The sea was not like either sort of the prophet's figs, but was inclined to be irritable without having vigour enough to work itself into

actual passion. Many suffered much from the marine malady; and, though we escaped it, yet we were glad to be again on the land which was meant for man; the sea is evidently only designed for fishes and sailors. We were asked our names at Calais; and, having answered to that first question of the Catechism, we were allowed to tread the soil of Republican France. We were soon satisfactorily "restaurated", and *en route* for Brussels, *via* Lille, Tournay, etc. The whole land is like a neatly-kept garden, from which the tillers derive all the produce possible. We had a good journey, reached our hotel at six o'clock, dined, then walked down to the Arcade which you will remember, and are now in our rooms, cosy and comfortable. The weather is delicious;—bright, clear, and balmy;—no fires needed; in fact, I am too warmly clad. The atmosphere is dry and light, and gives me new life. It seems very selfish to be writing thus to my dear prisoner at home, yet she loves me so much that the surest way to make her happy is to prove that I am enjoying my holiday. All my love I send thee; may the everlasting arms encompass thee, even the arms of my God and thine!

We were up early, and walked to the Botanical Gardens, and then on to the Church of St. Gudule, with its wonderful painted windows, some of them most ancient, others modern, but exquisite. These last represent a Jew stealing consecrated wafers, while other Jews are sticking daggers into them for the purpose of making them bleed. To me, it does not seem worse to carve wafers than to eat them; but the difference between tweedledum and tweedledee is sometimes immense. We then drove to the *Musée Wiertz*, which I have before described to you. It is certainly a very wonderful display of one man's powers, and a singular combination of the playful and the terrible. We saw all, and then went to the Luxembourg Station to continue our journey, by Waterloo, to Namur. O "days of auld lang syne," how ye flashed before me, especially when we rode along by the Meuse and Huy to Liège, and thence to Chaudfontaine, Verviers, and Aix-la-Chapelle! Alas! my dearest bides at home; and I, like a lone knight, can but remember the ladye of my love, for she rides not at my side as aforetime! The journey was exquisite for weather, temperature, and scenery; but it was long, and we were very hungry; so, when we sat down to table at 7.30, it was with the serious resolution to be avenged for our long fast.

This morning, I was up at six o'clock, revising a sermon. It is now raining for the first time since we left home; and this is convenient, for it makes it easier to remain indoors at work. Thus far, all has gone well, and we are grateful. To love God when all is smooth and sweet, is but the love of swine who know their feeder. The true test is to be able to bless His smiting hand, and cry, "Though He slay

me, yet will I trust in Him." You, my darling, have been enabled to do this; and though the weary, weary pain bows you down, you will be able to possess your soul in patience even unto the end. The Lord will comfort you with His choice consolations in the day of your afflictions. Some of those well-ripened apples which housewives bring forth amid the chill, leafless days of winter, God hath in reserve for thee; wherefore, be of good courage, my sweetheart!

It rained till we left Cologne yesterday, when we travelled to Mayence along the banks of the Rhine. The light was gone by 5.30, so that we saw nothing beyond Andernach; the sky was leaden, and the atmosphere hazy. The woods, however, were ablaze with autumn fires, and the tints were inexpressibly lovely;—alas! the loveliness of decay. We reached here at 8.30, had tea, then crossed the bridge of boats, and returning, went up into the skies to bed (alluding to the height of the hotel).

Munich.—Yesterday, we were on the railroad all day long. We left Mayence at 10.20, and did not reach this city till 9.30. The first part of the road was tame, then followed a chapter of forests with their matchless pomp of autumnal glory. Anon, we mounted uphill into glens and mountain-valleys, which were presently succeeded by a river, with towns growing like osiers on its banks. This must be a superb city, and I want to spend to-day in seeing it; but we are in a fix. The only train over the Brenner leaves here at eleven at night. Innsbruck is the town at the foot of the pass on this side, and the train reaches and leaves there at three o'clock in the morning. So, you see, if we go on a bit, we shall be no better off. To think of going over a pass in the dark, seems to me to be a wilful blasphemy of nature, if not of nature's God! We must find out if it cannot be managed otherwise than as a deed of darkness. We must have a carriage, if possible; and see the marvels of the mountains.

This is an artistic city in all ways, a certain Greek-art appearance strikes one everywhere; not a sham, but a real reproduction of antiquity. We have been to the Glyptothek, a fine museum of statuary; but, really, after one has seen a few thousand nude figures, one feels content without any more anatomical models in stone. Thence, we visited a large picture-gallery,—which I think almost equal to the Louvre,—full of masterpieces of most of the ancient schools. We have been into a marvellous basilica, with pillars of the richest marble, and a ceiling of golden mosaic; also to the cathedral, to see the tomb of a German Emperor, a boy of the olden time, who has a bronze memorial of the noblest fashion. Then we entered the studio of a renowned sculptor, and saw the plaster casts, the stone being chiselled, and the finished statues,—very interesting this. There is enough

left for two or three days' enjoyment, but we must leave it; and I scarcely regret this, for the weather is very damp and depressing. After all enquiries, I find we are compelled to go to-night at 11 o'clock, and pursue our weary way over the pass in the dark. Horses would require two days, and the roads are said to be in bad condition. "What can't be cured, must be endured;" so I say, "Southward Ho! at any price." My heart flies to my wifey; I have just kissed my hand to her. God bless her! Loads of love I telegraph by the soul-wire.

The Brenner is passed. We had some very uncomfortable experiences; the first part of the way, the guard wanted a coupon from us about every hour, and at Kuffstein we were hauled out of our nest, marched into the Austrian custom-house, made to wait, shivering, about thirty minutes, and then packed into a poor seedy carriage, cold and miserable, to continue our journey. Botzen was reached at last, but we were all so weary that we were glad to go into our rooms to rest till dinner. Since then, we have walked round the old-fashioned town, and under its long-arched lines of shops. We have also heard service in the cathedral opposite to our hotel; and very fine was the music, and very quaint the sight of a great crowd in the dark, except where a few had candles to see to read their mass-books. Do you remember this old inn (Kaiser Krone), where Emperors and Popes have lodged? It is a singular building; our rooms are on the same floor as the *salle*, but we have to go up, and then down to them. I am weary, and am looking forward to to-morrow's rest.

Sabbath eve.—This has been a very gracious, happy, restful day. Did I but know that you are better, I don't think I should have more to wish, except your company. We had a delicious morning service together;—read Psalm xxii., and sang, "Come, let us sing the song of songs," and "Where God doth dwell." It was indeed a season of refreshing. Then we saw a service at the cathedral. Large and devout congregations assemble here at each hour from five a.m. to five p.m. I have never seen any Romish place so well attended. Every person in the town seemed to go to one of the hourly services, and very attentive and earnest they appeared to be. We looked in several times, and twice heard a kind of litany, in German, by the whole congregation, led by a layman in common dress. It reminded me of a prayer-meeting after service, for mass was over, and the altar-lights were put out, and then prayer broke out among all the people. After dinner, we walked up a mountain's side in the bright sun's genial warmth, and what a view we had! Snowy Alps, and dark forests, and then, lower down, the meadows and the terraced vines, and lower yet, the plain of the Adige and its villages. Our path led us by a series of shrines, similar to those at Varallo, but smaller, and at the end of the path was a "Calvary."

We had sweet communion together here, and great enjoyment of God's presence. I am so much better in mind; I feel more elastic, light, and clear of forebodings. I now expect good news from my darling, whereas before I have felt sure of gloomy tidings.

Hotel Barbese, Venice.—God be thanked for even the twinkling stars of better news in the letter I have just received from your dear self! It has poured with rain all day; indeed, they say it has rained for three whole weeks in these parts. We left Botzen at six o'clock, driving through mist, cloud, and deluges above, and through wide, far-reaching floods upon either side. We only stayed two hours at Verona, but I had the joy of receiving your letter there. On to Venice, found it better, but still very bad and wet. Had a gondola. Our rooms are very good, but an evil smell pervades the place; whether it is the canals in general, or these rooms in particular, we cannot tell. A waiter, who has just come up, says it is the *tapis*, which is new; this is possible, but the nuisance is none the better for that. Alas! the rain changes all things, and Venice looks sad in her sodden state. We must hope for improvement.

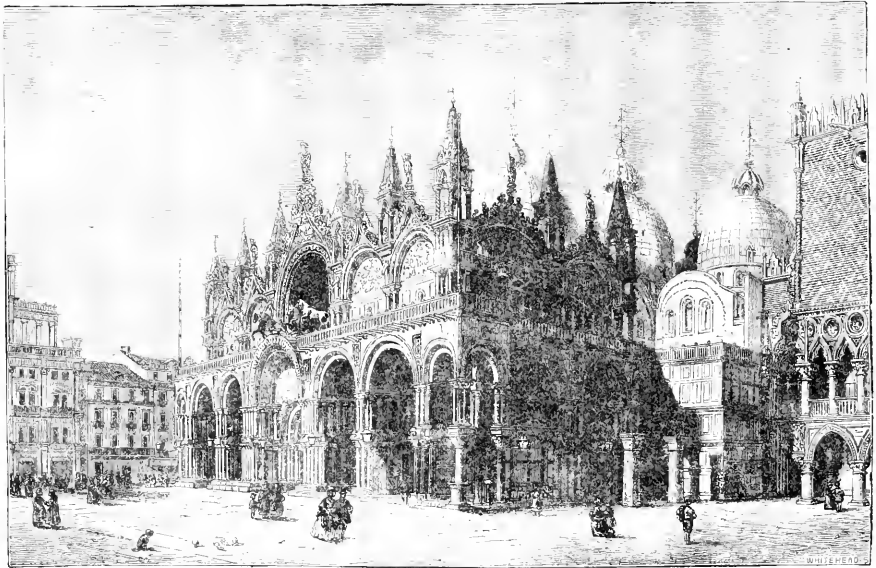
After a splendid night's rest, I awoke at six o'clock, full of good spirits, and revised a sermon. After breakfast, we had a gondola, and went along the Grand Canal.



IN A GONDOLA ON THE GRAND CANAL.

Glorious! About eleven, the tide turned, and rain began again, so we went to St. Mark's, and saw the grand old cathedral, which is the same as ever, but needs sunshine to perfect it. Thence to the Doge's Palace,—you know all the details of these places. The rain poured down when we got under the black cover of the

gondola; but it was a delightful experience to be so sheltered, and yet to be moving through the floods. We went to the Jesuits' Church, that fine marble one in the poorer part of the city;—you remember the curtains and carpet all reproduced in marble. Then we explored a glass manufactory, this was very interesting; they make mosaics, and mirrors, and chandeliers of the fine Venice glass, very wonderful to look upon. Still it rained, and the water was over St. Mark's Square in front of



ST. MARK'S CATHEDRAL, VENICE.

the cathedral. Nevertheless, we visited Santa Maria Gloriosa, where is Canova's pyramidal tomb, and marble enough to stock a city; and then to Santa Maria del Salute, opposite to our hotel. I have seen all these before, yet was still very much interested.

It is pitiable to see the poor people look soaked and only half-alive. Only the pigeons of St. Mark's are gay; they fly as a cloud, and swarm on the windows, and even enter the rooms of the houses all round the square; one might almost tread on them, they are so tame. The unhappy vendors of shells and miniature gondolas will, I fear, be half-starved, and the flower-girls look very downhearted. The water now is over the paths, and up to the doors; yet Venice is not a bad place in wet weather, since you can keep dry in your gondola, and can look out through the windows.

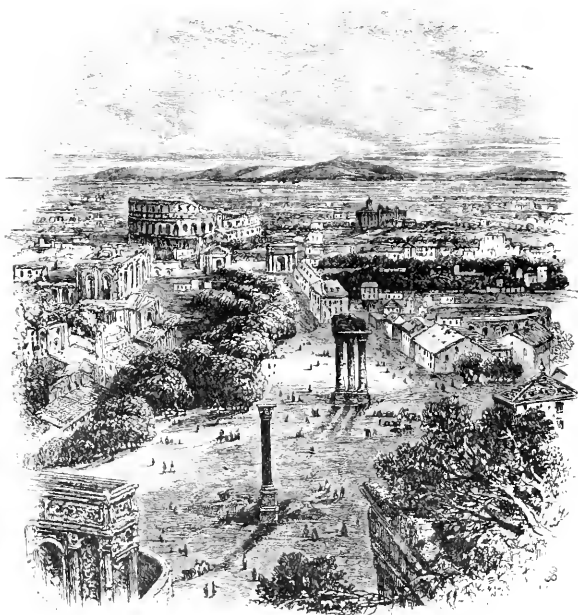
6 a.m.—I awake grateful for another night's peaceful rest, only to find myself very badly bitten by mosquitoes. A mosquito is the most terrible of beasts. A lion delights in blood, but he does not suck it from living animals; he does not carefully prolong their tortures. A viper poisons, but he is generally content with one use of his fangs; but these small-winged serpents bite in scores of places in succession. My hands are a series of burning mountains. The creatures are as nearly omnipresent as Satan, which means that, though a mosquito cannot be everywhere, yet no mortal can be sure that he is not near him, or tell where he is not. Curtains are a delusion, pastilles are a snare; the little enemies are irritated by such attempts to escape their malice, and give you double punishment. O Italy! I have shed my blood for thy sake, and feel a love of thee (or something else) burning in my veins! The sooner I am away from thee, O fair Venice, the better, for thou dost deluge me by day, and devour me by night! I wonder how my two companions have fared; I shall go, by-and-by, and look for their remains! I have opened my windows, and the pests are pouring in, eager and hungry; but, as I am up and dressed, there will be no more of me available for them at present.

To-day has been charming, and we have been in the gondola most of its lovely hours. The sights we saw were nothing compared with the delicious rowing in the city itself. Could you but have been there, it would have been as much of Paradise as this earth can ever yield. Venice decays, but her autumn is fair. The fear is, lest the "restorers" should come and deface her. We went to the Arsenal, but models of ships and guns would not interest you. Then to the Greek Church, and the Carmelites', and the Academy of Arts;—saw hosts of Madonnas and St. Sebastians, I am quite weary of them. The outside of Venice is *the* treat, the beauty, the enjoyment.

We are off to-morrow very early for Florence; the air is loaded with mosquitoes, and my hands are "a mask of sores," as Mrs. Gamp would say, and both Mr. Passmore and I suffer much. Venice cannot be endured with these torments.

We left Venice at 7.50, and proceeded to Bologna, which was reached by 12.10, after an uninteresting ride among perpetual trees festooned with vines,—muddy earth,—flooded fields,—and disconsolate maize-stalks. From 1.20 to 5 o'clock, we were traversing the mountains between Bologna and Pistoia, and a more marvellous road it has never been my lot to see. It was up, up, up, by the side of a torrent, which the rail crossed and recrossed, with rugged scenery of a sublime character on either hand. Then, in commencing the descent, we saw Pistoia, and the great plain of the Arno far below, like a raised map. It was a truly wonderful view, but was soon gone; and we rushed down zigzags, and saw it again, and lost it every few

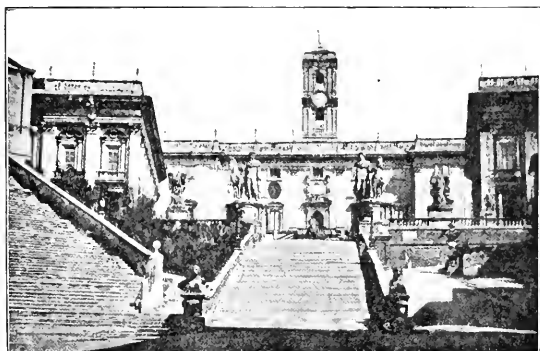
minutes. It is almost miraculous that a train can keep to the rails upon such descents. Down below at Pistoia, we found that the floods had done great damage; but the railway was all right, so we reached Florence about seven o'clock. All this is very uninteresting to read, but it was pleasant to experience, while good companionship and the sunshine made the whole journey enjoyable. Though wearied by the long hours of travelling, I am in every way more fresh and free from depression. May the Lord enrich me also in spiritual blessings, and send me back more capable of serving Him than I have ever been! We are off early to-morrow, so now, my darling, may God watch over thee, bless thee, and keep thee, and restore me to thee in joy and peace! Oceans of love, and as many kisses for you as the sand on the sea-shore. My next letter will be from "the city of the seven hills," if all is well.



"THE CITY OF THE SEVEN HILLS."

We are in Rome. Let a man say what he will, there is a thrill passes through his soul, at the thought of being in Rome, that he cannot experience anywhere else, except in the city of our Lord,—Jerusalem. There are interests and associations that cluster about "the eternal city" that a man must feel, if he has any soul at

all. You remember that, last year, we started off for our first day's sight-seeing without a guide, and wandered about without knowing whither we went; this time, I can act as guide and interpreter, and am able to observe much which, on a former occasion, I had not noticed. To-day, we went down the Corso, and up the Capitol.



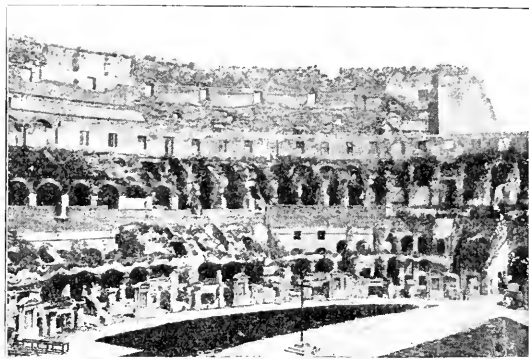
THE CAPITOL, ROME

There are new excavations at its foot. We passed down the other side to the Forum, where they are still digging. Rome of the olden time is buried beneath itself, under its own ruins, and the Forum lies some ten, fifteen, and in some places thirty feet of earth below the present level. I soon found myself on what I knew to be the Via Sacra, along which the triumphal processions passed when the great generals returned from war, and climbed the Capitol in state; and it was a memorable thing to stand before the Arch of Titus, and gaze upon its bas-reliefs. There is



BAS-RELIEF ON THE ARCH OF TITUS, ROME

Titus returning from the siege of Jerusalem, with the seven-branched golden candlestick, and the silver trumpets; and, while these things stand there, it is idle for infidels to say that the Bible is not true. It is good history. Nobody doubts what is written in stone upon the Arch of Titus, but the same story is found in the Book; and the more discoveries that are made of ancient cities, especially in Palestine, the more will the truth of the Book be confirmed, and the record upon stone will be found to tally with what is written on the tablets of God's Word.



INTERIOR OF THE COLOSSEUM, ROME

Then we came to the Colosseum. What a place it is! Two-thirds of it are gone, and yet enough remains wherewith to build a great city! I climbed to the very top. Under an arch of one of the great corridors we sat down, and sang, "Am I a soldier of the cross?" "I'm not ashamed to own my Lord," and "Jesu's tremendous name;" and then I preached a little sermon from the text, "Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations He hath made in the earth;" then we prayed, and sang, "Ashamed of Jesus?" Just then, two persons went by, and said, in broad American, "Don't let us disturb you." To which I answered, "Come and join," but they replied, "Our time is too short," so we sang the Doxology, and went on. Pretty bold this, in such a public place, but very sweet to be remembered. "Boylston" rolled along the vaulted tunnels like a battle-song.

We went down to the Appian Way, and on to the baths of Titus. By a mistake, I took the party up a lane, and through the wrong gate; but, after all, this was fortunate, for it brought us to the top of the immense structure; and, looking down, we saw the rooms which before I had only seen from below, and this view gave us a better idea of their vastness and mystery. The building is a huge ruin, built upon a ruin. Nero had a golden palace here, but when Titus came into power, he buried it. Its roof was made of great arches, massive and strong, so

he bored holes through them, and poured in rubbish till the place was filled up, and then he built his baths on the top of all. *His* work is ruined; but now, part of the palace below has been dug out, and they have found gems of art, enough to fill hundreds of museums. Getting to the right entrance, we came across the custodian, an old wounded soldier, who showed us over the whole place, as far as practicable, telling us all he knew, pointing out every fresco, and putting a delightful zest into it for us all. It is a place of marvels! Its passages and rooms are countless, vast, weird, and most impressive; one could spend a week there, and then begin again. The excavations have brought to light treasures of porphyry, marble, and statues; and the paintings and frescoes of eighteen hundred years ago are as fresh as if they were painted yesterday. Your guide has a long pole, into which he screws another long pole with a lighted candle at the end, this he holds up as high as possible, and you see the paintings on the roof of Nero's palace. There are said to be two hundred rooms still unexcavated, and no one knows what treasures of art they may conceal. Strange to say, there is yet another house beneath this golden palace, for Nero built over the house of Mecenas, the friend of Horace; and, after digging deep down, they have come to the mosaic pavements of the first structure erected on this extraordinary spot. I want a bigger head, to take all these wonders in, and hold my thoughts!

After all this, we went a little further, to the Palace of the Cæsars, which is a mile and a-half round, and is being excavated. All is ruined, but it is so far opened up as to show the lower rooms, and the first, or Imperial floor. It consisted of many palaces, and would take a month to explore. In one part, I saw rooms just dug out, as fresh as when originally decorated, and remarkably like the Pompeian house in the Crystal Palace. There was Cæsar's great hall, the place of his throne, the bath of the harem, the library, the academy or residence for philosophers, and the rooms for the Pretorian guard. In fact, the whole Palatine Hill is a palace; and as they dig down, they come to vast chambers and corridors which seem endless. One of these, quite as long as our Nightingale Lane, has its mosaic pavement all complete; we looked down from a great height upon it, and there were opened places far below that. The walls are usually seven to ten feet thick, so the work must be very heavy. I should think all kinds of marble in the world can be picked up here; it is just a vast quarry! What heaps of broken wine-jars,—the champagne bottles of the Cæsars! It is a mountain of ruins of porphyry, alabaster, and all precious things! From its top you see other great ruins of temples, basilicas, palaces, and theatres!

Then the guide said, "Now you must come and see the baths of Caracalla." I was bewildered, lost, confounded; but I went, and found a building more than a mile in length, which beat all we had seen before, and made me feel as if my senses would give way. These enormous baths could accommodate 1,600 persons at a

time; they were in tiers, one for men, another for women, the third for slaves. There were hot baths, cold baths, steam baths, swimming baths; and all these were floored with mosaics which we saw uncovered as we stood there. The roof was destroyed by the Goths; and when it fell in, it smashed the floor; but here and there great portions—as big as our lawn—are left intact, and one could see the lovely patterns of the mosaic.—each room different. The huge brick walls still stand, but the marble facing is almost all gone. I think no living man can conceive what the place must have been in its glory. I needed to go to bed, to sleep off my stupor of wonder! I am foolish to try to write about it. It is like a tadpole describing a sea! The Farnese family have taken the fine statues and other treasures to Naples; but there are acres yet to be dug out, in which, doubtless, many more are buried, but it is too great an expense to dig away very fast.



ST. PETER'S, ROME

I had one delicious half-hour during the day. I sat down alone opposite to St. Peter's, and felt as if in Elysium. The snow gone, the sun shining, and on the great obelisk I saw words which cheered my soul; they were these, "Christ conquers, Christ reigns, Christ rules, Christ defends His people from all evil." The Lord be praised; this is true, and the Pope and all the world shall know it! I love my love

amidst all these great thoughts. She is my palace, my throne, my empress, my Rome, my world; yet I have more, my Saviour, my Heaven! Bless you, my own!

To-day is the Sabbath, and has been up till now most sweetly calm and happy. We had our little service, with breaking of bread, and the Lord was with us. I read a sermon, and our song and prayer were "in the spirit." May it please the Lord of peace to give the like holy rest to my beloved! We then walked on the Pincian, where there are few people during the day, but lovely groves, and beds of roses, with seats in every corner, and all Rome at one's feet. It was truly Sabbatic. All that nature and art can do, is to be seen in these gardens, where the loveliest statues look down upon you, and fountains ripple to tunes of peace, and aromatic trees breathe perfume. A statue of Jochebed laying Moses in his ark of bulrushes among the reeds, struck me as charming to the last degree. It stood as the centre of a fountain, reeds and water-lilies grew at the rocky base, and the ripples of the little hidden jets made wavelets round the ark. Can you imagine it? Nothing in modern art has pleased me more,—perhaps nothing so much. This has been a blessed day to me, and I have been feeling so well; I almost tremble lest it should be too good to continue.

Another day of wonders! This morning, we drove to the great amphitheatre of Marcellus, which once held 20,000 persons, and is far older than the Colosseum. It is buried for fourteen feet, and much built over and hidden; around it is a market for the poor, where I saw baskets full of cigar-ends which had no doubt been picked up in the street, and were being sold to be smoked in pipes. What would Marcellus have thought of this? Then we saw the long covered way which led from the theatre to the baths of Agrippa,—a great colonnade, of which some pillars are visible, and others are built into the houses of the street which occupies its place. From thence to the Jews' quarter, where the same use of old stones is apparent; capitals, friezes, cornices, and all sorts of marbles are let into the walls of the dwellings. Ah! the cruelties the Jews have suffered in that Ghetto, the barbarities which have there been inflicted upon God's ancient people! Their district is often flooded by the Tiber; and, on one occasion, when they made an appeal to the papal authorities, because their houses were ten or twelve feet under water, the only answer they received was that the water would do the Jews good! There was a law in Rome, only lately repealed, that a hundred men and fifty women from the Jewish quarter must go to the Church of St. Angelo every Sunday, and they were driven there with whips; and if one of them went to sleep, there was a whip to wake him up, that he might hear himself and his forefathers bitterly abused. On certain days of the Carnival, the Jews were obliged to run races in the Corso, stripped of almost

all their clothing, and then the people showered execrations and curses upon them. Time would fail to tell of their sufferings and privations, besides which they were forced to pay large sums of money to their oppressors. Matters have mended somewhat lately, and they are relieved from many of the most cruel persecutions of former days; but they are oppressed still, and I was greatly moved when, in the Church in the Ghetto, I saw this message from the Lord plainly set forth before them, "All day long I have stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people."

To-day we went several miles along the Appian Way. What bliss ever to see it! On both sides, for many miles, it is skirted by tombs, temples, *columbaria*, and ruins of villas in continuous lines. It is a British Museum ten miles long! I felt a strange joy in walking along the same road which Paul trod, when the brethren from Rome came to meet him. From it can be seen Tusculum and Tivoli, and the long line of the Claudian aqueduct, on arches all the way from the mountains into Rome, as also the temple of Romulus, and the great circus of Maxentius. What a world of wonders! We went as far as the Casale Rotundo, a round tomb so large that, being full of rubbish, there is a house, and stables, and an olive garden on the top. We wanted to investigate, so climbed up, and were rewarded by the sight of a family of very scantily-clothed children; their mother and an old woman were baking maize bread in a hole in the wall of the tomb. They had kneaded it in a wheelbarrow, and the children looked as if they needed it, too. *Bono joko!*

On our way back, when nearly as far as the old walls, we turned down a lane to visit the catacombs of Calixtus. Candles were provided, and we went down to the second tier; there are five of these, one below another. I do not know how far we went, but it seemed miles;—passages just wide enough for me to pass through, opening into rooms every now and then, and with many cross-roads where one could soon be lost. Here were countless graves, here and there skeletons, emblems, places for lamps, frescoes of ancient date, and many interesting memorials. It was a new scene to me, but deeply solemn and touching. Think of it,—that this was only one set of chambers and passages, and that there was one above, and three deeper down! There are from five to six graves, one above the other, in each passage, and the whole place is full right along. These tombs are open in most cases, for the doors or stones which closed them are taken away to museums. This is the best and most convenient catacomb for tourists to see; but there are, I believe, sixty others. They have no Popery in them, and I would sooner live and die in them than live in this city of Babylon. It is nothing less than what the Bible calls it; it is full of idols, filthy rag, bone, and rubbish worship of the most abominable kind. I have cursed it all, as Paul did those who preach "another gospel."

Then we drove to St. John Lateran, "the mother of all churches," and I shall here only dare to write of one thing which, to my dying day, I shall never forget. I do not know that I ever felt my blood boil so with indignation or my heart melt so much with pity as when I saw the Santa Scala, down which our blessed Lord is said to have come from Pilate's hall. It was a pitiable sight to see old people, grey-headed men, young women, and little children with their mothers, crawling up and



SANTA SCALA, ROME

down this staircase on their knees, kissing the bottom step, and touching it with their forehead, and doing likewise to the middle and top steps, because they say our Saviour fainted at those places. As I stood there, I could only pray that another Luther might arise, and thunder forth the fact that men are not justified by works, but by faith alone. It was an awful thought to me that all these poor creatures should believe that they gained a hundred days' indulgence and the pardon of their sins every time they crawled up that staircase, and that every step their knees kneeled on meant so many days less of purgatory for them. The stairs are covered with wood, which has been three times renewed, having been worn away by the

knees of the votaries ! My heart feels all on a blaze with righteous anger, O miserable world, thus to dishonour the ever-blessed Lamb ! O infinite mercy, which permits such insulters to live ! I have seen them adoring thigh-bones, skulls, arms, and hands ;—yes, actually *adoring* these things as if they were Divine ! Pagan Rome never went this length.

We went to St. Peter's to finish the day with music, and it was fine indeed ; but I was jostled in a crowd of people so highly perfumed with garlic, that I soon made my escape to the outskirts to have another look round the great joss-house. Here I learned some English history, for I saw Canova's tomb to the memory of James III., Charles III., and Henry IX., Kings of England ! Ask the boys if they ever read of them. They were the last of the Stuarts ;—the Pretender,—his son, Charles Edward, or " bonnie Prince Charlie,"—and his son. What hundreds of other things I have seen this day, cannot now, and perhaps never will be told. I have stayed up late to put this down for fear of forgetting it, and also because it may be I shall have less time to-morrow when preparing to preach. God bless thee, dearest, and be thou glad, with me, that no " strong delusion to believe a lie " has fallen upon us. To-day has taught me a year's learning. The Lord make it useful to His Church !

I send a picture of the Pope's coachman. What a swell he is ! I think you will like the portrait of a brigand's wife. It is very well executed, and if you like it too much to part with it, be sure to keep it. The fellow in red is awful ; these *confratelli* are in all colours according to the degree of the buried person. They are good fellows, who bury the dead "*pour l'amour de Dieu*," and they belong to all ranks in Rome. They cover themselves up in this manner to avoid recognition, and escape praise. They are universally respected, but look horribly ugly. I think they will make a sensation in the magic-lantern.

Yesterday morning, when I preached in the Presbyterian Chapel, all was quiet and delightful ; but at night, in Rome, while my words were being translated by Mr. Wall, we were stopped by questioners. It was requested that they would reserve their enquiries till the end of the service, but the opponents were impatient. A paper was passed up from a Catholic lady, to say that a secular priest was present, a man of great ability, and a personal friend of the Pope, and that he was sent on purpose to discuss. So, presently, a man of unprepossessing appearance began to assail us with arguments from a sceptical standpoint, upon which he received such an answer that he shifted his ground, and declared that none had any right to teach save " the Church." Mr. Wall replied to this, and the man changed his tactics again. Then, up rose a Waldensian minister, who spoke so well that the people broke out in cheers and clapping. This was suppressed, and again the enemy thundered forth his threats. He was answered by several, and told that he had shifted his ground,

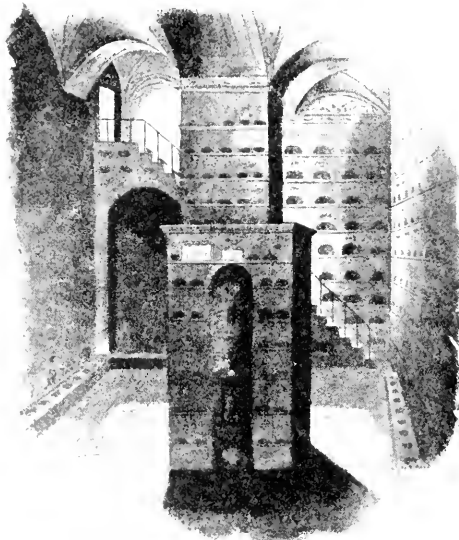
and was a priest ; and Mr. Wall challenged him to a public dispute at any place he chose to name. This he declined, and seeing that the people grew warm, he wisely withdrew. One word from us, and he would have been put out of the window. The incident pleased Mr. Wall, for it created excitement, and will bring more to hear ; but I was far from happy about it, and would gladly have been spared such a scene. Glory be to God, there is a living church in Rome, and the way in which they have gained converts has been by opposition ; the notoriety which it has given them has brought many to hear the gospel. Bravely the work goes on, and the baptized lead the way. The leaders are two good fellows, pronounced Baptists, believing firmly that their church is that of the catacombs, and the only true Church of Christ in Rome ; the others, they say, are the churches of Luther, and Knox, and Wesley, and Waldo,—theirs is the only old original. I gently combat their restrictiveness, but do not wonder at it.



BAPTISTERY IN CATACOMB OF ST. PONZIANO, ROME

We have been to another catacomb, one not often visited. It is named after

St. Ponziano, and is situated outside Rome, in a vineyard, a good way from the walls, and though truly ancient, it is not very far opened up, but you have to go down very deep. A man, who calls himself "the dove of the catacombs" (he must mean "bat"), took us down. We went a long, long way, each of us carrying a taper, and at last we came to a place where some eight roads meet underground. Seven of these were closed, but we found what we had specially come to see. This was a baptistery. It was full of sweet, clear, running water, about four feet deep, and above it was a painting in fresco of our Lord standing up to his waist in the water, and John putting his hand on the sacred head, that it, too, might be immersed;—he was not *pouring* the water on him. Here we stood, and prayed to the blessed One into whose Name we had been buried by baptism. It was a solemn moment. Here also were two other frescoes of our Lord, —very beautiful faces— and the Alpha and Omega, and Christian monogram symbols, which are so plain and natural that they do not come under the head of superstition. There were, however, bones in plenty, and the place was very hot and close, so we were glad soon to escape into the open air, for even holy dust is not the best purifier, or the best provender for living lungs.



A COLUMBARIUM, ROME.

You would have liked to have been with us when we went to see the

columbaria, near the St. Sebastian gate. We visited two of them ; they are singular places, like vast dovecots, but they are not for doves. It is strange to look upon the spot where thousands upon thousands of Rome's wealthy citizens have for many ages lain in little heaps of ashes. The bodies of the dead were burned, and the dust was preserved in small urns which were kept in these curious places. Some persons had a family *columbarium* ; in other cases, companies were formed for their construction, and they were then let out in portions as required. The niches are like small vaulted chambers, and there will be in them, sometimes an urn, sometimes a lamp, or a small bust, while frequently the name and age of the deceased will be found on a slab of marble over the recess. In each of these small spaces, there are two holes sunk to receive the ashes if an urn is not used, and these have lids to cover the remains. These great square buildings contained many hundreds of these "nests" for the dead, and a visit to them leaves a strangely-solemn impression on the mind.

I had two such precious letters from you this morning, worth to me far more than all the gems of ancient or modern art. The material of which they are composed is their main value, though there is also no mean skill revealed in its manipulation. They are pure as alabaster, far more precious than porphyry or verd antique ; no mention shall be made of malachite or onyx, for love surpasses them all.

We are off to Naples to-day.



THE BAY OF NAPLES, — PAINTED BY DR. JOHNSON, AND PRESENTED BY HIM TO MR. SPURGEON, "IN REMEMBRANCE OF TRAVEL TOGETHER IN ITALY."

CHAPTER LXXIV.

A Traveller's Letters Home (*Continued*).



HIS morning, we drove through Naples for, I should think, six or seven miles or more. It is a crowded city, full of stir, full of business, and full of pleasure. Horses seem innumerable, they are decorated profusely, and the carriages are very comfortable; but, I am sorry to say, the men drive furiously, and make me very nervous. Old women are numerous and hideous, beggars pestiferous, and dealers intensely persevering. But what a bay! What a sea and climate! No one ought to be ill here.

We have been over the museum,—full of frescoes from Pompeii, gleanings from the catacombs, pickings from the Appian Way, stealings from the baths of Caracalla and other places. Naples has taken away from Rome the best of the ancient statuary and treasures, and prepared a vast museum for the spoils. We saw thousands of precious things, enough for a year's inspection; but the Pompeian remains were the most important. There were surgical instruments exactly like those of the present day;—cottage-loaves of bread, stewpans, colanders, ladles, and all cookery things just like our own. The safes for money were just like old plate-chests. There were cotton, silk, and thread, in skeins and hanks, and large knitting and netting needles. Indeed, the people then had all we have now; even earthen money-boxes with a slit in the top, such as the children have in our country villages. There were plenty of proofs that the people were sinners, and of a scarlet dye, too. It was curious to see the colours in a painter's shop, the bottles and drugs of a chemist, and the tools of other traders. We saw also a splendid collection of ancient gems and cameos, most costly and lovely. I never saw so many gathered together before.

We drove from the museum to the site of a new field of lava, which flowed down from Vesuvius last April. It is just beyond the houses of suburban Naples, and was very different from what I had expected. It had crossed our road, and passed on through a vineyard,—this was one tongue of the stream. Then we crossed a second by a road made near it, and came to a village through which the largest stream had burned its way. It is a huge incandescent sea of the outflow of the volcano; men were blasting and using pickaxes to open up the road which the flood had completely blocked. We were soon upon the lava; it has a surface like a

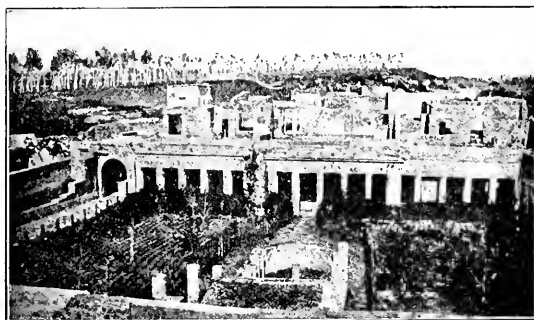
heap of ashes, supposing that every ash should weigh a ton or two. It is still hot, and in some places smoking. I should have investigated it carefully, and with interest, only a horde of children, beggars, and women with babies gave us no rest, but continued crying, and imploring alms, and offering us pieces picked out of the mass. Much of the strange material is far too hot to hold, and our feet felt the heat as we walked across the surface. The stream has partly destroyed several houses, and cut the village in two; people are living in the half of a house which stands, the other half being burned and filled up with the molten substance. Vesuvius, high above us, is only giving out a little smoke, and seems quiet enough. As I could never climb up to the crater, I think we shall be content to have seen this lava torrent.

Our hotel here is vast and empty; we have excellent rooms, and are thoroughly comfortable. There is music continually, and very fair music, too, though not so sweet as silence. Everybody makes all the noise possible, and quiet dwells beyond the sea. Rome is a sepulchre,—this city teems with life. You are not out of the door a moment before you are entreated to have a carriage, buy fruit, fish, pictures, papers, or something. The side-streets swarm with people, who appear to live in them; there they eat, cook, work, catch fleas, hunt over each other's heads like so many monkeys, etc., etc. It is like living in a museum; but as to the beauty and gracefulness of which we read so much, I cannot detect it, though really looking for it. Persons over forty look worn out, and females at that age are haggard; over that period, they are ghastly and mummified. Macaroni hangs out, in some quarters, before the doors on lines to dry; and the flies, which are numerous upon it, give it anything but an attractive appearance. To-morrow, we hope to go to Pompeii. I am now thinking about next month's Magazine, and devoutly wish I could light upon a subject for an article,—but my brain is dull.

We have seen Pompeii. We drove there, and it took us three hours, almost all of it between long lines of houses, like one continuous street. At the town of Resina, we passed Herculaneum, but did not enter it, as Pompeii is more worth seeing. Then we went through a town which has, I think, been seven times destroyed by Vesuvius, and is now crowded with people. There we saw the lava by the side of, and under the houses, hard as a rock; and the roads are generally paved with great flags of the same material. Though driving by the shore of the bay, we seldom saw the water, for even where there was no town, there were high walls, and, worst of all, off the stones the white dust was suffocating, and made us all look like millers. However, we reached Pompeii at last, and I can only say, in a sentence, it exceeds in interest all I have seen before, even in Rome.

I walked on, on, on, from twelve to four o'clock, lost in wonder amid the miles of streets of this buried city, now silent and open to the gazer's eye. To convey a worthy idea of it to you, would be impossible, even in a ream of paper.

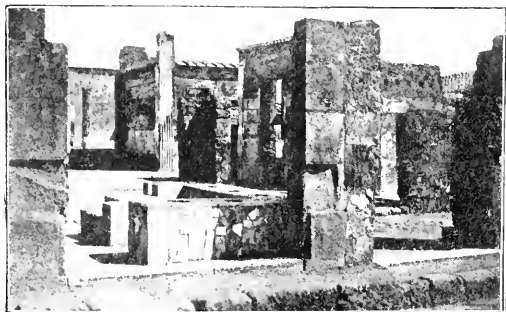
We entered at the Street of Tombs, which was outside the gate. In it were houses, shops, taverns, a fountain, and several tombs. The house of Diomed greatly interested us. We went upstairs and downstairs, and then into the cellars where were still the amphoræ, or wine-bottles, leaning against the wall in rows, the pointed end being stuck into the ground, and the rows set together in dry dust, in exactly the same way as we place articles in sawdust. In the cellars were found eighteen skeletons of women who had fled there for shelter. The photograph I send shows



THE HOUSE AND GARDEN OF DIOMED, POMPEII

the garden, with covered walk round it, and tank for live fish. In this street were several places for seats in the shade, made in great semicircles, so that a score of persons could rest at once. Near the gate was the niche where the soldier was found who kept his watch while others fled. We could not think of going up and down all the streets; it would need many days to see all. The city was, I should think, a watering-place for the wealthy. No poor class of houses has yet been discovered. It was paved with great slabs of stone, which are worn deeply with cart or chariot wheels. Across the streets were huge stepping-stones, just wide enough to allow wheels to go on each side; but either they had no horses to the cars in these streets, or else they must have been trained to step over. In some places were horsing-blocks, in others there were holes in the kerbstone to pass a rope through to tie up a horse. The houses are many of them palaces, and contained great treasures of art, which are now in museums, but enough is left in each case to show what they were. Frescoes remain in abundance, and grottoes, and garden fountains, and marble terraces for cascades of water. It is a world of wonders.

In one part of the city, a noble owner had let the corner of his house to a vendor of warm wines, and there is his marble counter, with the holes therein for his warming-pots. Stains of wine were on the counter when it was first uncovered.



THE HOUSE OF SALLUST, POMPEII.

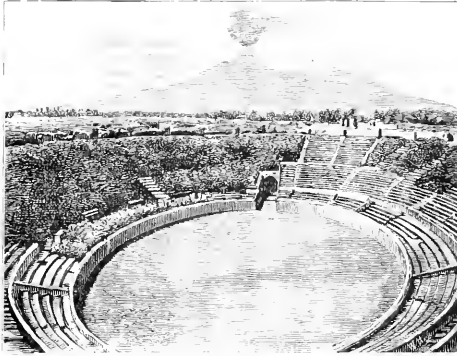
We saw the back parlour of a drinking-shop, with pictures on the wall of a decidedly non-teetotal character. There were several bakers' shops with hand-mills, the tops of which turned round on a stone, and ground well, no doubt. In one, we saw the oven, with a water-jar near it,—in this place were found 183 loaves of bread.

In the doctors' and chemists' shops, when opened, they saw the medicines as they were when entombed, and even pills left in the process of rolling! In the custom-house were standard weights and measures. Soap factories have their evaporating-pans remaining. Oil vessels abound; and in one, made of glass, some of the oil may still be seen. Cookshops had in them all the stewpans, gridirons, and other necessities of the trade. We saw jewellers' shops, artists' studios, and streets of grocers' and drapers' shops, many with signs over their doors.

The baths impressed me much, for they had been newly built when the awful tragedy took place, and look as if they were opened yesterday;—a fine cold plunge-bath, with water carried high for a "shower", a dressing-room with niches for brushes, combs, and pomades,—all of which were there, but have been removed to museums;—and a great brazier in green bronze, with seats round it for the bathers to dry themselves;—a warm bath, and a vapour bath all perfect, and looking ready for use to-morrow.

The Forum was vast, and had in it the façades of several magnificent temples, the remains of which reveal their former glory. The pedestals of the statues of the eminent men of the town remain with their names upon them. We saw the tragic and comic theatres, and the amphitheatre which held 20,000 persons, in which

the people were assembled when the eruption came, and from which they escaped, but had to flee to the fields, and leave their houses for ever.



THE AMPHITHEATRE, POMPEII.

In the Temple of Isis, we saw the places where the priests were concealed when they made the goddess deliver her oracles! We saw the lady herself in the museum, with a pipe at the back of her head, which was fixed in the wall, and served as the secret speaking-tube. The priests of Isis were found dead at her shrine; one of them with an axe had cut through two walls to get out, but had not succeeded. Poor creature!



THE FORUM, POMPEII.

In a money-changer's house, we saw his skeleton, lying on its face, with outstretched arms and hands; much money was found near him. In the barracks

were sixty-three persons, soldiers' and officers' wives. Here were the stocks which had been used for the punishment of refractory soldiers.



THE STREET OF MERCURY, POMPEII.

In the Street of Mercury is a triumphal arch, on which stood a statue of Nero, found nearly perfect. Here, too, we noted a drinking-fountain, and a house with its exterior richly adorned with red frescoes. In a vast Hall of Justice were cells under the magistrates' bench; and in these, three prisoners were found, inside an iron ring which went round their waists. They were, perhaps, waiting to be brought up before the aldermen for some misdemeanour, and expecting to be fined "five shillings and costs," but they perished like their betters, and were summoned before a higher tribunal.

Out of so great a city, I suppose comparatively few were destroyed; so, as the bodies of these are found, they are preserved, especially if anything remarkable is to be seen in connection with them.

We saw the digging still going on, and the mounds of removed rubbish were like high railway embankments. No roofs remain, but spouts for the rain-water are there in great abundance; they are in the form of dogs' and lions' heads and other quaint devices. No stables have yet been uncovered; but the carts, which stood at the inn doors, have left their iron tires, the skeletons of the horses, and their bits, to bear witness to their former existence. Skeletons of dogs and cats were there, and in a pan was a sucking pig prepared and just ready for roasting! I saw also a pot on a tripod, or trivet, which, when discovered, actually had water in it! I feel ashamed to write so badly on such a theme, but I cannot do better. It is too vast a task for me, and I fail to recollect a tithe of it. I must cease writing to-night, but I continue to breathe loving assurances to my sweet wifey.

We have been in a steamer to the Island of Capri, calling at Sorrento on the way ;—a glorious excursion, but we failed in our great object, which was, to see the Blue Grotto. The sea was too rough to permit entrance, as the opening is only three feet high, and no one can get in except during smooth water, and when the wind is from a certain quarter. However, we stayed a couple of hours on the island, which is precipitous, so I did not climb, but sat on a balcony, enjoying the marvellous scene. We reached Naples late, for the boat was slow ; but first the sunset, and then the moonlight, gave us two charming effects, to which Vesuvius added by smoking almost continuously. This little trip served as a pleasant rest and refreshment after the toil and the dust of Pompeii.

To-day, we have had a long and splendid drive to the other side of the bay. First along the quay, then through a tunnel almost half a mile long, and then skirting the bay, by road to Puteoli, where Paul landed ;—we saw the spot (as is supposed), and the commencement of the Appian Way which he followed till he reached Rome. At Puteoli, we first went into the crater of the Solfatara, a semi-extinct volcano, which has not been in eruption since 1198, when it destroyed ancient Puteoli. It is grown over with shrubs and small trees. A man throws down a big stone, which makes it all sound, and shows you that the whole vast area is hollow. You are led to a great hole in the side of the hill, whence pours out, with the roar of an engine blowing off steam, a great quantity of sulphureous vapour. All around is brimstone, and with a long kind of hoe a man rakes out bits from the mouth of the huge oven. The ground is very hot, and an odour, which is anything but dainty, prevails. You can go right up to it with perfect ease and safety. The vapour is said to cure gout, but one must stand in it some time every day for a month ! When Vesuvius is furious, Solfatara subsides, so there seems good evidence that the two, though twelve miles apart, are vents of the same fires. We looked down on the Temple of Serapis ; it has been up and down, and in and out of the sea several times, as the restless coast has risen or fallen. It is now out of water, but is remarkable rather for its history than for its present beauty.

We drove on by the crater of Monte Barbaro and that of Monte Nuovo. This last volcano sprang up in a night in 1538, covered a village, stopped a great canal, and did no end of mischief ; but since then it has been quiet, and allowed itself to furnish soil enough for brushwood, which makes it look like a green pyramid. On the other side of this hill is the famous lake of Avernus, of which Virgil wrote, and by the side of which he placed the entrance to Hades. The dense woods which smothered it have been cut down, and it has by no means a repulsive appearance now ; but it is a channel for the escape of noxious gases, and is, no doubt, the crater of a volcano. We did not enter the Sybil's Cave, or otherwise enquire of Pluto and

Proserpine ; but drove on, through the ruined city of Cumæ, to the lake of Fusaro or Acheron, another circular basin. Here oysters were cultivated till the lake gave out mephitic vapours, and killed the bivalves. The water has become pure again, and the industry has recommenced. Passing by Virgil's Elysian fields, and manifold wonders, we came to Misenum, and the village of Bacoli. Here we left the carriage, and ascended the hill to see what is called the *Piscina Mirabilis*,—a vast underground reservoir, which once contained water brought by the Julian aqueduct from some fifty miles' distance. It is dry now, and we descended a long flight of steps to the bottom. It has a roof supported by forty-eight huge columns ; it is 220 feet long, and 82 feet broad. There are traces of water having filled it up to the spring of the arches, and the place where the water entered is very plainly to be seen. There are great openings in the roof, down which hang festoons of creeping plants. The place was very chilly, and coming up forty steps out of it seemed like leaving a sepulchre. Yet it was a sight to be remembered to one's dying day. We descended through the foul and loathsome village street, where cholera may well rage in summer. We could not explore villas of Julius Cæsar, prisons of Nero, villa of Agrippina, and other places, for we were tired, and I felt afraid of more vaults and their horrible damp. So we went into Baia, and entered a queer little *osteria*, or inn, and had some poor would-be oysters, bread and butter, and green lemons, freshly gathered from the tree. The view was glorious indeed, nothing could excel it ; great ruined temples and villas were everywhere, and made a picture of exceeding beauty.

The drive home was by the sea, and we could perceive buildings down at the bottom, under the clear blue water. These have been brought down by the depression of the land upon which they stood, owing to earthquakes. We crossed a lava torrent which had come from Monte Nuova, and then we went on by our former road through Puteoli, till we left it to return to Naples without traversing the tunnel. This road took us up on one side of the promontory of Posilippo, whence we saw Ischia, Puteoli, Baia, and Misenum ; and then we went down the other side, with Capri, Sorrento, Vesuvius, and Naples, all in full view. We were quickly down among the grand equipages which fill the Riviera di Chiaia ; and, dashing along as fast as any of them, we were soon at the hotel door ; and, since *table d'hôte*, I have been writing this long narration for you. The air here is balmy, the atmosphere dry, the heat great in the sun, but bearable in the shade. Mosquitoes are fewer and less voracious than in Venice. Everything is restorative to the system, and exhilarating. Even the beggars seem to be happy. None are miserable but the old women and the priests. Organs are far too plentiful, and music of all sorts is *ad nauseam*. Of religion, I have only seen one trace, namely, the bowing down of everyone when "the host" was being carried under an umbrella

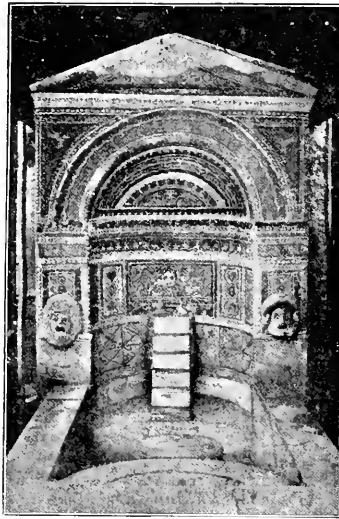
to some sick person. Beggars swarm, and dealers in little wares assail you at all points, and will not cease their importunities. To-morrow will be the Sabbath, and in this I rejoice, for rest is sweet, and sweetest when made "holiness to the Lord." I send tons of love to you, hot as fresh lava. God bless you with His best blessings!



PANORAMA OF NAPLES

It is the Sabbath, quiet and restful. We have had a delightful service, and I have written for my note-book and the Magazine; so there will be a little less for my dear one, but there is nothing new to tell. I have been so grandly well all this time that I do not know how to be grateful enough, and my heart is light because you are better; my soul is at rest, my spirit leaps. I am indeed a debtor to Him who restoreth my soul. Blessed be His holy Name for ever and ever! We are very quiet, for there are no other visitors in the house; we have the best rooms, nice beds, well-curtained from mosquitoes. There is a house between us and the sea, but we can see the bay on each side of it, and Vesuvius if we go out on the balcony. The climate is like Heaven below, and cannot but be a medicine to the sick. I send you a photograph of a slave who was found in Pompeii close behind his master, and carrying a bag of money, both of them endeavouring to escape. It is a perfect model, covered with incrustations.

I have also sent the photograph of a grotto, or rather, ancient fountain in mosaic, which is in one of the houses. They used to put a lamp inside the



ANCIENT FOUNTAIN, POMPEII

grotesque heads. Water fell in a little cascade down the steps. It seems in odd taste, but there are several such in the gardens of the buried villas.

To-morrow we hope to be travelling; God be with thee, mine own, and give thee peace and healing! My heart is everywhere and ever thine

Again in Rome. Waking somewhat early this morning, I have risen to write to mine own darling wife. The fact is, I am afraid there will be a gap in the correspondence, and I shall be very sorry if it turns out to be so. Just as we left Naples, the rain began to descend, the warmth was gone, and we had a cool, if not a cold journey here. The fall in the temperature seemed to affect me, and I had a very disturbed and uncomfortable night. I am, however, so grateful for my long spell of rest, night by night, that this does not depress me, although I hoped that I was getting beyond the reach of such restless hours.

Yesterday was wet every now and then, but I had to devote the day to the Magazine, and therefore it mattered not. I stole out to the Pantheon, and the Lateran, and then in again. Not being in harness, I worked slowly, and the matter came not until the mind had been much squeezed. How much more pleasant is the outbursting juice of the grape when it yields its streams to the lightest pressure of

the vintner's hand! Yet duty had to be done, and I did it; but have more yet to do. Three dear letters awaited me here. "Not worth sixpence," did you say? They are worth a mint to me; they are mosaics of which every little bit is a gem. Naples has been a great treat; how I wish you could have been there, but I should not like you to see how horses are treated, it would make you quite unhappy. The Neapolitans load up their carriages most cruelly. I never saw so many horses, mules, and donkeys in my life before in proportion to the people. Everybody drives or rides, and they are all in a great hurry, too. Now, my wifey, this brings great galleons of love to you, and a cargo of kisses lies under the hatches. Just pull them up, and let the creatures fly in the air; innumerable they will be as the clouds of doves which flew over the olive gardens of Judæa in the olden time, and every one has its own tender voice. God give thee still thy daily patience while He sees fit to send thee pain; but, oh! may He remove the affliction, and send healing to thee, and brighter days to us both! Nevertheless, His will be done!

Florence.—By an unfortunate mistake as to train, we were prevented from leaving Rome early this morning, so we have done a little more sight-seeing. One of our party is of the Mark Tapley school, and always persuades us that any hitch in our plans is a capital thing, and could not have happened better. We went off to Santa Maria Maggiore, and there saw the various chapels, and precious stones, and rare marbles, and bronzes, etc., etc. The old verger was so eloquent in Italian that I made out nearly all he said. Then we went to the Borghese Palace, and saw long rooms of pictures, mostly saints and virgins. In these rooms were two sweet little fountains of water, and glasses for the visitors to drink from. This is a private palace, but the public are always welcome. Then we found our way to the Jesuits' Church, where there was uncovered a silver statue of Loyola, of priceless value for the gems set in it, and the masses of *lapis lazuli*. Afterwards, we sat on the Pincian till the rain came, and it has poured down ever since, making our journey to this place a more weary one than usual. Everything is shrouded in mist, mildewed and funereal, except the young waterfalls, which leap like lions' whelps from Bashan, and laugh, and fling themselves about in their glee.

Genoa.—We left Florence on Friday, and the day was fine, so that we greatly enjoyed the journey over the mountains to Bologna. Then it is a dull road to Alessandria, which we reached about six o'clock. Thence to Genoa should take two hours and a-half; but, in ascending the Maritime Alps, there was snow, and the engine crawled along, and at last stopped altogether. Think of it,—going up hill, and stopping! The steam was put on, and the wheels revolved, sending out a shower of sparks, but the train did not stir. Then came men with spades to clear

away some snow, and after a while the carriages moved, we gained the top of the hill, and ran down all right, getting into Genoa about 10 p.m. A long, tiresome day.

Here, where we were so comfortable last year, we were marched up four sets of stairs, and then shown into rooms which had a most offensive smell. The house was full, the waiter said, and they could give us no other rooms. We replied, "Very well, then, we will go somewhere else;" and when we had carried all our luggage to the door, apartments were found for us on the first floor!

This morning, expecting to leave for Mentone at twelve o'clock, we hear that the line is broken in four places, and no train goes except at eight a.m., so we are here till Monday. It rains, and has rained all night in torrents. We must wait, and then go on in great uncertainty and sure discomfort. Never mind! it will serve me for illustration, no doubt. Dr. Jobson, a Wesleyan minister, has had an hour's happy chat with me, and very much interested me. He is a holy, liberal-hearted soul, and we enjoy a conversation together, so it is not all dullness. It is beginning to clear up while I am writing, so perhaps we may get a walk. I have had restful nights this week, and am still really much better, but the damp and cold try me a good deal.

Sabbath.—This day, which we have been forced to spend here, has not been an unhappy one, but a sweet day, most calm and bright. The rain cleared off yesterday about four o'clock, enabling us to wander through the narrow streets of Genoa la Superba, and to enter several of the churches. My indignation was stirred beyond measure when, upon looking into the confessional boxes, I read the directions to the priest as to the questions he should ask the penitents. These were printed in Latin, and referred to those unmentionable crimes which brought fire upon Sodom, and are the curse of heathendom. To see young maidens kneel down to be asked such questions as these, made me wish that every priest could be cut off from the face of the earth as unfit to live, and I most deliberately invoked upon them all the righteous vengeance of an insulted God! Since I came away, my more sober reflections fully endorse my indignant wrath. How can the Lord endure all this? Truly, His patience is great.

To-day we had our breaking of bread, and Dr. Jobson and his wife joined us. The good old man spoke most sweetly, and prayed for you with great pathos, and much faith that the Lord would yet heal you. He shamed me by his faith, and I blessed him for his tender affection. The Lord was with us, and the season will be memorable to us all. Then I revised a sermon, which is not quite finished yet; but the *table d'hôte* bell is ringing, so I must needs pause a while, and allow the body to feed in its turn. To-day is fine and bright, and has been warm in the sun. We have

large leads to walk on, and I have had a little turn there while the others have gone up on the heights for a walk. To-morrow, I hope, will be equally clear, and then we shall not mind the getting out and in where the railway is broken.

Table d'hôte is now over, and I have had the old Doctor in for a talk, though I wanted to be alone, and go on with my sermon and letters. However, the good soul is gone now, and I can get to my dear work of communing with my darling by the pen. Every memory of you is full of joy, except your illness; and that makes me love you all the more, by adding sympathy. I am afraid I am still a rough, forgetful being, so apt to get absorbed in my work, and to think too little of you; but this is not in my heart, but is in my nature; and I suppose, if it were not there, I could not do my work so successfully. You know and love me too well to judge as others would. We have to be off early in the morning, so I must close this note.

Mentone.—We came here yesterday from Genoa, and a very interesting journey it was. We left Genoa at eight o'clock, and went on all right till ten, when we all had to get out, for the road was destroyed. We walked down a lane, then over a bridge, then down on the other side, and up the embankment, and got into another train. In this case, the bridge of the railway was broken by a torrent, and a break indeed it was. In due time, we went on; but, in an hour or so, came to a dead halt, and had to get out again. This time the walk was long, and the way went through a vineyard, and up a steep bank. Crowds of men and boys clamoured for our luggage, and followed us all the half-mile we had to trudge. We had to wait forty minutes till another train came; and then, when we scrambled in, they quietly shoved us out of the way, and made us sit still for forty minutes more. We went on a little, only to stop again; and, at last, at Porto Maurizio, we had the carriages pushed by men over a dangerous place, and then hooked on to another train. However, we reached Ventimiglia safely at about seven o'clock, and then had an hour to wait to have dinner. We left there at 8 p.m., and arrived here at 7.20 p.m., this last being the greatest feat I ever performed! To travel for twenty minutes, and then to find the clock forty minutes behind the time at which you started, is a gain not to be despised;—the explanation is that Roman time is used at Ventimiglia, and Paris time at Mentone. The day was fine, and though the way was long, the adventures made the hours pass away merrily, and our Mark Tapley friend was quite in his element. We are at a most comfortable hotel, and everyone tries to please us. The landlord knew me at once, and shook hands heartily, saying, "How do you do, reverend? I am very glad to see you!"

To-day, while I was lying on the beach, and Mark Tapley was slyly filling our pockets with stones, and rolling Mr. Passmore over, who should walk up but

Mr. McLaren, of Manchester, with whom I had a long and pleasant chat. We are to go to Monaco to-morrow together. He has three months' holiday. I am glad I have not; but I should wish I had, if I had my dear wife with me to enjoy it. Poor little soul! she must suffer while I ramble. Two clergymen have had a long talk with me this evening. It began by one saying aloud to the other, "I hear Mr. Spurgeon has been here." This caused a titter round the table, for I was sitting opposite to him. Mentone is charming, but not very warm. It is as I like it, and is calculated to make a sick man leap with health. How I wish you could be here!

We have had another day here of the sweetest rest. We drove to Monaco and back, and saw to perfection the little rocky Principality. Its lovely gardens and promenades are kept up by the profits of the gaming-tables, which are in a far more sumptuous palace than those at Baden-Baden, which we saw together years ago. We had Mr. McLaren with us, and went in and watched the players. One gentleman monopolized our attention; he was a fine-looking Englishman, like an officer. He lost a pile of money, and went out apparently most wretched and excited. Soon, he came in again, and changed bills for 3,000 francs, and began playing heavily. He won, and got back his bills; and when we left, we saw him come out; I could only hope that God had delivered him, and that he would be wise, and never go to the table again. It is a vortex which sucks in a vast number of victims day by day. What moths men are if the candle be but bright enough!

The two parsons here are High Church and Low Church, and I have had a talk with both. Just before dinner, who should go by but the Earl of Shaftesbury, with whom I had half-an-hour's converse. He was very low in spirit, and talked as if all things in the world were going wrong; but I reminded him that our God was yet alive, and that dark days were only the signs of better times coming. He is a real nobleman, and man of God. Everybody in the hotel is courteous and kind, and I have quite a circle of acquaintances already. I have enjoyed the rest very much; but young married couples remind me of our early days, and the cloud which covers us now. Still, He who sent both sun and shade is our ever-tender Father, and knows best; and if it be good for us, He can restore all that He has withdrawn, and more; and if not, He designs our yet greater good. There is nothing more to write, except the ever true and never tiresome message,—my perfect love be with thee, and the Lord's love be over thee for ever! In a few more days I shall see thee, and it will be a fairer sight than any my eyes have rested on during my absence.

Yesterday, Mr. and Mrs. Müller went with me to Dr. Bennet's garden, and I

had a most profitable conversation with him, one to be remembered for many a day with delight. Dr. Bennet came up, and I was amused to hear Muller teaching him the power of prayer, and recommending him to pray about one of the terraces which he wants to buy, but the owner asks a hundred times its value. Dr. B. thought it too trilling a matter to take to the Lord; he said that Mr. Muller might very properly pray about the Orphanage, but as to this terrace, to complete his garden,—he thought he could not make out a good case about it. Mr. M. said it encouraged people in sin if we yielded to covetous demands, so he thought the Dr. might pray that the owners should be kept from exorbitant claims; but Dr. B. said that, as ignorant peasants, they were very excusable for trying either to keep their land, or to get all they could from an Englishman whom they imagined to be a living gold mine! The spirit of both was good; but, of course, the simple, child-like holy trust of Müller was overpowering. He is not a sanctimonious person; but full of real joy, and sweet peace, and innocent pleasure.

Nice.—In this place we have been put up four flights of stairs, and, alas! into very cold rooms. I woke in the night, and felt as if I were freezing in a vault, and my ankles were in great pain. I was much cast down; and, on getting out of bed, found the carpet and floor both very damp. I had a very bad night, and am now in much pain in the left foot. Yet I believe I shall get over it soon, and I mean to have no more of these climbings up stairs, and sleeping in horrid cells. Nice is a very grand place, and I am sorry we left Mentone to come to it. But I must not write in a grumbling vein. Here have I had nearly five weeks of good health, and have grown stronger every day; why should I care for one little relapse? We will be off to Cannes and Hyères, and see what God has in store for us. He will deal graciously with me as He has ever done.

Cannes.—I was too ill yesterday to write. After the deadly chill of Thursday night at Nice, I felt the gout coming on, but resolved to escape from that inhospitable hotel. An hour brought us here, but it rained mercilessly, and all around was damp and chill. I got upstairs into beautiful rooms, but had to go to bed, which I have only left for a moment or two since, while it was being arranged. My left foot is badly swollen, and the knee-joint is following suit. I have had very little sleep, and am very low; but, oh, the kindness of these friends! They sit up with me all night by turns, and cheer me with promises. I hope I shall get home in time for Sunday, but have some fears of it. Do not fret about me, I may be well before this reaches you; and if I am, I will telegraph and say so. I have every comfort here but home, and my dear wifey's sweet words. I am sad that my journey should end so, but the Lord's will be done!

Two days later.—I have had a heavy time of pain, my dearest, but am now better. God has changed the weather;—yesterday was warm, to-day is hot, so we think it best to hurry on, and, if possible, have a *coupé-lit* right through to Paris. I feel well in myself, but the knee will not bear me, though I think I should be as strong as a horse after a day or two of this weather. How much I have to thank the Lord for! Such kind friends! They have proved their love beyond all praise. I was never alone. Even the *femme de chambre* pitied "*poivre monsieur*," and did her best for me. I hope now to get home in time for Sunday. My soul loves you, and longs to see you.

Paris.—In the hope that one more letter may reach you before I come personally, I give myself the delight of writing it. The telegram will have told you that, at the very prudent advice of the doctor, I left Cannes at 3.15 on Tuesday in a *coupé-lit* to travel direct to Paris. It has proved a very wise step. A lady lent her Bath-chair to take me to the station, and porters lifted me into the carriage. There I had a nice sofa-bed and every convenience. I lay there with great comfort till we reached Marseilles; then came the night, and I had hoped to sleep, but the extreme oscillation of the train quite prevented that. Once only I dozed for a few minutes, yet I was kept restful till six o'clock, when my dear friends got me some warm soup, and I had a refreshing wash. Then, all day long, I was at peace till 6 p.m. From Lyons, the country is flooded all along the road; we seemed to ride through a vast river. I naturally felt the chill of this, and my knees complained. Near Paris it rained hard, and at Paris heavily. After much stress and difficulty, I was put into a cab, and we drove to this hotel. I went to bed immediately, and slept on, on, on, till eight o'clock the next morning, awaking then refreshed, and, happily, none the worse for the long journey. I meant to stay in bed all day, and sent my friends out, so that I might not always be a drag upon them; but, at about noon, I rose and dressed, and when they came in, I had flown,—to a sitting-room and a sofa by a cosy fire! I can walk now a little, and hope to be all right for Sunday. Bless the Lord, O my soul; and may He bless thee, too, my dear heart of love! I hope to have a *coupé*, and to-morrow lie down again while travelling, and so home to my tender wifey. Who could hope to escape rheumatic pains when all the world is wet through to the centre? It must not grieve you that I suffer, but you must rejoice that I escaped so long. Why, even rocks might feel this marvellous, long-continued wetting! I am indeed grateful to God for His goodness; still, "there's no place like home." This brings great loads of love all flaming. God bless thee ever!

Carriage at Victoria at 5.45, Friday!

CHAPTER LXXV.

Mutual Love between Pastor and People.

What a grand set of men some of the preachers of the past age thought themselves to be! I trust those who played the archbishop have nearly all gone to Heaven, but a few linger among us who use little grace and much starch. The proud divines never shook hands with anybody, except, indeed, with the deacons, and a little knot of evidently superior persons. Amongst Dissenters it was almost as bad as it is in most church congregations, where you feel that the good man, by his manner, is always saying, "I hope you know who I am, sir, I am the rector of the parish." Now, all that kind of stuck-upishness is altogether wrong. No man can do good in that way; and no benefit at all comes of assuming superiority over our fellows. I often regret that I have so large a congregation. Perhaps you ask, "Why?" Well, when I had a smaller company of hearers at New Park Street Chapel, there were many even then, yet I did get a shake of the hand with every member sometimes; but now there are so many of you that I can scarcely recollect you all, good memory as I have, and I seldom have the pleasure of shaking hands with you,—I wish I had it much more frequently. If there is anybody in the wide world whose good I long to promote, it is yours; therefore I want to be at home with you; and if ever I should affect the airs of a great man, and set myself up above you all, and by proud manners cease to have sympathy with you, I hope the Lord will speedily take me down, and make me right in spirit again.—C. H. S., *in sermon at the Tabernacle, May 3, 1868.*

I like to see the people coming here on the Lord's-day or on a week-night; I often say that, as I am driving to the Tabernacle, I can tell the members of my congregation, for they have a way of walking and a happy look quite different from those who are going to some places of worship that I might mention. Those other folks are so solemn and sad, as if they were going to an execution. They look so grave, as if it were an awful work to serve God, as bad as going to prison to attend a service, and as disagreeable as the pillory to stand up and bless the Lord. But I notice that you come here with joy, tripping along gladly as if you were pleased to come, and as if you came to enjoy yourselves, as I believe you do. That is how God would have you worship Him, in the spirit of freedom, and not in the spirit of slavery. Does He want slaves to grace His throne? To rule over free men, should be the ambition of a monarch; and God will rule over spirits that love Him, that delight in Him, that are perfectly free, and that find their freedom in doing His will.—C. H. S., *in sermon at the Tabernacle.*

I sat, one day, by the bedside of one of my old members. I went to comfort her, for I heard that she was ill; but, instead of doing so, she set about comforting me, and I came away rejoicing. She began speaking to me in this fashion, "My dear Pastor, I shall never be able to tell to any soul what I owe to you, both personally and relatively." I said, "Now, my dear sister, do not talk about that." She replied, "But I will, for my former Pastor, Joseph Irons, once preached a sermon upon the words, 'Thou, O Solomon, must have a thousand, and those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred,' and that dear man of God said, 'Give Solomon his thousand; that is, render to the Lord all the glory that is due unto His holy Name; but let His ministers, who are the keepers of the vineyard, have their two hundred; that is, give them all the encouragement you can.' Now," said she, "that sermon did me great good. I used to be afraid to cheer ministers, by telling them what God had done for me through their preaching; I feared that I might make them proud; but, from that sermon, I learned that it was God's business to keep them humble, and my business to encourage them all I could." I bless the Lord that, while I have had many who have tried to discourage me, I have always had many more who have been ready and pleased to give me words of encouragement and cheer.—C. H. S.



N pages 17, 156, and 176, mention has been made of the attack of small-pox from which Mr. Spurgeon suffered in November, 1869. On the 9th of that month, he went, for the first and only time, to the Lord Mayor's banquet, and immediately afterwards he was attacked by that trying complaint, though happily not in its worst form.

In later years, whenever he was invited to the great City feast, he always playfully replied that he had only once been in such high society, and then

he had caught the small-pox, so he had determined never again to form one of that company. When his very special friend, Sir William McArthur, became London's chief magistrate, he tried hard to induce Mr. Spurgeon to join the festive throng, but his pleading was all in vain; and, a few months afterwards, when the Lord Mayor took the chair at the annual supper in connection with the Pastors' College Conference, the President humorously repeated the story of the banquet of 1869, to the great delight both of the assembled guests and the genial chairman.

During the Pastor's illness, his church-officers sent the following letter to cheer him; the manuscript shows that it was composed by Elder W. Dransfield, concerning whom Mr. Spurgeon wrote, when he was "called home," in 1872, "he was one of the holiest and happiest Christians it was ever our privilege to know:"—

"Metropolitan Tabernacle,

"Nov. 22nd, 1869.

"Beloved Pastor,

"With more than usual pleasure, by desire of the elders and deacons, I sit down to write you a few lines, in concurrence with which, I have no doubt, they will cordially sign their names. When we first heard the serious nature of your affliction, and especially when we considered dear Mrs. Spurgeon's very delicate state of health, a deep gloom seemed to fall upon our spirits, and we did indeed very sincerely sympathize with you both under the heavy trial. But when we were told that the attack was not of a virulent nature, and that the Lord was dealing very gently with you, the gloom was dispersed, the heavy load was removed from our minds, and gave place to a holy confidence that God, being very merciful, would restore you to us again with renewed health and vigour.

"Beloved Pastor, the very striking providences which have taken place, in connection with the Orphanage (see page 176), within the last few days, have made a deep impression upon our minds, and have afforded us a double pleasure, knowing the cheering and exhilarating influence they will have upon your spirits in your sick-room. Truly may you say, with the psalmist, 'I will praise Thee for ever, because *Thou* hast done it.'

"And now for the College, which is so dear to you, be assured that we will rally round it, and support it by our prayers, by our influence, and with all the help that is in our power. May the Divine blessing continue to rest upon its President, its tutors, and the dear young men who are training in it for the Christian ministry!

"Our Co-pastor, your beloved brother, is labouring among us, during your absence, with indefatigable zeal and increasing success. He is daily growing in our affection and esteem; and we bless God for providing you with such a faithful coadjutor in the work He has given you to do. You will be pleased to hear that all

the services at the Tabernacle continue to be well attended, that our 'supplies' for the last two Sabbaths were very acceptable and profitable, that the spirit of prayer is in no way diminished, but is in as full efficiency as ever, and that God is in the midst of us indeed and of a truth. If the laying aside of Pastors, for a time, be sent to test their people's love, then we are sure there never was a period in your ministry when you were more cordially and universally loved than you are at the present moment.

"And now, beloved Pastor, we leave you, with many prayers, in the hands of your Father and our Father. May He have you in His safe keeping, preserve you from lowness and depression of spirits, cheer you with the light of His countenance, strengthen and sustain you by His gracious Spirit, and, in His own good time, bring you again to your beloved Tabernacle 'in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.' This is our fervent prayer."

(Signed by the deacons and elders.)

In the year 1871, Mr. Spurgeon had a long and painful illness, the course of which can be traced in the following letters to the congregation at the Tabernacle :—

" Clapham.

" Dear Friends,

"The furnace still glows around me. Since I last preached to you, I have been brought very low; my flesh has been tortured with pain, and my spirit has been prostrate with depression. Yet, in all this, I see and submit to my Father's hand; yea, more, I bless Him that His paternal love has been more than ever clear to me. With some difficulty, I write these lines in my bed, mingling them with the groans of pain and the songs of hope.

"The peace of God be with every one of you, my beloved! My love in Christ Jesus be with you all! I rejoice that my very dear friend, Mr. Hugh Stowell Brown, is with you to-day. May his words be marrow and fatness to your souls!

"It must, under the most favourable circumstances, be long before you see me again, for the highest medical authorities are agreed that only long rest can restore me. I wish it were otherwise. My heart is in my work, and with you; but God's will must be done. When I am able to move, I must go away. I try to cast all my cares on God; but, sometimes, I fear that you may get scattered. O my dear brethren, do not wander, for this would break my heart! I might also feel deep anxiety for my great works, but I am sure my Lord will carry them on. It is, however, my duty to tell you what you can do, and what is needed. The Orphanage funds are lower just now than they have been these two years. God will provide, but you know that you are His stewards.

"You do pray for me, I know; but I entreat you not to cease your supplications. I am as a potter's vessel when it is utterly broken, useless, and laid aside. Nights of watching, and days of weeping have been mine, but I hope the cloud is passing. Alas! I can only say this for my own personal and light affliction; there is one who lies nearest my heart whose sorrows are not relieved by such a hope. In this relative trial, a very keen one, I again ask your prayers. The Lord be with you evermore! Amen. So prays,—

"Your suffering Pastor,

"C. H. S."

"May 13th, 1871.

"Dear Friends,

"Yesterday finished a long six weeks of pain and weakness. I made a desperate push for the sea-side, and reached it; but I am in great doubt whether I shall not be obliged to go home again, for I am so very weak. Please pray for me, that the Lord would restore to me my strength.

"I beg to thank the Lord, in your assembly, for graciously permitting me to live, and for giving me some hope that I shall yet again be among you in vigour. It must be long first; but you will have much patience, and your loving prayers will greatly help me to mend.

"Dear friends, be sure to carry on every part of the Lord's work with earnestness. If there has ever been any neglect, let there be none now; but all of you combine to make up for the lack of my service. Let the prayer-meetings be better attended than ever, and may the petitions be still more intense! May God bless the brethren who minister among you in my place! I send my love to the deacons, elders, and all friends.

"During last week, very large help came in for the Orphanage, for which I bless the Lord.

"Yours truly,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

"Clapham,

"June 4th, 1871.

"Beloved Friends,

"I write you these little notes because I am told that you are pleased to hear from myself the state of my health, and certainly it would be very wrong if I did not write now; for I was not silent in my mourning, and therefore I dare not refrain now that I am able to rejoice. Thank God, the healing One, with me, for, during this week, I have each morning awakened refreshed, feeling that I was better

than on the preceding day. The pain is gone, but extreme weakness remains. I am as feeble as a child; but each day I gather a little strength, and I hope I shall be able to preach to you on the 25th of this month. I cannot be sure, but this is my hope and prayer; and, moreover, I desire to come among you with a sevenfold blessing, that we may all love Jesus more, do more for His glory, and see greater things than ever done for His Kingdom. Shall Satan triumph over my twelve silent Sabbaths? Will not the Lord bring good out of evil by leading us on to some higher service and greater work? The Lord be richly with you to-day! May He smile on the Sabbath-school, send the dew of blessing on Mrs. Bartlett's class, and bid the Heavenly wind breathe upon all the Bible-classes! May the saints be fed with manna, and have the appetite to enjoy it! May the unconverted among you be visited by the Holy Ghost, and renewed in heart, and that speedily!

"Accept my loving thanks to those especially who have remembered me and my work by their deeds. Do not think that I am unmindful of your weekly liberality. I know you give as unto the Lord; but to me also you say, in language more powerful than words, 'Do not feel any anxiety; we will not forget your work; and when you are not with us, we will be as faithful as when we hear your voice.' The Lord reward you! Let not your prayers cease or be diminished. Prayer can have anything of God. With the utmost love,—

"Yours until death,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

"Clapham,

"June 11th, 1871.

"Beloved Friends,—whom I have in constant and affectionate remembrance,—

"I am obliged again to take up the note of mourning, for I have been all the week suffering, and the most of it confined to my bed. The severe weather has driven me back, and caused a repetition of all my pains. Nevertheless, the Lord's will be done! Let Him have His way with me, for He is love. I have been wearying to preach again; but it may be that my dumb Sabbaths are appointed for my chastisement, and their number is not yet fulfilled. We must work for God while we can, for not one of us knows how soon he may be unable to take a share in the sacred service. At the same time, how unimportant we are! God's cause goes on without us. We all need Him, but He needs no one of us.

"Beloved, hitherto I have had much solace in hearing that the Lord's work among you goes on. I pray you, make earnest intercession that this may continue. I hope the week-night services will not droop. If you stay away, let it be when I am there, but *not now*. May the deacons and elders find themselves surrounded

by an untiring band of helpers at every meeting for worship! May abundance of grace rest on you all, especially on the sick, the poor, and the bereaved!

"Pray for me, I entreat you. Perhaps, if *the church* met for prayer, I should be speedily restored. I know thousands do pray, but should not the church do so *as a church*? I must give up all hope of preaching on the 25th; but I trust the Lord will be merciful to me, and send me among you on the first Sabbath of July.

"With deep Christian love from—

"Your suffering Pastor,

"C. H. S."

The Pastor's suggestion, that the church should meet for prayer, was speedily carried into effect, and the result was thus chronicled in the next letter:—

"Clapham,

"June 18th, 1871.

"My Beloved Friends,

"As soon as the church had resolved to meet for special prayer for me, I began rapidly to recover. It pleased God to turn the wind at the beginning of this week, and the change in the temperature has worked wonders. We may truthfully say of the Wednesday meeting for prayer, that the Lord fulfilled His Word: 'Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.' For all this great goodness, I pray you to unite with me in sincere and intense gratitude to the Lord our God

'I feel bound publicly to express my happiness of heart. This week has furnished me with the liveliest proofs of your true love. I have been deeply touched with the various ways in which the affection of so many of you has sought to find expression. I value this, not only for my own sake, though it is very sweet to be the object of such hearty love, but because I see in it the evidence that our union has been cemented by years, and the earnest of future years of united effort, if God spares us. The absence of unity is weakness; its indisputable presence is strength.

"On the closing day of my thirty-seventh year, I find myself the Pastor of a beloved flock, who have borne the test of twelve Sabbaths of their minister's absence, and the severer test of more than seventeen years of the same ministry, and are now exhibiting more love to him than ever. I bless God, but I also thank you, and assure you that I never felt happier in the midst of my people than I do now in the prospect of returning to you. I am still weak, but the improvement in strength this week has been very surprising. I hardly dare speak of the future; but I earnestly hope we shall look each other in the face on the first Sabbath of July.

"Peace be with you, and the Lord's own anointing! May those who speak to

you to-day be filled with the Spirit! May the soft South wind of the Spirit's love be among you, and may you pour forth praise as flowers breathe perfume!

"Yours very truly,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

The dear sufferer's expectation was realized, for he was able to preach at the Tabernacle on the morning of July 2. His subject was Psalm lxxi. 14: "But I will hope continually, and will yet praise Thee more and more." In the course of his sermon, he thus referred to his illness and restoration:—"I know one, who has been long privileged to lift up his voice in the choir of the great King. In that delightful labour, none were more happy than he was; the longer he was engaged in the work, the more he loved it. Now, it came to pass that, on a certain day, this songster found himself shut out of the choir; he would have entered to take his part, but he was not permitted. Perhaps the King was angry; perhaps the songster had sung carelessly; perhaps he had acted unworthily in some other matter; or possibly his Master knew that his song would grow more sweet if he were silenced for a while. How it was, I know not; but this I know, it caused great searching of heart. Often, this chorister begged to be restored; but he was as often repulsed, and somewhat roughly, too. I think it was for nearly three months that this unhappy songster was kept in enforced silence, with fire in his bones, and no vent for it. The royal music went on without him; there was no lack of song, and in this he rejoiced, but he longed to take his place again,—I cannot tell you how eagerly he longed. At last, the happy hour arrived; the King gave His permit, he might sing again. The songster was full of gratitude, and I heard him say,—you shall hear him say it, 'My Lord, since I am again restored, I will hope continually, and will yet praise Thee more and more.'"

Preaching at the Tabernacle, later in the same year, Mr. Spurgeon thus described how he wrestled in prayer, and prevailed with the Lord, in what proved to be the crisis of that season of suffering:—"I have found it a blessed thing, in my own experience, to plead before God that I am His child. When, some months ago, I was racked with pain to an extreme degree, so that I could no longer bear it without crying out, I asked all to go from the room, and leave me alone; and then I had nothing I could say to God but this, 'Thou art my Father, and I am Thy child; and Thou, as a Father, art tender and full of mercy. I could not bear to see my child suffer as Thou makest me suffer; and if I saw him tormented as I am now, I would do what I could to help him, and put my arms under him to sustain him. Wilt Thou hide Thy face from me, my Father? Wilt Thou still lay on me Thy heavy hand, and not give me a smile from Thy countenance?' I talked to the Lord as Luther would have done, and pleaded His Fatherhood in real earnest. 'Like as a

father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.' If He be a Father, let Him show Himself a Father,—so I pleaded; and I ventured to say, when they came back who watched me, 'I shall never have such agony again from this moment, for God has heard my prayer.' I bless God that ease came, and the racking pain never returned. Faith mastered it by laying hold upon God in His own revealed character,—that character in which, in our darkest hour, we are best able to appreciate Him. I think this is why that prayer, '*Our Father* which art in Heaven,' is given to us, because, when we are lowest, we can still say, 'Our Father,' and when it is very dark, and we are very weak, our childlike appeal can go up, 'Father, help me! Father, rescue me!'

This experience made so deep an impression upon Mr. Spurgeon's mind and heart that he never forgot it. Those who are familiar with his writings must have noticed how often he referred to it, and how he urged other tried believers to do as he had done. On one occasion, when he was speaking at the Mildmay Park Conference Hall, he narrated this incident with very telling effect.

The Tabernacle church made a special record of this trying period and of the Lord's gracious answer to the united supplications of His people. At the church-meeting, on July 24, 1871, it was resolved that the following statement should be entered on the Minutes:—

"It having pleased our Heavenly Father to lay His afflicting hand upon our beloved Pastor, he was compelled to cease his public labours in our midst on the 2nd of April, and for a period of twelve Sabbaths we were deprived of his faithful ministrations. During this time, he addressed to us several letters, which we insert upon our records as a proof of the close mutual love and esteem which link us together as Pastor and people. Our public prayers have been many, and our private supplications have been unceasing. On June 14th, we met *as a church* for special prayer, and God was pleased to hear our cry, and once more to restore His servant to some part of his wonted strength, so that he preached on the morning of July 2nd. We therefore met to give thanks to God on Wednesday, July 5th, when it was resolved:—

"That this church desires to leave upon record its sense of gratitude to Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, for having restored our beloved Pastor to so much of health as permits him again to minister in our midst, and we pray that he may speedily regain his accustomed vigour, and enjoy still more of the comfort and preciousness of the truth he so eloquently and faithfully preaches. We implore for him a yet fuller measure of the Holy Spirit, and enlarged success in all the many labours to which he has set his hand; and whilst thus recording our thanks and

petitions, we also desire to convey to our beloved Pastor our expressions of sincerest sympathy with him in his severe and protracted illness. We have learned to prize more highly than ever those loving ministrations under which so many of us have been savingly blessed, and all of us have been greatly helped. We rejoice exceedingly that he can again occupy his accustomed place, to which he is welcomed by a people more than ever prepared to co-operate with him in all his labours, and to love him ever with a pure heart fervently. Our prayers shall still mingle at the private and public altar that himself, his dear wife, and their sons may be long spared to enjoy that blessing which our covenant God alone can bestow."

The next special manifestation of the love of the people for their Pastor commemorated three notable events in his history. The Minutes of the annual church-meeting, held at the Tabernacle on January 8, 1875, contain the following entry:—

"Proposed by Brother William Olney, seconded by Brother John Ward, and carried unanimously:—That we desire, as a church, to record our devout gratitude to our Heavenly Father on the completion of the 21st year of our Pastor's ministry amongst us. We also desire to present our hearty congratulations to him that he has been privileged to complete the 20th volume of his printed sermons, and also, during the past year, to accomplish the erection of the New College Buildings. We feel it desirable that a permanent record should be made of these important events, and therefore agree that it shall be entered in our church-book, and that a suitable address, handsomely framed and beautifully illuminated, shall be presented to our Pastor as an expression of our loving sympathy with him, which was never felt by us to a greater degree than at the present time."

At the church-meeting, on April 1, 1875, Pastor J. A. Spurgeon reported that a meeting of the church and congregation had been held, on Tuesday, March 30, to welcome the senior Pastor, on his return from the Continent, after an absence from the pulpit for eleven Sabbaths, and at that gathering the testimonial authorized by the church had been duly presented. A reduced *facsimile* of it is reproduced on the following page.

A reference to the letter of Mr. William Olney, in Volume I., page 346, will show that one of the reasons he mentioned in urging "the boy-preacher" at Waterbeach to accept the invitation to the pastorate at New Park Street Chapel was, that he hoped his brother Henry would be converted through the young minister's preaching, which had even then greatly impressed him. This result happily came to pass, and dear old "Father Olney" had the joy of seeing all his sons members of the church of which he had so long been a deacon. In October, 1875,

Metropolitan Tabernacle.

MEMORIAL.

The Baptist Church of Jesus Christ meeting
in the Metropolitan Tabernacle assembled in its
Annual Church Meeting on Friday January 8th 1875.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY That we have as a Church
qualified our Heavenly Father that he has retained our Pastors

C. H. SPURGEON

of the Church in the space of faithful living and energetic ministry. We are
deeply indebted to the memory of his death when he left the mantle of the pastorate
of the Tabernacle to the gathering in of the South and the resignation of his
Christian fellowships and pastoral charges at the time the Lord was pleased.

THAT you are having felt the loss of his presence in our midst and are
increasing love and esteem. We are rejoicing that the work of the
Holy Ghost of presence in our hearts and souls of which we have found
evidence and all of us continue. Amen and amen. We will do our best
that thousands of souls may be by them rescued, glorified and saved.

Our hearts desire you to be the good seed of God that we feel you to
plant and grow from the New Testament and the Word of God.
We are sure that for every year you may be glad to see that a
goodly band of disciples are still faithful members of the Church and
that they will be able to do as much for the world as you have done.

We are sure that you will have many souls of God to be saved and
many hearts to be comforted and many lives to be glorified.

May the Lord be with you in all your ways and may he
Prayer be for the more to come we may see you again and then
... are your loving people in the fellowship of the Gospel.

Yours affectionately,
C. H. Spurgeon
Pastor

Mr. Henry P. Olney was "called home;" and, as soon as the news reached Mr. Spurgeon, he wrote the following letter to Mr. Thomas H. Olney:—

"Nightingale Lane,

"Clapham,

"(October , 1875.)

"Dear Friend,

"I could not say much to Mr. Macgregor, for I felt stunned by the tidings of your brother's death, and could not realize it; indeed, I cannot now.

"God bless you, beloved brother; and as He comes so very near in solemn deeds, may He come just as near in love! Peace be to you in the hour of sore amazement!

"I send my deepest sympathies to the bereaved wife. I can do no better than pray that she may now be very graciously sustained. If she can calmly bow before the Lord, it will be for her own good. Grief so natural, and so likely to prove excessive, must be restrained for the sake of herself and babes. God help her, poor soul! What a loss is hers!

"Yours lovingly,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

When Mrs. Bartlett was "called home," in August, 1875, the members of her class desired her son Edward to take his mother's place. This arrangement met with Mr. Spurgeon's full approval, and was accordingly carried out. The annual meeting of the class was, for many years, the occasion for presenting to the beloved President of the College the contributions and collections of the members in aid of his much-loved work. In the course of twelve years, no less than £1,346 was thus received. The Pastor was particularly anxious to be present at the first anniversary under the new leadership, but he was unable to be there, and had to be content with writing the following characteristic epistle:—

"Nightingale Lane,

"Clapham,

"Feb. 22, 1876.

"My Dear Mr. Bartlett, and Class,

"If it were not that it is *the Lord* who has put me out of the way for a day or two, I should be very rebellious. All yesterday, I was weeping and sneezing, till I could not see out of my eyes. To-day, I feel that the turning-point has come, and that I shall soon be better; but it would be the utmost folly to leave my bed-chamber as I now am.

"This is a terrible disappointment to me as well as to your young friends, and I want you to tell them how sorry their Pastor is. I am glad they cannot see him, for he has an awful nose, and such eyes! Also let them know that he is very fond of *Mrs.* Bartlett's class, and would sooner have disappointed the Queen than have been absent from the meeting to-night. Besides, he wanted to thank *Mrs.* Bartlett, and to say some kind things which are due all round.

"I am anxious to do all I can to mitigate this trouble, and therefore I propose, (1) that you enjoy yourselves all you can to-night; (2) that I invite you all to tea another evening as soon as possible; or, (3) that I come to the class some Sunday afternoon; or, (4) that we do all the three things.

"May God bless you all! You are so good to keep together, and work on, and pray on. I hope we shall have hundreds of souls saved this year; let us aim at such a result. Dear Mr. Bartlett has my unbounded confidence and esteem. May every blessing abound towards him and you!

"Don't be alarmed about me. I have about 49 colds all at once, and lumbago into the bargain; but all will go in a day or two, I hope. I cannot tell how I could have got into such a sneezy, freezy, droppy, shivery, watery, coughy, fevery state; I hope I shall soon get out of it.

"Yours ever lovingly,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

In the earlier days, when the dear Pastor was able more frequently to preside at the Tabernacle church-meetings than he could in his later years, he used to make brief but very interesting entries in the church-book. Sometimes, they would be humorous, as when he wrote concerning the quality of the pens and ink supplied for use in the lecture-hall; occasionally, they were very sad notes, when some turned aside to sin or to error, and so pierced his heart through with many sorrows; but, more often, the comments were of a grateful and jubilant character, like the following, which was written at the first meeting of the members after the communion service on Lord's-day evening, March 5, 1876:—

"It is worthy of special note that four children of our beloved deacon, William Higgs, were added to the church on one evening, while others of his family have preceded them. As he was the builder of the Tabernacle in which we meet, we rejoice that the Lord there blesses his household."

While Mr. Spurgeon never neglected the comparatively few wealthier members of the church and congregation, he was always accessible to their poorer sisters and brethren, and he constantly proved, in a most practical way, his sympathy with them, and his personal interest in their temporal and spiritual welfare. A conspicuous

instance of this manifestation of kindly feeling is thus recorded in the report of the annual church-meeting at the Tabernacle on January 10, 1877 :—

“ Before proceeding to the business of the evening, the Pastor stated that, in his own name, and on behalf of the church, he desired that some note should be taken of the fact that the Lord had spared to the church, for a period of 70 years, our aged sister, Miss Fanny Gay, during the whole of which time she had been a useful and consistent member. The Pastor then handed to her a copy of *The Interpreter*, containing the following inscription :—

“ Presented to Miss Fanny Gay, upon completing her seventieth year of membership with the church which now worships in the Metropolitan Tabernacle, with the love of the Pastors and members. The Lord bless thee and keep thee !

“ C. H. SPURGEON.

“ January 10, for February, 1877.”

The good sister lived until early in 1886 ; and when she was “ called home,” Mr. Spurgeon wrote concerning her :—“ The church at the Tabernacle has recently lost Miss Fanny Gay, who has for many years been the first on the roll of membership. She joined the church in the year 1807, and had thus been a member nearly eighty years, and was within a few hours of ninety-seven years of age when she was called home. She was a great sufferer for most of her long life, but her afflictions were patiently, and even cheerfully, borne ; and for many years she had been one of the happiest inmates of the Almshouses connected with the Tabernacle.”

The Tabernacle church has long been a mother of churches ; and, usually, when the brethren and sisters have been drafted off to found a new cause, the Pastor has written a special letter to accompany the formal transfers. When the church at James' Grove, Peckham, was about to be constituted, no less than 75 members received their dismission from the Tabernacle, and the Pastor gave them his parting blessing and his wise and loving counsel in as hearty and genial a fashion as if he had been receiving that large contingent of adherents instead of losing them.

“ Metropolitan Tabernacle,

“ September 9th, 1878.

“ Beloved Brethren,

“ The Church of Christ at the Metropolitan Tabernacle has heard with pleasure of your wish to be formed into a separate community, and we hereby grant an honourable dismission to you all with that view. You are such beloved and useful members that we should have been grieved to part with you under any other circumstances ; but now we send you out as a father sends out his full-grown

son to found another house, and to become himself the centre of a family. We wish you every blessing. It is our joy to see our Lord's Kingdom increased; and, as we believe that your being gathered into a new church will tend to that grand design, we gladly part with you, wishing you the power and presence of the Lord henceforth and for ever.

"Brethren, be of one heart and one mind. Suffer no 'root of bitterness' to spring up among you. Sustain your excellent Pastor-elect; and, by your prayers, gird him with the power of the Highest. Watch over your own personal walk, and let the world see what grace can do in you and by you. Do not forget to pray for the mother-church and its officers. We wish you the like blessing with us; what more could we desire for you? May the ministry among you be full of Divine power, and may thousands be thereby called out of darkness into light! Abound in confidence in God, and in His gospel. He is able to surpass your loftiest thoughts. Believe great things of God, and expect great things from God. To the Eternal Trinity we commend you by Christ Jesus.

"Yours, on behalf of the whole church,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

This chapter may be appropriately closed with Mr. Spurgeon's testimony to the piety and the unity of the Tabernacle church, together with a solemn warning as to what would happen if such a highly-favoured company of people should ever prove unfaithful:—"I thank God that we have a great many very warm-hearted, earnest Christians in connection with this church,—I will make bold to say, such true and lovely saints as I never expected to live to see. I have beheld in this church apostolical piety revived; I will say it, to the glory of God, that I have seen as earnest and as true piety as Paul or Peter ever witnessed. I have marked, in some here present, such godly zeal, such holiness, such devotion to the Master's business, as Christ Himself must look upon with joy and satisfaction. God has been pleased to favour us with profound peace in the church. We have been disturbed by no word of false doctrine, by no uprising of heretics in our midst, or any separations or divisions. This is a blessed thing; but, still, Satan may make it a dangerous matter. We may begin to think that there is no need for us to watch, that we shall always be as we are; and deacons, and elders, and Pastor, and church-members, may all cease their vigilance, and then the 'root of bitterness' may spring up in the neglected corner till it gets too deeply rooted for us to tear it up again. Though we are not free from ten thousand faults, yet I have often admired the goodness of God which has enabled us, with a hearty grip, to hold each other by the hand, and say, 'We love each other for Christ's sake, and for the truth's sake, and we hope to live in each other's love till we die, wishing, if it were possible, to be buried side

by side.' I do thank God for this, because I know there is more than enough of evil among us to cause dissensions in our midst. We who bear office in the church have the same nature as others; and therefore, naturally, would seek to have the supremacy, and every man, if left to himself, would indulge an angry temper, and find many reasons for differing from his brother. We have all been offended often, and have as often offended others. We are as imperfect a band of men as might be found, but we are one in Christ. We have each had to put up with the other, and to bear and forbear; and it does appear to me a wonder that so many imperfect people should get on so well together for so long. By faith, I read over the door of our Tabernacle this text, 'When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?' When some of our members were first taken into the church, I received a very suspicious character with them. It was said, 'Well, if Mr. Spurgeon accepts such-and-such a man, he has been so great a trouble in our church, that he will be the beginning of wars at the Tabernacle.' But those very persons, who came with that doubtful character, have become the most zealous of our working community; and, instead of differing and disagreeing, they have felt that there was so much to do that it would be a pity to spend one grain of strength in quarrelling with other children of God. If a man thinks himself to be some great one, his importance vanishes as soon as he joins our vast host. I have been warned, sometimes, by fellow-ministers who have had a member who has proved troublesome to them, and who wished to come into our midst. I have been told that I must watch him very carefully, for he would be sure to be a cause of anxiety to me; but I have answered, 'No one ever troubles me; I do not let him.' Many of these people, who are supposed to be so dangerous, only want something to do; they have too much energy to be unemployed. I set them to work, and they are no longer troublesome; if that does not cure them, I give them still more work to do. They have too much vigour for small places, and need to be where their powers can have full scope, for then they have less time to notice things with which they do not wholly agree. Possibly, my brethren, many of you do not sufficiently prize the peace which reigns in our church. Ah! you would value it if you lost it. Oh, how highly you would esteem it if strife and schism should ever come into our midst! You would look back upon these happy days we have had together with intense regret, and pray, 'Lord, knit us together in unity again; send us love to each other once more;' for, in a church, love is the essential element of happiness.

"If we, as a church, prove unfaithful; if we leave our first love; if we do not plead in prayer, and seek the conversion of souls, God may take away His presence from us as He has done from churches that were once His, but which are not so now. The traveller tells you that, as he journeys through Asia Minor, he sees the ruins of those cities which once were the seven golden candlesticks, wherein the light of

truth shone brightly. What will he now say of Thyatira? Where will he find Laodicea? These have passed away, and why may not this church? Look at Rome, once the glory of the Christian Church, her ministers many, and her power over the world enormous for good; and now she is the place where Satan's seat is, and her synagogue is a synagogue of hell. How is this? Because she departed from her integrity, she left her first love, and the Lord cast her away. Thus will He deal with us also if we sin against Him. You know that terrible passage: 'Go ye now unto My place which was in Shiloh, where I set My Name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of My people Israel.' God first of all had the tabernacle pitched at Shiloh, but it was defiled by the sin of Eli's sons, so the tabernacle was taken away, and Shiloh became a wilderness. So may this flourishing church become. If justice should thus visit you, you may hold your prayer-meetings,—probably those will soon cease,—but of what avail will your formal prayers be? You may get whom you will to preach, but what of that? I know what you would do, if some of us were fallen asleep, and the faithful ones buried,—if the Spirit of God were gone, you would say, 'Well, we are still a large and influential congregation; we can afford to pay a talented minister, money will do anything;' and you would get the man of talents, and then you would want an organ and a choir, and many other pretty things which we now count it our joy to do without. Then, if such were the case, all these vain attempts at grandeur would be unsuccessful, and the church would ere long become a scorn and a hissing, or else a mere log upon the water. Then it would be said, 'We must change the management,' and there would be this alteration and that; but if the Lord were gone, what could you do? By what means could you ever make this church, or any other church, revive again? Alas! for the carnal, spasmodic efforts we have seen made in some churches! Prayer-meetings badly attended, no conversions, but still the people have said, 'It is imperative upon us to keep up a respectable appearance; we must collect a congregation by our singing, by our organ, or some other outward attraction;' and angels might have wept as they saw the folly of men who sought almost anything except the Lord, who alone can make a house His temple, who alone can make a ministry to be a ministration of mercy, without whose presence the most solemn congregation is but as the herding of men in the market, and the most melodious songs but as the shoutings of those who make merry at a marriage. Without the Lord, our solemn days, our new moons, and our appointed feasts, are an abomination such as His soul hateth. May this church ever feel her utter, entire, absolute dependence upon the presence of her God, and may she never cease humbly to implore Him to forgive her many sins, but still to command His blessing to abide upon her! Amen."

CHAPTER LXXVI.

A Holiday Drive to the New Forest.

On our public rests for porters in the City of London, you may read the words, "Rest, but do not loiter;" and they contain advice worthy of our attention. I do not call the *dolce far niente* laziness; there is "a sweet doing of nothing" which is just the finest medicine in the world for a jaded worker. When the mind gets fatigued, and out of order, to rest it is no more idleness than sleep is idleness; and no man is called lazy for sleeping the proper time. It is far better to be industriously asleep than lazily awake. Be always ready, however, to do good even in your resting-times, and in your leisure hours; and so be really a minister, and there will be no need for you to proclaim that you are one.—C. H. S., in "*Lectures to my Students.*"

I went, the other day, to St. Cross Hospital, near Winchester, which some of you may know. There they give away a piece of bread to everybody who knocks at the door; so I knocked, as bold as brass. Why should I not? If they gave the dole away to everyone, why should not I have my share? In due course, the hatch was opened, and I and the friends who were with me received our portion. It was a dole to be given to everybody who came, so I did not humble myself, and make anything special of it; it was meant for all, and I therefore, as one of the people who were willing to knock, was not refused. Now, even so, if the gospel is to be preached to every creature, why do you stand higgling and haggling when you want the Bread of life? Why should you waste time in raising question after question when you only need to take what Jesus freely gives? I will warrant that you do not raise such quibbles against yourselves in money matters. If an estate is bequeathed to you, I am sure that you do not employ a solicitor to hunt for flaws in the title, or to invent objections to the will. Why do men raise difficulties against their own salvation, instead of cheerfully accepting what the infinite mercy of God so graciously provides for all who, with broken hearts, and willing minds, are ready to take what God the Ever-bountiful is so pleased to give?—C. H. S., in a sermon at the *Tabernacle.*

A minister should be like a certain chamber which I saw at Beaulieu, in the New Forest, in which a cobweb is never seen. It is a large lumber-room, and is never swept; yet no spider ever defiles it with the emblems of neglect. It is roofed with chestnut; and, for some reason, I know not what, spiders will not come near that wood by the year together. The same thing was mentioned to me in the corridors of Winchester School. I was told, "No spiders ever come here." Our minds should be equally clear of idle habits.—C. H. S., in "*Lectures to my Students.*"

I was sitting, one day, in the New Forest, under a beech tree. I like to look at the beech, and study it, as I do many other trees, for every one has its own peculiarities and habits, its special ways of twisting its boughs, and growing its bark, and opening its leaves, and so forth. As I looked up at that beech, and admired the wisdom of God in making it, I saw a squirrel running round and round the trunk, and up the branches, and I thought to myself, "Ah! this beech tree is a great deal more to you than it is to me, for it is your home, your living, your all." Its big branches were the main streets of his city, and its little boughs were the lanes; somewhere in that tree he had his house, and the beech-mast was his daily food, he lived on it. Well, now, the way to deal with God's Word is not merely to contemplate it, or to study it, as a student does; but to live on it, as that squirrel lives on his beech tree. Let it be to you, spiritually, your house, your home, your food, your medicine, your clothing, the one essential element of your soul's life and growth.—C. H. S., in a sermon at the *Tabernacle.*



NE of my dear husband's most congenial recreations consisted in spending a long day in the country;—driving over hill and dale, and through the lanes and pretty villages of our charming county of Surrey. Many sweet days of rest have thus been snatched from weeks of heavy toil, and a furlough of a few hours has helped to restore and refresh the overworked brain and heart. He would go out in good time, taking with him some choice companion, or, perchance,

another weary worker; and, driving slowly, they would jog along till noon, when, at a pleasant wayside inn, they would rest the horse, and have their luncheon, returning in the cool of the evening for high tea at home at six or seven o'clock.

Such rest Mr. Spurgeon found very delightful; but this was surpassed and completed when a fortnight of similar days could be linked together to form a perfect holiday. Then, instead of driving back in the sunset, he would go forward; and the trip would extend itself to many towns, and bring him into pleasant acquaintance with new objects of interest, and novel impressions of places and people. It was amusing, at these times, to note that his ideas of comfort, and his disregard of external appearances, were equally conspicuous. He liked a cosy seat, and easy travelling; but he cared nothing for the style of his equipage;—an old horse—most inappropriately named "Peacock"—and a shabby carriage were matters of perfect indifference to him, so long as they were safe and trustworthy, and carried him out of the noise of the crowded world, into the stillness and beauty of nature's quiet resting-places.

I well remember—aye, and with a present thrill of regret that I ever laughed at it,—his purchasing, for these jaunts, a vehicle of so antiquated a pattern, and of such unfashionable proportions, that it was immediately dubbed "Punch's coach," and ever after bore that name. Its mirth-provoking aspect was increased when it was packed and prepared for a journey, for there was an arrangement behind, which supported a board for luggage, and added exceedingly to its grotesque and inelegant appearance. However, this convenient provision was, in the dear owner's estimation, one of its chief advantages, if not the very climax of its beauty; and though I laughed afresh at every glimpse of it, I loved him so dearly that I even learned to appreciate "Punch's coach" for his sweet sake. As I write, and the memories of the old days surge over my mind like the billows from a distant shore, I rejoice to know that his slightest wishes were tenderly indulged, and that his beaming, loving, satisfied face, as he started off on one of these country tours, is far more deeply impressed on my heart than the remembrance of his unsightly holiday caravan! Never was he more happy and exultant than when making excursions of this kind; and those who were privileged to accompany him, saw him at his social best, and with one accord they have testified to the grace and charm of his companionship.

From the pages of his daily letters to me, on one of these notable occasions, I have woven the story of his holiday drive into this single bright chapter, which, in consequence, possesses all the attractiveness of a personal narrative, and I think it well sets forth some traits in his lovely character which could in no other way have been so naturally revealed;—his intense delight in the works of God,—his fine appreciation of the minute or half-concealed lovelinesses of nature,—his care

for all living creatures,—his calm and contented spirit,—his devotion under all circumstances to his Master and His work;—all these are brought into distinct relief by the lively touches of his own vigorous pen and pencil.

Perhaps, out of respect for the "old horse" previously mentioned,—and which made so many delightful journeys for my beloved,—I ought to explain that the "noble greys" referred to in the opening sentences of the letters were owned and driven, in this particular instance, by a member of the party;—but they had to draw "Punch's coach" for all that!

Alton. June, 1873.—I am having a grand time. The horses are noble greys; the carriage, with my luggage-basket behind, most comfortable. We go along with an ease and dignity seldom equalled, and never surpassed. From Guildford, we drove to the foot of Martha's Chapel, and climbed to the very summit. What a view! Then down, and back to Guildford, and up the Hog's Back. Mistaking the route, we went up an old deserted Roman road, immensely broad, and all green. What a piece of country! The road itself was a sight, and the views on either side were sublime. So on to Farnham, where we dined, and went into the Bishop's park, which you will remember, with its deer, and avenue of elms. From Farnham to Alton is pretty and fruitful, but there were no incidents. I revised part of a sermon last night, and went to bed at 11.30; fell asleep at once, and neither stirred nor dreamed. I awoke at 6, then got up, and finished the sermon. Already, I am so much better that I feel able to go to work again,—quite. We go to Selborne this afternoon. How I wish you were with me! But you shall know anything I see which can help you to realize where I am, and what I am doing. By the way, this morning we went into the church here, and saw an old door which was riddled by the Parliamentarians; we were also regaled with a superabundance of organ music which a young gentleman volunteered. The church is restored very beautifully, and in good taste.

Same day, later—The drive was delicious, and I feel so well. Selborne is a little heaven of delights. It is Switzerland in miniature, where every turn changes the scene. If it were in a foreign land, all the world would crowd to it. We were all charmed; who could be otherwise? Well might White write so prettily upon so choice a subject. Hill, dell, bourne, hanger, down, lane, and wood,—one has them all within a very small compass, and with endless variety. We have returned to Alton to send off some of our party; and now, at a council of war, we have decided to visit Selborne again to-morrow, and see more of that gem of a village.

Selborne.—What a grand morning we have had! Up the Hanger above the village we climbed by a zigzag path, and had a very extensive view. It was delicious to ramble among the tall beeches, and peep down upon the village, and then to descend into the place itself by winding paths. We went to White's house, and were received very kindly by Professor Bell and his wife, both very aged persons. We were soon known, and had in honour. The poor complain of the parson's neglect of them, and their lack of anything to hear which they can understand. We rambled about as in a paradise, and then were off to Alresford. What enjoyment I have had, and what health is upon me! I never felt better in my life. We are all so happy with the scenery, that we do not know how to be grateful enough. Oh, that you were here! One of these days, I hope and pray you may be able to come.

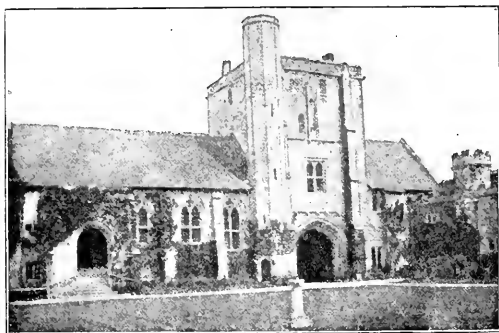
From Alresford, we have driven here (Winchester), along the beautiful valley of the Itchen, and your dear note was all I wanted to make me full of joy. Letters had accumulated here up to Wednesday. I have already answered twenty-five, and Mr. B—— many others; so we are keeping the work under

Winchester is a rare old place. We went first to the Hospital of St. Cross, and had a piece of bread, and a cup of beer. The cups are of horn, with five silver crosses on them; and my trio of friends bought one for me as a *souvenir*, and present for my coming birthday.



THE DOLE AT ST. CROSS HOSPITAL, WINCHESTER.

I noticed that *poor* men took a hunch of bread, while gentlemen were satisfied to receive a mere mouthful; and I thought,—Ah! none feed on Christ so fully as the poor and hungry. The dole is exhausted about noon, but the mercy of God continues to the eleventh hour.



BEAUFORT TOWER AND HALL OF ST. CROSS.

Having tasted of the hospitality of St. Cross, we passed into its rectangle, under the arch of the Beaufort Tower. It is here that the dole is given, and here we saw some of the old brethren in their gowns with crosses; there are thirteen of these old pensioners, and they get two quarts of beer to drink every day, and on "gaudy

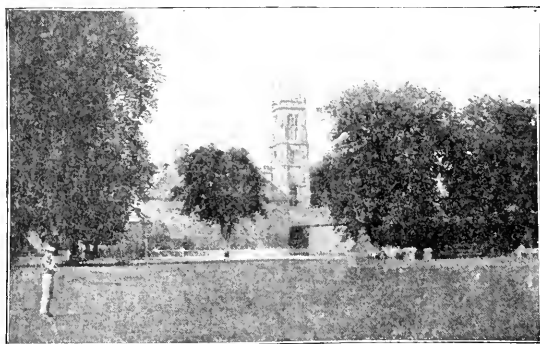


BRETHREN OF ST. CROSS

days" gin and beer hot! Indeed, these old Saxon institutions appear to have regarded beer as the grand necessary of life! We walked and talked, and then sat down on the steps leading up into the dining-hall, and quietly looked on the curious scene. In the days when the place was built, chimneys were a new invention, and therefore they are all *external*, and have a grotesque appearance. On one side are the cloisters, and at the further end is a noble church, in which service is performed twice a day.

Our next visit was to St. Catherine's Hill, but as I could not pretend to climb it, we kept along the river-bank till we reached the cathedral. Here, a most intelligent

guide made a couple of hours pass away as if they had only been so many minutes. I know more about architecture now than I had ever imagined I could learn, and am able to talk quite fluently about Early English, Decorated, Norman, etc., etc. It was strange to see the chests in which were the bones of Edgar, Ethelwulf, and all those old Saxon kings, and the sarcophagus of William Rufus. There is a kaleidoscopic window, all of the true old material, but no design, order, or arrangement; it reminded me of some men's theological knowledge,—their system is of the "anyhow" character. The thing which pleased us most was a pulpit, into which I ascended. The whole place was full of interest, even down to the crypt, into which we ventured.



WINCHESTER COLLEGE.

After the cathedral, we visited the famous school of William Wykeham, where the "tunding" took place. It is like one of the Cambridge Colleges, and very quaint are its ways. The photograph I send you shows the tower of the school-chapel, and the Quakers'-meeting-looking place in front is the French school. We saw the dining-hall, and the great buttery hatches through which the meat and *beer* are passed, of which the boys have as much as they choose;—Saxon again! Near the kitchen, is the ancient painting of "the faithful servant," which seems to be held in high repute at Winchester, but I think it a very poor thing.* I have also been up

* The figure is compounded of a man, a hog, a deer, and an ass. The inscription runs,—

"A trusty servant's portrait would you see,
This emblematic figure well survey
The porker's snout, not nice in diet shows;
The padlock shut, no secret he'll disclose;
Patient the ass, his master's rage will bear,
Swiftness in errand the stag's feet declare
Loaden his left hand, apt to labour south;
The vest, his neatness; open hand, his faith;
Girt with the sword, his shield upon his arm,
Himself and master he'll protect from harm."

St. Giles' Hill, above Winchester, and watched the setting sun, and have seen the lamps lit one after another all along the hill. It was very beautiful indeed, and the evening was so cool and calm it did me a world of good.

Salisbury.—To-day has been very dull and wet. Our drive through Hursley to Romsey was all very well; but from Romsey here, there was a constant downpour, and it got to be rather wearisome. It rains still, and I feel very tired; but a sunny day to-morrow will set me up again. I don't like big hotels in towns like dear old "Hatches" and the blessed trees.



"WOTTON HATCH"—A FAVOURITE RESTING-PLACE OF MR. SPURGEON.

Amesbury. Sabbath.—Last evening, we went into the grounds of the Abbey Park, the property of Sir Edward Antrobus. The river Avon runs through the domain, in many windings, branchings, and twistings. The grounds are thickly wooded, but so little frequented that we heard the hoarse crow of the pheasant, the coo of pigeons, the cry of waterfowl, the song of countless birds, and the splash of leaping fish, but no sound of man's profaning footsteps. We sat on an ornamental bridge, and listened to the eloquence of nature, while the river hastened along beneath us. The family being away, we had leave to wander anywhere, and we enjoyed the liberty very much. I was up this morning at six o'clock, dressing slowly, and meditating, then I came down, and had an hour's work at *The Interpreter*. I do not mean to preach to-day, except with my pen: and it is a great pleasure to me to use that instrument when thought flows freely. May you also have a quiet day,

and gather strength! May the Lord God of Israel bless my own best-beloved, and cause His face to shine upon her!

We had a nice little service yesterday morning, and after dinner, we went into the woods again. How I wished you could have been with me! Imagine a series of cathedrals of beech trees; the pillars all of silver, and the roof of emerald lace-work and twinkling stars of sunlight; the walls of dense yew trees, and the floor ankle-deep of red and brown leaves, softer than a velvet carpet. Rain fell; but, under the yews, we only heard it patter; and as we lay still, we could hear the wild ducks on the stream, far down below, making love,—and war. Presently, the sun came out, and we walked through the grand avenues up to a hill, which stood as a cliff above the Avon, with the Abbey House full in view, and Beacon Hill and the Wiltshire range of Downs with plentiful *tumuli*. Here again we saw pheasants in the mead on the other side, one white one among them, and wild ducks and coots on the river, diving, swimming, and flying after one another. Swallows were all around us. Wood-pigeons came every now and then, and some were in the trees cooing constantly. Hawks poised themselves in the air, flocks of starlings flew overhead, like November meteors, thrushes and blackbirds sang; and, last of all, there came, on downy yellow pinions, white-breasted and round-faced, your friend the owl, who sped into the wood, and was soon followed by another, whose soft course, on noiseless broad-sailing wings, would have made you nestle up to me for joy, and whisper, "Oh, husband, how lovely!" All the while, the fish leaped as if they were quite at home, for we were as high above them and all the other things as if we were on a church spire. We then walked down green alleys, and started the rabbits in families; and, as we stood still, we saw their gambols, and marked the hares sitting upright, so that, seeing only their backs, they might have been mistaken for stumps of trees, if it had not been for their ears. I send you a sketch of them. A sneeze made them run, or rather, leap away. Then we came on young partridges and hen-coops, which we left at once, for fear of offending; and so came in to tea, walking along the river-bank, and smelling the new-mown hay. It was a sweet Sabbath. To-day and yesterday, I have done twenty-four pages of *The Interpreter*, and have sixteen more to do when I can. Love as deep as the sea and as broad, I send thee, my dear one.

Lyndhurst.—Three dainty notes have I devoured; real delicacies, flavoured with the love I prize above all earthly things. This place is so beautiful that, to linger here for a week or two, will be delightful, and better than going elsewhere. On the way here, we drove to Broadlands, and had a good view of the interior. There is as fine a collection of pictures as I ever saw, distributed over a house replete with

comforts and conveniences. The Temples and Palmerstons were set forth in noble portraits, but there were many works of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir Peter Lely, Wouvverman, and other great masters; many Dutch pictures, and a large number full of interest, and truly instructive works of art. A mile further, we saw Emly Park, where Miss Nightingale was born, and another four or five miles brought us into the forest amid the wildest scenery, and boundless wildernesses of shade. Here we came upon Rufus Stone, of which I send you all three sides. I bought them of a poor boy in a smock-frock, on the spot. "Mother paints 'em, Sor," was the answer of this youth to my question, "Where do you buy them?" What are the Selbornians after to have no photographs of their sweet village? Evidently, this "Mrs. Hodge" of the New Forest is an advanced woman! How vivid history becomes when such memorials are before one's eyes! The top of the iron pillar is grated, so that we could look in, and see the stone which it encases. Here it began to rain, but we had only about four miles to drive to Lyndhurst, so we went along very gently in alternate shower and shine.

So ends this week's chronicle. I do not think more could well have been seen; certainly, more could not be enjoyed by any living man in the absence of a dear wife to share his pleasure. How I should have loved you to have seen the partridges, and rabbits, and birds of all kinds, and forest trees and cedars, and roses and honeysuckles! It may yet be. The Lord cheer thy heart, thou dearest among women! Accept my most fervent love, hot from my inmost heart!

Yesterday morning, we went for a ride through "The Manor," and there we came upon a very *Atlantic of rhododendrons!* Huge billows of these flowers dashed up into the trees, or sank into deep hollows, and that for a mile or so in length, and a quarter of a mile in depth. The azaleas and rarer rhododendrons are past, but enough remained to make a matchless sea of colour and beauty. How I wished you were there! Thence we drove to Castle Malwood, where Rufus slept the night before he was shot. It stands on a round hill, and the owner has cut out openings in the wood, so as to give a series of glorious views. It is like a circular picture-gallery; for, looking through a frame of green, you see the towns and villages far away. None but a man of taste would have thought of such a thing, and carried it out so well. Some of the views are wonderful; no artist could copy them, they are so far away, yet so large and so full of detail. In the afternoon, clouds hung low, there was no air, all was close and thundery; our heads ached, and though we went out for a walk, we could scarcely breathe.

Sabbath.—I have been to the little Baptist Chapel, and have been much refreshed with a plain sermon from "Master, carest Thou not that we perish?"

We then walked in the wood, and talked and meditated. It is a grand thing to be lost in the forest within five minutes of coming out of a meeting-house!



IN THE FOREST.

Monday.—This morning, we have been in the forest again from ten till twelve. There are great masses of beech in one place, then oak, then underwood and small trees. Amid these are green lawns, and verdant valleys, glades, dells, hills, and vales. Sometimes, trees disappear, and all is common, with gorse, heather, and low bushes. Cottages surprise you everywhere, in nooks as secret as the haunts of fairies. Cattle with bells create an Alpine tinkling, horses and hogs go in troops. Everything is picturesque, and the space seems boundless. One might soon be lost, for the roads, and tracks, and mere trails, are countless. Birds and insects abound, and wild flowers and mosses. It is a world of beauty, I can say no less. The trunks of the stately trees, all aglow with lichen and moss, are loveliness itself; and the weird oaks are sometimes grotesque, and at other times solemn. Lyndhurst

is only a village, but it is in the forest, and that is its charm. You can ramble where you will, and no man can threaten you for trespassing. We hoped to see some of the fallow deer, and the squirrels; but have not succeeded as yet. We tracked a little brawling brook this morning; and if ever perfect beauty has existed on earth since the Fall, we saw it. What with foxgloves on the banks, and rare ferns at the river's brim and the rippling waters among mossy mole-mounds, and thyme-bearing knolls, and the red floor beneath the temple of beech shade,—it was matchless! I am as happy as half a being can be without the other half! It would be bliss indeed if you were here to share my joys.

Tuesday.—An evening drive has been supremely delightful from its coolness, and from the shadows and the gleams of glory from the setting sun, which here and there lit up the tree-tops, blazed among the old roots, and gilded the lofty forest columns. I feel as peaceful as serenity itself. No place upon earth could so fitly minister to a wearied brain by giving such perfect rest. It is better than cities, pictures, or even mountains, for all is peace, and there is not even sublimity to excite the emotions of the mind. One rests, and gazes on a spider's web all silvered o'er, and set with diamonds of dew; a beetle flying heavily; a dragon-fly dashing forward like a cavalier charging the foe, then hesitating and irresolute until another fit of energy seizes him; a foal frisking with delight at its mother's side; a snake rustling hurriedly away among the red leaves, or a partridge scurrying across the heather! Thank God for such peaceful scenes!

We have been through Bolder Wood and Mark Ash, and seen the most wonderful forest scenery I have ever beheld or even dreamed of. The huge beeches and oaks are so fantastic as to seem grotesque and wizard-like. They are beyond measure marvellous, and one could visit them twelve times a day, and yet not see half their beauties. The most singular thing of all is the flying buttress of the beech trees, which I never observed before. A long bough will be supported by another which joins it from lower down, and grows into it, so as to hold it up. This habit in the beech leads to great curiosities of growth, for there are sometimes threefold bracings, and great branches will be thus locked together, while, in other instances, one bough will curl under another in order, apparently, to hold it up. There are shapes most unshapely, and twistings most queer and unexpected, but the one object appears to be to buttress one another, and contribute to each other's strength by this strange interlacing. Just so should believers aid one another; are they not all branches of one tree?

Another place we have visited during the week is Beaulieu Abbey, which is all in ruins, but some remarkable parts remain, and the foundations of the buildings are

marked out on the turf by a sort of stone edging, so that one can, in imagination, restore the whole structure. We amused ourselves by trying to decipher the inscription on a broken memorial stone, but could not succeed. What a blessing to have a *complete* Revelation, or we should be spelling out the meaning of what we could see, and losing ourselves in endless speculation as to what might have been written on the lost fragment! I am better and better, and all the ocean of my love is yours.

June 10, 1873.—This is my thirty-ninth birthday, and I desire to bless God for sparing and blessing me, and for giving me, as one of His choicest gifts, my own dear, precious wife. May we be spared to one another for many a day, and dwell together for ever hereafter! Thank you for your dear fond letter. Truly, it is sweet to be so dearly loved, and to love in return with an eagerness which could understand limping expressions, much more the tender words which you employ. God bless thee! It has rained all day, so we have all been to be photographed, gratifying our vanity, since we could not indulge our observation. I am promised a copy of the group to-night before this is posted, though it will not have been long enough in water to prevent its fading; but if it pleases you for a moment, it will answer my purpose.

What do you think of your old "hub" in the forest? Does he not look calm and happy?



C. H. SPURGEON ON HIS THIRTY-NINTH BIRTHDAY

I think the old log just suits him, and the shabby old coat, too! I like the photograph better than any portrait ever taken of me; I wonder if you will?

After I wrote to you yesterday, I worked a little while at *The Interpreter*, but soon felt one of my old attacks coming on, so we set off for a long walk, and at some time past ten o'clock at night we lost our way in the thick of the forest, only we knew the direction of Lyndhurst by the chimneys. After breaking through the long grass, brambles, bracken, and underwood, we came to the edge of the dense enclosed wood in which we had been wandering, but a ditch and a pond barred our way. However, there were some rails of fencing across, and over this we climbed, and went along it above the water. We landed in a field of high grass, and made tracks for a cottage, got into the garden, down the path, and out at the front gate, nobody challenging us. This adventure did me good, and procured me a fair night's sleep.

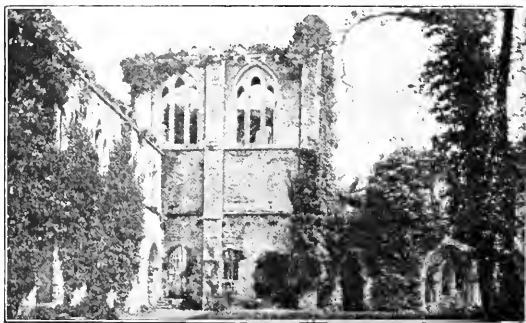
To-day, we have been to look at the scene of our night wandering, and to find out where we missed our way. We have roamed in the wood for two hours, and have never seen a soul. Birds, rabbits, flies, ants, and spiders have been our only company, save the OXE with whom we have held sweet converse, and of whose Word we have spoken to each other.

We have been for a drive to Lymington. It was charming to pass through the forest. Each road has its own character, and there is no sameness. I had a fine supply of tracts, and sowed the region well. Lymington is quite a considerable place, but I could not get a good photograph of it for you. We went down to the quay, and took the steamboat to Yarmouth in the Isle of Wight. It was about thirty minutes' steaming, and we saw Hurst Castle and the Needles to the right of us. Yarmouth is a poor little place, but we walked along the beach, and sat down for a while, and enjoyed the lovely view. Fine yachts went sailing by, and porpoises were in great plenty. After being kept in by the wet, the lovely weather of to-day is doubly pleasing. Returning to Lymington at seven o'clock, we then drove back to Lyndhurst, where I found a very specially sweet note from my beloved awaiting me. I am so glad you like the photo. It gives me real delight to afford you pleasure. I feel wonderfully well. My precious one, may the Lord give thee restoration also, and make thee happy with me in journeys yet to be planned! How I should rejoice to show you about this grand forest, the noblest in all England!

Yesterday afternoon was spent most deliciously. We drove along the Christchurch Road, and took the photographer and his apparatus with us, hoping

to secure some charming pictures. Our purpose was, however, thwarted by the absence of the sun, for he kept behind a cloud. We then sent back the carriage, and followed on foot the little brook called the Millfont, in all its winding ways. Ah! my darling, what choice bits we came across! Here, the water had worn out the earth from under the trees, and left bare a wattling of roots; there, in another place, clustered the water-lilies, and the green leaves with which they paved the brook. At one moment, we were on a sand island in the middle of the rivulet; at another, the bank was high above the water, like the Rhine hills, in miniature, above that mighty flood. Strange moths and dragon-flies frequented the pools and lakelets, and here and there a fish leaped out, while shoals of minnows flashed away when our shadows fell upon them. We crossed the current upon a single fir tree, rough and unsquared; if we had tumbled into the water, it would not have mattered much, except that we could not quickly have changed our clothes. All this walk was in solitude, among great trees. It was so singular to sit down in the silence, broken only by the warble of the brook's liquid notes, or by the noise of a moving bird, or the scream of a water-fowl, or the surprise of hearing a great crack, such as furniture will give in certain weathers. A dog saluted us with pertinacious barking, and we found his mistress, an artist, sitting down on a sandbank in the stream, sketching. The dog evidently felt that he was her protector, but I do not think we should have seen the lady if he had not called our attention to her presence. Oh! it was delicious to lie on a bed of moss, beneath a shady beech, with ferns and foxgloves all around, and the water rippling at one's feet! It was balm and cordial to me.

Bishop's Waltham.—We left delightful Lyndhurst at about nine o'clock this morning, and drove along a charming road till we reached Southampton, and crossed by the horse-ferry to go to Netley, and explore the ruins of its Abbey. Certainly, no



NETLEY ABBEY.—THE CLOISTER COURT.

place could be more congenial for an hour or so of rest. One can clamber up to the top in some places, especially in the South transept, where there is a walk on a sort of narrow ledge under the arches below the window. I was greatly interested, but could only keep on saying to myself, "How I wish my dear wify were here!" From there we went to see the Victoria Hospital, driving along by the edge of Southampton Water,—such a fine drive! The Hospital is the longest building in England; I should think it is nearly half a mile long. Then we went over the hills to Botley, where the views are boundless, and so on to this queer old town. We have been wandering among the ruins of a castle-palace, where Henry II. and Cœur-de-Lion have feasted in the days gone by. It has been a cool, lovely day, and the way splendid.

Liphook.—We left Waltham this morning, and drove along a ridge which gave us glorious views. We turned off the good roads, and made for Winchester Hill,—a great Roman or British earthwork upon an eminence. The tradition is that Winchester once stood here, but I cannot believe it. On the vast Down there are several *tumuli*; indeed, in the region we traversed to-day, *tumuli* are as plentiful as blackberries. What air we breathed! How fresh it blew up from the sea! It was a fair requital for the puffing which it cost me to climb the hill! Then we came down to East Meon, where is an ancient church, and then we traversed a long valley between two great ranges of Downs. Such exquisite views! Nobody need go to Switzerland for the sublime! At Petersfield, I found a sweet note from my darling. May all God's blessings be heaped upon her! As the way had been too short for a day's journey, we came on to Liphook this evening, and saw gems of views, which filled us with admiration. Here is a great inn, of ancient date, stately and roomy. It is mentioned by old Pepys; but since the coaching days, its glories have departed, though it still remains comfortable and vast. I am now looking forward to my work, and hope to keep on for a long time.

Ockley.—We strolled into the park, and sat on a fallen tree. Presently, a squirrel came and peeped at us, and not knowing our faces, he scudded away, and went up a beech. Anon he came down again, waving his tail on high, and passed us to another tree. Then came a doe and fawn, and stood and stared; and others followed, and in Indian file went slowly off. It became cold, so we trotted in to tea; and this done, I pen a line to my darling, almost the last she will get before my return.

A dear little note has just come from you, and rejoiced my heart. What joy to meet my beloved again, and find her better! On Sunday, we went and sat with the Quakers, and created an event. A portly female was moved to speak, and also

to admonish us against water-baptism. She was one of the old school, and evidently relieved her soul by her exhortation. In the afternoon, we had a fine storm and refreshing rain, and I revised a sermon, and wrote on a Psalm. Receive a great flood-tide of love from my heart to yours. May God bless us in returning to each other's beloved society, and spare us for many years to one another!



"THE RED LION" INN, AT OCKLEY, WHERE MR. SPURGEON WAS A FREQUENT VISITOR AND WHERE MUCH OF "JOHN PLOUGHMAN'S TALK" WAS WRITTEN.

CHAPTER LXXVII.

Memories of my Father.

BY PASTOR CHARLES SPURGEON.



C. AND T. SPURGEON AT THE AGE OF 7.

Charlie and Tommy are good little boys.
When they're asleep, they don't make any noise.—C. H. S.

That is a very precious Name which Christ puts into our mouths when He bids us say to God, "Our Father, which art in Heaven;" and there is a wonderful sweetness when we come to know that we may call Him our Husband. I do not like to compare the two, and say which title is to be preferred,—whether Husband or Father;—they are both unutterably sweet when they are enjoyed to the full—C. H. S., in sermon preached at the Tabernacle, March 4, 1883



MY dear mother has told, and is telling, in the sweetest manner possible, much of tender interest concerning her beloved husband. She records, in her own inimitable fashion, many touching incidents in the life of him who is so dear to her heart; and her charming writing proves how "unutterably sweet," because "enjoyed to the full," the title "my husband" is to her. There is only one other who can write the words "my father" after the illustrious name of Charles Haddon

Spurgeon,—and such a father! Blessed be his dear memory! Oh, for “the tongue of the learned,” and “the pen of a ready writer,” for then could I hope to speak and write love’s eulogy on one whose like we cannot hope to see again. Never had any son a kinder, wiser, happier, holier, or more generous sire; and I count it one of the highest honours of my life to be permitted to place within the already well-stored casket, a few gems which memory has preserved through that sweet relationship, which, in God’s great goodness, I, as one of my father’s sons, was privileged to enjoy.

There was one trait in his noble and godly character, which, among many others, always shone with a lustre peculiarly its own. His humility was of a Christlike character, and it demands heartiest commendation from those who speak or write about him. Words of eulogy concerning himself were ever painful to him, his motto in this, as in all other matters, being, “not I, but Christ;” yet, from his own loving child some meed of praise may surely come, and the son would fain render all due honour to the best of fathers. His blameless example, his holy consistency, his genial love, his generous liberality, his wise counsel, and his fearless fidelity to God and His truth, are all on a par with his fatherliness; and in my heart, as in all those with whom he came into contact, these qualities have been enshrined. The matchless grace and goodness, manifested in the home, found their counterpart in his public career, and proved how completely the spirit of the Master permeated the whole life of His servant. What my father was to me, to the Church of Christ, and to the world at large, none can ever fully estimate; but those who knew him best understood the secret of his magic power, for they felt that he “had been with Jesus,” and that Jesus lived in him.

The earliest recollections of my dear father, which I have retained, are, naturally, those associated with my childhood; and my heart is filled anew with joyful pleasures as I think again and again of the doings of the days gone by. I must have been a very small boy when I capered about, with great delight, because my father had provided, for the entertainment of the natives of Walton-on-the-Naze, a firework display on the sands; and, among the visitors for a season, at the then slightly-known and out-of-the-way watering-place, little Charlie was made glad by looking at sky-rockets, and listening to the bang of squibs. This may seem a small matter to report, but it is indicative of a prominent feature in my father’s character, inasmuch as he constantly rejoiced in giving pleasant surprises wherever he could; nor was this the only time when, to give his children some fun, he made the fifth of November an excuse for indulging in works of fire.

I well remember, too, how an improvised swing had been hung between two trees for the amusement of the boys; but an untimely fall of one of the twins

precluded all further use of this out-door gymnasium. Father felt, however, that athletic exercises were conducive to the health of growing lads, so he arranged for the erection of a substantial horizontal bar and swing for their use, thus giving evidence of his thoughtful love and sympathetic consideration for their well-being.



THE TWIN-SONS AT THE AGE OF 9.

I can seem to see, as if it were but yesterday, his bright face beaming with smiles, as he gave his would-be carpenter-sons a present, in the form of a basket of tools and a box of nails. All the implements needed for the full equipment of a master in the trade were to be found within that workman's basket; and I shall never forget how father watched and waited for us to discover, among the tools, a neat roll of rag! While we were puzzling our brains to find out why this was included, he laughingly explained that, in all probability, when we had cut our

fingers, we should find out the use of it. The providing of the bandage for wounded amateurs, exemplified his power of forethought, and also his profound common sense.

I still have in my possession a silver medal, bearing the following inscription :—

“ Presented to
 MASTER CHARLES SPURGEON
 by the
 United Kingdom Band of Hope Union,
 January, 1865.”

It calls to mind a notable occasion when the Tabernacle was crowded with a vast audience gathered to hear the famous lecture on “Sermons in Candles” delivered by my dear father; and well do I remember coming forward to receive, from Mr. W. R. Selway, a broad band of blue ribbon, to which was attached this medallion of membership, and how, after he had placed it around my neck, with trembling



PROFESSOR SELWAY, AND C. AND T. SPURGEON.

*Mr Selway placing the medals of the Band
 of Hope upon C & T Spurgeon*

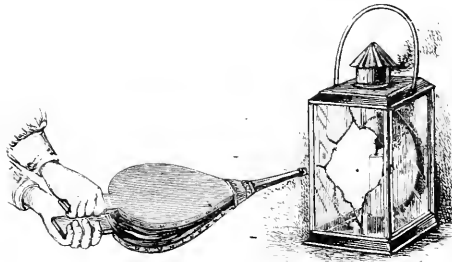
voice I acknowledged the kind gift, and expressed the hope that I might be a teetotaler all my life.

What a wonderful light the lecturer threw upon his subject! It can well be imagined with what interest the little lads, in their ninth year, looked and listened, as the different candles were lighted, and the sermonettes sparkled. Most vividly do I recollect how daintily my dear father walked across the platform,—as if to avoid the pools of water and heaps of refuse to be found in the streets of an Oriental city,—bearing in his hand a small cane, at the end of which hung a coloured paper lantern, thus illustrating Psalm cxix. 105: "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." I must confess that I had, even then, a wish to do the



'A LIGHT UNTO MY PATH'

self-same thing, little dreaming that, in after-life, the dear father, whom I was watching with such intense delight, would make over to me, as a love gift, the whole of the apparatus he had used, with a bound copy of the lecture, saying, "There, Charlie, my boy, you can go on giving it."



THE BELLOWS AND THE BROKEN LANTERN.

Two other illustrations fastened themselves upon my youthful mind; the first being the one in which the lecturer's assistant represented the tempter discovering

the weak place in the Christian's character. Watching for the defective spot in the lantern, the helper, by the use of a pair of bellows, soon put the candle out.



THE CANDELABRUM.

The other emblem which I specially noted was the one described by dear father as "the greatest display of our fireworks." Suspended from the roof of the Tabernacle was a massive candelabrum which, to the young onlooker, was most attractive for its brightness and beauty; and, though one of such tender years could hardly appreciate all that was then said concerning "the Church of Christ in its multiplicity, variety, and unity," he cannot forget the harmless mirth, expressed in guileless laughter, which followed the lecturer's remark that one strong old Baptist had assured him that the "Dips" gave the best light!

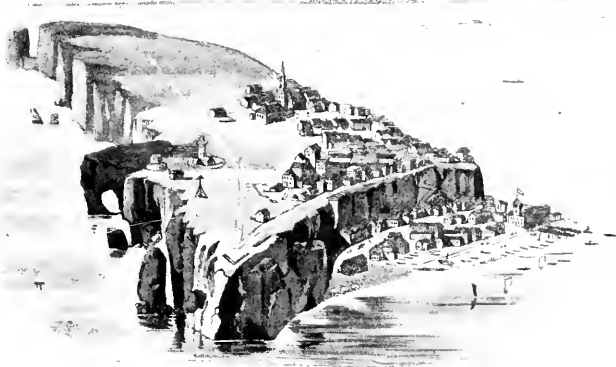
These are only a few of my happy memories of that memorable Band of Hope meeting.

I prize immensely the first letter I ever received from my beloved father. It is written to a little boy, and has, therefore, on the top of the note-paper, a coloured view of Heligoland. I feel constrained to treat the publication of the letter in the same manner as age has treated the original, and to give it in pieces. It runs thus:—

"My Dear Charlie,

"I am very glad that you wrote a nice little note to your dear mother, and I hope it is a sign that you are always going to be diligent and thoughtful, and this will be a glad thing indeed. . . . I am delighted to hear that you are

doing so well at College. Give my love to all the students, and tell Mr. Rogers that it always cheers me to know that the brethren bear me up in their prayers.



HELLIGOLAND.

“On this little island, there is a lighthouse; you see it at the top, on the left of the picture. It is much needed, for many vessels are wrecked here. We live down below, on the beach, near the square tower with a flag on it; that is a bath-house. Steamers come every two days, and then we can send letters; at other times, we are far off from everybody, alone in the wide, wide sea. We have sheep's milk, for there is no room for cows. Fish is very plentiful, and very good.

“My dear boy, I trust that you will prove, by the whole of your future life, that you are truly converted to God. Your actions must be the chief proof. Remember, trees are known by their fruit, and Christians by their deeds. God bless you for ever and ever! Mother sends her kindest love, and so does—

“Your loving father,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”

The reference to “doing so well at College,” needs just this explanation. One of the students was, for a time, our tutor; and, naturally, dear father took a deep interest in our educational progress. Pastor Harry Rylands Brown, now of Darjeeling, was the good brother who had us in training; and, from that day to this, teacher and pupil have been close friends. This first letter to his firstborn exhibits the tender love that the President always had for the College, which he often termed, among his many works for the Lord, “his firstborn and best beloved.”

Among the many gifts we received from father, I recall one occasion, when a piece of gold was bestowed, as a birthday present, upon his two boys, who thereby

became the proud possessors of a magic-lantern and a few comic slides. When the toy was brought home, the kind donor gave instructions to the cook to allow the boys to show their pictures, as often as they liked, in that portion of the kitchen which would not interfere with culinary arrangements, saying, at the same time, "It won't last long, they'll soon be tired of it." This prophecy was quite sufficient to set up, within the minds of the purchasers of "this very pretty thing," a strong determination that they would not get tired of it. By the combined efforts of the two brothers, further pictures were produced upon glass, which necessitated the constant use of the lantern to test their artistic qualities; and, secretly, it was resolved that a special series should be prepared so that, during the coming Christmas, the services of Messrs. C. and T. Spurgeon might be requisitioned for the entertainment of the children who would frequent Yule-tide parties. Several engagements of this nature having been secured, and professional fees attending the lecturing exhibition having been received, they were able to hand over to the



THE YOUNG LECTURERS AND THEIR DEAR MOTHER.

President of the Pastors' College the sum of ten guineas ; and, in doing so, perhaps somewhat saucily reminded their beloved father that "they weren't tired of the magic-lantern yet." This little episode greatly charmed the heart of the original donor of the ten shillings, and proved the possibility of making a small capital bring in large interest.

When I was about twelve years of age, I was riding home with my dear father, in the brougham, after an evening service at the Tabernacle. It was "blowing great guns," there was a heavy downpour of rain, and a keen East wind, with a cutting edge, was driving it upon the pavement. It was a dark, dreary night ; and, as we came to a point where cross-roads met, father's quick eye discerned a person, whom he judged to be a poor woman, hurriedly rushing across the stones through the storm. With her skirt gathered over her head, she looked a weird spectacle ; and, in a moment, his heart was moved with compassion toward her. He cried out, "Charlie, stop the coachman ; jump out, and see if there is anything wrong with that poor creature, and find out whether you can help her." Of course, I sprang out of the carriage at once ; but I wondered what I was going to say to the woman. I overtook her, and said, "Excuse me, but is there anything the matter ? Are you in trouble ?" She replied, "Oh, dear, no ! I have been to see a friend, and have been caught in the storm. I came out without an umbrella, so I am running home as fast as I can." On repeating to dear father what she had said, he exclaimed, "That is a relief to me !" But what would he have done if she had been in distress ? He was glad that she was all right ; but I remember thinking, as I sat there by his side, "Dear me ! That woman is nothing to him, yet his heart went out towards her in pity and sympathy." It went out after everyone who was in need and distress ; and if his hand could help, its bounty speedily followed the leadings of his great heart of love.

While my brother and I were at Mr. Olding's school at Brighton, I wrote to tell my father that we had started a little prayer-meeting, in the master's drawing-room, among our school-fellows. In reply, he wrote :—"Dear boy,—One of my sweetest joys is to hear that a spirit of prayer is in your school, and that you participate in it. To know that you love the Lord, and are mighty in prayer, would be my crowning joy ; the hope that you do so already, is a happy one to me. I should like you to *preach* ; but it is best that you pray ; many a preacher has proved a castaway ; but never one who has truly learned to pray."

I understand that, in the first chapter on "A Traveller's Letters Home," father describes the very tour concerning which he wrote to me in this interesting

fashion :—" I have had a very happy journey, and am very much better. You can trace my trip thus,—I have been in stately Brussels, sniffed in odoriferous Cologne, slept in Rhine-washed Mayence, inspected regal Munich, rested in rustic Botzen, floated in palatial Venice, eaten sausage in Bologna, tarried in flowery Florence, and roamed in imperial Rome."

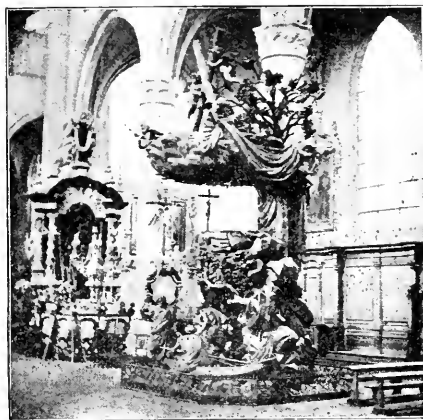
This reference to various places on the Continent reminds me of the great enjoyment dear father gave his two sons, in August, 1871, when he took us to Antwerp. As we went through the different churches there, he seemed to know all about every picture, each pulpit, and even the tombs; and he could tell us about the famous artists, sculptors, and carvers, upon whose works we were gazing in boyish wonderment. It was a treat to hear him describe the "Calvary" outside St.



"CALVARY" OUTSIDE ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, ANTWERP

Paul's Church. Some persons, unacquainted with my father, have said that he was no artist; but if they had known more of him, and heard him dilate upon the noblest works by the best Flemish masters, they would have thought otherwise. He found sermons while he looked upon "The Elevation of the Cross" and "The Descent" from it, by Rubens; and with equal facility drew lessons from the masterpieces of Vandyck and Snyders. It needs a true connoisseur to discover the hidden meaning of the artist's mind, as portrayed upon the canvas, and thus to revel in the spirit of the picture; such a gift was his. Standing before the magnificent pulpit in St. Andrew's Church, he pointed out the cross which bears the apostle's name, and then gave us an exquisite sermonette upon the miraculous draught of fishes illustrated by the carved figures of Christ and His two disciples, with their fishing-boat and the nets containing the unprecedented "take." I well remember, too, how

father's righteous indignation was kindled as we stood in the famous cathedral, and witnessed the absurdities connected with the funeral obsequies of some great personage. No sooner had the gloomy *cortège* quitted the building, to a slow and solemn dirge rendered by the chorister monks, than a gorgeous wedding procession, with all the joyous accompaniments of marriage festivities, took its place; and thus the whole scene was quickly changed, and the mournful "*miserere*" was succeeded by the nuptial "*jubilate*." The experienced preacher extemporized a brief discourse upon the ever-varying vicissitudes of human life, as set forth by the two events; and the truths he thus inculcated, still abide, as we remember that our joys and sorrows are not so far apart as we are apt to think, for sunbeams and shadows are closely allied, after all. *Sic est vita.*



PULPIT IN ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH, ANTWERP.

* The mention of Antwerp cathedral always recalled to Mr. Spurgeon a memorable encounter that he once had with Rev. Edward White in that grand edifice. It took place some time after Mr. White had left the Baptist denomination, and joined (or, rather, returned to) the Congregationalists, with whom, apparently, he did not find himself much more at home than he had been with those he had left.

The dialogue that ensued, was thus reported by Mr. Spurgeon:—

Spurgeon.—Well, Mr. White, you don't seem to get on with your new friends any better than you did with your old ones.

White.—“New friends” ? Why, I was a Congregationalist before I became a Baptist !

S.—Then it hath happened unto him according to the true proverb: “The dog is ———.” I need not finish the quotation (2 Peter ii. 22).

W.—Oh, you wretch, Spurgeon ! What do you think would be the consequences if I were to kill you on the spot ?

S.—I don't know; you are a greater authority on future-life questions than I profess to be; perhaps, for such a crime as that, you would be sent to purgatory for ten minutes !

W.—Ah ! you may make fun of my teaching, but dear Samuel Martin has embraced my views of the future

S.—Oh ! has he ? I don't care what views he has embraced; he is a gracious, holy man, and I shall continue to love him

There was a pause in the discussion here, and the two ministers walked together round the cathedral, pointing out to one another what each specially admired. Presently, in an unguarded moment, Mr. White said:—“You would be grieved if you could see poor Samuel Martin, his mind has completely gone, and he has become quite childish.” In an instant, Mr. Spurgeon replied, “That explains how it is that he has embraced your views !” After that retort, Mr. White judged it expedient to give up the contest.

It has been my privilege to accompany dear father, on many occasions, to "the land o' cakes" and the county of lakes; and never had any tourist a more excellent guide. He was a veritable walking Encyclopædia; so full of information, and so gracious in imparting it, that a holiday spent with him was as instructive as a term at school, and to me, far preferable. It sometimes became amusing to see how eager folks were to show any little kindness to him. On one occasion, we were passengers on Mr. Duncan's yacht, *Larina*, and had made the passage of the Caledonian Canal, as far as Loch Etive, where, in one of the sheltered and picturesque bays, we had anchored for the night. Next morning, when breakfast was being prepared, the steward discovered that the supply of milk had run short, and that he must needs visit the shore to replenish the store. Standing on deck, I watched the progress of our caterer as he climbed the hillside, and made application at a small cottage on the border of the wood which covered the slope. Presently, a woman made her appearance, and then it soon became evident that she and the steward were having a somewhat lively conversation. In a few minutes, the man returned; but, alas! minus the milk.

He told us, when he came back, that the lady of the house would only supply it on condition that he would let her see Mr. Spurgeon, whose name he had used as his last argument. Upon my dear father learning that his appearance was required for this purpose, with his usual readiness to supply "the milk of human kindness," he came up on deck, and waved his hand in the direction of the cottage. The woman at once recognized him, and commenced a "Scotch reel" of delight. The steward had, meanwhile, again pulled to the shore; he soon disappeared within the house, and, in a few seconds, he came out, bearing a huge jug, brimful of pure milk, for which the worthy dame would not accept even twopence a quart!

At another time, I was staying with my father in a much-loved, and oft-frequented spot, in dear old Surrey, where his presence was always looked upon as a high honour. The villagers had been successful in securing a fine large carp from the pond which skirted the green, and they thought that such a good catch should at once be sent to their notable visitor; so, with great ceremony, a deputation of rusties was appointed to wait upon him. The best that any could give to him, was never reckoned too good for the man they loved; and though, in both these instances, the gifts were small, they were sufficient to prove the affectionate regard in which he was held by multitudes of people of all classes. Testimonials, amounting to thousands of pounds, have been presented to him by admiring adherents; and while the plaudits of enthusiastic crowds have greeted him as the hero of the hour, he has, in grateful terms, acknowledged the favours showered

upon him, and, while passing on the praises to the Lord, he has handed over the purses and their contents to the service of his Master. Never did a more liberal soul, nor a more grateful man, breathe, than my father.

It was a memorable period in my history when, upon leaving school, in 1874, I decided to enter upon a commercial career. If every son, upon commencing his life's battle, received such a letter as the following, there would probably be fewer defeats sustained, and more victories gained:—

“Winchester,

“June 26th, 1874.

“My Dear Charlie,

“Your kind letter was very pleasant to me, and made my birthday much happier. I am right glad to see that you intend putting on the armour in earnest for the battle of life, into which you must now enter. We have to carry babies; but it is always a glad occasion when they run alone. After that, comes another period of carrying on a larger scale; and then comes (as now,) the time for another running alone, as to manly, serious, earnest, industrious life-work. We do not expect you to run, in this sense, all at once; and we shall not be surprised if there are some stumbles and failures; but we shall hope to see you an upright man, capable of any honest achievement, and bending all your strength to accomplish an honourable life-work. I am full of hope about you; and if I feel any anxiety, it is because I love you so well that I want you to be a greater success than other young men. I believe you love the Lord, and that is the main thing; the next is, *stick to it*. Leave childish things once for all, and buckle to the work. It will not be pleasant, and it may even become irksome; but the harder you work, at first, the less you will have to do in later life. The times are so pushing that you must put out all your energies; and, above all, you must be careful, and very persevering; and then, with God's blessing, you will soon take a position to which your father and mother can point with pleasure. If you do not preach the gospel, you must help me to do it, and make money for Jesus. With my two sons at my side, I shall be able to do marvels, if the Lord be with us.

“Letters from your dear mother are encouraging. Do not write to me here, as I am flitting.

“Your loving father,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”

CHAPTER LXXVIII.

Memories of my Father (*Continued*).

BY PASTOR CHARLES SPURGEON.



ONE of the most notable events, of which I still have vivid recollections, was the occasion of my baptism. An entry in the Tabernacle church-book, dated September 14, 1874, reads as follows:—
“Charles and Thomas Spurgeon, of Nightingale Lane, Clapham, were proposed for church-membership, and Brother Payne was appointed messenger.

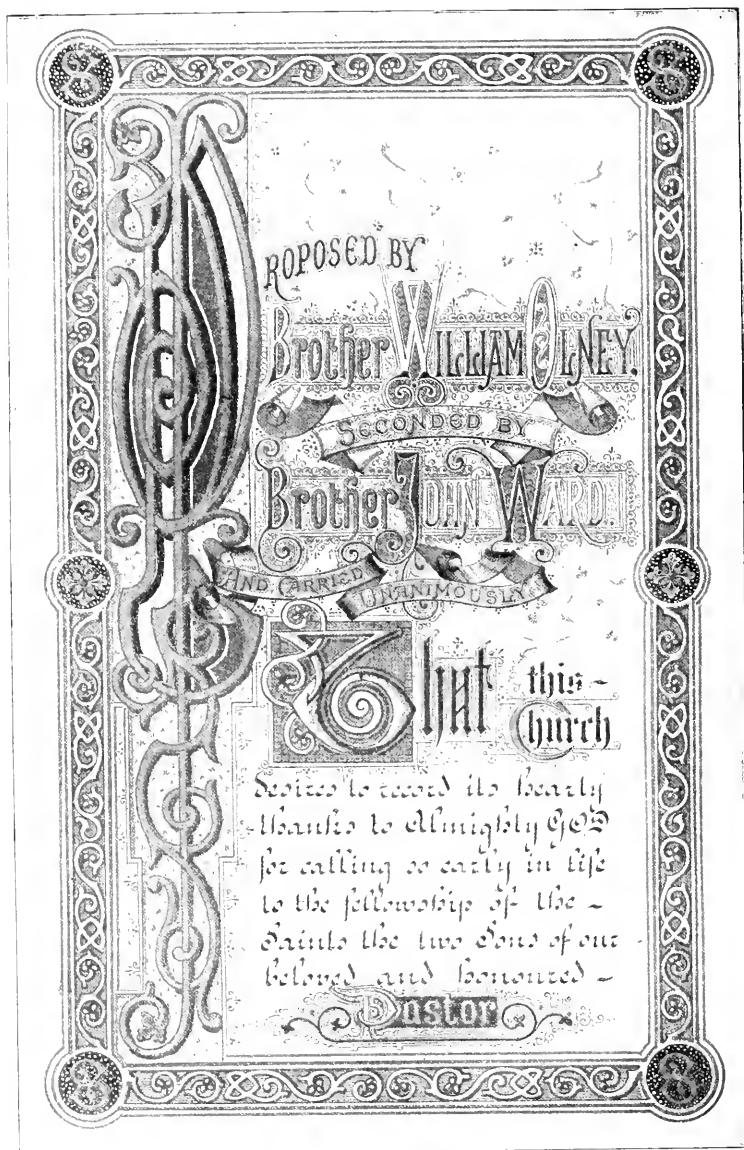
“Charles and Thomas Spurgeon came before the church, and gave a satisfactory statement of the work of grace in their souls, and the messenger reporting favourably, it was agreed that, after baptism, they should be received into communion with the church.”

On the following Lord's-day morning, dear father preached at the Tabernacle, from Isaiah viii. 18, a sermon to which he gave the title, “I and the Children.” The next evening, September 21, he baptized his twin-sons, who had, on the previous day, celebrated their eighteenth birthday. As the beloved Pastor had not, for a long time, been able to baptize, and also, perhaps, because the candidates were his own sons, the great edifice was crowded with an interested concourse of people who had come to witness the solemn ceremony. Dr. Brock, of Bloomsbury Chapel, was present, according to promise, and delivered a forcible address, which was emphasized by some of father's telling utterances. In connection with this joyful occurrence, an illuminated address (of which a *facsimile* appears on pages 288 and 289.) was presented to my dear mother, who had also been an eye-witness of her sons' confession of faith in the Scriptural fashion. We received the right hand of fellowship, at the Lord's table, on the night of October 4; the motto-text my father then gave me was, “Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price;” and many a time since has it been a source of spiritual inspiration to me.

When it was put into my heart to serve the Lord, and to begin to speak for Him, I of course sought my father's counsel. He was then laid aside with a painful illness at Brighton, but he wrote to me thus:—

“My Own Dear Son,

“I think it very kind and thoughtful of you to write to your father, and



FACSIMILE OF ILLUMINATED ADDRESS.

Welcome them most heartily and pray that for many years they may be spared to exhibit in fullest measure those graces and talents which shall be for the honour of God, and the good of our Church.

And we hereby express to our dear Mother our increasing sympathy with him in his numerous works of faith, and labours of love, and we ask for him many years of ever-augmenting prosperity in connection with them all.

And we would further praise our Gracious Lord that it should have pleased Him to use so greatly the pious teachings and example of our dear Sister **MRS SPURGEON** to the quickening and storing of the Divine life in the hearts of her twin sons, and we earnestly pray that amidst her long-continued sufferings, she may ever be consoled with all spiritual comfort, and by the growing devotedness of those who are thus twice given to her in the Lord.

the more so because the time you have to yourself is not very long. I am glad you desire to do something for the Lord, and shall be still more pleased when you actually set about it. Time flies; and the opportunity for doing good flies with it. However diligent you may be in the future, you can only do the work of 1875 in 1875, and if you leave it undone now, it will be undone to all eternity. The diligent attention which you give to business, the careful purity of your daily life, and your concern to do common things in a right spirit, are all real service for the Lord. The hours in which your earthly calling is industriously followed for Christ's sake, are really hours of work for Jesus; but, still, this cannot satisfy you, or, at least, I hope it cannot. As redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus, you feel that you belong to Him, and you long to show your love to Him by actions *directly* meant to extend His Kingdom, and gather in sinners whom He loves to bless. When once such efforts are commenced, they become easier, and a kind of hunger to do more seizes upon the heart. It is not toil, but pleasure; and if God blesses what we do, it rises from being a common pleasure to become a sacred delight. 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.' It is not for me to suggest what form your service shall take, that must be left to yourself; and half the pleasure of it will lie in the exercise of a sacred ingenuity in discovering the work for which you are best adapted.

"I was very thankful to read that you rejoiced in prayer; may it always be so, and yet more and more; for nothing gives us such strength, or affords us such guidance. The Lord bless you *there*; and all must be well. I have always hoped to see you a leader in the host of God. How it will be, I know not; but that so it may be, is one of my increasing prayers. Dear son, may all blessings abound towards you; you know I love you very dearly. It is a very dull Sabbath here, as to weather; I hope you are having a bright and happy day at home.

"Your loving father,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

This admonition well sets forth what kind of father "my father" was. With such words as these to encourage and direct me, it was not long before I decided to begin work for the Lord Jesus Christ, feeling sure also that he, who had written thus to his son, would pray even more earnestly than before that the humble worker might be richly blessed. The special service which was laid upon my heart ultimately resulted in the building of a small chapel in Chatham Road, Wandsworth Common; and I sought there to glorify God in the faithful discharge of "my Father's business," while I was also not slothful in the business of my earthly master, the late John Sands, Esq., of 50, Old Broad Street, City. The following note will show the interest my father took in both enterprises:—

“ Mentone.

“ My Dear Charlie,

“ Your conduct gives me the greatest pleasure when I think of it, for you have stuck to work right heartily, and I am sure God will open up your way. Live near to Him, and for Him; and He will give you, of His grace, happiness here and hereafter. May your good endeavours at Bolingbroke be crowned with success, and may you ere long see some souls led to Jesus! I must give you some substantial help for the new chapel. Receive your father's fondest love, and remember me very heartily to Mr. Sands.

“ Your affectionate father,

“ C. H. S.”

On one occasion, when dear father was preaching in the Tabernacle, he thus joyfully referred to several stages in the spiritual experience of his twin-sons:— “ Did not our hearts overflow, as parents, when we first discovered that our children had sought the Lord? That was a happy night, a time to be remembered, when we were called up to hear their tearful story, and to give them a word of comfort. We were not half so glad at their birth as we were when they were born again. Have we not, since then, often rejoiced as we have seen them useful in the service of the Saviour? It was an exquisite pleasure to hear them speak for the first time in the Redeemer's Name; and it has been a greater pleasure to know that God has owned their ministry in the conversion of souls. All parents have not that particular form of joy; but it has been mine to a high degree, and for this I bless the Name of the Lord. All of you have had great delight in your converted children, when your boy has stood out against temptation, or your girl has remained faithful when thrown among worldlings. No one can recount the mutual joys of the various members of a believing household; they rejoice in each other, and then they all rejoice in God. How cheering it is for you as a parent to live again in your children, and to march once more to the holy war in the vigorous zeal of one whom you still call ‘ My boy ’! O friends, I feel, at this time, in my own case, that my joy is up to the brim of my life-cup. Pardon me if I pause to magnify the Lord. I have seldom been long without affliction; but no man who has ever lived could have been more highly favoured in domestic happiness than I have been.”

On June 27, 1878, when nine persons from Chatham Road Chapel were admitted to membership at the Tabernacle, their names were entered in the usual way in the Tabernacle church-book, and then the following resolution was added:—

“ The church, having received the foregoing persons into fellowship, desires

to record its gratitude to our Heavenly Father for this evident blessing resting upon the labours of our Pastor's two sons, Messrs. Charles and Thomas Spurgeon. As these are the firstfruits of their ministry, since the erection of the new chapel, we earnestly and heartily pray that abundant prosperity may continue to rest on the work carried on at Chatham Road."



C. AND T. SPURGEON AT THE AGE OF 21.

During the period I spent as a student in the Pastors' College, my dear father was always interested, not only in my own welfare, but in that of all the brethren. Perhaps, at no time in the history of the Institution was he better acquainted than he was then with the whole of the men, and the internal work and hidden life of our "Alma Mater." It was not looked upon as "telling tales out of school" when the

son answered the enquiries of the sire. On two occasions, I was privileged to receive from him letters containing sermon-notes, which he desired me to read to all the brethren. No less than eleven outlines of discourses were given in the following letter; but space can only be spared here for one or two specimens:—

“ Beloved Brethren,

“ Mentone.

“ Always make hay while the sun shines, and store up notes of sermons when your mind is fertile, for there are seasons of famine as well as of plenty, and every Joseph should lay up a store against the time of need. I fear I am not just now in the right order for sermonizing; but, if ‘silver and gold have I none,’ ‘such as I have give I you.’ By the way, that would not be a bad subject,—*What we would give if we could, not half so valuable as what we can bestow if we will.* Or, (I.) Talents we do not possess are not to be the source of repining, of sloth, or of indifference to men’s wants; (II.) Talents we do possess are to be used for the good of men, in faith, in the Name of Jesus, to the glory of God.

“ Turn to Acts xix., which is rich in texts. Verse 8. (I.) The characteristic of a useful ministry: ‘he spake boldly.’ (II.) The subject of such a ministry: ‘persuading the things concerning the Kingdom of God.’

“ (1) The consistency of it with the Old Testament.

“ (2) The binding character of its claims.

“ (3) Its blessedness.

“ (4) Its immediate requirements.”

At the end of the eleven skeletons of sermons, dear Father wrote:—

“ This is all I can do to-day. I am much better, and send my love to you all, and thanks for capital letters, all of which are beyond criticism.

“ Yours ever heartily,

“ C. H. SPURGEON.”

Those ever-memorable Friday afternoons produced many rich seasons for storing up homiletic hints and outlines. This exercise seemed to be a recreation to the President, for if ever there was a brief interval that needed filling in between a bracing talk and a brilliant exposition, he would quietly make some such remark as this:—“ Here’s a good text: ‘HE restoreth my soul,—

“ (I.) To life, by regeneration.

“ (II.) To hope, by the revelation of His Son.

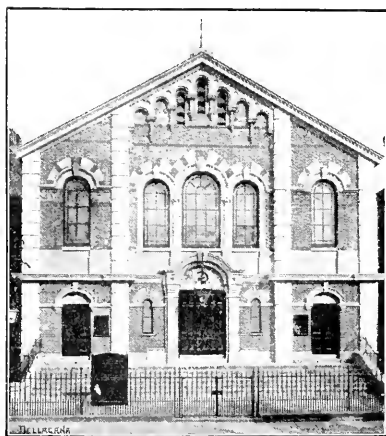
“ (III.) To strength, by being my food.

“ (IV.) To wealth, by being my Father.

“ (V.) To a Kingdom in Christ.

“ (VI.) To Paradise with Christ.”

As my College course was drawing to a close, my father wrote to me :—"Your time will soon be up, and I should like you to begin in some sphere, not too large, nor too small, from which you may step into a life-long position. I think you will maintain a good congregation; and, by God's blessing, will be useful. We must not push or strive to get you a position, but wait on the Lord, and He will do better for you than I can. When Bishops look out for livings for their sons or nephews, we condemn their nepotism, so we must not fall into the same evil ourselves. You will be patient and believing, and the right door will open."



SOUTH STREET BAPTIST CHAPEL, GREENWICH.

When the time came for me to settle in the ministry, my father's counsel was a great factor in helping me to decide to accept the "call" from the members of South Street Baptist Church, Greenwich, and it afforded me no little joy to have him as the preacher on the occasion of my recognition as Pastor. A striking injunction, from the discourse he then delivered, stands out vividly in my memory, and has been a constant inspiration to me. Leaning over the pulpit rail, and looking down upon me, as I sat on the lower platform, he said, in tender, yet thrilling tones, "Preach up Christ, my boy! Preach HIM up!!"

Among my father's letters that I treasure beyond the price of gold, are those which relate to the help rendered to him in times of sickness. Some of them look almost like hieroglyphics, because they were hurriedly scribbled, when his poor hands were swollen with gout, on a Sunday morning, and sent to Greenwich by a special messenger, asking me to take his service. Here is one :—"I am too full of

pain to preach this morning; will you go to Tabernacle? I telegraphed Dunn to go to you, but if you have anyone else available, let him be ready. Your poor father,—C. H. S.”

The first time that ever it was my honour to stand in his place, and thus occupy the pulpit in the Metropolitan Tabernacle on the Lord's-day, called forth from him the following loving letter:—

“Nightingale Lane,

“Balham,

“Surrey,

“December 14, '78.

“My Dear Son,

“I pray earnestly for you under the solemn responsibility of to-morrow. May your father's God lift you out of yourself, giving you lowly dependence on His Spirit, and pleading earnestness that men may come to Christ! I am very ill, or I would be in my pulpit. I am ready to weep on being still away; but dear son, the Lord is so good in giving me you, that I dare not think of repining. Only lean thou wholly on Him, and be nothing before Him. He has been my stay these many years.

“Tell the people that, night and day, I am full of pain; and as these three times I have promised to be with them, and have failed, I fear to hope any more. Only they will be all sure that it will be my highest joy to be back among them, to see their loving faces, and to speak to them the good Word of God. I am an exiled prisoner, and the iron enters into my soul; but the Lord is good, and in His Name do I hope.

“With best love from your dear mother, and—

“Your poor father,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”

The deep interest he ever took in my work at Greenwich, and his ardent affection for my beloved mother, are set forth in many of his letters, such as the following:—

“Mentone.

“My Dear Son,

“May you, some quarter of a century hence, enjoy the pleasure of having your son Charles to preach for you! It is a great delight to me to receive such loving letters from the Bishop of Greenwich, who is also my son and heir; and it is even more joy to see that God is prospering you, and making your work successful. I think you have made specially good progress in the time. Stick to

your studies. Read *Matthew Henry* right through, if you can, before you are married; for, after that event, I fear that Jacob may supplant him. Remember me to Mr. Huntley, and all the good people.

"I have not yet had this week's letter from the Tabernacle, and therefore have not read the eulogiums on your sermons. I am better and better. It is forty-two days since we had any rain; and, all along, the fine weather has been unbroken. I am so grieved about your dear mother, and my impulse is to come home at once; but then I reflect that I can do her no good, and should do her harm by becoming the second invalid to be waited on. Dear Charlie, do not get the rheums or the gout; but spin away on your skates or your cycles. Don't go too much over the bridge; but you may give my love to Sis. The sermon was capital; thank you much.

"With heartiest love and all good wishes from—

"YOUR OWN DAD."

The gentle hint, towards the close of this letter, shows that it was penned during the period of my courtship. At my marriage, on April 11, 1881, both my dear parents were present; the happy ceremony was performed by my father, and I can even now recall some of his words after the legal portion of the service had been completed:—"As this ring is round, so may your love be endless! As it is made of pure gold, so may your affection be pure." Continuing to say all manner of nice, kind things, he added:—"It is exceedingly necessary that a minister, especially a young minister, should have a wife. The duties a minister's wife has to fulfil are very important, for she is expected to be a combination of all impossible virtues; in fact, altogether a wonder." Glancing lovingly at dear mother, he said:—"I know one minister's wife who has greatly strengthened her husband in the Lord." Never shall I forget the beautiful prayer in which he commended "the happy couple" to God; the answers to those petitions we continue to receive even to this day.

He was again in the sunny South when he wrote the following letter:—

"Grand Hotel,

"Mentone.

"My Dear Son,

"Your note was a real joy to me. What a good fellow you are! I live twice in seeing you so firm in the faith of God's elect. I do not wonder that the chickens flock around the man who gives them real corn, and not mere chaff. The Lord keep you evermore true to the truth, and you will see His hand with you more and more!

"Your little notices of books are first-rate;—short and pithy, better than half a

page of long-winded nothings. You may do as many as ever you like, for nobody can do them better, nor as well. You charm me as I think of your interesting your dear mother with your lantern and views. It is most sad to have her at home when I am here enjoying myself. What can we do but try to cheer her up, and pray the Lord to give her journeying strength?

"I am right glad to hear of the growth and advancement of the little girl. God bless her, and her mother, too! I am having a true holiday; not idle, but restful. Love evermore to you and yours, from—

"Your happy father,

"C. H. S."

There are one or two matters of interest alluded to in the above correspondence, which recall happy memories of my father. The reference to my "notices of books" recalls a slight service which I sought to render to the overtaxed Editor of *The Sword and the Trowel*, by reading some of the lighter literature sent to him for review, and giving him my opinion of the books. One day, at dinner, a friend thanked my father for his racy review of an interesting little work; whereupon, with evident delight, he drew the speaker on to say more about the criticism, and then, with that merry twinkle in his eye, which always told how he relished harmless fun, he said, "Well now, it so happens that I did not write that notice in the Magazine; there is the dear boy opposite who wrote it."

Father paid many visits to my flock at Greenwich, for it has ever been my delight—a delight fully shared by my people,—to help him in the many good works to which the Lord had moved him to set his hand. As these visits were paid upon my birthday, we used the occasion to make him a present on behalf of either College, Orphanage, or Colportage. His appreciation of my filial affection is expressed in the following letter:—

"Dear Son,

"You are ever a well of joy to your father. On this occasion, you greatly refresh me by helping the orphans. Cheques for £58 15s. 6d. do not come in so very often; but when they do, I praise God with all my heart. Will you thank all those good people for me? I am very grateful to them. God bless them!

"Chiefly, may a blessing rest on the church of God over which He has made you overseer! To that church I render grateful thanks for furnishing the occasion for this love-token,—this sacrifice of sweet smell.

"All the blessings that God can give be yours evermore! So prays—

"Your loving father,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

In acknowledging some pecuniary help, sent on behalf of the College, in connection with the Annual Conference, he wrote :—

“ Dear Son,

“ You are always helping me and my work. May the Lord bless you ; and, one day, give you such joy in your family as I have in you !

“ I met, last week, with another soul converted under your last Tabernacle sermon.

“ Your loving father,

“ C. H. SPURGEON.”

How he delighted in recounting cases of conversion ! He liked me to go out driving with him ; and, as I sat silently listening, he would tell of recent instances of blessing which he had been permitted to see as the result of his own preaching. In this way, I learned much of the holy art of dealing with anxious enquirers, an art of which he was indeed a master.

I must relate an incident which, at the time, afforded my father a large amount of pleasure ; and which is, I should think, unique in ministerial life. He had been announced to preach on behalf of a small Baptist church in the East End of London, and the Congregationalists had kindly lent their large place of worship for the occasion. Long before the appointed hour of service, a great crowd had gathered both within and around the building, so that, when the preacher entered the pulpit, many hundreds were still seeking admission. Turning to me, as I sat just behind him, he asked me whether I would take an overflow meeting in the sanctuary opposite. I readily assented ; whereupon he rose, and told the people to pass word on to those outside, “ that his dear son Charles would preach just over the way, in the Baptist Chapel.” He continued his own service, and I retired to fulfil my promise, and had a crowded audience in the smaller building. It had been arranged that I should preach, in the evening, in the Baptist Chapel ; and it turned out that the experience of the father was to be repeated with the son, for the place was filled in every part, and a large number in vain sought admission, so I despatched a pencilled note to the great preacher of the afternoon, asking him if he would kindly come and take *my* overflow in the schoolroom opposite ! As we journeyed home together, he said, “ Well, Charlie, I do not suppose it has ever happened before, that father and son should be preaching opposite to one another at the same time ; but, thank God, dear boy, not in opposition.”

I remember, too, in connection with this visit, that, as we passed through the great meat-market at Smithfield, he called my attention to the immense quantities of

provisions, remarking, as he did so, "Whatever will become of it all?" But we had not gone far down the Mile End Road, before the ever-moving mass of humanity caused another enquiry to rise to mind and lip, which was expressed in the Scriptural question, "From whence can a man satisfy these?" The conversation, which might very naturally have taken the form of a discussion upon the law of supply and demand, and such kindred themes as social and political economy, was, however, diverted into the higher channel of talk about the gospel amply meeting the spiritual needs of the masses,—a truth which was shortly after to receive its exemplification through the ministry of father and son.

On another occasion, it was my high privilege to preach to some three or four thousand people, who were the *residue* of a congregation numbering one thousand, gathered to hear my father in a church at Pollockshaws. The intense joy, which seemed to ripple over his face, and sparkle in his eyes, when he learned that his son had the larger audience, increased the already large measure of happiness which delighted my heart. The crowds surged round him, blocking the thoroughfare, and rendering it impassable, until "the gude man" had shaken hands with his Scotch friends; and joyous cheers rang out again and again as the carriage conveyed the two preachers away from the place of their joint ministry.

It was a very memorable day to me when I had to take my father's place in Exeter Hall,—the building which is inseparably associated with some of the greatest triumphs of "the boy-preacher's" history. The letter summoning me to this service was as follows:—

"Dear Son,

"Alas! I may be unable to preach on Sunday at Exeter Hall. Can you serve me yet again? All would be content. I am better; but can barely hold a pen, and have two rheumatic arms. Ah, me!

"Love to my dear son and his,—my comfort and joy

"C. H. SPURGEON."

Birthday *billets doux* and New Year's notes are among my special treasures. A specimen of each may serve as a pattern for those who would fain express their loving wishes to dear ones. Here is the birthday epistle:—

"Westwood,

"September 20, 1888.

"My Dear Son,

"The Lord, Himself, bless you! Long may your useful life be continued,

and growing blessings be given to you, and be scattered by you ! It is always a joy, to me, even to think of you. In all things you cause me comfort and delight, specially for the grace manifested in you. The Lord remember, in His infinite love, your dear wife and children, and make them ever your joy !

" I could not tell what birthday gift to send you ; so I thought I would ask you to serve me by taking upon yourself the trouble of laying out the enclosed little cheque for something which would give you pleasure.

" I have been to Wotton, to see Mr. Evelyn, and have rested finely. I feel that my candle has been snuffed.

" Your loving father,

" C. H. SPURGEON."

The New Year's greeting runs as follows :—

" Mentone.

" Dear Son,

" I wish to you and yours, one and all, a happy new year. The Lord bless you in your person, your household, your ministry, and your church ! Peace be to you within, and prosperity without ! The blessing on your father has been great, and long may it rest upon you to a still larger degree ! I breathe a joyful prayer for you and your beloved, to whom, remember me.

" Your own loving father,

" C. H. SPURGEON."

A large book could be written concerning the experiences of persons who had the honour and delight of meeting with my dear father during his visits to different parts of the country. I often wish that I had had it in my power to preserve, more securely than in mere mental jottings, many of the wise sayings reported to me by those who remember their interviews with him.

To a friend, who had called upon him, he said, " I was looking at myself in the glass, this morning, when the words of the psalmist came to my mind : ' Who is the health of my countenance, and my God.' I saw no signs of health upon my countenance, and thought that they were far away ; but my heart was comforted by the latter portion of the text, for none can rob me of ' my God.' "

To the same friend, he said, " I am going to preach, one day, upon ' bad lodgers.' You get them here, for they come into your house to eat the food that you provide, and spoil the furniture in your home, and then leave without paying. I am not going to talk about this class of lodgers ; but shall try to answer the question, ' How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee ? ' " He was as good as his word, for he preached in the Tabernacle from Jeremiah iv. 14, and the sermon is published under the title, " Bad Lodgers, and How to Treat them."

On one occasion, it was my lot to have to go some distance, from a countryside station to the village where I was to conduct some special services. A horse and cart were in waiting to convey me to my destination, the driver being a local farmer. We had not gone very far upon the road before his rustic voice broke the silence. "So you be Mr. Spurgeon, be you, the son of the great man in Lunnon? I bin once in Lunnon, and 'eard him. I was up at the cattle show, and went over to his big chapel, and he preached about sheep. Bless you, he knew more about sheep than I do; and yet I've bin a farmer all my life!" The conversation did not lack in vivacity for the rest of the journey, as my newly-found acquaintance gave his town friend some agricultural education, second-hand, his tutor having been the worthy Pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle! Dear father was a living "Enquire Within upon Everything." All who ever heard him can well understand how his almost universal knowledge furnished him with striking simile, matchless metaphor, forceful figure, and instructive illustration.

Entering, only the other day, an establishment which, in years long gone by, was frequented by both father and son,—as the former sought after some old Puritan, to add to his library, and the latter interested himself in conning picture-books, which were lying all around,—I fancied I could see the form of my father, sitting, as was his wont, in a particular corner of the shop, (and he would sit in no other place,) and I could hear him say, "Well, friend Smith, have you any new old books, —something rich and rare?" And the proprietor of the store would speedily bring forth from his treasures "things new and old."

Following in my father's footsteps, I had betaken myself to this market of material for the mind; and, naturally, memories of former visits made me desirous to have a little talk with the worthy proprietor, who is now well on in years. With thoughtful mien, and moist eye, he recounted to an attentive listener several personal reminiscences of his dear friend. He told me that he once journeyed to London, to see the great preacher, and upon entering the precincts of the Tabernacle, my dear father turned to the caretaker of what is now the Jubilee House, and gave the following instructions, "Please get dinner for two at one." In due course, the bookseller and the bookreader returned to partake of the ordered meal, when, to their dismay, they found the table bare. Summoning the good woman into his presence, the following explanation was forthcoming, "Why, sir!" said she, "you ordered dinner for one at two." The mistake caused great merriment to the would-be host and his guest; and, while waiting for the repast to be prepared, the dear Pastor discovered others whose expectations had not been realized. A number of old women had gathered in one of the rooms at the Tabernacle, in the hope of receiving gifts from the Benevolent Society; but the

ladies in charge of that agency were not present, as some mistake had been made in the day and hour. The "fellow-feeling" that always made him "wondrous kind," moved him to thrust his hand into his pocket, to bring forth a number of shillings, and to bestow one upon each of the erstwhile disappointed applicants, saying as he did so, "There's a trifle for you, so you haven't had quite a lost journey." His benevolence was one of the best and brightest traits in his beautiful character. There are secrets, concerning his generous gifts, and the self-sacrifice they often entailed, which will never be revealed on earth; I do not know whether they will be unveiled even in Heaven.

When the Good Shepherd was pleased to take a little lamb from my household, the hearts of the sorrow-stricken parents were greatly comforted by the following letter:—

"Westwood,

September 11, 1890.

"My Dear Children,

"The Lord Himself comfort you! Think of that dear little creature being taken away; yet it must be right, it must be good! Our Father is never mistaken, nor unkind. You are acting wisely in not bringing the little one from the place.* You will be setting an example of common sense which is greatly needed in an age which is as sentimental as it is false-hearted. If you would like a wreath from me, kindly order it in H— B—, and send the bill to me; but, if you are not going to have any, I should be setting an ill example by sending one.

"I feel sure you will both find a secret strength poured into your souls, and in this also faith shall have the victory. I shall never forget this day. Your dear mother, to our intense delight, was able to go with me to the Orphanage, and she greatly enjoyed the visit. As soon as we reached home, we received your telegram,—the bitter herbs with our feast. To you, it must be a sharp cut; but the Great Physician will apply the healing balm.

"Your loving father,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

I know of no one who could, more sweetly than my dear father, impart comfort to bleeding hearts and sad spirits. As the crushing of the flower causes it to yield its aroma, so he, having endured so much in the long-continued illness of my beloved mother, and also constant pain in himself, was able to sympathize most tenderly with all sufferers.

It was my unspeakable pleasure frequently to see him, during the last few

* The child died while the whole family were resting at the seaside.

years of his earthly service, hardly a week passing without a drive being enjoyed together; and during the critical period of his last long illness, when the prayers of God's people undoubtedly brought him back to life, it was my sad pleasure to visit him every day, Sundays only excepted. Those seasons will ever remain fixed upon my memory. The secrets of the chamber of "the shadow of death" lie deeply hidden in a fondly-loving heart; and, especially, the emotions experienced when, with my dear mother, we stood at his bedside, and listened, as we thought, to his parting blessing.

The last kiss I ever received from his dear lips was bestowed upon me ere he left the waiting-room at Herne Hill station, and the last look I had at him was from the furthest extremity of that platform, as the train bore him away, and he, with waving hand, bade me adieu. It was with great joy (for his sake,) that I hailed the day when he started for the sunny South. After so many weeks, which told up to months in the class-room of suffering, he went forth, like a scholar freed from his lessons for a while, out into the sunshine and sea breezes. We were all pleased that there was such a beautiful retreat, a spot on earth which he so dearly loved, where he could tarry, for a few bright weeks, as in veritable Beulah Land, ere he crossed the river, and entered the Celestial City, to go no more out for ever.

Pages could be filled by my pen in writing of my beloved father; but I must close with a brief tribute of love. If ever a man was sent of God, he was; a true apostle and a faithful ambassador of Jesus Christ. Although my judgment may be deemed very partial, I venture to express the opinion that, since the days of Paul, there has not lived a greater or more powerful exponent of the doctrines of grace, or a more able and successful preacher of the "saying" which is "worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." There was no one who could preach like my father. In inexhaustible variety, witty wisdom, vigorous proclamation, loving entreaty, and lucid teaching, with a multitude of other qualities, he must, at least in my opinion, ever be regarded as the prince of preachers. From the days when, as a little boy, I sat behind the platform, in the high-backed and well-cushioned seat in the dear old Tabernacle, with silver pencil-case and neat pocket-book, to take notes of my beloved father's sermons, until this present time, I have looked upon him as "the prime minister of England." Those who believe eloquence lies in reaching hearts, rather than in tickling ears, will not hesitate to place him amongst orators of the highest order. It was his delight to travel on foot, rather than to soar like the eagle; but this did not hinder him from reaching altitudes loftier than Pisgah; and while he could always feel something

solid under his feet, he was, like a brave mountaineer, leading his listeners to peaks which glistened with the glory of Patmos.

Both for quantity and quality, and each was of the best, there never has been one to equal him, and, for forty years, he preached the same old gospel. He never turned aside to the foolish vagaries of "modern thought", or ran after the will-o'-the-wisp of "the new theology"; the ancient covenant of grace, and the inspired Word of God, were the Alpha and Omega of his preaching. The ease and grace of his delivery were noteworthy; his preaching was a very kaleidoscope of ever-changing beauty, for each part of his speech fell into its right place with perfect aptness, and made a complete and charming pattern. When once he began to speak, you felt sure that each succeeding wave of expression would wash up some new and hitherto-hidden truth, or make the common facts of every-day life glisten afresh, like the silver sand lately laved by the ocean's wave; and while listening to the matchless voice, there seemed to steal over you the low murmur of another, which told you that he was declaring the very oracles of God. None can exaggerate the boundless generosity, tender sympathy, practical sagacity, and Christlike zeal displayed in the manifold agencies of which he was both head and heart. His "works do follow" him, and are living monuments to the memory of a great man;—great, because the grace of God made him good. As a teacher and author, his works speak volumes; and while the wonderful voice is silenced by death, one cannot but rejoice that thousands of his discourses are preserved in the printed sermons, and these shall, for many a year to come, still continue to bring forth fruit. Shall we not all humbly pray that the memory of his gracious and noble life may be a daily incentive and inspiration to us, and that grace may be given to us to follow him as fully as he followed the Lord?

CHAPTER LXXIX.

Later Literary Works.

Beloved, when you and I have seen or heard anything which God has revealed to us, let us go and write it, or make it known by some other means. God has not put the treasure into the earthen vessel merely for the vessel's own sake, but that the treasure may afterwards be poured out from it, that others may thereby be enriched. You have not been privileged to see, merely to make glad your eyes, and to charm your soul, you have been permitted to see in order that you may make others see, that you may go forth and report what the Lord has allowed you to perceive. John no sooner became the seer of Patmos than he heard a voice that said to him, "Write." He could not speak to others, for he was on an island where he was exiled from his fellows, but he could write, and he did; and, often, he who writes, addresses a larger audience than the man who merely uses his tongue. It is a happy thing when the tongue is aided by the pen of a ready writer, and so gets a wider sphere, and a more permanent influence than if it merely uttered certain sounds, and the words died away when the ear had heard them.—C. H. S., in a sermon at the Tabernacle on the words, "Write the vision."



RESUMING the record of Mr. Spurgeon's publications from the point reached in Volume II., Chapter XLVII., the first to be mentioned here is *Spurgeon's Illustrated Almanack*. This little book began to be issued in 1857; the first one was entitled, *The New Park Street Almanack*, and the Editor thus explained his object and hope in preparing it:—"It may appear, to some persons, degrading and unseemly for a minister to edit a penny Almanack; but I am not burdened with any notions of false dignity, and I think nothing degrading which may be useful. It is quite certain that, by this little Annual, I shall reach many readers who might not have purchased a larger volume; and I hope, by God's grace, some of them will be impressed with thoughts which may result in conversion, or in other cases afford consolation and edification."

In his Prefatory Note, "To the Reader," in the following issue, Mr. Spurgeon wrote:—"Last year, this little Almanack gave me an opportunity of speaking to many thousands; and as I believe it to be my duty to avail myself of every means of proclaiming the gospel, I again address myself to you through this humble medium. If one sinner shall be led to Jesus by this little book, or one saint be assisted in his spiritual warfare, my object will be abundantly answered, and unto God shall be the glory. The thousands of this Almanack, which will be scattered over our land, may be compared to a discharge of grapeshot, which is often far more effective than the larger cannon-ball."

In 1860, the Editor had the joy of being able to report that his desire had been at least in part realized:—"From one of the remote corners of the earth, I have received the good news of a sinner saved through the Almanack of last year.

This has been a most sweet and precious reward for the past, and is a most stimulating encouragement for the future. This little David will yet smite another Goliath, and to God shall be the glory." Happily, this was by no means a solitary instance of blessing; and, year by year, as the booklet became still more widely known, the Lord signified His approval of it by using its printed messages to the salvation of sinners and the strengthening of saints. Everything that the beloved Pastor originated had some practical purpose in view; and, therefore, this small book was employed as the advocate of the College, and the other Institutions as they were founded, and became the means of materially increasing the funds needed for their support and development.

The publication of the Book Almanack has been continued, without intermission, from 1857 until 1899; and, for a great part of that long period, the texts for daily meditation have been chosen by Mrs. C. H. Spurgeon, who has also, during the last seven years, written many of the articles, most of which have been illustrated parables from the garden at "Westwood." Since 1894, quite a new interest has been imparted to the passages of Scripture selected for reading and thought from day to day, for the "Text Union" was then formed, and all who joined it agreed to learn the Almanack motto, so as to be ready to repeat it when challenged by a fellow-member asking for "the text for to-day, please." Many thousands of Christians, in our own and other lands, have thus been banded together, in a holy fellowship, which great numbers of them have found to be exceedingly helpful; and some very remarkable instances of the appropriateness of the Scriptural quotations to the cases of different individuals have been reported to Mrs. Spurgeon, or her son Charles, who has undertaken the onerous task of superintending this department of service for the Saviour. He will be glad to enrol any readers of these lines who have not yet enjoyed the blessings which others have derived from the "Text Bond."

In 1872, the large penny broadsheet—entitled, *John Ploughman's Almanack*,—was first issued. Instead of a verse from the Bible, the motto for each day was a proverb, or proverbial saying, either composed or selected by "John Ploughman." The task of arranging 365 suitable maxims, with the other contents of the Almanack, was by no means a light one; and Mr. Spurgeon evidently had, at first, no intention of repeating the process, and so making a permanent addition to his ever-increasing literary labours; but when 1873 arrived without the sheet to correspond with the one for the previous year, so many friends expressed their disappointment at its non-appearance, that the publication of its homely messages was resumed; and, from 1874 to 1899, *John Ploughman's Almanack* has been a welcome visitor in tens of thousands of homes, and has exerted a very considerable

influence on behalf of religion, temperance, thrift, and charity. The one for the year 1893 was pathetically interesting from the fact that Mr. Spurgeon had been preparing the proverbs for it until within a few days of receiving the home-call: and so long and so diligently had he been gathering materials for future use, that, since his promotion to glory, the Almanack has been very largely composed of his own wise and witty sayings, and, in consequence, it has met with almost as much acceptance as when it had the great advantage of his own unequalled master-touch. Probably, not less than five million copies of the two Almanacks have been already sold; and the cessation of either of them would be mourned as a personal loss by vast numbers of friends, both at home and abroad. The full extent of the blessing they have been the means of producing will only be known on the day when all secrets are revealed; but testimonies to their usefulness are constantly coming to hand to encourage those upon whom has devolved the responsible duty and privilege of continuing their compilation.

In January, 1865, a notable "new departure" was inaugurated by the publication of the first number of the monthly magazine,—*The Sword and the Trowel*,—which was destined to play such an important part in the after-history of its beloved Editor. The *facsimile* (on page 309) of the cover in which it then appeared shows its connection with the memorable and perilous period when Nehemiah was the Tirshatha, or Governor, of God's ancient people. The motto-text, which has appeared on every one of the volumes, was: "They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me." Although Mr. Spurgeon was such a lover of peace, it is significant that he put the battling before the building, not only in the title, but also in the sub-title of the magazine,—"*A Record of Combat with Sin and Labour for the Lord.*" His purpose in issuing it was clearly set forth in his opening article, which was headed, "Our Aims and Intentions:"—

"Our magazine is intended to report the efforts of those churches and Associations which are more or less intimately connected with the Lord's work at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, and to advocate those views of doctrine and church-order which are most certainly received among us. It will address itself to those faithful friends, scattered everywhere, who are our well-wishers and supporters in our work of faith and labour of love. We feel the want of some organ of communication, in which our many plans for God's glory may be brought before believers, and commended to their aid. Our friends are so numerous as to be able

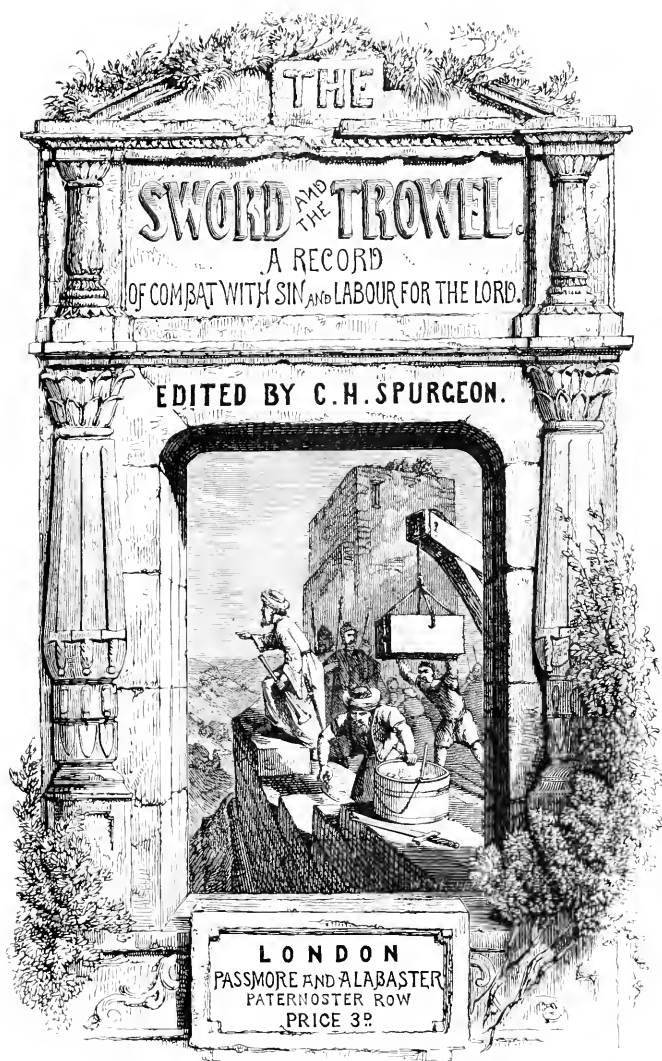
to maintain a magazine, and so earnest as to require one. Our monthly message will be a supplement to our weekly sermon, and will enable us to say many things which would be out of place in a discourse. It will inform the general Christian public of our movements, and show our sympathy with all that is good throughout the entire Church of God. It will give us an opportunity of urging the claims of Christ's cause, of advocating the revival of godliness, of denouncing error, of bearing witness for truth, and of encouraging the labourers in the Lord's vineyard.

"We do not pretend to be unsectarian,—if by this term be meant the absence of all distinctive principles, and a desire to please parties of all shades of opinion. We believe, and therefore speak. We speak in love; but not in soft words and trimming sentences. We shall not court controversy, but we shall not shun it when the cause of God demands it.

"The many ministers who were students in our College will be our helpers in maintaining a variety and freshness of matter; and their flocks, we trust, will receive a blessing through their stirring words. It is our first and last object to do practical service, and to excite others to active exertion.

"We shall supply interesting reading upon general topics; but our chief aim will be to arouse believers to action, and to suggest to them plans by which the Kingdom of Jesus may be extended. To widen the bounds of Zion, and gather together the outcasts of Israel, is our heart's desire. We would sound the trumpet, and lead our comrades to the fight. We would ply the trowel with untiring hand for the building up of Jerusalem's dilapidated walls, and wield the sword with vigour and valour against the enemies of the truth."

The Sword and the Trowel has had, from the beginning, quite a unique constituency, for which Mr. Spurgeon always endeavoured to provide suitable literary and spiritual fare. The complete history of the magazine could not be condensed even into a chapter in the present volume, so only a very partial record of its usefulness can be embodied in the space available. In addition to being the direct cause of the origin of the Metropolitan Tabernacle Colportage Association and the Stockwell Orphanage, it has been, from the first, under God's blessing upon its advocacy, the chief medium of their maintenance; while all the dear Pastor's larger and lesser Institutions have been either started or supported in response to the appeals appearing in its pages. The College, the Society of Evangelists, the Almshouses, and the many smaller, yet important, works which are or have been more or less intimately associated with the Metropolitan Tabernacle, have derived incalculable benefit from the powerful pleas penned by Mr. Spurgeon, and published in his magazine; while various religious and philanthropic movements, with which he was only indirectly connected, have been very substantially aided in the same



FACSIMILE OF FIRST COVER OF "THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL."

way. The total amount of money thus contributed for the Lord's work would need to be represented by almost fabulous figures.

Those who are the privileged possessors of a complete set of the annual volumes find them to be a wonderful storehouse of interesting information on all manner of subjects; and much of the material is just as valuable now as when it first appeared. Questions concerning Scriptural doctrine, church-government, education, the Ritualistic controversy, Disestablishment, and other matters of present-day importance, are discussed in such a fashion that, with very slight modifications, the articles in the magazine can be adapted to the circumstances of these later times, and still be as effective as ever. For instance, an early series of Illustrated Tracts on Ritualism set forth the Protestant position in such a popular style that they are most suitable for circulation during the present crisis; some of them have never been excelled, or even equalled, by anything that has been published since.

Mr. Spurgeon had a number of assistants, some paid and others who delighted to aid him voluntarily, from the commencement of the magazine; but, with the exception of very occasional articles, he made himself personally responsible for all that appeared in its pages, and he often declared that most of the manuscripts and all the proofs passed directly under his own hand and eye, so that it was, in a very special sense, "his own magazine." It was also, by the generally-expressed desire of its readers, largely autobiographical;—a fact that has been recognized by the many writers who have given to the public more or less reliable versions of the history of the Editor and of the various Institutions which were for so long committed to his charge.

On one occasion, at least, the magazine was mentioned in the House of Lords; and the phrase used concerning it, in that august assembly, furnished its ever-ready Editor with the title of a short article in its next number:—"A Lively Newspaper, called, 'The Sword and Trowel.'" The opening paragraph was as follows:—"The good Bishop of Rochester has described *The Sword and Trowel* to the House of Lords as 'a lively newspaper.' We are afraid our friend is not so well acquainted with his *Sword and Trowel* as we could wish him to be, for it can hardly be called a newspaper; its shape, form, and monthly period of issue most distinctly place it among magazines. Still, that is near enough for recognition; and the adjective appended is so complimentary that we accept it with pleasure, and consider it rather a feather in our cap. What good can a magazine or any other publication effect, if it is not *lively*? Our trying state of health often makes us fear that we shall grow dull, and we accept the Bishop's kindly criticism as a doctor's certificate that the magazine is up to the mark, and is, in fact, 'a lively paper.' It is all that we can hope if our readers will add, 'and so say all of us.'"

The position taken by those who have been responsible for the conduct of the magazine since its Founder and first Editor was "called home," has been thus described by Mrs. Spurgeon:—

"It is a source of much satisfaction to me that the readers of *The Sword and the Trowel* so thoroughly appreciate the efforts made to keep the dear old magazine up to its past standard of interest and integrity. Letter after letter of warm approval reaches me, from those to whom it is at once a storehouse of blessed memories, a rallying-point for faith's most loyal forces, and, in some strange, sweet way, a heart-link between the loved one in Heaven and the loving ones on earth. In it, *his* writings still charm us,—bright gleams of *his* wit and wisdom sparkle among the paragraphs,—*his* ways and methods are carefully followed,—*he* is still the chief contributor,—and the *sunshine* of *his* name lingers lovingly on every page.

"But above and beyond all this, the same jealousy for God's honour, faithfulness to His truth, and fearless denunciation of false doctrine and error, are maintained by those into whose hands dear Mr. Spurgeon committed the 'sword' and the 'trowel' when he laid them aside for the crown and the glory. *He* never let the sword rust in its scabbard, or the trowel lie idle on the mortar-board; and his splendid courage in wielding both the weapon of war and the implement of toil is an untailing incentive to those who follow him in the 'combat with sin, and labour for the Lord.'"

The early volumes of *The Sword and the Trowel* soon became specially valuable to ministers and students, because in them the Editor gave his expositions of the Psalms, which were afterwards incorporated in his greatest literary work, *The Treasury of David*. Those seven substantial volumes contain, in addition to Mr. Spurgeon's own Commentary, the choicest extracts which he and his helpers could find in ancient and modern literature upon the whole Psalter; and, together, they constitute an indispensable portion of the library of any servant of the Lord who would be fully furnished for his Saviour's service. The Prefaces to the various volumes give just a glimpse of the delight with which this real labour of love proceeded during all the twenty years of the busy author's life in which it was in course of preparation; and his final words, written when the great task was accomplished, indicate how deeply the beloved commentator and compiler had been himself profited by his study of this part of the Sacred Scriptures, and how real was his regret when the last Psalm was reached, and he had to turn to other and less congenial forms of toil for his Master:—

"At the end of all these years, the last page of this Commentary is printed, and the seventh Preface is requested. The demand sounds strangely in my ears. A

Preface when the work is done? It can be only nominally a Preface, for it is really a farewell. I beg to introduce my closing volume, and then to retire with many apologies for having trespassed so much upon my reader's patience.

"A tinge of sadness is on my spirit as I quit *The Treasury of David*, never to find on this earth a richer storehouse, though the whole palace of Revelation is open to me. Blessed have been the days spent in meditating, mourning, hoping, believing, and exulting with David! Can I hope to spend hours more joyous on this side of the golden gate? Perhaps not; for the seasons have been very choice in which the harp of the great poet of the sanctuary has charmed my ears. Yet the training which has come of these heavenly contemplations may, haply, go far to create and sustain a peaceful spirit which will never be without its own happy psalmody, and never without aspirations after something higher than it has yet known. The Book of Psalms instructs us in the use of wings as well as words: it sets us both mounting and singing. Often have I ceased my commenting upon the text, that I might rise with the Psalm, and gaze upon visions of God. If I may only hope that these volumes will be as useful to other hearts in the reading as to mine in the writing, I shall be well rewarded by the prospect.

"The former volumes have enjoyed a singular popularity. It may be questioned if, in any age, a Commentary so large, upon a single Book of the Bible, has enjoyed a circulation within measurable distance of that which has been obtained by this work."

Shortly after Vol. I. of *The Treasury* was issued, Mr. Spurgeon met one of the most eminent of the London publishers; and, in the course of their conversation, his new book was mentioned. As the gentleman had such a wide experience of the success or failure of the works of various authors, the dear Pastor asked him what he would consider a satisfactory sale of *The Treasury*. He replied, "Well, Mr. Spurgeon, in the first place, you have fixed the price very much lower than I should have done if I had brought out a valuable theological work of that kind. Fifteen or sixteen shillings would not, in my judgment, have been at all too much to charge for it; but, as you have issued it at eight shillings, and, with the prestige of your name, I should say that you have done very well if you have sold as many as two thousand copies by this time." "Oh!" said Mr. Spurgeon, "that number was far exceeded directly it was published, and we have already run into several thousands more. I purposely put the price as low as possible, because I wanted to place the volumes within the reach of as large a number of students of the Word as I could." The publisher was surprised, yet gratified, to hear of the successful commencement of the series, and the author felt that he had great cause for gratitude to God for giving such a gracious token of approval to this important part of his literary labours.

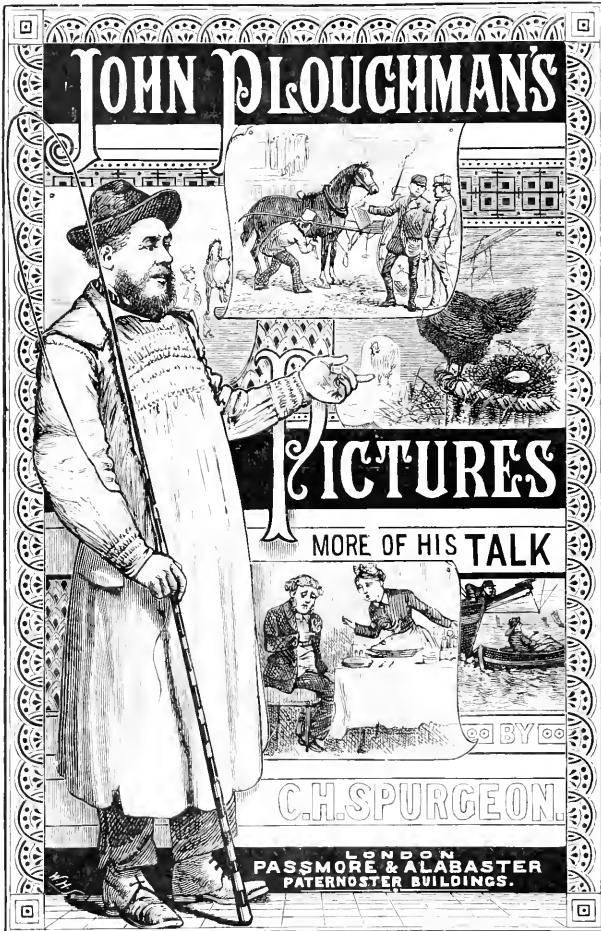
Before Mr. Spurgeon was "called home," no less than a hundred and twenty thousand volumes of *The Treasury* had been sold; twenty thousand more have been disposed of since his departure; and it is still in constant demand. Messrs. Passmore and Alabaster have just finished the re-issue of the whole work in shilling monthly parts, thus bringing it within the means of local preachers and others who could not buy the volumes. The complete set was republished in the United States; Mr. Spurgeon's own comments are being translated into German with a view to publication; and his exposition of Psalm cxix. has been issued, by Messrs. Passmore and Alabaster, in a handy 3s. 6d. volume, entitled, *The Golden Alphabet of the Praises of Holy Scripture*. It is impossible to estimate the blessing that has been conferred upon the whole Christian Church by *The Treasury of David*. If its author had never written anything else, it would have been a permanent literary memorial of no small value; and among the hundred and fifty volumes (or thereabouts), which bear his name on their title-pages, this series is unquestionably his *magnum opus*.

The most popular of all Mr. Spurgeon's publications—*John Ploughman's Talk*—first saw the light in the pages of his magazine, and probably helped largely to increase the circle of his readers. Even some of the Editor's most intimate friends did not recognize their beloved Pastor's voice when he addressed them in the language of such godly ploughmen as his old Stambourne friend, Will Richardson; and he has himself left on record this interesting reminiscence of what one of the Tabernacle deacons thought of the writings of the (supposed) man in the smock-frock:—

"Many years ago, it came into the head of the Editor of *The Sword and the Trowel* to write a set of plain papers for the people, in pure Saxon, and in the style of homely proverbs. He produced, one after another, the chapters which now make up *John Ploughman's Talk*. As no one knew who wrote them, amusing things occurred. An attached friend said to their author, 'Why do you put those papers of that ploughman into the magazine?' The answer was, 'Well, they are lively, and they have a good moral; what is the matter with them?' 'Yes,' replied the unsuspecting critic, 'they are rather good for a poor uneducated person like the writer, but they are too coarse for your magazine.' 'Think so?' said the Editor, and with a smile on his face, he went his way. When that good brother found out who the actual writer was, he felt all sorts of ways; but never a word was said about his criticism."

One of the ministers trained in the College, Pastor W. D. McKinney, in writing to Mrs. Spurgeon, concerning her dear husband, after he was "called home," proved

that a student penetrated the disguise through which the deacon could not see. Referring to his beloved President, he wrote:—"The first gift of books I ever received was two volumes of his sermons, which were presented to me at the close



C. H. SPURGEON AS "JOHN PLOUGHMAN."

of my first public discourse. Afterwards, I entered the College, and was one of those upon whom he tried the effect of *John Ploughman's Talk*; and I think I was the first who found 'John' out. Being one of the senior students, who were dubbed

'the twelve apostles,' I sat on his right hand on Fridays when he read the 'Papers from a Ploughman.' He evidently wanted to know what we thought of them, yet decided that our verdict should be unbiassed. 'Well,' said he, with that merry twinkle of his eye which we knew so well, 'Well, McKinney, who do you think this ploughman is?' 'I think he is not very far away,' I replied, 'and that he has enjoyed *his own talk!*' 'Aha!' said he, 'you know too much!'

As soon as the volume was published, it attained an immense circulation. At first, the book was issued in stiff covers at a shilling, and in cloth at two shillings, without illustrations; but, after the publication of *John Ploughman's Pictures; or, More of his Plain Talk for Plain People*; the former work was also illustrated, and both books are now sold, in cloth, at a shilling. Nearly six hundred thousand copies of the two volumes have been already purchased, and the demand for them still continues. Several translations into other languages have been made, but the one that specially pleased "John Ploughman" was the Dutch version, published at Amsterdam, by Mr. C. S. Adama van Scheltema, under the title, *Praatjes van Jan Ploeger*. Mr. Spurgeon wrote, in the *Sword and Trowel*, a very amusing article upon "John Ploughman as a Dutchman," in which he used and applied proverbs specially suitable to Holland and the Hollanders.

Another contribution to the proverbial literature of his day consisted of the two handsome volumes to which he gave the title of *The Salt-Cellars*, in allusion to the definition of a proverb which says that it should comprise "shortness, sense, and salt." It is a vast collection of *Proverbs of all Nations, with Homely Notes thereon*, concerning which *The Church Review* said:—"The proverbs are excellent; but Mr. Spurgeon's comments are perfect."

While the dear Pastor was travelling, either at home or abroad, he always had his note-book close at hand, and jotted down everything that was likely to be of service afterwards, incidents that could be used as illustrations being specially preserved. Many of these were first published in the *Sword and Trowel*, and then gathered, with other material of a similar kind, into a half-crown volume, entitled, *Feathers for Arrows; or, Illustrations for Preachers and Teachers*; which has had a very large sale. In one of the *Lectures to my Students*, Mr. Spurgeon related the following incident concerning the book:—"I once met with a High Churchman, who told me that he had purchased *Feathers for Arrows*; 'and,' said he, 'some of the illustrations are very telling; but they have to be used with great discretion.' His words seemed to imply that my expressions were possibly a little too strong, and perhaps somewhat rough and unpolished here and there; so he said, 'They must be

used with great discretion.' 'Well,' I replied, 'that is how I wrote them.' He looked at me, but he said nothing; probably it had never occurred to him that the same kind of discretion was necessary in making the illustrations as in using them."

At the close of the year in which the magazine was commenced, another valuable literary work was completed. This was Mr. Spurgeon's first volume of daily readings,—published under the title of *Morning by Morning*,—and concerning which he wrote in the Preface:—

"In penning these short reflections upon certain passages of Holy Writ, the author has had in view the assistance of the private meditations of believers. A child may sometimes suggest a consolation which might not otherwise have cheered a desolate heart; and even a flower, smiling upward from the sod, may turn the thoughts heavenward: may we not hope that, by the Holy Spirit's grace, as the reader turns 'morning by morning' to our simple page, he will hear in it 'a still small voice' whose speech shall be the message of God to his soul? The mind wearies of one thing, and we have therefore studied variety, changing our method constantly; sometimes exhorting, then soliloquizing, then conversing; using the first, second, and third persons, and speaking both in the singular and plural, and all with the desire of avoiding sameness and dullness. Our matter also, we venture to hope, is wide in its range, and not altogether without a dash of freshness; readers of our sermons will recognize many thoughts and expressions which they may have met with in our discourses; but much is, to the author at least, new; and, as far as anything can be which treats of the common salvation, it is original. We have written out of our own heart, and most of the portions are remembrances of words which were refreshing in our own experience; and, therefore, we trust the daily meditations will not be without savour to our brethren; in fact, we know they will not, if the Spirit of God shall rest upon them.

"Our ambition has led us to hope that our little volume may also aid the worship of families where God's altar is honoured in the morning. We know that it has been the custom in some households to read Mason, Hawker, Bogatsky, Smith, or Jay; and without wishing to usurp the place of any of these, our *Morning by Morning* aspires to a position among them. Our happiness will overflow should we be made a blessing to Christian households. Family worship is beyond measure important, both for the present and succeeding generations; and to be in part a chaplain in the houses of our friends, we shall esteem to be a very great honour."

The work so admirably answered all the ends designed by Mr. Spurgeon that, in a little over two years, he issued the sequel, *Evening by Evening*, and wrote in the Preface:—"Having had the seal of our Master's approval set upon our former

volume, entitled, *Morning by Morning*, we have felt encouraged to give our best attention to the present series of brief meditations, and we send them forth with importunate prayer for a blessing to rest upon every reader. Already, more than twenty thousand readers are among our morning fellow-worshippers. Oh, that all may receive grace from the Lord by means of the portion read; and when a similar number shall be gathered to read the evening selection, may the Father's smile be their benison!

"We have striven to keep out of the common track; and, hence, we have selected unusual texts, and have brought forward neglected subjects. The vice of many religious works is their dullness;—from this fault we have striven to be free, our friends must judge how far we have succeeded. If we may lead upward one heart which otherwise would have dropped, or sow in a single mind a holy purpose which else had never been conceived, we shall be grateful. The Lord send us such results in thousands of instances, and His shall be all the praise! The longer we live, the more deeply are we conscious that the Holy Spirit alone can make truth profitable to the heart; and, therefore, in earnest prayer, we commit this volume and its companion to His care."

Both the books have had a remarkable circulation,—over two hundred and twenty thousand having been sold,—and their ministry is by no means ended. Since the dear author's home-going, the publishers have carried out an idea that he had long cherished, and issued the two sets of meditations, printed on India paper, in a dainty little volume that can be carried in the pocket, and used for private meditation, or for the visitation of the sick.

A singular instance of the appropriateness of one of the readings in *Evening by Evening* has often been described by Mr. Spurgeon. Lady Burgoyne (wife of Sir John F. Burgoyne, Constable of the Tower, and mother of the first Mrs. J. A. Spurgeon,) was a member of the church at the Tabernacle. The Pastor gave, in his sermon entitled, "Speak for yourself.—A Challenge!" the following testimony concerning her Christian character and witness-bearing for her Lord:—"You, your ladyship, say, 'I love the Lord, but I do not think I could possibly say anything for Him in my circle and walk of life.' Could you not? You will easily surmount this little difficulty if you attain a greater growth in grace. We had one among us, whose rank entitled her to move in an upper sphere of 'society'; but her choice enabled her to prefer the humble companionship of the church to which she belonged. Some of you well remember her silvery locks. She has left us now, and gone home to glory. Her lot was cast amongst the aristocracy; yet, with gentle, quiet, bland simplicity, she introduced the gospel wherever she went. Many and

many have come to these pews, to listen to your minister, who would never have been here but for her calm, beautiful, unobtrusive, holy life, and the nerve with which, anywhere, and at any time, she could say, 'Yes, I am a Christian; what is more, I am a Nonconformist; and what you will consider worse, I am a Baptist; and what you will think worst of all, I am a member of the church at the Tabernacle.' She never blushed to own our dear Redeemer's Name, nor yet to acknowledge and befriend the lowliest of His disciples; and you will do well to imitate her faith, and follow her example."

On September 7, 1870, Lady Burgoyne took up her copy of *Evening by Evening*, and began to read the text and exposition for that date:—"There is sorrow on the sea; it cannot be quiet."—Jeremiah xlix. 23. Little know we what sorrow may be upon the sea at this moment. We are sate in our quiet chamber; but, far away on the salt sea, the hurricane may be cruelly seeking for the lives of men. Hear how the death-fiends howl among the cordage; how every timber starts as the waves beat like battering-rams upon the vessel! God help you, poor drenched and wearied ones!"—when she exclaimed, "Something dreadful has happened to poor Hugh;" and so it proved, for her son, Captain Hugh Burgoyne, commander of H.M.S. *Captain*, an ironclad turret-ship, had, that very morning, been lost off Cape Finisterre with his vessel and over five hundred of his officers and crew, as well as Captain Cowper Coles, the designer of the ship, who was on board as a visitor. The providential arrangement of the message in *Evening by Evening* somewhat prepared the bereaved family for the terrible tidings that soon after reached them.

A double coincidence, with brighter associations, but connected with the same volume, was thus reported to Mrs. Spurgeon in 1898 by Pastor W. Usher, M.D., of Tunbridge Wells:—

"In the course of conversation with a friend in the train, yesterday, he narrated the following incident, which I thought you would like to know. He had been telling me of the profit he derived from reading *Morning by Morning*, and then he added, 'There is a story connected with another of Mr. Spurgeon's books, which he would have been pleased to hear. About thirteen years since, a friend of mine, a Christian farmer, resided in Devonshire. He had a desire to remove; and, having heard of an available farm in Essex, he visited a gentleman in London to make enquiries about it. During his visit, he opened a copy of *Evening by Evening*, remarking, as he did so, "I wonder what the Lord will say to me through Mr. Spurgeon?" The text for May 12 caught his eye: "Fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: I will go down with thee into

Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again." This seemed suited to his circumstances, but he could not at once decide to take the farm. Some weeks later, he was pressed to decide one way or the other; and again visiting the house of his friend in London, he once more consulted *Evening by Evening*, and the text was that for June 8: "Thou shalt see now whether My Word shall come to pass unto thee or not." He took the farm, found the village in a state of spiritual desolation; opened his barn, and preached in it, and, when it became too small, erected a meeting-house capable of seating 400 persons. There were recently in fellowship there 160 baptized believers, and a Sunday-school of 200 children! The farmer evidently connects his success with the two messages he found in Mr. Spurgeon's book."

In the chapter on "A Holiday Drive to the New Forest," mention is made of another book which Mr. Spurgeon was preparing as an aid to family devotion. This was duly published under the title of *The Interpreter*; and consisted of selected passages of the Word of God for reading every morning and evening throughout the year, together with brief comments and suitable hymns. It was issued first in monthly parts, and afterwards as a very substantial volume, in various styles of binding. It has been a great help in the private worship of thousands of households; such men of mark as Earl Cairns and Earl Shaftesbury have been among the many who have borne testimony to its value. Mr. Spurgeon always felt that he might have added largely to its circulation if he had in one respect changed the character of the work; but he explained, in the Preface, the reason for his decision upon that matter:—"I have been earnestly urged to add *prayers*, but my conscience will not allow me to do so, although it would greatly increase the sale of the work. Let every Christian parent try to pray from his heart; and, though at first it may be difficult, it will soon become a delight, by the aid of the Holy Ghost, to pour out the desires of his soul in the midst of his family. To some persons, the use of forms of prayer appears to be lawful; but, as I cannot coincide with that opinion, it would be the height of hypocrisy for me to compose prayers for the use of others."

In 1866, another formidable yet happy task was accomplished in the compilation of *Our Own Hymn-Book*. The worshippers at the Tabernacle might have continued longer to employ in their service of praise the selections of Dr. Watts and Dr. Rippon, if it had not been for the complicated arrangement of the various books and parts, which proved so puzzling to strangers. So, taking pity upon them, Mr. Spurgeon commenced this new undertaking; and when he had completed it, he wrote this explanation of the motive which had actuated him, and the methods he

had followed to make the new book as perfect as possible :—"None of the collections already published are exactly what our congregation needs, or we would have cheerfully adopted one of them. They are good in their way, but we need something more. Our congregation has distinctive features which are not suited by every compilation :—not, indeed, by any known to us. We thought it best to issue a selection which would contain the cream of the books already in use among us, together with the best of all others extant up to the hour of going to press ; and having sought a blessing upon the project, we set about it with all our might, and at last have brought it to a conclusion. Our best diligence has been given to the work, and we have spared no expense : may God's richest benediction rest upon the result of our arduous labours ! Unto His glory we dedicate *Our Own Hymn-Book*.

"The area of our researches has been as wide as the bounds of existing religious literature,—American and British, Protestant and Romish, ancient and modern. Whatever may be thought of our taste, we have exercised it without prejudice ; and a good hymn has not been rejected because of the character of its author, or the heresies of the church in whose hymnal it first appeared ; so long as the language and the spirit of it commended the hymn to our heart, we included it, and we believe that we have thereby enriched our collection. The range of subjects is very extensive, comprising not only direct praise, but doctrine, experience, and exhortation ; thus enabling the saints, according to apostolical command, to edify one another in their spiritual songs.

"If any object that some of the hymns are penitential or doctrinal, and therefore unfit to be sung, we reply that we find examples of such in the Book of Psalms, which we have made our model in compiling our work ; there we have Maschils as well as Hosannahs, and penitential odes as well as Hallelujahs. We have not been able to fall in with modern scruples, but have rested content with ancient precedents.

"We hope that, in some few churches of the land, we may be helpful to their service of sacred song, and aid them in praising the Lord. The Editor has inserted, with great diffidence, a very few of his own compositions,—chiefly among the Psalms ;—and his only apology for so doing is the fact that, of certain difficult Psalms, he could find no version at all fitted for singing, and was therefore driven to turn them into verse himself. As these original hymns are but few, it is hoped that they will not prejudice the ordinary reader against the rest of the collection ; and, possibly, one or two of them may gratify the generous judgment of our friends."

The hope, so modestly expressed, that *Our Own Hymn-Book* might be adopted by other congregations beside that at the Tabernacle, has been fully realized ; and

the Editor's own compositions have been prized as much as any in the whole work. Three of them especially—the one written for an early morning prayer-meeting—

“Sweetly the holy hymn
Breaks on the morning air;
Before the world with smoke is dim,
We meet to offer prayer;”—

another, intended for singing at the communion,—

“Amidst us our Belovèd stands,
And bids us view His piercèd hands,
Points to His wounded feet and side,
Blest emblems of the Crucified;”—

and a third, commencing—

“The Holy Ghost is here
Where saints in prayer agree,
As Jesu's parting gift He's near
Each pleading company;”—

have been incorporated into many modern hymnals.

Mr. Spurgeon often spoke of the compilation of *Our Own Hymn-Book* as having been a great means of grace to his own soul, especially when he was selecting the hymns in praise of the Lord Jesus; and, once, when preaching at Surrey Chapel, he thus explained why he had omitted one hymn that he found in other collections:—“It really is lamentable to see how common, in certain quarters, misery is among the people of God. In many places they are a feeble folk. Mr. Ready-to-Halt, of whom John Bunyan writes, must have been the father of a very large family. I am afraid that the manufacture of crutches will never die out altogether; and really, in some parts, it must be a most lucrative business, for many of the Lord's people never get beyond, ‘I hope so,’ or, ‘I trust so,’ and no hymn in the hymn-book is so sweet to them as—

“‘Tis a point I long to know.

“I did not put that hymn in *Our Own Hymn-Book*. I had a debate in my own mind about it. I said to myself, ‘Ah, well! they will know all about that hymn without my putting it into the book;’ and I thought that, if you wanted to sing it, you could sing it alone at home; but it did not seem to me to be a hymn that a whole congregation should use. I have to sing it myself sometimes, I am sorry to say. It is an excellent hymn, as expressing the feelings of some of God's people, but it will not do for all of you to get into that state. It is very well for the good wife to have a little black draught at hand when the child needs it sometimes; but to give the whole family the same medicine, might be a great deal more injurious than beneficial. And so it is with regard to that class of hymns; it is suitable to a certain case of diseased spiritual condition, but it would be wrong to suppose or to insinuate that all the people of God, at any one time in a congregation, could be found in exactly the same condition of sad decrepitude of faith.”

After being in use for a third of a century, it was felt that there was need to add to Mr. Spurgeon's own compilation ; so, in the year 1898, a *Supplement* was issued, containing 300 additional hymns ; and, providentially, it was ready for use just when the Tabernacle congregation had need of new hymn-books to replace the many that had been burned in the fire which wrought such terrible destruction in their great house of prayer. The new selection closely follows the lines laid down for the former one, and includes many of the best " psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs " that have been composed during the last thirty years.

It is scarcely necessary to refer, in detail, to the notable series of volumes, entitled, *Lectures to my Students*, which have attained world-wide fame, and have been a source of incalculable blessing to thousands of ministers of the gospel and Christian workers generally. Nor is there need for more than a passing mention of the volumes composed entirely of extracts from the Pastor's published works,—*Gleanings among the Sheaves, Spurgeon's Gems, Flashes of Thought, The Spurgeon Birthday Book and Autographic Register, Barbed Arrows from the Quiver of C. H. Spurgeon, and Everybody's Book*,—all of which prove the abundance and preciousness of the stores from which so many specimens could be selected, while leaving the vast bulk almost untouched. In addition to the discourses regularly published, week by week, in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, five volumes of Thursday and Lord's-day evening sermons have been issued under the titles, *Types and Emblems, Trumpet Calls to Christian Energy, The Present Truth, Storm Signals, and Farm Sermons* ; while, among the smaller books, which have been the means of great usefulness to various classes of readers, may be named, *Christ's Glorious Achievements, Seven Wonders of Grace, The Mourner's Comforter, The Spare Half-hour, The Bible and the Newspaper, Eccentric Preachers, " Be of Good Cheer," The Royal Wedding, The Metropolitan Tabernacle,—its History and Work, All of Grace, According to Promise, and Around the Wicket Gate*.

Anyone who had the opportunity, for the first time, of examining a complete set of Mr. Spurgeon's publications might imagine that he had never done anything but write all the days of his life ; yet the present volume alone proves that, after all, his literary labours employed only a part of that busy forty years' ministry which was all spent to the honour and glory of the Lord he loved so dearly and served so faithfully.

CHAPTER LXXX

Blessing on the Printed Sermons.

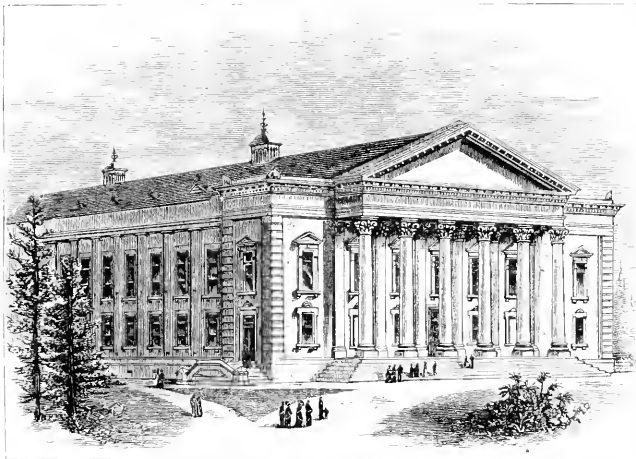
Seldom does a day pass, and certainly never a week, without letters from all sorts of places, even at the utmost ends of the earth, bringing the glad tidings of the salvation of souls, by means of one or other of the printed sermons — C. H. S.



ONLY a very small proportion of the blessed results arising from the publication of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons, can be given in this chapter. Records of so many have been preserved, that, to chronicle all, would go far towards filling a volume the size of the present one.

An early and interesting instance is mentioned in the church-book for the year in which the Metropolitan Tabernacle was opened.

Under the date, November 20, 1861, is this entry:—"A very cheering communication was read from our Brother Wilson, giving some extracts from a letter he had received from his father in Auckland, New Zealand. The following is a brief summary of its



THE TABERNACLE, AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND

contents. Our Pastor's sermons are regularly read by Mr. Wilson and some Christian friends, and God has been pleased to own this instrumentality in the conversion of eleven persons,—four natives and seven Europeans,—the sermon

entitled, 'None but Jesus,' being particularly useful. Five thousand copies of that discourse have been distributed amongst the natives in their own language. An effort is being made to build a Baptist Chapel in the town. The prayers of the church are earnestly requested on behalf of our friends in New Zealand."

How little could the dear Pastor at that time have anticipated that one of his own sons—then just seven years old,—would preach the Word in Auckland, be the means of building a large Tabernacle there, (represented on the preceding page.) and afterwards be chosen as his father's successor at the Tabernacle! Yet, in that very building, less than a month after the church-meeting at which the letter from New Zealand was read, Mr. Spurgeon, preaching on "The True Apostolical Succession," said:—"How many there are, in our midst, who have been raised up by God to fill similar positions in the church to those which their forefathers occupied! I hope there will always be a family succession in the eldership and in the deaconship; and what if I were egotistical enough to say so, in the ministry, too? I would to God there might be, in every single position in this church, as soon as one dies, another allied to and descended from the departed to take his place!"

Mr. Spurgeon never ceased to remember, with deep gratitude, the great service rendered to the cause of Christ by a generous gentleman at the Antipodes who, for years, paid for the insertion of the sermons, as advertisements, in *The Australasian* and other colonial newspapers. The following letter will show the spirit in which this noble enterprise was undertaken, and the blessing that rested upon it; but the writer's name and address are omitted in accordance with his own wish:—

"Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

"Having been brought, through grace, to feel somewhat of the power and love of Jesus, and the blessings of the glorious gospel, and knowing the wants of the great mass of our widely-scattered population, and seeing that your sermons so fully set forth the way of salvation, I was induced to publish them in the newspapers here. *The Australasian* being a sporting paper, the manager seemed indisposed to help in carrying out my idea, so he gave orders that I was to be charged the full price, as advertisements, for the sermons; but, feeling the importance of the step, I resolved to pay what he demanded until his readers were interested in them, and then I thought better terms might be obtained. After the publication had continued for some six or nine months, I waited on the manager, who did not even then appear willing to grant me the reduction I wanted; and not being able to convince him of the appreciation his readers had for the sermons, I suggested that we should ask for an expression of their opinion with regard to them. The result was, that about four hundred letters were received; and I send the

enclosed specimens of them for your good cheer. I should be sorry that any name should be made public, and I have withheld my own from the papers here, fearing that the enemy might say that I am seeking the approbation of men. The reason of my sending these letters to you is, that Mr. —— called on me, and I showed them to him, and he said that I ought to let you see them.

"I have sent a few of the papers containing the sermons to Mr. Samuel Morley, Mr. Peabody, Earl Shaftesbury, and others, in the hope that they might be induced to do likewise, as a newspaper often falls into the hands of men and women who would not take a tract. May I ask you for any suggestion that will help to further the cause and advance the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ?

"In conclusion, I would beg your prayers for myself. I am seeking to grow in grace, and in knowledge of the love of God. Also please pray that this work of publishing the sermons here may abundantly prosper. Wishing you every success and happiness in your noble work,

"I am,

"Yours truly,

"———."

The four hundred replies, mentioned in the letter, came* from all parts of Australia and New Zealand. Many of them were from far-off dwellers in the bush, who looked for the weekly sermons as regularly as for their daily meals. In some cases, lonely believers were encouraged and helped by the preacher's message; and, in other instances, little companies gathered together while one of their number read to them the discourse which had been delivered so many thousands of miles away, but which, when repeated to them, was as fresh and fragrant as ever. Quite a large number of the letters contained the glad tidings that the unusual advertisements in the papers had been blessed to the salvation of souls; among these were some striking trophies of the grace of God, of which just two specimens may be included here. One man, who wrote from an outlying district in Victoria, said:—

"Sir,

"Having seen an advertisement lately, at the head of one of the sermons published weekly in *The Australasian*, asking for an expression of opinion as to their usefulness, I venture respectfully to offer the following plain and brief statement in reply.

"I have been, for some five years or more, one of those unfortunates who are commonly called 'swagmen.' Travelling about, a few months since, looking for employment, I came to a public-house, by the roadside, into which I went for a drink, and an hour's rest, as I was very tired. A newspaper was lying on the

counter, containing Mr. Spurgeon's sermon on the text, 'Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you.' I read it through, with increasing interest as I went along; and it exactly met my case. It aroused me to a sense of my utterly lost condition as a sinner of the deepest dye, and, at the same time, so encouraged me to seek for mercy and peace at the foot of the cross that I could not resist doing so; and I humbly hope and believe that I did not seek in vain.

"I left that public-house resolved never to enter one again unless absolutely compelled by circumstances to do so. Since then, I have enjoyed a peace to which I had been long a stranger. I now make God's Word my daily study, and attend Divine service whenever I can. Although nominally a Church of England man, previous to reading the sermon alluded to, I had only been once to church since my arrival in the Colony, now nearly seven years ago.

"To my personal knowledge, these sermons are extensively read in the country districts; and, for my own part, I look to the arrival of the weekly paper—which my employer always lends me,—as the messenger of joy and comfort to myself; and I pray that it may prove to be the same to hundreds of others also. I would just, in conclusion, ask you to offer the expression of my humble and heartfelt thanks to the friend who pays for the advertisements of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons.

"I am, sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"————."

Another correspondent, in a different part of Victoria, wrote:—

"Sir,

"Reading, in *The Australasian*, a request that parties approving of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons would communicate with you, I place the following facts before your notice. I have been in the Colony about sixteen years; and, during that period, have been into a place of worship about three times, and then more from accident than design. During my abode in this Colony, I am sorry to say that I have contracted the horrible habit of drunkenness, occasionally getting what some people call 'on the spree' for a fortnight or three weeks at a stretch. The summer before last, I had 'the horrors' twice; and last summer, I had delirium tremens just coming on. Unable to either sit, stand, lie down, or walk about, I casually picked up *The Australasian*, and what should catch my eye but Mr. Spurgeon's sermon on 'The Approachableness of Jesus.' I commenced reading it; and before I had gone far, tears came into my eyes; and I had not got through it before I had to hold my hand before my face for very shame. By the time I had read it all, I found myself looking to Christ to be relieved from my hideous burden of sin; and, to my astonishment, the delirium tremens vanished like a heavy dew on a summer's

morning. I was weak in consequence of the long drinking-bout, but felt quite happy in my mind ; and, since, am glad to say that I never enjoyed such peace of mind in my life before.

“ Yours respectfully,

“ A subscriber to *The Australasian*.”

It is interesting to note that, many years afterwards, when Pastor Thomas Spurgeon was in Geelong, the writer of the above letter went to see him, and produced from his pocket the torn and discoloured copy of the newspaper containing the sermon which was used by the Holy Spirit as the means of his conversion.

In one case, a portion of one of the Australian papers was blessed to the salvation of a reader under the singular circumstances thus related :—

“ I was preaching,” says the writer of the narrative, “ in the Baptist Chapel, Aberdeen Street, Geelong, a few years ago, when, at the close of an evening service, an elderly man came to the platform to bid me ‘ good-night.’ As he was a stranger, I asked him where he came from, and how long he had known the Lord ; he then told me the story of his conversion, and the strange way by which he was led to the Saviour. About five years before, while keeping sheep some miles beyond Ballarat, he *picked up a sheet of a weekly newspaper, which the wind had blown over the plains*. He glanced at a few sentences, and these drew him on to read more, and then he found he was eagerly perusing a sermon by Mr. C. H. Spurgeon. ‘ If I had known it was a sermon,’ he said, ‘ before I had begun to read it, I should have tossed it away ;’ but having commenced the discourse, he wanted to see how it finished. It set him thinking ; he carefully preserved it, reading it over and over again in deep concern, until finally it became the means of leading him to the cross. For many years he had not entered a place of worship, and he was utterly careless about his soul till this paper was blown to his feet. Now, when he has the opportunity, he always attends some Baptist service ; but this is a rare pleasure, owing to his lonely life and employment in the bush. He does, however, get the weekly sermons, which cheer and comfort him with spiritual nourishment.”

A still more remarkable instance of blessing upon one of the sermons published in the papers was once reported to Mr. Spurgeon. A parcel, sent from Australia, to the wife of a publican in England, was wrapped up in a newspaper containing one of the discourses delivered in the Metropolitan Tabernacle. The woman read it, and so was led to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as her Saviour. Surely, that was another proof of the truth of Cowper's lines,—

“ God moves in a mysterious way,
His wonders to perform

Copies of the Australian papers containing the sermons were regularly sent to a gentleman in Jersey who, at that time, did not know how to obtain the original English edition of them. Long afterwards, he wrote to Mr. Spurgeon:—

“I have been a reader of your sermons these seventeen years or more, and God has been graciously pleased to bless them to the salvation of my soul. I had almost begun to think my Saviour had forgotten me; I knew I had long ignored Him. I have lately found out the way to procure the sermons in any number, and have gladly availed myself of it. I think I have now nearly six hundred of them; I lend them out in books of fifty. I prize them above every other means of grace save *the Book*. As you so frequently want money for the good works in which you are always engaged, I thought you would not despise my trifle. I wish it were fifty times as much. Receive my sincere and heartfelt thanks for the unspeakable help your sermons have afforded, and still afford me.”

A Wesleyan minister, in New South Wales, reported the following cases of conversion through the published sermons:—

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,—At an evangelistic service, held here recently, a well-known saw-mill proprietor, who is an esteemed local preacher in this circuit, made a brief reference to his own history to this effect:—‘For twenty-five years of my life, I lived in the darkness of sin. I had never been inside a Protestant place of worship. *I had never, in all that time, met a Christian man.* I knew nothing of the distinction between Methodist, Presbyterian, Baptist, etc.; they were all alike despised in my eyes as being all in gross error. About that time, five of my companions were drowned together at Port Stevens. The occurrence made a deep impression upon my heart. The thought would force itself upon me, “What if you had been among the number? Would you not now have been weeping and wailing among the lost souls in hell?”

“I was greatly troubled, and did what alone I could do,—prayed to God; but not knowing anything of the way of salvation through faith in Christ, and having no one to guide me, I lived for two years in the most awful agony. I would rather die than live those two years over again. I knew nothing of the great preachers of the day, until I happened to hear of Mr. Spurgeon; and a friend being about to visit Sydney, I asked him to get me a volume of Spurgeon’s sermons. I read them eagerly, and received much light and comfort from them. At length, I came to one bearing the title, “Seeking for Jesus” (No. 947), and as I read, God spoke peace to my troubled heart. I felt that my sin was pardoned, and I could sing aloud for joy. It was about noon on a glorious Sabbath-day when the great change took place, and I well remember the spot on which it occurred. Since then, ten years ago now, I have been telling the story of the cross wherever I can.’

"I was much impressed by the incident, and resolved to let you know about it, as I thought it would both afford matter for praise to God, and prove an encouragement to trust in, and labour for, Him, 'knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.'

"P.S.—At our meeting, last night, an old gentleman stated that, twenty-one years ago, in this district, he was led to decision through reading a sermon of yours, entitled 'Now' (No. 603). He is to-day a consistent Christian. To God be the praise and glory!"

Mr. Spurgeon once related to his congregation at the Tabernacle a notable instance which illustrated both the power of the prayer of faith and the usefulness of one of his printed sermons:—"At the close of one of our services, a poor woman, accompanied by two of her neighbours, came to my vestry in deep distress. Her husband had fled the country; and, in her sorrow, she had gone to the house of God, and something I said in the sermon made her think that I was personally familiar with her case. Of course, I had really known nothing about her; I had made use of a general illustration which just fitted her particular case. She told me her story, and a very sad one it was. I said, 'There is nothing that we can do but kneel down, and cry to the Lord for the immediate conversion of your husband.' We knelt down, and I prayed that the Lord would touch the heart of the deserter, convert his soul, and bring him back to his home. When we rose from our knees, I said to the poor woman, 'Do not fret about the matter. I feel sure your husband will come home; and that he will yet become connected with our church.'

"She went away, and I forgot all about her. Some months afterwards, she re-appeared, with her neighbours, and a man, whom she introduced to me as her husband. He had indeed come back, and he had returned a converted man. On making enquiry, and comparing notes, we found that, the very day on which we had prayed for his conversion, he, being at that time on board a ship far away on the sea, stumbled most unexpectedly upon a stray copy of one of my sermons. He read it; the truth went to his heart; he repented, and sought the Lord; and, as soon as possible, he came back to his wife and to his daily calling. He was admitted as a member at the Tabernacle, and his wife, who up to that time had not joined the church, was also received into fellowship with us.

"That woman does not doubt the power of prayer. All the infidels in the world could not shake her conviction that there is a God that heareth and answereth the supplications of His people. I should be the most irrational creature in the world if, with a life every day of which is full of experiences so remarkable, I entertained the slightest doubt on the subject. I do not regard it as miraculous; it is part and parcel of the established order of the universe that the shadow of a coming event

should fall in advance upon some believing soul in the shape of prayer for its realization. The prayer of faith is a Divine decree commencing its operation.

"Perhaps someone says, 'That was merely a coincidence.' Well, that woman did not think so, nor did her husband, nor did I at the time; and I do not think so now. You may call it a coincidence, if you like; but I call it an answer to prayer; and as long as I get such coincidences, I shall be perfectly satisfied to go on praying. 'A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.' I do not believe I should have had such coincidences if I had not asked for them; and as I get them daily, I shall stand to it, nor shall anything stop me from this glorying, that there is a God who heareth prayer; and I challenge all men to try for themselves whether it is not so. If they come humbly to Him, by Christ Jesus, and seek His face, they shall not seek in vain; and, by-and-by, if they continue to wait upon Him in prayer, He will gird them with power, so that they shall ask and receive both for themselves and for others."

In the same sermon in which he narrated the above incident, Mr. Spurgeon mentioned another case of conversion which had occurred only a few days before the delivery of the discourse:—

"About a fortnight ago, there stood in Cheapside a young man reading one of my sermons which had attracted his attention. As he was reading it, he came across this passage:—'If you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, you are saved now. But I want you to project your faith further, and to believe in Jesus Christ for the whole of your life; for if you do so, you shall not only be saved now, but you shall infallibly be saved for ever.' Then followed the text, 'I give unto them eternal life,' and this comment upon it:—'Now, eternal life cannot come to an end. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." Everlasting life cannot come to an end; it is a thing that lasts for ever. Believe for everlasting life, and you have it; you are saved for ever.' The young man said, 'Standing there, I did believe just as I was told. I trusted Christ, and I believed then that in Him I had everlasting life. The next minute I felt, "Oh, what a glorious thing this is! How I love Christ who has done this great thing for me! What is there that I can do to serve Him? What sin is there that I would not give up?" Then,' he added, 'I said to myself, as I walked on, "Why, I am saved! I am sure I am, because now I love Christ; now I want to give up sin, and now I want to serve Him."' And was not that a sure proof of his being saved, because he saw the greatness of Divine love to him, and this made him grateful; and that gratitude turned him right round, and made a new man of him? This is how Christ can save you, also. Suppose you have been addicted to drunkenness, and that you are convinced of the evil of it. You go to Christ, and He forgives you; then you say, 'Now I am forgiven, oh, how I love

my Saviour! I will never go back to my cups again; I have done with my old companions; I will go and seek out other people who love Christ, and I will join with them if they will have me; and I will see what Christ expects me to do, and I will do it, for I want in everything to please Him who has done so much for me.' That is salvation,—a change of character,—a deliverance from that which held you in bondage, an entrance into the blessed liberty of loving God and longing to be holy. Oh, that we might each one of us know that blessedness!"

The welcome news, in the case mentioned above, reached the dear Pastor very quickly; but, in some instances, many months or even years were allowed to elapse between the reception of the blessing through the printed page and the glad tidings concerning it being conveyed to the one who had delivered the message. Thus, the secretary of a Young Men's Christian Association in the country once wrote to Mr. Spurgeon:—

"Dear Sir,

"I met with a young man, a few days ago, whose case will interest you, as you have had much to do with guiding him to his present position. W. T.— was converted seven years ago. He was manager of a large brewery. As he was not happy, he commenced to read your sermons week by week. These made him more wretched, because they showed him that he had not made a full surrender to the Lord, and he felt that he could not continue in his business and serve the Saviour fully. The time came when he saw that one or the other must go, and he told his uncle, who is the principal partner in the firm, that he must leave, giving his reasons for so doing. His father and uncle tried to persuade him not to be so foolish as to throw away what they considered his only chance in life; but his answer was, 'I must throw away this, or Christ: the one I cannot, the business I must.' His uncle then offered to give him as many shares in the firm as he liked to name; but still his answer was, 'No, I must wash my hands of the trade;' and he left, not knowing where he would go, or what he would do; but confident that the Lord, who had given him grace to take this stand, would help him to realize his one desire to please his Lord and Master. The way was opened for him to enter the City Mission, where he has been working for the last eighteen months with much success. I asked if he had told you the benefit your sermons had been to him; and finding that he had not done so, suggested that he should write, knowing that you are encouraged by every fresh case of blessing."

An even longer period passed before Mr. Spurgeon had the following good news from a far country:—"Five-and-twenty years ago, I heard from a Christian lady the following story:—"My brother and his Christian wife had three grown-up

sons, all unconverted. After a while, they agreed to leave home, and try their fortunes in New Zealand. When they left, the parents conferred with one another as to what could be done for their souls' salvation, now they had gone from their influence and prayers. They agreed to send your sermons out to them every month. They did so. God owned the effort, and all three of them were converted by reading them."

Sometimes, a paragraph in a newspaper was used as the means of cheering the dear preacher, as in the case of a Baptist paper, published in the United States, which contained the following notice, headed—

"FOR BROTHER SPURGEON'S EYE."

"At our prayer-meeting, the other Sunday evening, a brother, to show the different ways there are of doing good, mentioned an incident that occurred on board a steamer in which, some time before, he was a passenger up the Pacific Coast to Oregon. It was Sunday; and a passenger, who had with him a volume of Spurgeon's sermons, went round asking one and another to read one of them aloud. The passengers declined, till he came to our brother, who consented to act as reader. Quite a company gathered round him, which gradually increased, as he went on with the discourse, until, looking up, after a little time, he saw that, not only the passengers, but all the crew who could possibly be at liberty, were among his audience, and that all were very attentive.

"The informal service was soon over. But not so the effect of the sermon; for, some months after, being in San Francisco, he was abruptly saluted in the street, one day, by a stranger—a sailor—who seemed overjoyed at meeting him. 'How do you do?' said he. 'Don't you know me? Why, I heard you preach!' 'I am not a preacher, my friend; so you must have made a mistake.' 'Oh, no! I have not; I heard you preach. Don't you remember the steamer that was going to Oregon?' 'Oh, yes!' replied the gentleman; 'I recollect, and I read one of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons.' 'Well,' said the sailor, 'I never forgot that sermon; it made me feel that I was a sinner, and I have found Christ, and I am so glad to see you again.'"

The publication of that paragraph led a friend in England to write to Mr. Spurgeon this story of the connection of the sermons with another company of those "that go down to the sea in ships":—

"One of the most earnest and devoted of the Christian brotherhood at Dover had been 'before the mast' in a small schooner, the master of which, a godly man, going for a cruise of some months, and being anxious about the spiritual welfare of his crew, resolved to take with him some Bibles, in order that none on

board should be without, at least, the letter of the Word. He, however, from some cause or other (probably forgetfulness), sailed without the Bibles; but had to put back to harbour through stress of weather. Again he essayed to go to sea, but with a similar result. As he lay in port, weatherbound, it flashed across his mind that it might be the hand of the Lord which had detained his vessel; and, believing it to be so, he added to his freight some of the incorruptible seed of the Word, in the form of Bibles, for his crew; and with them some of your own sermons, one of which latter he read to the assembled ship's company each Lord's-day morning.

"Our brother informed me that his spiritual birth was the fruit of one of these sermons read by the illiterate captain, who had adopted this simple method of echoing your exposition of God's truth. The sermon read upon the momentous morning in question was from the text, 'Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight.' The arrow, guided by the Holy Spirit, went home to the hearer's heart, and David's conviction and confession were repeated in the case of our brother, who gratefully recognizes the sovereign grace of the Lord in His repeated interference with man's purpose, and the saving efficacy of God's truth in the unpretending service on the schooner's deck."

Mr. Spurgeon once made use of an instance of blessing upon his published sermons to enforce the stirring appeal which he addressed to his hearers in the Tabernacle. Preaching, on Lord's-day morning, July 7, 1867, on "Jesus putting away sin," he closed his discourse in this striking and solemn fashion:—

"I heard, the day before yesterday, something which greatly cheered me. It was that, at the late meeting of believers in Chicago, one came from the far West, who asked for a missionary to preach in a newly-formed district; and the reason he gave for wishing for the missionary was, that the people in that region had read my sermons on the Sabbath, and that no less than two hundred souls had been converted to God through reading them. When I heard that good news, I rejoiced exceedingly, but then I thought, 'Alas! there are many who have those sermons first-hand, and yet get no blessing from them;' and I remembered some of you who have heard me these many years, and I have been faithful to you,—I trust I have,—God knows I desire to be,—and yet you are still 'in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.' While across the blue Atlantic, the echo of my words has called men from the grave of sin to life in Christ, you, though you love to listen to me, have not heard my voice in the depths of your soul. Shall it always be so? It will be, I fear, with some of you, for I foresee your ruin. You will go down to hell with the gospel sounding in your ears, and wake up in the pit with this sad truth to aggravate your woe, that you knew the gospel, and yet refused it. How shall you

escape if you neglect so great salvation,—so great that angels cannot tell its greatness, and human tongues are dumb at best when they attempt to speak of the excellent glory of it? Why will you reject it when it is so close to your hand, when, if you with your hearts believe and with your mouths confess Christ, you shall be saved? Why those hard hearts? Why those silent mouths? May the Eternal Spirit bring you to Jesus this very hour, and His shall be the praise, world without end! Amen.”

It was a happy day for the dear Pastor when a Ritualistic “priest” came to tell him of the blessing he had received through the printed sermons. Mr. Spurgeon thus narrated the story:—

“He told me that he owed everything to me, because I had been the means of leading him to Jesus. He said he was ‘only a humble vicar of the Church of England,’ so I asked what his line of teaching had formerly been. ‘Very high,’ he replied. ‘But,’ I asked, ‘did you pretend to forgive people’s sins?’ ‘Yes,’ he answered. ‘Then,’ I enquired, ‘how did you get rid of the idea that you were a priest?’ ‘Well,’ he said, ‘I sincerely believed myself to be a priest until I read one of your sermons. That convinced me of my own state as a sinner, and the priesthood oozed out of me directly. Now I am trusting the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, and I point my congregation to Him alone.’”

Scarcely less striking was the conversion concerning which the following testimony was given:—

“A woman in Scotland, who was determined, as far as possible, not to have anything to do with religion, threw her Bible, and all the tracts she could find in her house, into the fire. One of the tracts fell down out of the flames, so she picked it up, and thrust it in again. A second time it slipped down, and once more she put it back. Again the evil intention was frustrated, but the next time she was more successful, though even then only half of it was consumed. Taking up the portion that fell out of the fire, she exclaimed, ‘Surely the devil is in that tract, for it won’t burn.’ Her curiosity was excited; she began to read it, and it was the means of her conversion. The tract was one of the sermons published in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*. Verily, that sermon, and the woman too, were ‘saved, yet so as by fire.’”

A minister in Tennessee bore the following pleasing personal testimony:—
“Nine years ago, I was a wild young man; but I was converted through reading one of Mr. Spurgeon’s sermons, and I am now the Pastor of a large and influential church. The Lord’s name be magnified!”

The following letter from California was specially welcome, for it recorded the somewhat unusual circumstance that a former slanderer had become converted through reading the sermons of the preacher whom he had aforetime reviled :—

“ Dear Sir,

“ I consider it but justice to yourself, and my duty as one who is striving to follow the example set by our Lord and Master, to seek your pardon for the manner in which I have spoken and thought of you in former years. Too much prejudiced to hear and see for myself, although the opportunity lay daily within my reach, I accepted and repeated all I heard to your reproach, not remembering the injunction of the Holy Scriptures, to ‘ prove all things.’ And you have had a noble revenge, for it was your words, as read by me in your published sermons, that have shown me to myself as I really was, and have been the means, through the grace of God, of awakening a desire within me to seek to lead a pure and holy life ; and not only this, but they have likewise awakened a great desire in me to be the means, God willing, of bringing others to see the danger of their sinful state, and to lead them also to the Saviour.”

A grateful convert wrote from Quebec to the dear Pastor :—

“ My Dear Sir,

“ Since reading a sermon, delivered by you a long time ago, on the text, ‘ Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,’ (No. 293,) and in which you set forth the great sin of unbelief, I have felt a strong desire to write to strengthen your hands by letting you know that your labour is not in vain, as I, for one, can testify to the great good derived from that and other sermons of yours. My father, before we left Scotland, seven years ago, always got your sermons, as well as your *Sword and Trowel*, and having derived great benefit from them, he carefully put them away. About a year ago, my brother sent me a few of those old sermons, which I read, and—glory be to God!—He opened my eyes while I was reading the sermon I have mentioned, and I found peace in believing.”

For a long time, the sermons, or portions of them, have been, by special arrangement, allowed to appear in *The Christian Herald*. Among the instances of blessing on their publication in that form, a friend in Glasgow, who signed himself, “ Your loving son in Jesus,” wrote thus to Mr. Spurgeon :—

“ About two years ago, a sermon of yours, entitled, ‘ The Search Warrant,’ appeared in *The Christian Herald*. I had been anxious long before ; but the Wednesday evening that this sermon came, I went away into the country to read it. Oh, I was in earnest that night ! When I was sure I was alone, I stood and cried to God in prayer, and I was led to ask just one thing,—namely, that Spurgeon’s sermon

might be the means of saving my soul that night. I opened the paper, and read it with great attention. The Spirit was with me; and when I got half-way through, brought home to me the words, 'the very simplicity of faith makes the difficulty.' I had always been searching for some dark, mysterious, hidden thing. Back I went to the beginning, with a firm resolve to read it simply. Then I saw how one thing after another was cast down, and faith itself was made a standing-ground on which to place the only thing that I could see left in the whole sermon,—the beautiful, glorious, 'altogether lovely' form of our wounded Emmanuel. Christ was everywhere, and even myself had vanished, for I was a new creature. Thank God for a Spurgeon to preach 'The Search Warrant'!"

Greatly as the sermons have been used in leading sinners to the Saviour, they have been almost equally blessed in reclaiming backsliders, and in comforting and cheering those who have been in mental or spiritual distress. From Victoria, a lady wrote to Mr. Spurgeon the following grateful letter:—

"My Dear Sir,

"I have often felt inclined to write to you. Twelve years ago, I lost a darling boy; everything seemed dark, and nothing brought me any comfort. The Word of God, which had been my stay through many previous trials, was all darkness to me. A friend brought me one of your sermons, and asked me to allow her to read it. At first, I refused; but, at last, I consented. I forget the title, but it was to the effect that everything is ordered by God, and that there is no such thing as chance. I felt, all the time my friend was reading, almost afraid even to breathe; I could only say, 'Go on, go on.' When she had finished it, I leapt from my couch, and said, 'All is right; thank God, my dark mind is all light again!' I have had similar sorrows since, and many other trials; but I could, from my heart, say to the Lord, 'Thy will be done; it is all right.' At that time, my husband ordered your sermons monthly, and we still continue to have them. Every Sunday evening, we read one of them aloud, for all to hear, and afterwards I send them into the bush.

"My dear sir, go on and preach what you feel; it has often been a great comfort to us that you seemed to feel just as we felt."

This letter may be appropriately followed by a touching epistle which came to Mr. Spurgeon from Florida:—

"My Dear Brother in Christ,

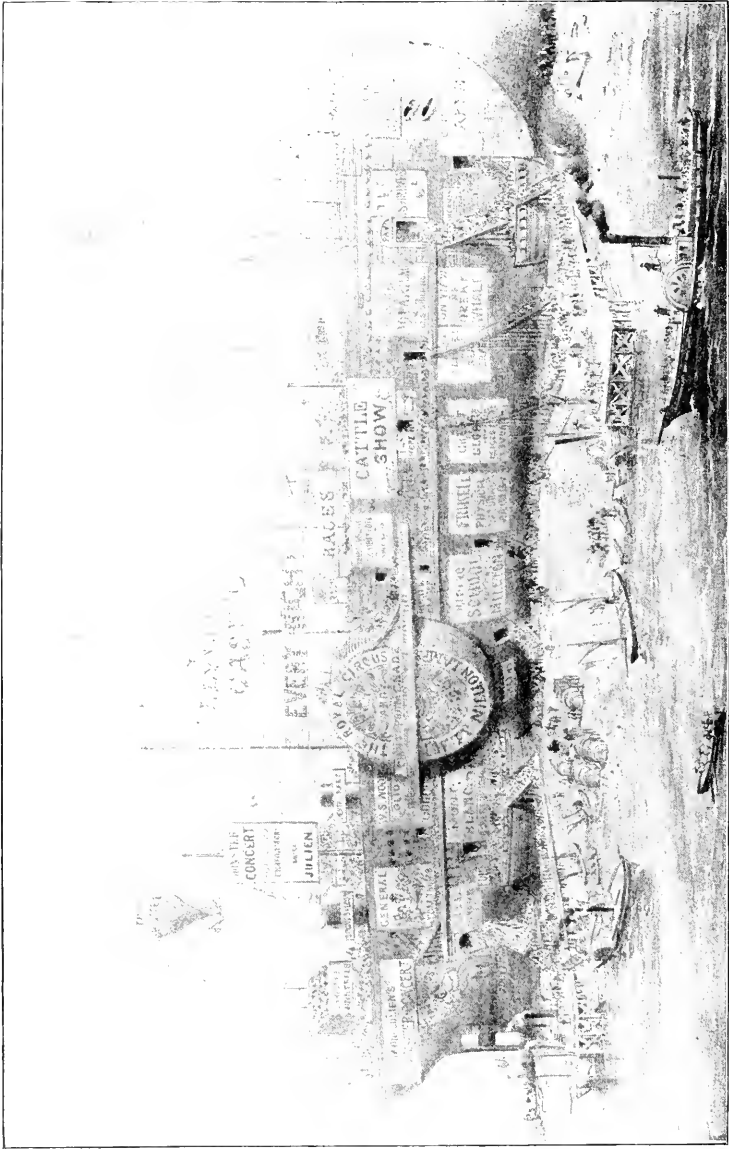
"Once upon a time, a wealthy man, who owned many gardens, sent one of his gardeners to water the plants. The gardener went and adjusted the hose, turned the tap, and watered them far and near. Many of them were near him; but, away in a corner of the garden farthest from the gardener, was a frail flower that

had long been pining for the refreshing showers. The gardener, not knowing its need, nevertheless turned the hose in that direction, and the drooping plant revived, and bloomed afresh, to delight all who happened to come near it; and it loved the master, *and the instrument*, though the latter was unknown.

“Several weeks ago, I lay ill, far away from England, in the wilds of Florida. Weak and faint-hearted, I lay pondering on the strange providence of the Master, when one of your sermons was placed in my hands. The refreshing shower revived me, and gave me fresh hope and courage; and I rose from my sick couch to strive still more earnestly to gain access to the hearts of those by whom I am surrounded; and, to-day, in a small class that I have formed out here in the wilderness, the Lord made His presence felt, and blessed us with an awakening that I have never seen here before, and tears of repentance were shed by many. I was so full of joy and gratitude to God that I longed to let you know that your influence, as an instrument, had reached even this far-away spot.”

It was but fitting that, as Mr. Spurgeon's sermons had been the means of blessing to so many readers, he should, himself, receive a special message through one of his own discourses. He thus describes how the “waiter” became, on at least one occasion, “a guest at the gospel feast:”—

“I once learnt something in a way one does not often get a lesson. I felt at that time very weary, and very sad, and very heavy at heart; and I began to doubt in my own mind whether I really enjoyed the things which I preached to others. It seemed to be a dreadful thing for me to be only a waiter, and not a guest, at the gospel feast. I went to a certain country town, and on the Sabbath day entered a Methodist Chapel. The man who conducted the service was an engineer; he read the Scriptures, and prayed, and preached. The tears flowed freely from my eyes; I was moved to the deepest emotion by every sentence of the sermon, and I felt all my difficulty removed, for the gospel, I saw, was very dear to me, and had a wonderful effect upon my own heart. I went to the preacher, and said, ‘I thank you very much for that sermon.’ He asked me who I was, and when I told him, he looked as red as possible, and he said, ‘Why, it was one of your sermons that I preached this morning!’ ‘Yes,’ I said, ‘I know it was; but that was the very message that I wanted to hear, because I then saw that I did enjoy the very Word I myself preached.’ It was happily so arranged in the good providence of God. Had it been his own sermon, it would not have answered the purpose nearly so well as when it turned out to be one of mine.”



"THE GREAT EASTERN."

Suggestions as to the way in which the vessel might be utilized. See page 359.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

Pure Fun.

The whole Church will be indebted to Dr. Stanford for having protested against the superstition which regards wit and humour as deadly sins. He has not only set forth the propriety of simple, natural mirth, but has well-nigh shown the duty of it. We knew that our beloved friend had a sly twinkle in his eye, and said things which sparkled with a subdued and chastened fun; but we hardly believed that he would become the defender of our faith in wit, and the avenger of those fierce assaults which have been made on humour. This book ought to shut the mouths of those melancholy critics who think that everything solemn should be sad, and that anything approaching to pleasantry must be wicked. The chapter upon "What have Christians to do with Wit and Humour?" gives us the utmost delight. The argument is as irresistible as the laughter which it provokes; and both the argument and the laughter are as wholesome and as holy as anything we have ever read. We are tempted to make copious quotations, but we had rather our friends should get the book for themselves; in fact, they will have to do so, for everybody will be forced to read it. We hope these wise and genial pages will work a revolution in the ideas of thousands who now blush when they smile, and put down an honest laugh in the category of things to be repented of.—C. H. S., in review of Dr. Charles Stanford's volume, "*The Wit and Humour of Life.*"

It is a sort of tradition of the fathers that it is wrong to laugh on Sundays. The eleventh commandment is, that we are to love one another; and then, according to some people, the twelfth is, "Thou shalt pull a long face on Sunday." I must confess that I would rather hear people laugh than I would see them asleep in the house of God; and I would rather get the truth into them through the medium of ridicule than I would have it neglected, or leave the people to perish through lack of reception of the message. I do believe, in my heart, that there may be as much holiness in a laugh as in a cry; and that, sometimes, to laugh is the better thing of the two, for I may weep, and be murmuring, and repining, and thinking all sorts of bitter thoughts against God, while, at another time, I may laugh the laugh of sarcasm against sin, and so evince a holy earnestness in the defence of the truth. I do not know why ridicule is to be given up to Satan as a weapon to be used against us, and not to be employed by us as a weapon against him. I will venture to affirm that the Reformation owed almost as much to the sense of the ridiculous in human nature as to anything else, and that those humorous squibs and caricatures, that were issued by the friends of Luther, did more to open the eyes of Germany to the abominations of the priesthood than the more solid and powerful arguments against Romanism. I know no reason why we should not, on suitable occasions, try the same style of reasoning. "It is a dangerous weapon," it will be said, "and many men will cut their fingers with it." Well, that is their own lookout; but I do not know why we should be so particular about their cutting their fingers if they can, at the same time, cut the throat of sin, and do serious damage to the great adversary of souls.—C. H. S., in "*Lectures to my Students.*"



GLAMORS of Mr. Spurgeon's ready humour have been visible at intervals all through this and the preceding volumes, but it was felt that the record of his happy life would not be complete unless at least one chapter was filled with specimens of that pure fun which was as characteristic of him as was his "precious faith."

All who were brought into the closest contact with him know that his wit was as abundant as his wisdom; indeed, full often, the wisdom found its most effective utterance by means of the witty words which gained an entrance for the message which might otherwise have been rejected. His fun was always pure,

with an emphasis ; and he showed how it was possible for the highest spirituality to find a fitting exemplification in the brightest and cheeriest character. Some of his most intimate friends have often said that there was not the slightest incongruity, after one of his brilliant witticisms which had set the whole company laughing, in hearing him say, "Let us pray," for both the merriment and the devotion were sanctified. He had no sympathy with the hymn-tinkerer who altered even the glorious hundredth Psalm by putting "fear" instead of "mirth" in the third line of the first verse ; and he always sang it according to the authorized version, as it appears in *Our Own Hymn-Book*,—

"All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice ;
Him serve with *mirth*, His praise forth tell ;
Come ye before Him, and rejoice "

In making a rather rough classification of Mr. Spurgeon's pure fun, as manifested under various aspects throughout his long public career, first may be placed a few incidents associated with a matter which he always regarded as of great importance,—

PUNCTUALITY.

Everyone who was acquainted with him knows how scrupulously punctual he was at all services and meetings, and that, unless something very unusual had detained him, he was ready to commence either the worship or the business proceedings at the exact minute fixed. In the New Park Street days, he was unavoidably late on one occasion when he was to meet the venerable deacons represented on page 15. One of them, the most pompous of the whole company, who was himself noted for his punctuality, pulled out his watch, and held it up reproachfully before the young minister. Looking at it in a critical fashion, Mr. Spurgeon said, "Yes ; it's a very good watch, I have no doubt, but it is rather old-fashioned, isn't it ?"

He had often to suffer inconvenience and loss of time because those who had asked for interviews with him were not at the place arranged at the appointed hour. Frequently, after allowing a few minutes' grace, he would go away to attend to other service, leaving word that, as those he expected had not come according to the arrangement made, they must wait until he could find some other convenient opportunity of meeting them. This was to him an amusing method of giving a lesson which many greatly needed. "Punctuality is the politeness of kings ;" yet some who are "kings and priests unto God" are sadly deficient in that particular virtue. Sometimes, the Pastor would laughingly say that perhaps those who came so late were qualifying to act as lawyers, whose motto would be, "Procrastination is the hinge of business ; punctuality is the thief of time."

“General” Booth once sent an *aide-de-camp* to Mr. Spurgeon to ask for an interview for himself. The hour for him to come was named, but it was several minutes past the time when he arrived. Mr. Spurgeon, though sympathising with the efforts of the Salvation Army, never approved of what he called their “playing at soldiers,” so he said, in a tone of gentle irony, “Oh, General! military men should be punctual!” It appeared that the object of “General” Booth was to ascertain if the Tabernacle could be lent to the Army for some great gathering; but he would not ask for the loan of the building until the Pastor gave him some sign that, if he did make such a request, it would be granted. There the matter rested.

The Pastor once had occasion to see Mr. Gladstone at Downing Street. Having asked for an interview of ten minutes, he arrived punctually, and, having transacted the business about which he had called, rose to leave directly the allotted time had expired. “The grand old man” was not willing to allow his visitor to go away so quickly;—though he said he wished others who called upon him would be as prompt both in arriving and departing;—and “the two prime ministers,” as they were often designated, continued chatting for a good while longer. It was during the conversation which ensued that Mr. Spurgeon suggested to the great Liberal leader a grander measure of reform than any he had ever introduced;—his proposal was, that all the servants of the State, whether in the Church, the Army, the Navy, or the Civil Service, should be excluded from Parliament, just as the servants in a private family are not allowed to make the rules and regulations under which the household is governed. Possibly, archbishops, bishops, generals, admirals, noble lords, and right honourable gentlemen might imagine that this suggestion was a sample of Mr. Spurgeon’s pure fun, but he introduced it to Mr. Gladstone with the utmost seriousness, and he often referred to it as a plan which would greatly and permanently benefit the whole nation, and which he believed his fellow-countrymen would adopt if it were laid before them by the great statesman to whom he submitted it.

The caricature on page 343, reproduced from *Figaro’s* phrenological cartoons, shows one of the many instances in which Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Spurgeon were pictorially and amusingly associated, and it may therefore appropriately introduce a brief series of—

POLITICAL PLEASANTRIES.

On one of Mr. Spurgeon’s visits to Mentone, a lady, who was a great admirer of Mr. Gladstone, asked the Pastor to guess the word which would explain the

following riddle :—(1) What Mr. Gladstone likes ; (2) what he does not like ; (3) what he would like to do ; and (4) where his enemies would like to put him. When Mr. Spurgeon learned the solution of the puzzle, he was so pleased with it that he passed it on to other friends. The answers were,—(1) Reform ; (2) a Tory ; (3) to reform a Tory ; and (4) in a reformatory !

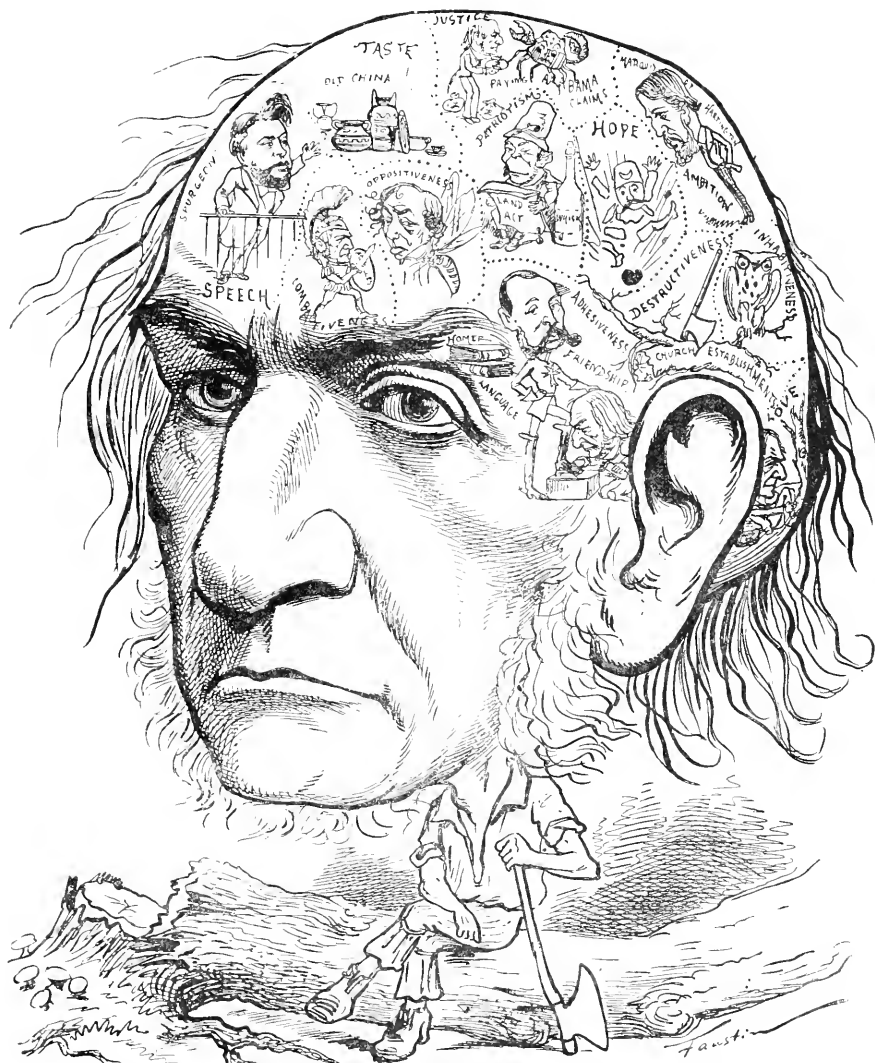
During a General Election, it was discovered, one Monday morning, that the front gates and walls of " Helensburgh House " had been, in the course of the night, very plentifully daubed over with paint to correspond with the colours of the Conservative candidates for that division of Surrey. In speaking, at the Tabernacle, the same evening, concerning the disfigurement of his premises, Mr. Spurgeon said, " It is *notorious* that I am *no Tory*, so I shall not trouble to remove the paint ; perhaps those who put it on will take it off when it has been there long enough to please them ; " and, in due time, they did so.

The mention of a General Election recalls a characteristic anecdote which Mr. Spurgeon delighted to tell. He had gone to preach for his friend, Mr. John Offord, and, contrary to his almost universal practice, was a little late in arriving. He explained that there had been a block on the road, which had delayed him ; and, in addition, he had stopped on the way to vote. " To vote ! " exclaimed the good man ; " but, my dear brother, I thought you were a citizen of the New Jerusalem ! " " So I am," replied Mr. Spurgeon, " but my ' old man ' is a citizen of this world. " " Ah ! but you should mortify your ' old man. " " That is exactly what I did ; for my ' old man ' is a Tory, and I made him vote for the Liberals ! "

At another General Election, it was widely reported that Mr. Spurgeon had declared that he would vote for the devil himself if he were a Liberal ; and so many enquiries with regard to the statement came from all parts of the country, that a large number of post cards had to be printed and sent in reply. Those who had started or circulated the falsehood were probably somewhat ashamed when they read Mr. Spurgeon's emphatic denial :—" I certainly should not vote for the devil under any circumstances, nor am I able to conceive of him as so restored as to become a Liberal. I think he has had a considerable hand in the invention of many a story which has of late been published concerning me. "

CRITICISM AND WITTICISM.

When the Tabernacle was about to be opened, tickets of admission to the various gatherings were printed. The one intended as a pass to the first service



FIGARO'S PHRENOLOGY.—No. 2.

seemed to Mr. Spurgeon so unsuitable to the occasion that he turned it into a sweep's advertisement by annotating the front of it in this humorous style :—



He also wrote on the back the comments and queries here reproduced in facsimile,—

This would be very mean even for a chimney sweep's Kitchen card
 What is Passmore at?
 Pray bring out the tickets at once, somehow or other; if a worse one than this can be invented, let us have it by all means. C.H.S.
 Why not print it, & not this ugly cursive, whirly, writing?

and sent the card to Mr. Passmore, who preserved it with the other epistolary curiosities that were published in Vol. II., Chapter XLVII.

One matter that always afforded Mr. Spurgeon the opportunity of poking a little good-natured fun at his esteemed publishers was the non-arrival of proofs for which he was looking. Frequently, at Mentone, or at some other place where the beloved author was combining rest and work, Mr. Passmore or Mr. Alabaster would be asked about the "Cock Robin shop" that he had left for a while. (A "Cock

Robin shop" is the trade designation of a small printing-office where cheap booklets, such as *The Death of Cock Robin*, are issued.) It was a theme for perennial merriment, and no protestations of the publishers availed to put an end to it. If sermon or magazine proofs were delayed, the invariable explanation was, "Perhaps they have had another order for *Cock Robins*, so my work has had to wait."

On one occasion, Mr. Spurgeon and his secretary had gone to Bournemouth for a week; and, not knowing beforehand where they would be staying, the printers were instructed to send proofs to the Post Office, to be left till called for. On enquiry, the officials declared that they had nothing for Mr. Spurgeon, so the following telegram was despatched to London:—"When you have finished *Cock Robins*, please forward proofs of sermon and magazine." It turned out that the fault was with the postal authorities, for they had only looked for letters, whereas the printed matter was in the office all the while in the compartment allotted to book-post packets.

At one of the meetings when contributions for the new Tabernacle were brought in, the names of Knight and Duke were read out from the list of subscribers, whereupon Mr. Spurgeon said, "Really, we are in grand company with a knight and a duke!" Presently, "Mr. King, five shillings," was reported, when the Pastor exclaimed, "Why, the king has actually given his crown! What a liberal monarch!" Directly afterwards, it was announced that Mr. Pig had contributed a guinea. "That," said Mr. Spurgeon, "is a guinea-pig."

The propensity of punning upon people's names was often indulged by the dear Pastor; and, doubtless, many readers of this chapter will recollect instances that have come to their own knowledge. Mr. Spurgeon could remember, in a very remarkable fashion, the faces and names of those whom he had once met; and if he made any mistake in addressing them, he would speedily and felicitously rectify it. A gentleman, who had been at one of the annual College suppers, was again present the following year. The President saluted him with the hearty greeting, "Glad to see you, Mr. Partridge." The visitor was surprised to find himself recognized, but he replied, "My name is Partridge, sir, not Partridge." "Ah, yes!" was the instant rejoinder; "I won't make *game* of you any more."

A lady in Worcestershire, writing to Mrs. Spurgeon concerning a service at Dunnington, near Evesham, says:—"Mr. Spurgeon shook hands with *seventy* members of one family, named Bomford, who had gone to hear him. One of our deacons, a Mr. Alway, was at the same time introduced to him; and, in his own inimitable and ready way, he exclaimed, 'Rejoice in the Lord, Alway!'"

Dr. John Campbell was once in a second-hand bookseller's shop with Mr. Spurgeon, and, pointing to *Thorn on Infant Baptism*, he said, "There is 'a thorn in

the flesh' for you." Mr. Spurgeon at once replied, "Finish the quotation, my brother,—'the messenger of Satan to buffet me.'"

During the Baptismal Regeneration Controversy, a friend said to Mr. Spurgeon, "I hear that you are in hot water." "Oh, dear no!" he replied; "it is the other fellows who are in the hot water; I am the stoker, the man who makes the water boil!"

MINISTERIAL MIRTH.

Mr. Spurgeon made a very sparing use of his wit in the pulpit, though all his wits were always utilized there to the utmost. To one who objected to some humorous expression to which he had given utterance while preaching, he replied, "If you had known how many others I kept back, you would not have found fault with that one, but you would have commended me for the restraint I had exercised." He often said that he never went out of his way to make a joke,—or to avoid one; and only the last great day will reveal how many were first attracted by some playful reference or amusing anecdote, which was like the bait to the fish, and concealed the hook on which they were soon happily caught.

At the last service in New Park Street Chapel, the Pastor reminded his hearers that the new Tabernacle, which they were about to enter, was close to "The Elephant and Castle," and then, urging them all to take their own share of the enlarged responsibilities resting upon them as a church and people, he said, "Let every elephant bear his castle when we get there." This was simply translating, into the dialect of Newington, Paul's words, "Every man shall bear his own burden," and, doubtless, the form of the injunction helped to impress it upon the memory of all who heard it.

No student of the Pastors' College, who listened to the notable sermon delivered in the desk-room by the beloved President, would be likely ever to forget the text of the discourse after it had been thus emphasized:—"Brethren, take care that this is always one of the Newington Butts,—'*But* we preach Christ crucified.' Let others hold up Jesus simply as an Example, if they will; '*but* we preach Christ *crucified*.' Let any, who like to do so, proclaim 'another gospel, which is not another; '*but* we preach *Christ crucified*.'"

Among the most memorable sermons ever preached by Mr. Spurgeon was the one on behalf of the Baptist Missionary Society, in Exeter Hall, on April 27, 1881, from Isaiah li. 2, 3. After setting forth the noble personality of Abraham, concerning whom the Lord said, "I called him alone," the preacher, by using a word in two senses, revealed the contrast between the father of the faithful and his time-serving nephew,—"Lot,—a poor miserable lot he was,—costing his noble uncle more trouble than he ever brought him profit."

On one occasion, when Mr. Spurgeon was to preach in a Nonconformist "church" where the service was of a very elaborate character, someone else had been asked to conduct "the preliminaries." The preacher remained in the vestry until the voluntary, the lessons, the prayers, and the anthem were finished, then entering the pulpit, he said, "Now, brethren, let us *pray*;" and the tone in which the last word was uttered indicated plainly enough what he thought of all that had gone before.

When Mr. Cuff was minister at Providence Chapel, Hackney, one of the College Conference meetings was held there. The President presided, and in the course of his speech, he pointed to the organ, and said, "I look upon that as an innovation; and if I were here, I should want it to be an outovation, and then we would have an ovation over its departure. I was once asked to open an organ,—I suppose the people wanted me to preach in connection with the introduction of the new instrument. I said that I was quite willing to open it as Simple Simon opened his mother's bellows, to see where the wind came from, but I could not take any other part in the ceremony."

Preaching at a chapel in the country, Mr. Spurgeon gave out Dr. Watts's version of the 91st Psalm,—

"He that hath made his refuge God,
Shall find a most secure abode;"—

and then added, "We'll sing it to the tune 'Refuge.'" The organist leaned over from the gallery, and whispered to the preacher, "It is not in our tune-book, sir." "Then it ought to be," answered Mr. Spurgeon, "no tune-book is complete unless 'Refuge' is in it;" and, turning to the congregation, he said, "The last time I was here, you people praised God for yourselves, but now you have a machine to do the praising for you. If it can't play 'Refuge,' we'll have it all the same, and I'll start it myself."

Relating to his students some of his experiences in his early ministerial days, the President said:—"I remember going to a little village to preach; the forms had no backs to them, and on the front bench were seated some ancient dames, each wearing a cloak and hood, like Little Red Riding Hood's, which made me feel that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. After the service had commenced, the front seat gave way with a crash, and down came all its occupants. This was too much for my gravity, and it was no use to go on with the sermon from the selected text, so I made the enquiry, 'Where did that form come from? Was it borrowed from the Established Church?' 'No, sir,' replied someone; 'it came from the Wesleyan Chapel.' 'Well then, you see, dear friends,' I said, 'Dissenting forms are no safer than those used by the Church of England, so I would advise you not to trust to any forms or ceremonies, but to the Lord Jesus

Christ, for He alone can save you.' That accident gave me a subject on which I was able to speak with freedom, and I hope with profit also, to my rustic hearers, who would probably long recollect my warning against borrowing any mere formal religion from either the Church or Dissent."

MATRIMONY AND MERRIMENT.

Mr. Spurgeon was, even on ordinary occasions, so happy and joyous, and the means of communicating so much pleasure to others, that it is not surprising that his services were in great demand when his friends were about to be married. Some of the sweetest reminiscences of the loving couples who have survived him are associated with the brightness that his presence and counsel imparted to their wedding-day. Naturally, the addresses given on such occasions bore considerable resemblance to one another, although there was always something special in each case. The earliest marriage service conducted by Mr. Spurgeon, of which the record has been preserved, was that of Pastor T. W. Medhurst and his first wife, Miss M. A. Cranfield. The wedding took place on May 26, 1859, at Kingston-on-Thames, where the first student of the Pastors' College had been ministering for more than two years. Mr. Spurgeon announced, at the commencement of the proceedings, that he was not going to perform the ceremony as if he were reading the burial service, nor as if he were about to thrust his two young friends into prison, and make their feet fast in the stocks. He also said that he hoped their wedded life would not be like the Church of England marriage service, which begins with "Dearly-beloved" and ends with "amazement." He trusted that they would both be "dearly-beloved" not only at the beginning of their united career, but all through to the end, and then for ever and ever; and that, while their sorrows would be mutually shared, their joys would all be multiplied. In expounding Ephesians v. 23, the Pastor, addressing the bride, said, "According to the teaching of the apostle, 'The husband is the head of the wife.' Don't you try to be the head; but you be the neck, then you can turn the head whichever way you like."

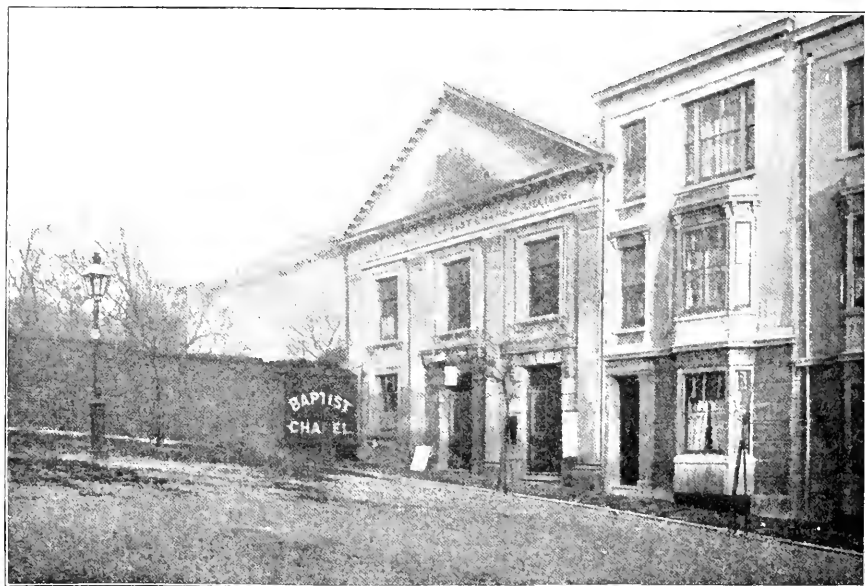
At another marriage service, many years afterwards, Mr. Spurgeon, commenting on the same passage, said to the bridegroom, another of "our own men," "My dear friend, don't you begin to feel proud because Paul says that the husband is the head of the wife. Solomon says that 'a virtuous woman is a crown to her husband;' and the crown is the top of the head. Still, the governing faculty should rest with the head; and the family will never be ordered aright unless we each keep our proper place." On the same occasion, he thus humorously described the difficulties and privileges of a pastor's wife:—"If I was a young woman, and was thinking of being married, I would not marry a minister, because the position of minister's wife is a very difficult one for anyone to fill. Churches do not give a married minister two

salaries, one for the husband and the other for the wife; but, in many cases, they look for the services of the wife, whether they pay for them or not. The Pastor's wife is expected to know everything about the church, and in another sense she is to know nothing of it; and she is equally blamed by some people whether she knows everything or nothing. Her duties consist in being *always at home* to attend to her husband and her family, and being *always out*, visiting other people, and doing all sorts of things for the whole church! Well, of course, that is impossible; she cannot be at everybody's beck and call, and she cannot expect to please everybody. Her husband cannot do *that*, and I think he is very foolish if he tries to do it; and I am certain that, as the husband cannot please everybody, neither can the wife. There will be sure to be somebody or other who will be displeased, especially if that somebody had herself half hoped to be the minister's wife! Difficulties arise continually in the best-regulated churches; and the position of the minister's wife is always a very trying one. Still, I think that, if I was a Christian young woman, I would marry a Christian minister if I could, because there is an opportunity of doing so much good in helping him in his service for Christ. It is a great assistance to the cause of God to keep the minister himself in good order for his work. It is his wife's duty to see that he is not uncomfortable at home; for, if everything there is happy, and free from care, he can give all his thoughts to his preparation for the pulpit; and the godly woman, who thus helps her husband to preach better, is herself a preacher though she never speaks in public, and she becomes to the highest degree useful to that portion of the Church of Christ which is committed to her husband's charge."

Wedding breakfasts naturally afforded Mr. Spurgeon the opportunity of making many kind and witty remarks. He was very fond of saying to the bridegroom, "I really cannot compliment you upon your great discrimination in choosing your bride;" and then, when the poor fellow was blushing to the roots of his hair, and the guests all round the table (if they had not previously heard the joke,) were saying to one another, "What can Mr. Spurgeon mean?" he quietly added, "Any stupid, with half an eye, could see that she would make a man a good wife, so no discrimination was needed in your case, and I very heartily congratulate you upon your choice." The neat turn of the speech not only set the whole company at their ease, but proved a notable addition to the harmless merriment that always prevailed on such occasions until the time came for the closing devotional service before the happy couple started for their honeymoon.

At one wedding breakfast, Mr. Spurgeon made an amusing allusion to the fact that the bridegroom, a missionary brother from Japan, had been previously married. Speaking to the bride, he said, "You must not be too proud of your husband,

Mrs. ——, for he is only second-hand; yet he is as good as new, for he has been Jappeded!"



THE BAPTIST CHAPEL "IN A CORNER, QUEEN SQUARE, BRIGHTON.

Anyone acquainted with Queen Square Baptist Chapel, Brighton, or who looks at the position of that building as represented in the above view, will realize how appropriate was Mr. Spurgeon's reference to it after he had conducted a marriage service there. In the course of a charming address at the breakfast which followed the ceremony, he turned to the bridegroom, and said, "I tell my friend —— that, whatever he says about his wedding, he will never be able to say, 'This thing was not done *in a corner!*'"

Even when he had not been present at the marriage of his friends, Mr. Spurgeon often managed to make merriment for them out of something which he heard or knew concerning the happy event. A notable instance of this occurred when "one of our own men" and his bride went to Mentone for their honeymoon, and someone sent to the beloved President a newspaper containing a full report of the service, and the details generally published on such occasions. In the course of

conversation, after the happy couple arrived, Mr. Spurgeon said to the bride, "Mrs. ——, if I was a young lady, going to be married, I should wear so-and-so and so-and-so." Turning to her husband, she exclaimed, "Oh, ——! Isn't it funny? That's just how I was dressed." "Then," said Mr. Spurgeon, "I should have so many bridesmaids, and they should wear such-and-such dresses and such-and-such hats." "Oh, ——! Why, that is just how many bridesmaids I had, and they were dressed exactly like that." "Then, for presents," said the Pastor, "I should like so-and-so and so-and-so." "Oh, ——! Isn't it funny? That is just what we had." It is not certain that the good lady knows even to this day how it came to pass that the great preacher's wishes and her own coincided so singularly! Certainly, he extracted a considerable quantity of pure fun out of her amazement as he proceeded with his recital of things to be desired at a wedding.

On one of his visits to Mentone, a friend asked him, "In what coloured ink should a promise of marriage be written?" He guessed all the colours he could think of, and then was informed that the right answer was, "in violet" (inviolable). He was so delighted with the conundrum,—both for its wit, and for its confirmation of the solemnity of an engagement with a view to marriage,—that he often tried the effect of it upon his friends, and seldom found one who was more successful in seeing through it than he himself had been, though all thought the answer to it was admirable.

"LEARNED IN THE LAW."

Mr. Spurgeon once spent an evening, with a few of Her Majesty's judges, at the house of Mr. Justice Lush, who was a very dear personal friend of his. After dinner, with an air of apparent seriousness, the Pastor said that he had a point of law that he should like to submit to the eminent authorities present. There was a man who had been lying in Camberwell for the last fortnight, and yet nobody would bury him; his friends would not arrange for his funeral, and neither the police nor the parish officials had been able to get him interred. The learned judges began consulting with one another, and quoting various Acts of Parliament that applied to such a case, and said that, if the relatives persistently refused to bury the man, the requisite power remained with certain local authorities whom they named. They were, however, considerably nonplussed when Mr. Spurgeon very quietly said, "There was one little item in the case that I omitted to mention, *the man is not dead yet!*" "Are you not afraid of the consequences of taking in Her Majesty's judges like that?" enquired Mr. Justice Lush; adding, "You really ought to be committed for contempt of court; but as you seem to be well up in legal matters, tell me,—Ought a man to be allowed to marry his widow's sister?" "Oh, yes!" exclaimed the Pastor, not suspecting the trap that had been laid for him, and in the

excitement of the moment thinking that the question had been, "Ought a man to be allowed to marry his deceased wife's sister?" "Then," said the judge, "we will cry quits, for even your friend in Camberwell could not marry his *widow's* sister!"

Later in the evening, Mr. Spurgeon told a story that invariably elicited the wrong reply, and that occasion was no exception to the rule. "A lady and gentleman were engaged to be married; they were walking along the sea-shore, when some dispute arose, and the lady, in a fit of temper, snatched the engagement ring from her finger, and threw it into the water. After a while, she found another lover, to whom she was married, and they went down to Scarborough to spend the honeymoon. On the first morning, they had fish for breakfast; and, as the bridegroom was dividing it, he felt something hard; what do you suppose the knife had cut against?" Of course, the judges, like everybody else, exclaimed, "The ring." "No," said Mr. Spurgeon, "it was only a bone!"

Pastor Charles Spurgeon mentions (on page 299) a service conducted by his dear father at Pollockshaws. During that visit to Scotland, Mr. Spurgeon was introduced to the Dean of Guild. "The Dean of Guild; oh, you are the gentleman who can go through every tollgate in England without paying!" "I was not aware that any such privilege was attached to my office." "It is quite true, sir," replied the dear Pastor; "*you* can go through every tollgate without paying, but the gatekeeper will charge for your horse and carriage!"

STUDY AND SMILES.

All the students of the Pastors' College, who have recorded their reminiscences of the time spent in connection with that Institution, have testified to the bright and joyous atmosphere which pervaded all the classes, and which has made that period in their history ever-memorable to them. From the very beginning of Mr. Spurgeon's work of training young men for the Christian ministry, hard study and a happy spirit have been delightfully combined. Even before there was any College, when a solitary student was under the charge of Mr. Rogers, coming events cast their *sunshine* before, as the two following paragraphs, supplied by Mr. Medhurst, clearly prove:—

"Soon after I went to live with Mr. Rogers, one Saturday morning Mr. Spurgeon called to see what progress we were making, when the following conversation took place:—'Well, friend Rogers,' enquired the dear Governor, 'how are you getting on with this zealous young Baptist?' 'Oh!' replied the tutor, 'we get along very nicely; but we don't say much about baptism. You know, Mr. Spurgeon, that when the Samaritan woman found the Saviour, she left her waterpot.' 'Yes,

friend Rogers,' was the prompt answer, 'she left her sprinkling machine, for the Lord Jesus had shown her the "much water" that there was in the deep well.'

"On another occasion, there had been a snowstorm during the night; so, in the morning, I joined Mr. Rogers' sons in a game of snowballing in front of the house. This, dear precise Mrs. Rogers considered very unbecoming on the part of a ministerial student! Mr. Spurgeon called shortly afterwards, on the same day, and the good old lady (she was a dear kind soul) asked him what he thought of me for so far forgetting what was due to my position as a candidate for the Christian ministry. Mr. Spurgeon replied, 'Well, Mrs. Rogers, I greatly admire the prevenient grace of God that did not allow me to come earlier this morning; for had I been here, I fear I should have been tempted to join in the snowballing.' Then, turning to me, he said, in a tone of assumed solemnity, 'Young man, you are forgiven this time; but see that you transgress no more,—until the next fall of snow!'"

Mr. Spurgeon evidently had great confidence, both in Mr. Rogers and in those who were trained by him, or he would not have committed to his care the hundreds of students who passed through the College during the long term of his principalship. It is to the credit of both tutor and taught that, although some few of the men have become Pædo-Baptists, no one of them has ever been known to attribute his change of sentiments to the influence of the Congregational Principal. Yet the subject of believers' baptism *versus* infant sprinkling was very often under discussion; and probably all the students, at some time or other, sought to lead Mr. Rogers into what they regarded as the light upon this important matter. The President used to say that the brethren treated their tutor as a kind of hone on which they tried to sharpen their Baptist arguments, and he himself had many an encounter with the sturdy old Independent. A very favourite simile with him was that the Pædo-Baptist tutor of Baptist students resembled a hen sitting on ducks' eggs, and he humorously described the agitation of the poor bird as she stood trembling on the edge of the pond while the ducklings took to the water according to their nature! This comparison was greatly enjoyed by the merry audience, and they were not less pleased with Mr. Rogers' ready reply, "If I am as silly as an old hen, I have always managed up to the present to keep my head above water!"

Pastor Harry Abraham has written, for this volume, the following description of a lively scene which may be regarded as fairly representative of many similar occurrences in the history of the College:—

"WHEN ESSEX MEETS ESSEX."

"The summer holidays had ended. The opening day of a new session was

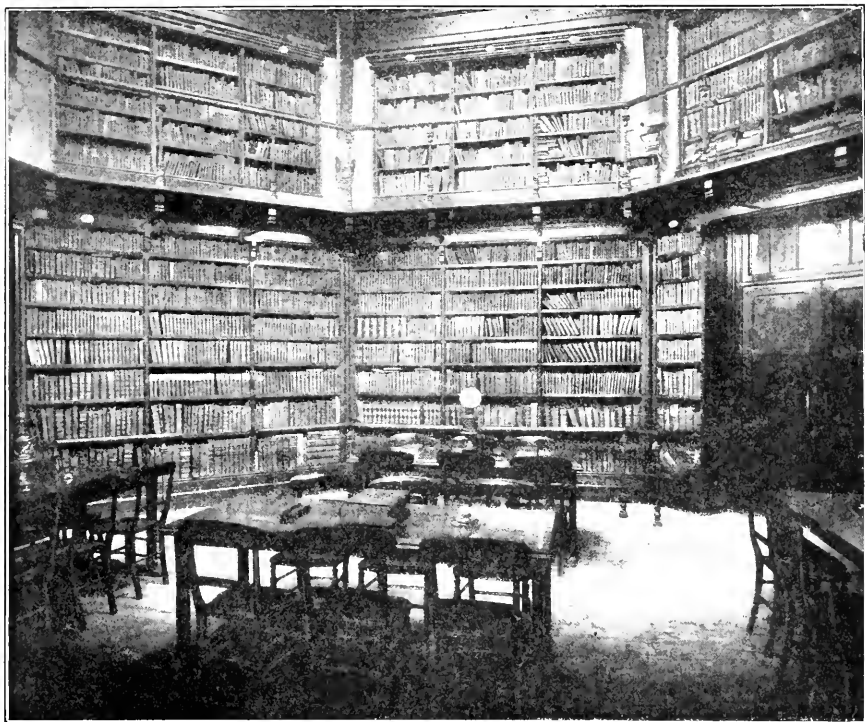
ever a time of glad greetings, and of pleasant preparations for the tasks which lay before us. Old friends were speaking mutual welcomes, and new students were regarded with kindly curiosity. The tutors were heartily received, as being at once our fathers and our brothers; for so was it ever in the days of Messrs. George Rogers, David Gracey, and Archibald Fergusson; while the dear President, C. H. Spurgeon, was still the best-loved,—most paternal and most fraternal of all.

“On the morning to which I now refer, the three tutors were in their places on the platform in the College lecture-hall, and nearly a hundred of us occupied the benches. The venerable and venerated George Rogers was telling, in characteristic fashion, how he had spent the vacation: attending recognition services, delivering charges, preaching sermons, and speaking at various meetings in places where ‘our own men’ were doing the Great Master’s work. The dear old man could never resist an opportunity of making some playful allusion to his own Pædo-Baptist views, in contrast with those which his hearers held,—always to the advantage of his own position, of course. An observation of this kind, which had just fallen from his lips, led Professor Gracey to interject the sentence, ‘But *you won’t be baptized.*’ ‘Yes, I will,’ replied the nimble-witted sage, ‘if you’ll let me *stand up to be done!*’ But the Irish wit of the classical tutor was equally quick, and he answered, ‘We’re quite willing to let you stand up *if only the water is deep enough!*’—a retort which the students emphasized with a merry peal of laughter and ringing cheers. ‘Ah!’ said the old man, in the familiar tone which always seemed gravest when his spirit was gayest, ‘you can’t find anything *deep enough for Mr. Gracey!*’

“In the very midst of the applause which followed this smart rejoinder, in came the President! Only those who knew how much he was beloved, and what a glad-some spirit of freedom was always associated with his coming upon such a scene, could have understood, or perhaps excused, the boisterous burst of welcome—laughter, cheers, and a general din of delight,—which sent the echoes flying about the lecture-room for a while. Ere the noise subsided, Mr. Spurgeon had reached the platform steps, where he paused,—lifted his right hand,—and exclaimed, ‘Brethren! brethren! I feel like Moses coming down from the mount; true, there isn’t much music, you are not exactly dancing, but you are making a great row; and, lo! I see that you are *worshipping—an Essex calf!*’ In an instant, Mr. Rogers had seized the sharp shaft of good-tempered humour, and, with exquisite grace and skill, had sent it flying back, by simply and swiftly *dropping into his chair*, with a profound and courtly bow, *leaving the President standing alone upon the platform, himself the Essex calf to whom the homage was being rendered!* A more perfect *tu quoque* in action could not be conceived, and no words can indicate the wonderful way in which it was done. It was the wittiest thing I ever saw, even from the most witty of octogenarians whom I have ever met. But the merry scene was not quite at an end

even then. 'Well, friend Rogers, what does all the noise mean?' asked the genial 'Governor.' 'Oh, sir! Mr. Gracey has been trying to put me down.' Like a flash came the Roland for the Oliver. 'Why, that's what I have been trying to do for the last twenty years, you old sinner, and *you won't go down!*'

"All the sparkling fun lingers in the memory,—pure as the holy joy of angels;—for there strangely mingles with it the recollection of the hallowed moments spent at the throne of grace before that meeting ended; and between the playfulness and the prayer there seemed to be no abrupt transition, no discord, no incongruity,—but all was perfect harmony and happiness."



THE LIBRARY OF THE PASTORS' COLLEGE.

Many other amusing reminiscences of College days have been preserved, but space can be spared for only one more, which relates to a certain period when the library had been closed for a while, mainly because some of the choice volumes,

which it ought to have contained, were missing. It seemed a long time to the students before they were able again to avail themselves of the privilege of consulting the many valuable books collected in that spacious room at the top of the building. One Friday afternoon, when the President took his place on the platform of the desk-room, he looked up at the clock, and seeing that it had stopped, said, "I cannot understand what is wrong with that clock; we have had it repaired several times, yet it won't go." One of the students thought he saw an opportunity of calling attention to another matter in which he and all the brethren were interested, so he said, "It's like the library, sir, it is shut up." "Yes," replied Mr. Spurgeon, "and very probably for the same reason, because some of the 'works' have been taken away!"

At the close of the annual Conferences, it was the President's custom to invite from a dozen to a score of the ministers to spend the Friday afternoon and evening at his house; not only for their own enjoyment, but also in order that they might repeat for Mrs. Spurgeon's benefit as many as possible of the notable sayings during the week, or recall any incident in which she would be specially interested. It was a very delightful winding-up of the meetings; and with prayer, and speech, and song, the time swiftly passed. On one of those occasions, the whole company started to march round the garden, singing, "Hold the fort." Mr. Spurgeon was walking in front of his little band of picked soldiers of the cross; but, as soon as the first verse of the hymn was finished, he cried, "Halt! Right about face! Quick march! *Now* you may sing,—

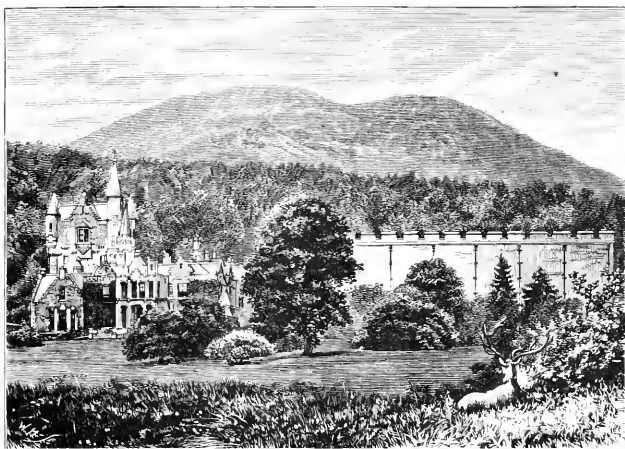
"See the mighty host advancing,
Satan leaving on."

One year, Mr. W. Y. Fullerton was, with his beloved Pastor, the guest of Mr. Duncan at "Benmore." On the Sabbath, the evangelist preached at Kilmun; and, the following morning, when driving past the building where the service had been held, Mr. Spurgeon pointed to the house adjoining, where there was a notice, "Mangling done here," and amused the other visitors by trying to connect that announcement with the sermon of the preceding day.

Pastor W. Williams, of Upton Chapel, narrated, in his *Personal Reminiscences of Charles Haddon Spurgeon*, an amusing experience which he had when it was his privilege to accompany his President to Mr. Duncan's. In connection with the illustration on the opposite page, he wrote:—

"In the foreground of the picture is a stag, lying majestically, with head erect, in the meadow (as though 'Benmore' belonged to him). There is a little incident connected with this stag which I think is worth relating. It may tell a 'wee' bit against the writer, but it illustrates Mr. Spurgeon's love of fun. Soon

after we were settled down at 'Benmore,' Mr. Duncan said to me, 'Can you shoot, Mr. Williams?' 'Yes,' I replied, 'I was almost born with a gun in my hand.' 'Well, then,' said he, 'I will send to Glasgow for a gun licence for you to-morrow.' I had not specially noticed the stag in the meadow, for there were plenty of deer close, too. The next evening, just as it was getting a little dusk, as Mr. Spurgeon, Mr. Duncan, and I were sitting outside the house, Mr. Spurgeon said, 'Oh, Mr. Williams, I have asked and obtained permission from Mr. Duncan for you to shoot

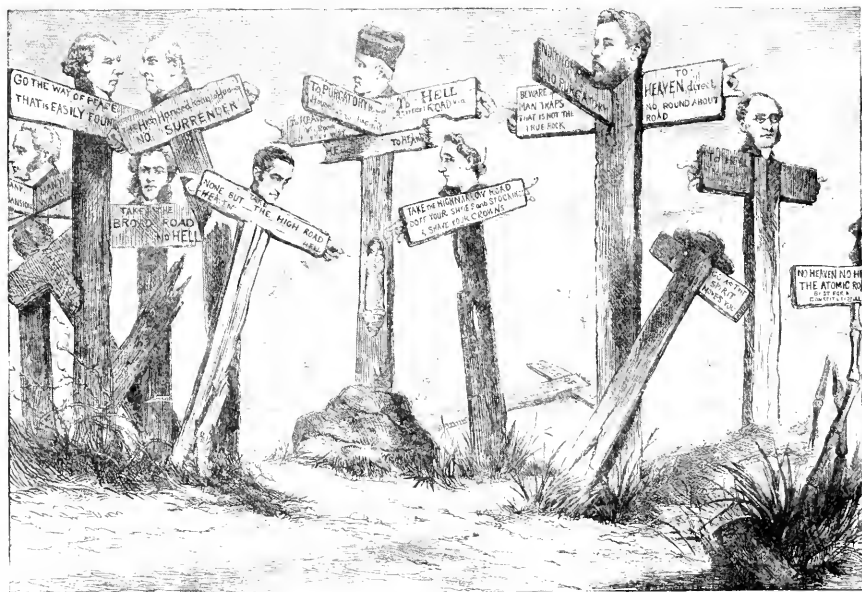


THE BRONZE STAG AT "BENMORE."

that fine stag in the meadow; see, he is lying there now. But you are to shoot him as he lies; for, if you get him to move, you won't hit him; and Mr. Duncan says, if you kill him, you can have a haunch of the venison to take home with you. Now, there is a chance for you.' I expostulated, and said it was not fair to shoot at the animal *sitting*; if I were allowed first to make him rise, I would fire. 'No, no,' said Mr. Spurgeon; 'if you don't shoot him sitting, Mr. Duncan is sure you won't shoot him at all. He is a very unusual sort of stag.' I yielded, and crept quietly behind the trees in front of him until I got within forty yards of the animal, when, dusk as it was, I began to be suspicious, and soon discovered that *the stag was bronze*. I did not fire, or the reader might be now looking at the singular phenomenon of a lively-looking stag's body without a head. I turned round to find Mr. Spurgeon laughing with all his might. A tougher piece of venison than I should have liked to bring to London, was that stately monarch of the meadow."

For many years, Mr. Spurgeon's portrait occupied a prominent position in

most of the cartoons and caricatures in which representative public men were grouped together. In some of them, he was depicted in company that he never kept, and at scenes he never frequented; but the artists usually intended, even in such cases, to pay a well-deserved tribute to his popularity. Mr. Spurgeon regarded these productions only as so many more specimens of harmless pleasantry to be added to the large collection of pictures in his portfolios. In a few instances, there was no fun in the pictorial representations of the dear Pastor; but only coarse blasphemy, which made him shudder at the awful condition of heart of the human being who thus not merely ridiculed him, but also poured out his scorn upon all that he held sacred and precious. Still, these were the exceptions, few and far between, which saved him from the "woe" of having all men speaking well of him.



"THE DREAM OF PAUL, THE PARISH CLERK."

*"But what seem'd such a wondrous phase,
Their hands all pointed different ways"*

Among the ecclesiastical cartoons, one that interested and amused Mr. Spurgeon very much is here reproduced. It formed part of a shilling booklet, published by Mr. James Wade, of 18, Tavistock Street, Covent Garden, under the title, "The Dream of Paul, the Parish Clerk." The Pastor had no cause to find fault with

the directions inscribed on the sign-post above which his portrait appeared, and he regarded others in the group as being ingeniously pictured with remarkable accuracy.

When *The Great Eastern* was launched, many suggestions were made as to the best way of utilizing the huge vessel; the cartoon on page 338 humorously contains several of them, including the proposal that Mr. Spurgeon should preach on board every three hours!

This chapter cannot be better concluded than by inserting a selection of
 AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL ANECDOTES,
 related in Mr. Spurgeon's own words.

Soon after I came to London, an eccentric individual called to see me, with the view of setting me right on various points in which he did not agree with the doctrine I preached. When he failed to convince me that my teaching was unscriptural, he rose and said, "Then I will shake off the dust of my feet against you." "Please don't do that," I answered, "you might make the carpet dirty; you will find a scraper and a mat at the front door, they will answer the purpose quite as well!"

A man who had made a special study of "the number of the beast" mentioned in the Book of Revelation, wrote to me and said that he could make the names of Mr. Gladstone and the Emperor Napoleon III. agree with the mystic number, 666; but he could not make the numerical value of the letters in my name fit in with it, and he wanted me to explain how I accounted for that fact. "Why," I replied, "I suppose it must be because I am not the beast, and that, therefore, 666 is not the number of my name!"

Dean Stanley once invited me to dine with him; and when I arrived, I found Mr. Rogers, of Bishopsgate ("Hang Theology" Rogers), was also a guest. We had a merry time, especially when the question of Disestablishment was under discussion. The Dean jocularly said to me, "When that time comes, would you like to have the Abbey?" "No, thank you," I replied, "I have not horses enough to fill it." "Well," said the genial ecclesiastic, "I did not think you would have made that objection, but really the place is more adapted for stables than for preaching the gospel to such crowds as gather around you. But, seriously, Mr. Spurgeon, if the Church is disestablished, what will become of friend Rogers and myself?" "Why," I answered, "you will have to do as I do, live upon what your people give you." "Oh, dear! Oh, dear!" cried both gentlemen at once, "if we only had what our people gave us, it would be a poor living." I encouraged them to do all they could to

educate their congregations in the Scriptural system of giving before the day of their emancipation arrived.

A young man, who had been "in fellowship with the brethren," wished to join the church at the Tabernacle. I knew that they would not grant him a transfer to us, so I wrote to ask if there was anything in his moral character which should prevent us from receiving him. The reply they sent was laconic, but not particularly lucid:—"The man —— has too much of the flesh." When he called to hear the result of his application, I sent for a yard or two of string, and asked one of our friends to take my measure, and then to take his. As I found that I had much more "flesh" than he had, and as his former associates had nothing else to allege against him, I proposed him for church-membership, and he was in due course accepted.

I went, on several occasions, to The Cottage, Virginia Water, to visit Captain Welch, R.N., the former commander of the Queen's yacht. He was on board the *Alberta* when the *Mistletoe* was run down, but I believe he was free from all responsibility for the sad disaster. As we were walking towards his house, I noticed that he had a number of dragons all along the eaves. Pointing to one of them, I said, "Ah, captain! that is what you ought to have had when the *Mistletoe* was sunk by the royal yacht." "What do you mean, Mr. Spurgeon?" he enquired. "Oh!" I replied, "only that you ought to have had the *drag on!*"

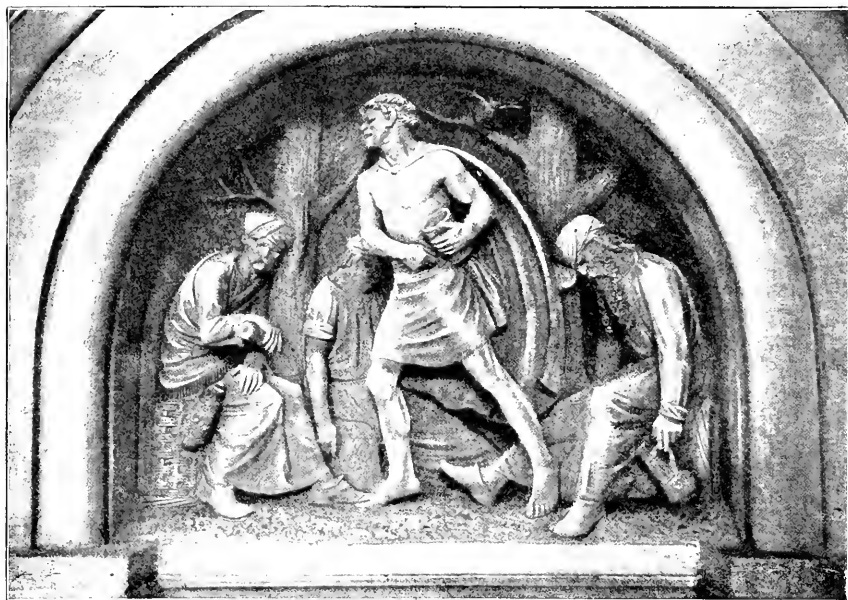
Once when I was going through a gentleman's garden, in company with the owner, we suddenly came to a rosemary bush, and I playfully said to him,—not dreaming that my words could have any personal application,—“Oh, rosemary! you know what people say about it, I suppose? ‘Where the rosemary grows, the missus is the master.’” The next time I went there, I saw that the bush had been cut down! Then I knew who was the master!

A gentleman said to me, one day, "Ah! Mr. Spurgeon, I don't agree with you about religion; I am an agnostic." "Yes!" I replied, "that is a Greek word, and the exact equivalent is *ignoramus*; if you like to claim that title, you are quite welcome to it." I do not think he cared to accept that designation, for he thought himself anything but an *ignoramus*!

I have greatly admired Mr. George Tinworth's work, and have been much pleased with many of his original interpretations of Scripture. On one occasion, when I called at Messrs. Doulton's, he said to me, "I wanted your help, the other day, Mr. Spurgeon. Someone was here, looking at this panel,—‘The enemy sowing

tures. You see that I have depicted the enemy sowing with his left hand; the gentleman said that was not correct, and I did not know what reply to give to him." "Why, you should have told him that he never saw Satan sowing tares with his right hand!" Mr. Tinworth thought that would have been a most conclusive answer, and was sorry it had not occurred to him at the time.

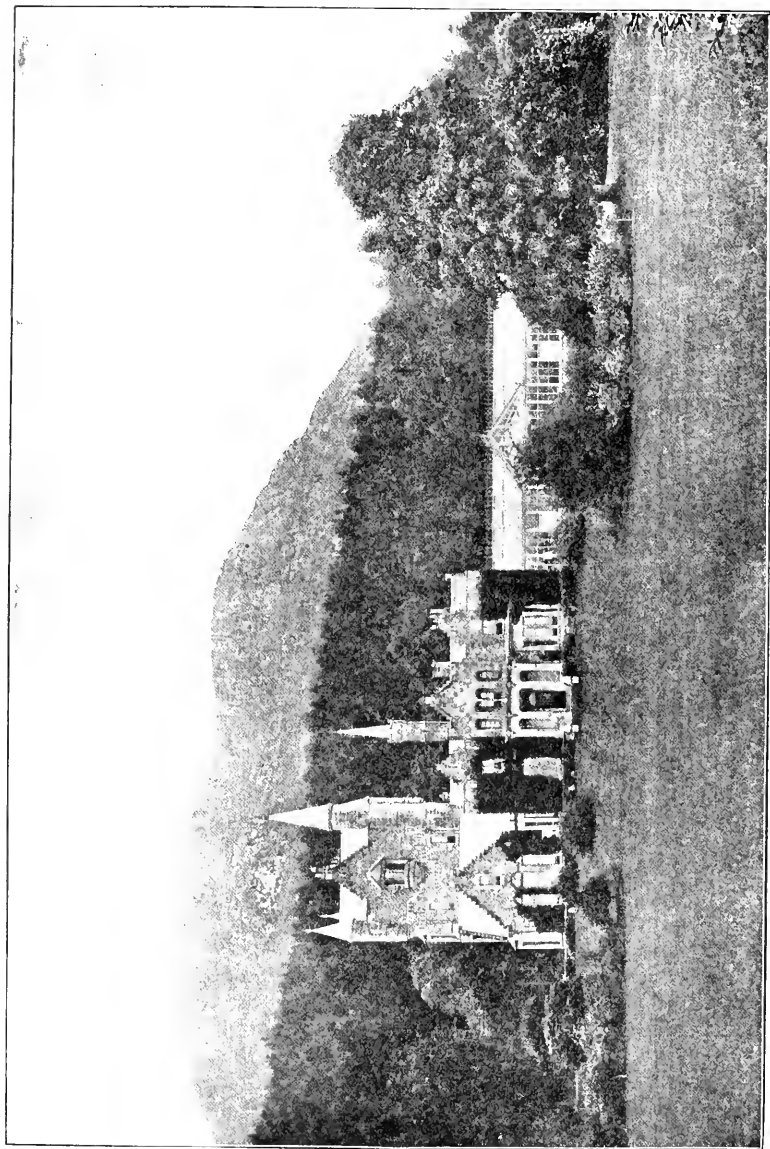
(After that particular panel was sold, the artist made another upon the same subject; but in that one he reversed the position of the sower's hands, so that his critic would be satisfied—at least upon that point,—if he could see the quaint yet suggestive work here represented.)



MR. GEORGE TINWORTH'S PANEL, "THE ENEMY SOWING TARES."

The compilers of Mr. Spurgeon's "Life" are regretfully aware that the chapter on "Pure Fun" does not adequately set forth the vivacity of his wit, or the geniality of his humour. They cannot reproduce the soft rich tones of his voice, the merry twinkle in his eye, or the grace of gesture which accompanied all his utterances. His fun was so natural, so spontaneous, and so hearty, that any description of it fails to do justice to the effect it produced at the time. The *esprit* of his jests and repartee cannot be written down; it was as fugitive as the colours of those iridescent fish of which we read that, the moment they are drawn up in the nets, the rainbow hues vanish, and their singular beauty has faded away.

Perhaps it is better so. We prefer to recall Mr. Spurgeon's solidity of thought, steadfastness of purpose, and unflinching faith in God as the chief characteristics of his life,—the firmament across which the flashes of his wit would sometimes play, like the harmless lightning of a summer's eve.



"BENMORE."

CHAPTER LXXXII.

Preaching in the Open Air.

It can be argued, with small fear of refutation, that open-air preaching is as old as preaching itself. We are at full liberty to believe that Enoch, "the seventh from Adam," when he prophesied, asked for no better pulpit than the hillside, and that Noah, as a preacher of righteousness, was willing to reason with his contemporaries in the ship-yard wherein his marvellous ark was built. Certainly, Moses and Joshua found their most convenient place for addressing vast assemblies beneath the unpillared arch of heaven. Samuel closed a sermon in the field at Gilgal amid thunder and rain, by which the Lord rebuked the people, and drove them to their knees. Elijah stood on Carmel, and challenged the vacillating nation with the question, "How long halt ye between two opinions?" Jonah, whose spirit was somewhat similar, lifted up his cry of warning in the streets of Nineveh, and in all her places of concourse gave forth the warning utterance, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" To hear Ezra and Nehemiah, "all the people gathered themselves together as one man into the street that was before the water gate." Indeed, we find examples of open-air preaching everywhere around us in the records of the Old Testament.

It may suffice us, however, to go back as far as the origin of our own holy faith, and there we hear the forerunner of the Saviour crying in the wilderness, and lifting up his voice from the river's bank. Our Lord Himself, who is yet more our Pattern, delivered the larger proportion of His sermons on the mountain's side, or by the sea-shore, or in the streets. He was, to all intents and purposes, an open-air preacher. He did not remain silent in the synagogue, but He was equally at home in the field. We have no discourse of His on record delivered in the Chapel Royal, but we have the sermon on the mount, and the sermon in the plain; so that the very earliest and most Divine kind of preaching was practised out of doors by Him who "spake as never man spake." There were gatherings of His disciples, after His decease, within walls, especially that in the upper room; but the preaching was even then most frequently in the court of the temple, or in such other open spaces as were available. —C. H. S., in "*Lectures to my Students.*"



I had my choice of a place for preaching out of doors, I should prefer to front a rising ground, or an open spot bounded at some little distance by a wall. Of course, there must be sufficient space to allow of the congregation assembling between the pulpit and the limiting object in front; but I like to see an end, and not to shout into boundless space. I do not know a prettier site for a sermon than the one which I have many times occupied in the grounds of my friend, Mr. Duncan, at "Benmore." It was a level sweep of lawn, backed by rising terraces covered with fir trees. The people could either occupy the seats below, or drop down upon the grassy banks, as best comported with their comfort; and thus I had part of my congregation in rising galleries above me, and the rest in the area around me. My voice readily ascended, and I conceive that, if the people had been seated up the hill for half-a-mile, they would have been able to hear me with ease. I should suppose that Wesley's favourite spot at Gwennap Pit must be somewhat after the same order. Amphitheatres and hillsides are always favourite spots with preachers in the fields, and their advantages will be at once evident.

Fresh air, and plenty of it, is a grand thing for every mortal man, woman, and child. I have preached twice, on a Sabbath day, at "Blairmore," not far from "Benmore," on a little height by the side of the sea; and, after discoursing with all my might to large congregations, to be counted by thousands, I have not felt one-half so much exhausted as I often am when addressing a few hundreds in some horrible "black hole of Calcutta," called a chapel. I trace my freshness and freedom from lassitude at "Blairmore" to the fact that the windows could not be shut down by persons afraid of draughts, and that the roof was as high as the heavens are above the earth. My conviction is, that a man could preach three or four times on a Sabbath, out of doors, with less fatigue than would be occasioned by one discourse delivered in an impure atmosphere, heated and poisoned by human breath, and carefully preserved from every refreshing infusion of natural air.

I am persuaded that, the more of open-air preaching there is in London, the better. If it should become a nuisance to some people, it will be a blessing to others, if properly conducted. If it be the gospel which is spoken, and if the spirit of the preacher be one of love and truth, the results cannot be doubted: the bread cast upon the waters will be found again after many days. The truth must, however, be preached in a manner worth the hearing, for mere noise-making is an evil rather than a benefit. I know a family almost driven out of their senses by the hideous shouting of monotonous exhortations, and the howling of "Safe in the arms of Jesus," near their door every Sabbath afternoon by the year together. They are zealous Christians, and would willingly help their tormentors if they saw the slightest probability of usefulness from the violent bawling; but, as they seldom see a hearer, and do not think that what is spoken would do any good if it were heard, they complain that they are compelled to lose their few hours of quiet because two good men think it their duty to perform a noisy but perfectly useless service. I once saw a man preaching with no hearer but a dog, which sat upon its tail, and looked up very reverently while its master orated. There were no people at the windows, nor passing by; but the brother and his dog were at their post, whether the people would hear or whether they would forbear. Once, also, I passed an earnest declaimer, whose hat was on the ground before him, filled with papers, and there was not even a dog for an audience, nor anyone within hearing, yet did he "waste his sweetness on the desert air." I hope it relieved his own mind. Really, it must be viewed as an essential part of a sermon that somebody should hear it; it cannot be a great benefit to the world to have sermons preached *in vacuo*.

Many years ago, I preached to enormous assemblies in King Edward's Road, Hackney (see Vol. II., page 92), which was then open fields. On those occasions, the rush was perilous to life and limb, and there seemed no limit to the throngs,

Half the number would have been safer. That open space has vanished, and it is the same with fields at Brixton, where, in years gone by, it was delightful to see the assembled crowds listening to the Word. Burdened with the rare trouble of drawing too many together, I have been compelled to abstain from these exercises in London, but not from any lessened sense of their importance. With the Tabernacle always full, I have as large a congregation as I desire at home, and therefore do not preach outside except in the country; but for those ministers whose area under cover is but small, and whose congregations are thin, the open air is the remedy, whether in London or in the provinces.

My friend, Mr. Abraham, once produced for me a grand cathedral in Oxfordshire. The remains of it are still called "Spurgeon's Tabernacle," and may be seen near Minster Lovell, in the form of a quadrilateral of oaks. Originally, it was the *beau idéal* of a preaching-place, for it was a cleared spot in the thick forest of Wychwood, and was reached by roads cut through the dense underwood. I shall never forget those "alleys green" and the verdant walls which shut them in. When you reached the inner temple, it consisted of a large square, out of which the underwood and smaller trees had been cut away, while a sufficient number of young oaks had been left to rise to a considerable height, and then overshadow us with their branches. Here was a really magnificent cathedral, with pillars and arches: a temple not made with hands, of which we might truly say,—

"Father, Thy hand
Hath reared these venerable columns, Thou
Didst weave this verdant roof."

I have never either at home or on the Continent, seen architecture which could rival my cathedral. "Lo, we heard of it at Ephratah: we found it in the fields of the wood." The blue sky was visible through our clerestory, and from the great window at the further end, the sun smiled upon us toward evening. It was grand, indeed, to worship thus beneath the vaulted firmament, beyond the sound of city hum, where everything around us ministered to quiet fellowship with God. That spot is now cleared, and the place of our assembly has been selected at a little distance from it. It is of much the same character, only that my boundary walls of forest growth have disappeared, to give place to an open expanse of ploughed fields. Only the pillars and the roof of my temple remain; but I am still glad, like the Druids, to worship among the oak trees. One year, a dove had built her nest just above my head; and she continued flying to and fro, to feed her young, while the sermon proceeded. Why not? Where should she be more at home than where the Lord of love and Prince of peace was adored? It is true, my arched cathedral is not waterproof, and other showers besides those of grace have sometimes descended upon the congregation; but this has its advantages, for it makes us the more grateful

when the day is propitious, and the very precariousness of the weather excites a large amount of earnest prayer.

I once preached a sermon, in the open air, in haying time, during a violent storm of rain. The text was, "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass: as showers that water the earth," and surely we had the blessing as well as the inconvenience. I was sufficiently wet, and my congregation must have been drenched; but they stood it out, and I never heard that anybody was the worse in health, though, I thank God, I have heard of souls brought to Jesus under that discourse. Once in a while, and under strong excitement, such things do no one any harm; but we are not to expect miracles, nor wantonly venture upon a course of procedure which might kill the sickly, and lay the foundations of disease in the strong.



CHEDDAR CLIFFS.

I well remember preaching between the Cheddar Cliffs. What a noble position! What beauty and sublimity! But there was great danger from falling pieces of stone, moved by the people who sat upon the higher portions of the cliff, and hence I would not choose such a spot again. Concluding a discourse in that place, I called

upon those mighty rocks to bear witness that I had preached the gospel to the people, and to be a testimony against them at the last great day, if they rejected the message. Many years afterwards, I heard of a person to whom that appeal was made useful by the Holy Spirit.

(Pastor T. B. Field, now of Crewe, has kindly furnished the following particulars relating to that memorable visit to Cheddar, on September 10, 1862. The spot chosen for the afternoon service was a natural amphitheatre at the entrance to the cliffs, and it was estimated that at least ten thousand persons were present. A temporary platform had been erected for the preacher, and Mr. Spurgeon commenced the service by saying, "Let us make these old rocks resound to the praise of God." The first hymn was,—

"All people that on earth do dwell ;"

and another that was sung was,—

"Rock of ages, cleft for me."

The text—John xiv. 6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by Me ;"—was written on a great scroll, and fastened to the side of a house, so that the whole congregation could see it. About fifteen hundred persons remained to tea in the Baptist Chapel and burial-ground ; and, at the evening service, held in a tent on Bridge Hill just above the cliffs, there was again an enormous crowd. The sermon was upon "The lifting up of the bowed down," the text being taken from Luke xiii. 11—13. One sentence in the discourse has been remembered even to the present day :—"All the devils in hell could not make the woman crooked again after the Lord had made her straight."

Mr. Field closes his account of the notable day by saying, "Such crowds have never been seen in Cheddar since ; and the good folks of that little town consider that they have been favoured above many, for the prince of preachers has been there. Mr. Spurgeon's visit has had great influence upon the place ; and from that time the Baptist community there has been and still is the most influential church for miles round.")

It would be very easy to prove that revivals of religion have usually been accompanied, if not caused, by a considerable amount of preaching out of doors, or in unusual places. The first avowed proclamation of Protestant doctrine was almost necessarily in the open air, or in buildings which were not dedicated to worship, for these were in the hands of the Papacy. True, Wycliffe for a while preached the gospel in the church of Lutterworth ; and Huss, and Jerome, and Savonarola for a time delivered semi-gospel addresses in connection with the ecclesiastical arrangements around them ; but when they began more fully to know the gospel, and to publish it abroad, they were driven to find other platforms. The Reformation, when

yet a babe, was like the newborn Christ, and had not where to lay its head; but a company of men, comparable to the heavenly host, proclaimed it under the open heavens, where shepherds and common people heard them gladly. Throughout England, we have several trees still remaining, which are called "gospel oaks." I have myself preached at Addlestone, in Surrey, under the far-spreading boughs of an ancient oak, beneath which John Knox is said to have proclaimed the gospel during his sojourn in England.



THE CROUCH OAK, ADDLESTONE.

(Concerning the proceedings on the occasion of Mr. Spurgeon's visit to Addlestone, Pastor R. Shindler writes:—"It was on July 12, 1872. Mr. Edward Leach was then Pastor of the Baptist Church there, and a larger chapel was needed for his increasing congregation. In the afternoon, Mr. Spurgeon laid the memorial stone, and gave an address upon 'The Romeward tendency of the Established Church, and the duty of Nonconformists in relation thereto.' The force, point, and pungency of his remarks on this important theme can well be conceived by those who knew him, and they would be even more pertinent at the present time. In the

evening, Mr. Spurgeon preached, under the Crouch Oak, from Matt. ix. 36, his theme being, 'The tenderness of the Lord Jesus.' The old oak had not then, we believe, been enclosed. It now stands within the grounds of Crouch Oak House, the residence of Mr. F. J. Marnham, J.P., who kindly supplied the photograph from which the illustration on page 368 has been made. The tree was once within the bounds of Windsor Forest, and various traditions and legends associate with it the names of Wycliffe, Whitefield, and Wesley, who are all said to have preached beneath its wide-spreading branches. Mr. Spurgeon's audience was gathered from many miles around, and his visit marks an era in the history of this growing suburb of the town of Chertsey.")

I preached at Bristol, many years ago, in the open air; and the service was specially interesting to me from the fact that I had a repetition in my own experience of the scene which Mr. Whitefield had there witnessed long before. He said, concerning one of his sermons to the colliers at Kingswood:—"The first discovery of their being affected was, seeing the white gutters made by their tears, which plentifully fell down their black cheeks, for they had come to the service straight from the coal-pits.' I also had a crowd of sailors and colliers—men with black faces—to listen to me, and when I began to talk to them about Christ's redeeming work, I saw the tears streaming down their cheeks; they put up their hands, as if to brush away something from their faces, but really it was in order to hide their tears. It was an affecting sight to behold those rough men broken down under the preaching of the gospel, and I could fully sympathize with what Mr. Whitefield wrote, concerning similar services:—"The open firmament above me, the prospect of the adjacent fields, with the sight of thousands and thousands of people, some in coaches, some on horseback, and some in the trees, and, often, all melted to tears,—to which sometimes was added the solemnity of the approaching evening,—this was almost too much for me to bear; and, occasionally, it quite overcame me."

Supplementing Mr. Spurgeon's own records of preaching in the open air, many friends, in various parts of the country, have supplied reminiscences of services which they are never likely to forget; but only a few of these can be inserted here. One enthusiastic Welsh brother has compiled a list of the outdoor gatherings in Wales addressed by the dear Pastor. Many of them must have been very notable occasions; the congregations were so large that there was great difficulty in reckoning, with exactness, the number of hearers. Of one assembly, it is said that "Mr. Spurgeon calculated that 28,000 persons were present;" and of another, "the people estimated the crowd at 30,000 to 35,000; Mr. Spurgeon said 25,000."

A memorable incident, connected with an open-air service at Rowland's Castle, near Havant, has only recently been reported by Rev. D. A. Doudney, the Editor of *The Gospel Magazine*, although it occurred forty years ago. On July 12, 1859, Mr. Spurgeon preached twice, in a beautiful valley, to large congregations; and, towards the end of the evening sermon, he made a powerful appeal to his hearers in the manner that Mr. Doudney thus describes:—"The valley in which we were assembled was a lovely one. It was surrounded by hills clothed with woods and verdure, and on that evening the atmosphere was perfectly calm and still. The sun, which had been shining brightly all day, was sinking in the West; and the large concourse of people, listening with fixed attention to the earnest pleadings of the young preacher, made altogether a scene which one could not easily forget; but although Mr. Spurgeon had spoken with considerable force and energy during the day, and used his noble voice so that every one of his auditors must have heard him distinctly, I, for one, had not noticed that there was a remarkable echo at the spot. The preacher, however, had evidently observed it, and he used the fact in a most effective way. When he came to the close of his last appeal, he exclaimed, with great deliberation and impressiveness, 'Yea, even Nature herself confirms and repeats these gracious invitations, for she too says, again and again,'—here he raised his voice to its highest pitch, and shouted with wonderful power the words—'Come,—Come,—COME.' And, instantly, amidst the breathless silence of the congregation, the words were echoed from the hills around, again and again, until they softly died away in the distance,—Come,—Come,—Come,—Come,—Come.' A thrill, like an electric shock, passed through the audience, and probably most of those who were present will remember the circumstance as long as they live."

Pastor W. Cuff writes, as follows, concerning a service in a meadow at Naunton, on the Cotswold Hills:—"I rode from Cheltenham, on horseback, to hear dear Mr. Spurgeon. I had not then long been converted, and had only just begun to—

"Tell to sinners round
What a dear Saviour I had found."

"It was in 1864, in the midst of his abounding labours and unparalleled popularity. There were thousands of people present, inside and outside the huge tent. A farm-waggon was his rustic pulpit, and his text was, Acts xiv. 9, 10. The dear man was in one of his happiest moods, and all the wheels of his mind and heart were oiled. Oh, how he did preach! His rich, melodious voice seemed more mellow and musical than ever as it sounded and swelled over the audience in sweetest cadences, rising and falling in rousing and melting tones. It swayed and moved the mass of people, and rang round the meadow, and echoed back from the little hills above the

valley with majesty and power both human and Divine, for the Lord was there, speaking through His beloved servant. It was Heaven on earth to be there. Ah, me ! It is only a memory now ; but it is very vivid, and it abides amongst the most precious treasures of my life. It stirred my soul to its very depths, and I there and then vowed that I would preach Jesus Christ as he did if that could be possible to me. Sinners *must* have been converted on the spot, and I know that saints were blessed.

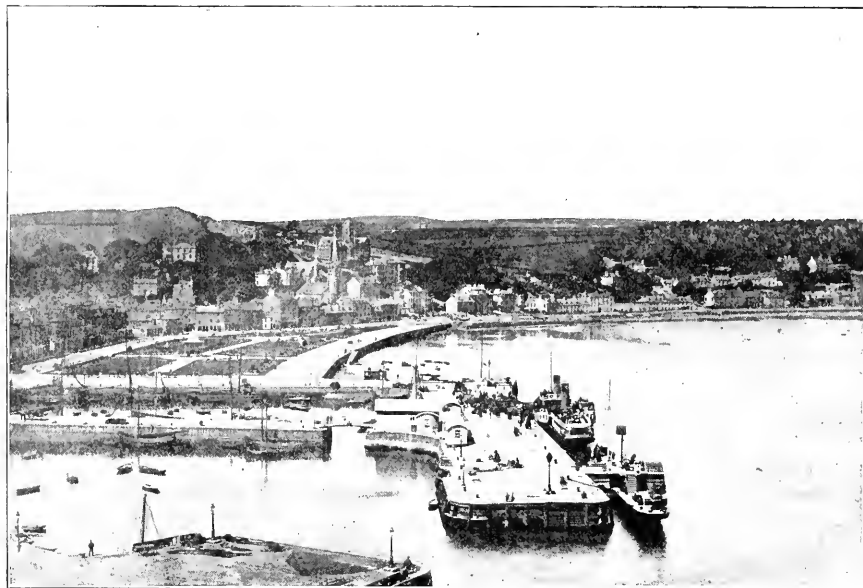
“ Mr. Harrald will remember the truly wonderful open-air service at Stowmarket, in Suffolk. It was held in the garden grounds of Mr. Manning Prentice. The trees were full of people ; and they looked like big birds roosting on the branches. I think it was in 1868, and I *know* the text was, ‘ With His stripes we are healed.’ It was a marvellous sermon.

“ I could not help writing the letter, as my heart is full. I loved our glorified President from the first time I met him, and I have always said that, under God, I owe to him everything I have done in the Lord's work. The Shoreditch Tabernacle is his far more than it is mine, for it would never have been built but for C. H. Spurgeon. What could I have been, or done, but for the Pastors' College ? Those who knew me in my early days know best what the College did for me. I can only lovingly and gratefully revere the memory of Mr. Spurgeon, and bless the Lord that I ever knew him.”

One other notable open-air service just comes within the period covered by the present volume ; it is specially memorable because of the very tender way in which Mr. Spurgeon's large Scotch congregation bade him farewell. The illustration on page 372 is reproduced from the photograph presented by the dear Pastor to his private secretary on his return from Scotland, and the incident is described by Pastor A. G. Short, now of Herne Hill, who writes :—“ I was at Rothesay, spending a brief holiday, when our ever-beloved President preached there in 1878. The mere fact that Mr. Spurgeon was announced to preach, created great interest all along the Clyde ; and in Rothesay, as the day fixed on (Sunday, July 28,) drew near, every scrap of information concerning the proposed service was greedily devoured. On the Saturday, Bute's bright little capital received a large temporary addition to its summer population. Many yachts, too, came and anchored in the bay. Mr. Duncan's yacht, with Mr. Spurgeon on board, arrived about 3 p.m. ; and in a few minutes the word had gone all over Rothesay, ‘ Mr. Spurgeon is in the bay.’ Directly on his arrival, our dear Brother Crabb (who is still the respected Pastor of the Rothesay Baptist Church) and I went off in a boat to greet our President, and to tell him what preparations had been made for the morrow.

“ The next evening, Mr. Spurgeon preached, with marvellous power, to a

congregation supposed to number from fifteen to twenty thousand persons. I need hardly say that the service was greatly enjoyed by the great company of worshippers. When it was over, the dear preacher rested for a while in the Provost's garden, to allow the crowds to disperse; but they evidently did not intend to leave him quite in that fashion. As they knew that he would have to go in a boat to reach the yacht, they gathered in thousands along the sea-wall. When Mr. Spurgeon stepped into the boat, and the sailors began to ply their oars, as one looked along the crescent-shaped front, it seemed as if every person in that vast gathering had



ROTHESAY BAY.

brought a white handkerchief for the special purpose of waving it in his honour. I have witnessed many touching scenes in my day, but I do not think I ever saw anything more impressive than the sight of those thousands of true-hearted Scotch people saying, by their silent action, better than they could have said it in words,— ‘Accept our heartiest thanks for your sermon, and may God bless you at all times!’ That was Scotland's way of bidding a Sabbath adieu to the great and good man she loved so well; and not until he was on board the yacht did the farewell signals cease to flutter in the evening breeze.”

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