



LIFE
AND LABORS
OF
C. H. SPURGEON.



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THE LIFE AND LABORS
OF
CHARLES H. SPURGEON.



C. H. Spurgeon

THE
LIFE AND LABORS
OF
CHARLES H. SPURGEON,

*THE FAITHFUL PREACHER, THE DEVOTED PASTOR, THE
NOBLE PHILANTHROPIST, THE BELOVED COLLEGE
PRESIDENT, AND THE VOLUMINOUS
WRITER, AUTHOR, ETC., ETC.*

COMPILED AND EDITED

By GEO. C. NEEDHAM,
Evangelist,

AUTHOR OF "RECOLLECTIONS OF HENRY MOORHOUSE," "THE TRUE
TABERNACLE," ETC.

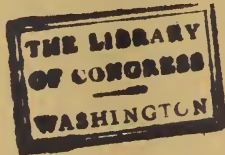


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PREFACE.

MR. SPURGEON has never written his own life, nor has he authorized any one else to do so. He has had no personal interest in or connection with any of the "Sketches" which have issued from the press. Facts of history are, however, common to all, and there is no law forbidding publishers to trade in foreign works; nevertheless, a moral obligation will bind every honorable man to refrain from piracy. We have acknowledged our indebtedness elsewhere to Mr. Stevenson, and we hope his valuable little work will become accessible to American readers. From Mr. Spurgeon himself we have had generous permission to make use of his writings at our own discretion. We heartily thank him for this privilege. His personal letters have encouraged us in our youthful days to persevere in evangelistic labors, while those received in later years are precious treasures. With characteristic humility he suggests in his latest, "Don't let writing take you off from preaching; I am a poor subject; keep to the Lord Jesus."

In our careful and conscientious preparation of this book we have heeded the sweet counsel of this dear servant of

Christ, and have prayerfully labored to make prominent, not the disciple, but the Master, and thereby magnify His abounding grace.

We earnestly trust that this form of ministry will, "through the thanksgiving of many, redound to the glory of God."

Geo: C. Needham

MANCHESTER-BY-THE-SEA, MASS.

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I.

INTRODUCTORY.

BEHOLD, at this hour our moral history is being preserved for eternity. Processes are at work which will perpetuate our every act and word and thought. Not alone the last page, but every line and letter of our actual history, is being stereotyped for the world's perusal in the day which shall reveal the secrets of men. We are not writing upon the water, but carving upon imperishable material. The chapters of our history are "graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever." — C. H. SPURGEON.

INTRODUCTORY.

WE first introduce the preacher as he was when, in early manhood, both his manner and matter startled England out of her reverie, and awoke many sleepers on distant shores. A Bristol college man gives us four pen pictures of Mr. Spurgeon, taken a quarter of a century ago, and kept ever since in the album of memory. To those who did not see the Evangelist-pastor in his younger days, these photographs will be full of interest; to those who have neither heard nor seen him, they present the man in early life in all the vigor and power of fresh manhood. After seeing a picture, we become interested in the subject and present our inquiries. The antecedents of Mr. Spurgeon, and his subsequent history, will be given later on. Remember, the pictures are those of a very young man, whose career had already been watched for some time with absorbing interest by millions of people. Thus the college man writes:—

It was from the lips of my tutor, who was an earnest Christian man as well as an able scholar, that I first heard the name of the popular minister who had even then made New Park Street Church famous. It was my last year at school, and I enjoyed rather more liberty than the other boys. Need I add that, after receiving the permission, it was not long before I was trying to make my way into the pretty, and then newly built, chapel where Mr. Hebditch preached? The place was quite full, and it was with difficulty that I managed to ensconce myself behind the pulpit. A few minutes afterwards, Mr. Spurgeon ascended the latter, and I saw for the

first time the preacher who was to be the Whitfield of the nineteenth century. My recollection of the appearance of the youthful divine is very vivid. Already inclined to be stout, with a face somewhat pale, and innocent of beard or mustaches, but often played over by a genial smile which won your confidence at once, with fearless, kindly eyes that told of the bold spirit and warm heart within, with black hair lightly tossed off the open brow, with gestures rather more frequent and rhetorical than those with which the great preacher now indulges, the hand being often uplifted, and with that rich, round, full voice which has never failed to charm with its music those who have had the privilege of listening to it, I still see and hear Mr. Spurgeon as he preached that morning at the chapel. The point in the sermon which remained clear in my mind was the very pronounced teaching of the doctrine of Election, and the preacher's assertion of his being at one with Calvin and Augustine, of whom, as well as of the doctrine, my knowledge at that time was by no means extensive. At the close of the sermon, as Mr. Spurgeon stepped down from the pulpit, everybody made a rush at his unfortunate hand; and I, by poking mine through the rails, managed to get a friendly shake from it. I have often thought since, when seeing Mr. Spurgeon coming down from other pulpits, or among his own people at the Tabernacle, or surrounded by friends on successive birthdays, how much he must have suffered in that way during all these years.

My second photograph was taken one morning in dim, dark surroundings at the back of the gloomy gallery at Counterslip Chapel, when I looked down upon a vast congregation below and around me, and upon the pulpit at the other end of the chapel. Mr. Spurgeon entered the pulpit accompanied by the venerable Mr. Winter, who was at that time minister of the Counterslip, and whose knee-breeches and patriarchal form will be remembered by many. The sermon left on my mind a sense of the *joy* with which he preached and of the fulness of *faith* in which he uttered his message; the striking originality and the wealth of the imagination of the preacher were features which could not escape even such a juvenile critic as I was at that time. But I was not a critic, I was a rapt and enthusiastic hearer. Never shall I forget the

passage in the sermon in which Mr. Spurgeon made us *hear* the angels harping with their harps, and with a touch of simplicity but great power told us how he always stopped in the streets to listen where a harp was being played in the neighborhood. I still see the rapturous look upon the upturned face of the youthful preacher as the light from one of the windows fell upon it. I am inclined to think that Mr. Spurgeon gave a little more play to his imagination then than now.

Now for my third photograph. This time I am standing on tiptoe at the back of the Broad Mead Rooms, trying to look above a great sea of heads at the crowded platform and the young preacher, whom all are so eager to hear that there is no little confusion and hustling around the doors. But soon Mr. Spurgeon's voice rolls through the spacious room and hushes all into silence. The Broad Mead Rooms form a large building, with a somewhat low roof, and with side galleries rising from the floor and capable of holding between two and three thousand people. On the night of which I speak, many must have failed to obtain admission. One instance in connection with this sermon is perhaps worth mentioning. Some seats had been reserved and a small charge made for them, in order to defray the expense incurred by hiring the rooms. This had been made a matter of complaint; and Mr. Spurgeon, alluding to it, remarked that he had heard of a lady at Exeter who had given a guinea in order to hear the gospel preached. The perfect simplicity and honesty with which this was said, and the very unconsciousness of its being capable of being twisted into anything like self-glorification, impressed everybody with that utter losing sight of himself in his work which has ever since been so grand a characteristic of Mr. Spurgeon's ministry. I may add that at this time the Bristol papers were full of letters and articles respecting Mr. Spurgeon's preaching, not a few containing a good deal of hostile criticism. One article, and that in a Tory journal, however, stands out in my memory as containing a very vivid, and, I am disposed to think, fairly impartial account of an open-air service conducted by Mr. Spurgeon on the quay. A storm came on during the service, and Mr. Spurgeon spoke of one of the flashes of lightning as "God's

·spear in the sky.” This struck the writer as being a singularly happy expression—a flash of genius.

My last photograph was also taken in a public building, in the beautiful Victoria Rooms at Clifton, which are said to be capable of containing some six thousand people. However that may be, they could not have held more than they did on the summer evening when I heard Mr. Spurgeon preach in them. I do not think I have mentioned that at that period Mr. Spurgeon was in the habit of wearing a white necktie of the most correct parsonic character, which, being of fair dimensions and surmounted by a stand-up collar, served with its virgin whiteness to at least set the beardless face in strong relief. I mention it now, as it forms a prominent feature in my recollection of Mr. Spurgeon’s appearance upon that evening, sitting, as I did, at some distance from, but directly in front of the platform. The scene presented by the densely crowded Victoria Rooms upon this occasion, with the platform filled by ministers, in front of whom stood the earnest and youthful preacher, was one which still shows clearly through all the years that have passed since then. The golden glow of the setting sun coming through the window lent to it, too, a singular impressiveness: for the text was, “Thou God seest me;” and as we listened to the heart-searching eloquence of the speaker, the warm light which flooded the room seemed almost to place us more fully within the vision of the all-seeing eye.

In his fifteenth year Mr. Spurgeon wrote the following letter to his uncle, in which the vigor of his mind, the boldness of his faith, and the strength of his will are clearly manifest. His theological opinions at that early age were decided and outspoken. The indefinite doctrinal teaching of the pulpit to-day may well receive a rebuke from the positive assertions of a child. In no period of his life has Mr. Spurgeon declared himself an *Agnostic*,—a “know-nothing.” For many reasons this letter is worthy of our perusal:—

MY DEAR UNCLE,—Dumb men make no mischief. Your silence, and my neglect, make one think of the days when letters

were costly, and not of penny postage. You have doubtless heard of me as a top-tree Antinomian. I trust you know enough of me to disbelieve it. It is an object of my life to disprove the slander. I groan daily under a body of sin and corruption. Oh for the time when I shall drop this flesh, and be free from sin! I become more and more convinced that to attempt to be saved by a mixed covenant of works and faith is, in the words of Berridge, "to yoke a snail with an elephant." I desire to press forward for direction to my Master in all things; but as to trusting to my own obedience and righteousness, I should be worse than a fool and ten times worse than a madman. Poor dependent creatures! prayer had need be our constant employment: the foot of the throne our continued dwelling-place; for the Rock of Ages is our only safe Hiding-place. I rejoice in an assured knowledge by faith of my interest in Christ, and of the certainty of my eternal salvation. Yet what strivings, what conflicts, what dangers, what enemies stand in my way! The foes in my heart are so strong, that they would have killed me and sent me to hell long ere this, had the Lord left me; but, blessed be his name! his electing, redeeming, and saving love has got fast hold of me; and who is able to pluck me out of my Father's hand? On my bended knees I have often to cry for succor; and, bless his name! he has hitherto heard my cry. Oh, if I did not know that all the Lord's people had soul-contention, I should give up all for lost! I rejoice that the promises left on record are meant for me as well as for every saint of his, and as such I desire to grasp them. Let the whole earth, and even God's professing people, cast out my name as evil; my Lord and Master, he will not. I glory in the distinguishing grace of God, and will not, by the grace of God, step one inch from my principles, or think of adhering to the present fashionable sort of religion.

Oh, could I become like holy men of past ages,—fearless of men,—holding sweet communion with God,—weaned more from the world, and enabled to fix my thoughts on spiritual things entirely! But when I would serve God, I find my old deceitful heart, full of the very essence of hell, rising up into my mouth, polluting all I say and all I do. What should I do if, like you, I

were called to be engaged about things of time and sense? I fear I should be neither diligent in business nor fervent in spirit. "But" (say you) "he keeps talking all about himself." True, he does; he cannot help it. Self is too much his master. I am proud of my own ignorance: and, like a toad, bloated with my own venomous pride, — proud of what I have not got, and boasting when I should be bemoaning. I trust you have greater freedom from your own corruptions than I have; and in secret, social, and family prayer enjoy more blessed, sanctified liberty at the footstool of mercy.

Rejoice! for heaven awaits us, and all the Lord's family! The mansion is ready; the crown is made; the harp is strung; there are no willows there. May we be enabled to go on, like lions, valiant for the truth and cause of King Jesus, and, by the help of the Spirit, vow eternal warfare with every sin, and rest not until the sword of the Spirit has destroyed all the enemies in our hearts.

May we be enabled to trust the Lord, for he will help us; we must conquer; we cannot be lost. Lost! Impossible! For who is able to snatch us out of our Father's hand?

May the Lord bless you exceedingly.

Your affectionate nephew,

C. H. SPURGEON.

The remark of the poet, "The boy is father to the man," is strikingly illustrated in Mr. Spurgeon's case.

In the opening of this year of grace, 1882, in his forty-eighth year, Mr. Spurgeon wrote a brief article for his magazine, in which we discover the same characteristics, the same dependence on God, the same distrust of self, the same doctrinal position and assured certainty through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. We subjoin an extract: —

A great statesman, the other day, celebrated his seventieth birthday by a retrospect of his life: it is meet that old age should look back. To us, however, in the middle of the stream, it seems more natural to look around on present circumstances. Years ago, at a younger age, our tendency was to look ahead, and long

for a great future; nor would we forego the habit, but still the pressure of long years, and growing burdens, and a sense of diminishing strength unite to keep the eyes occupied with the things of to-day, and the connection of the present with the infinite and eternal. It appeared to us when looking forward that the Christian life-work would require a power far beyond our own; but now we more intensely feel the certainty of that fact, and were it not for divine help we should give up in despair. If still sustained, after all these years of conflict, grace must indeed have the glory of it, and here upon the altar of the present we would offer the calves of our lips, giving glory to the Lord, the God of our salvation. Doubtless divine love will be glorified in the closing hours of the mature Christian, but it is emphatically magnified in the stern period when the burden and heat of the day are on the laborer, when the novelty and romance of youth are over, and the nearness of the reward is not yet vividly certified by old age. Of all parts of the stream, the hardest to ford is the middle: there the water is deepest, the current swiftest, and the footing least secure. Lord, hold thou me up, and I shall be safe. This is the prayer which oftenest leaps from our lips.

“Thus saith the preacher, vanity of vanities, all is vanity.” We have lived long enough to experience the hollowness of earth, and the rottenness of all carnal promises. Our work, though it be holy, presses heavily upon the shoulder, and we see not all the fruit of it which we expected in earlier days. Many strong helpers have been taken away by death, and the enthusiasm which made our earlier friends leap forward with their aid is not repeated to the full at a second sound of the clarion. The decline is only apparent to fear; but apprehension has the eyes of a hawk, and spies out the smallest discouragement. The world grows better very slowly: we sometimes fear that it grows worse. The church relapses to her former sloth; the good are weary, and the wicked wax impudent; the times are out of joint, and evil days are threatening. What can happen better to a man than to go home? Happy is he who is taken from the evil to come, or hears the sound of his descending Master’s coming ere yet the shadows of the day are lengthened to the utmost.

Thus does middle age prose when it is under the influence of its most sombre hour. The ink grows thick, and the pen is clogged, and makes black strokes and heavy. The subject should be treated in a more believing manner, and written of not according to the flesh, but after the spirit. Doubtless length of days tries our graces, but what length of days have we to speak of,—we who are sighting fifty, or passing beyond it? Half a century is a trifle in the life of God. True, there is a flagging of human energy, and the warm blood of youth cools down; but our Christian life never stood in the strength of the creature, and hence it cannot flag, since the Creator grows not old, nor is his arm waxed short. The same power which begat will preserve. Omnipotence first made the believer rise into newness of life, and until it fails his life will continue ever fresh and young. Well said the Psalmist, "All my springs are in thee." What if others suffer shipwreck, yet none that sail with Jesus have ever been stranded yet. Purposes, plans, and achievements of men may all disappear like yon cloud upon the mountain's summit; but, like the mountain itself, the things which are of God shall stand fast for ever and ever. Now is the time, in the lull of natural energy, to prove the power of the Holy Ghost. The trees of earth as they pass their prime decrease the quantity and quality of their fruit: it is a mark of the trees of grace that they still bring forth fruit in old age to show that the Lord is upright. The faithfulness of God may be relied upon to work a growing faithfulness in his people. Never so conscious of dependence as in this middle passage, never so certain of the all-sufficiency of God as in this noontide of the day, we joy in the Lord, and look for even richer mercies than ever.

Young men, trust God, and make the future bright with blessing. Old men, trust God, and magnify him for all the mercies of the past. As for us, we mingle gratitude and expectation in equal portions, and pray to stand in this present hour faithful to the Master in whose grace we trust.

Our valued friend, Pastor James H. Brookes, of St. Louis, author of "Maranatha," "Is the Bible True?" "The Way made Plain," &c., and editor of "The Truth," sent us the following com-

munication, which we deem of importance, coming, as it does, from the pen of an experienced minister of the gospel whose loyalty to Christ and the Scriptures cannot be questioned. Mr. Spurgeon was in his twenty-eighth year at the time of Dr. Brookes's visit to London, — the time of life when men usually manifest the vagaries and impetuosity of youth, and lack those marks of maturity which are seen in later life. But even in youth Mr. Spurgeon spoke with the experience of age, though with the fervor and strength of young manhood.

One of my strongest desires upon arrival in London, some years ago, was to hear the man of whom I had read so much. This desire was speedily gratified, and under circumstances which I knew would show the weak points of his character if these were prominent. In looking over a morning newspaper, I noticed that he was advertised to preach on a week-day in some obscure chapel. No one of whom I inquired could tell me anything about the place; but with the aid of a cabman it was found, and proved to be a small, dingy house, that would be crowded with an audience of four hundred. It was not more than half filled, and the few who were present were evidently plain people.

Mr. Spurgeon was fifteen minutes late, and I felt annoyed, supposing that he took advantage of his notoriety and popularity to consult his own convenience about his appointments. At length he appeared, walking briskly down the aisle, and ascended the pulpit. After spending a moment in prayer, he arose, and in a perfectly simple and natural manner, as if he were speaking to a friend by his fireside, apologized for his tardiness. He said that for the first time in his life he had failed to be prompt; but it was not his fault, for he had preached the night before in some country town, had taken the first train for the city, and had hurried from the station immediately to the meeting-house, without even going home to kiss his wife and little boys. Of course this put every one in good humor.

He then began the services by singing "Come, Holy Spirit, Heavenly Dove," and I am not sure that he did not start the tune. However this may have been, his prayer struck upon my ear and

heart as wonderful for its humility, earnestness, directness, and confidence. His reading of the Scriptures, with his brief common-sense remarks and expositions, added greatly to the interest of the hearer in the chapter selected; and the sermon that followed was certainly one of the best, in every respect, ever preached by uninspired man. If he had been preaching before the Queen and the nobility of England, if he had been speaking to an audience of ten thousand, he could not have laid out greater strength, nor exhibited greater sincerity, greater intensity of interest in the delivery of his message, greater concern for the honor of his Lord and for the souls of his hearers.

“Leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps,” was his text, and the teachings and life of Jesus Christ our Saviour were held up with singular clearness and fidelity to the truth. The first part of his discourse was doctrinal, and the second hortatory, or, as some call it, practical,—although it was all most thoroughly practical, because so thoroughly doctrinal. I remember that one man arose, obviously in anger, and slowly left the house, but turned now and then to look at the preacher. As he withdrew, Mr. Spurgeon reminded him of the sovereignty of God, and the sacrificial death of our Divine Redeemer as the only hope of the lost sinner, and then went on to urge us to walk like Him, and to walk worthy of Him, as His friends and representatives on the earth. The sermon was very searching to my own soul, and I determined to hear no one else during my stay in London.

Nor did I hear any one else, except one afternoon and one evening when Mr. Spurgeon was not preaching, or when he was preaching where I could not reach him. I heard him in Exeter Hall; I heard him, on my return from the Continent, in his own meeting-house, then just completed; and I never heard him without a little thank-offering of my own. While he was leading the vast congregation in prayer, pouring out his gratitude to God for all his manifold mercies, spiritual and temporal, I invariably sent up the incense of praise from my own heart in the words, “Thank God for Spurgeon!” Oh, how it comforted and strengthened me to see that brave witness standing there, often amid reproach and ridicule

and slander, telling "the old, old story," and bearing faithful witness to the truth, whether men would hear or forbear.

It was a cause of regret to me, on leaving London after a few weeks' sojourn, that I could not, at least for some months, listen again to his courageous defence of God's Word, and to his stirring appeals. But an incident occurred during my absence on the Continent that illustrates the wide sweep of the man's influence for good. For some weeks I was detained by ill health in Clarens, at the upper end of Lake Geneva. One day I climbed the mountain, and came to a solitary cottage at a considerable distance from the village, and also from any other visible habitation. Two poor women were sitting upon the grass before the door, one reading, while the other was sewing. My curiosity was excited to know what book had found its way to that lonely and desolate spot, and I asked the woman what she was reading. She at once held up the book, and I discovered it to be a volume of Spurgeon's sermons, translated into French.

The last sermon I heard him preach was in London, on my return to my own country. The text was, "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes" (Matt. xi. 25). It was exceedingly faithful, as was all I heard fall from his lips; and I recall a flash of genius, as the world terms it, which shows what he could do in the way of eloquence and oratory, if he cared for such things. Speaking of those who are so well satisfied with themselves and with their surroundings that they refuse to bow to the authority of God, he shouted, "You will not glorify him? You will not glorify him?" Then dropping his voice to a low and thrilling tone, he said, "Yes, you will, and you shall. I tell you the groans of the damned in hell are the deep bass of the universal anthem of praise that shall ascend to the throne of my God for ever and ever."

I doubt whether there is a minister of the gospel in Christendom, who tries to be true to the Lord and to his Word, that has not been helped by Mr. Spurgeon's example, faithfulness, and courage. In my judgment, he is the best preacher, in the best

sense of the word, this century has produced; and he is so far above the sensational preachers of our own land, who have attained notoriety as much by their unfaithfulness to Christ as by their genius, that they are not worthy to untie his shoe-latchet. They have their reward now in the admiration of the crowd, pleased with that which exalts human nature and dishonors the Bible; but at the coming of the Lord, which is fast hastening on, many of them at least will be wandering stars, to whom the mist of darkness is reserved, while Spurgeon will shine in the glory of the Master's approval and near his glorious Person for ever and ever.

No apology is needed for bringing before our American public, in the present form, the life and labors of this well-known, beloved, and faithful minister of Jesus Christ. Mr. Spurgeon has universal fame without seeking it. Free from selfishness and ambition, and without aiming at popularity, he has enshrined himself in the hearts of thousands, and commanded the homage and respect of millions. Like the late honored and revered President of the United States, Mr. Spurgeon is a manly man; childlike but not childish, great but not grand, he has taken rank as a prominent leader and teacher without officiousness or presumption on his part. His name and labors are closely interwoven with the religious history of England in the present century; and any who would acquaint themselves with the philanthropists of the age will seek acquaintance with this esteemed pastor. The man who has preached for twenty-eight years to a congregation of more than six thousand persons; the man who is pastor of a church now numbering over five thousand in its membership, having grown from comparatively few; the man who has given the right hand of fellowship during his pastorate, to nearly ten thousand persons in all; the man whose sermons have been published weekly for twenty-seven years, and besides their immense sale in England have been translated into many foreign languages; the man who has founded and presides over a College which is unique in itself, preparing one hundred students for the ministry of the Word; the man who is the originator and director of an Orphanage giving a home to five hundred needy children; the man who generously

devoted the testimonial given to him on the twenty-fifth anniversary of his marriage, of over thirty thousand dollars, to provide an Asylum for a score of poor widows; the man who is the author of over forty different volumes, including sermons, commentaries, lectures, and essays, the sale of one book alone, "John Ploughman's Talk," having reached the number of three hundred thousand copies, besides being republished in America and translated into many European languages; the man who for seventeen years has edited "The Sword and the Trowel," a monthly magazine, and who has started and still watches over various other works too numerous to mention,—is surely worthy of our study as well as of our veneration. Dr. Chalmers once wrote: "Every man is a missionary, now and forever, for good or for evil, whether he intends or designs it or not. He may be a blot, radiating his dark influence outward to the very circumference of society, or he may be a blessing, spreading benediction over the length and breadth of the world; but a blank he cannot be. There are no moral blanks, there are no neutral characters. We are either the sower that sows and corrupts, or the light that splendidly illuminates, or the salt that silently operates; but, being dead or alive, every man speaks."

When reading the above, Mr. Spurgeon instantly came to mind as fulfilling Dr. Chalmers's ideal for good. He is a missionary in the truest and noblest sense; a blessing spreading benediction through the length and breadth of the land; a light that splendidly illuminates, warning against the rocks and reefs of heresy, and directing the tempest-tossed soul into the haven of rest; the salt which operates, preserving from decay the church under his special care, with the tens of thousands to whom he ministers through his printed sermons, whose faces he has never seen. He is indeed a living man, enabled through grace to reanimate everything he touches; and as a living man he speaks out his full mind on every subject dear to him. Jealous for the divine message, he cares only for the truth. Without plausibility, without policy, without compromise, he ever seeks to expound the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. From his office as ambassador he has never been known to turn away, neither assuming

the *rôle* of ecclesiastic, nor degrading the ministry as a charlatan. Such a man, we repeat, is worthy of our study. The curious, the sedate, the inquirer, and the philosopher present their several queries. What is Mr. Spurgeon's history? what are his antecedents? what is the secret of his unwaning popularity — what the source of his increasing power? These are questions which we trust the reader will find fully answered in these pages. That Mr. Spurgeon's ministry has been appreciated by leaders in every department of theology is well known, whilst "babes and sucklings" have grown to maturity under his fostering care.

Our beloved friend and brother, Bishop Nicholson, of Philadelphia, writing to us recently, remarked: "With regard to Mr. Spurgeon as a minister of the gospel, I look upon him with the greatest admiration. The doctrines of Christ I think have never been more fully and faithfully taught. He is a bold utterer of God's will in the midst of abounding latitudinarianism, and yet he has seemed to me to be full of the sweetness and wisdom of Christ. His capacity for work is something marvellous. I look at what he has done, and I am simply amazed and confounded. He has been Christendom's foremost worker for Christ."

Many ministers in our own and other lands have been refreshed and stimulated through Mr. Spurgeon's example and preaching. The following testimony from a well-known pastor is only one of many which have reached us from time to time: —

"Though years have gone by since I listened to his graphic presentation of gospel truths, the whole scene, as well as the subjects discussed and much of the precise language used, is fresh and vivid in my memory at this very moment, and the influence of these services has remained with me like the perfume of precious ointment. His evident honesty, his robust Saxon speech, and his charming simplicity impressed me as the prime elements of his success as a winner of souls. I resolved while listening to him that, God being my helper, I would make my preaching so plain that no man, possessing ordinary intelligence, could fail to apprehend my meaning. I cannot claim to have followed the copy perfectly, for Mr. Spurgeon is unapproachable; but I have endeavored to follow after to the best of my ability."

Mr. Spurgeon, being a many-sided man, does not impress all who hear him in the same way. Some are benefited in one direction, some in another. His joyousness, as a ray of light, enters the gloomy hearts of not a few; his constant faith lifts up many discouraged ones; his sincerity and honesty, his ingenuousness and piety, and the combination of all these qualities affect different persons in different ways. We have met with those who have been most benefited by Mr. Spurgeon's interpretation and exposition of Scripture. Pastors who for years entertained their people with essays on moral themes, and sometimes on frivolous subjects, have come away from hearing Mr. Spurgeon with a profound determination that their preaching henceforth should be based on the opening and expounding of Scripture. An esteemed minister testified recently: —

“I regard Mr. Spurgeon as a wonderful expositor of the Word, — sound, spiritual, inspiring. I am not a great reader of sermons, but I never read one of his discourses without a sense of solid satisfaction. It is a cause of devout thanksgiving that in these days, when the trumpet so often gives an uncertain sound, a false or quavering note has never been heard from Mr. Spurgeon's watch-tower.”

In presenting to the public Mr. Spurgeon's personal history and labors, we have undertaken a work which has been upon our heart for many years. We are well persuaded that numberless caricatures and garbled histories have misled many persons, and prejudiced them against his teaching. We hope in some measure to correct this mischief, not for his sake, but theirs, who are the losers. Some American writers have done injustice to this noble man by representing him in a false light. Hobbyists on teetotalism and anti-tobacconists have made him the butt of their ridicule, and denounced him as an example of intemperance and fleshly indulgence. But no right-minded man who has ever heard or read Mr. Spurgeon would for a moment believe these slanderous reports. Yet there are thousands of persons who have been antagonized against this Defender of the Faith, having heard of him only through raving platform orators, flippant story-tellers, or vicious writers.

The motives which impel us in the prosecution of this work are various.

The Editor is well persuaded that Mr. Spurgeon's example will be an incentive to Christian workers, quickening their faith, inflaming their zeal, and encouraging their hearts in labor for the Lord. Many faint-hearted preachers have listened to his thrilling words with encouragement; despondency and unbelief have given place to hopefulness and faith. As we trace the history and development of Mr. Spurgeon from childhood, and observe how God makes choice of vessels sanctified and meet for His use, though we may not possess the rare talents of this minister of Christ, we may emulate his example in diligence, in faithfulness, and in loyalty to the gospel of our Lord. Many Christian workers would have given way to despair had not a timely word or a persevering example stimulated them to fresh hope. We trust, therefore, that in this direction our book will be eminently successful, and that weary toilers for God, missionaries, pastors, evangelists, students, and all who in the battle have had more than ordinary trials, will thank God for what He can do, and take courage.

We have also strong assurance that the bold, clear, faithful teaching of the great preacher will in some measure counteract the ill-balanced, weakly, and sentimental theories afloat, as well as deliver from unscriptural, hurtful, and sceptical preaching, — now, alas! so general, — many disciples of Jesus. When men depart from the simplicity that is in Christ Jesus, and with carnal minds seek to analyze the Divine Word, compelling it to fit into the mould of their perverted thought, they become impatient to regale their flocks with their negative knowledge. Such men, seeking fame, discover that fellow-fools are found who will applaud them for their folly. Some preachers have acquired notoriety in this direction, whose scholarship and independent thinking is accepted as undisputed fact. But when their foolish philosophizing is blown aside, and their castles in the clouds melt away before the sunlight of God's Word, what about their bewildered hearers? And herein is one source of Mr. Spurgeon's strength: he never trifles with the "book of books." He is a devout student and an humble

reader of the Bible. He accepts its facts, its doctrines, its history, its revelation, without question. And with all the vigor of mind which he possesses and the eloquence which he commands, he declares his own deep conviction of its divine origin, and thereby, through him, many have been delivered from the snare of scepticism into which they had fallen. Therefore we do believe that the extracts from his writings furnished in these pages will help thoughtful unbelievers out of the quagmires of every false philosophy, and lead them to the Rock of Truth, the Everlasting Word, God manifest in the flesh.

In addition, we have in our mind the thousands of families throughout the country who are isolated from churches, or who may be surrounded by heretical teachers, and prefer to spend the Lord's day at home, than allow themselves or their children to receive spiritual damage through corrupt doctrine. To supply interesting, moral, and healthful reading to such persons is a work worthy of our best efforts. The story of Mr. Spurgeon's life, the peculiarities of his ministry, the history of his Orphanage and College, besides the reports given of the various features of his labors, cannot fail to command interest. We therefore believe that herein are furnished both pleasure and profit for our readers. In the rural districts, where books are few and libraries not easily obtained, to supply a book which would be a library in itself, is a hope which we trust will be fully realized.

Besides, there are merchants and business men who need a book which will not fail to beguile the tedious hours of relaxation, — a book which must not be dull or mischievous in its tendencies. And who has found Mr. Spurgeon dull? There are chapters from his pen which out-rival for pure wit and homely wisdom any work extant. Never vulgar, sensational, or trifling, the humor of Mr. Spurgeon brings diversion and help and hope with it. The great object of his life is manifest in all his writings, — namely, the elevation and salvation of his race. His "John Ploughman's Talk" and "John Ploughman's Pictures" are full of sound advice, keen satire, kindly suggestion, and friendly warnings. No weary man can spend an hour reading these pithy sayings without feeling rested and benefited. But the mirthfulness within these pages is

not the mental food provided, any more than the spices on our table constitute the edibles. There will be met pages of solid reading, which the condiments will prepare the reader to enjoy and digest, the meal being a source of pleasure as well as a supply for present demand.

The book is prepared as a "labor of love," — love for the man who so nobly gives his life to the gospel ministry; love for the truth which he so unswervingly advocates; love for the Master whose religion he preaches; love for those who read these lines, which prompts the prayer that it may be sanctified to their highest good, and that Mr. Spurgeon's words through this medium may result in the conversion of many souls, leading them from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God.

II.

ANCESTRY, PARENTAGE, BIRTH.

A LITTLE lone plant in the forest had prepared a tiny flower, which as yet was not opened ; yet the plant had no anxieties, but waited its time. Could it hope that the great sun would think of it, and send his genial rays to bring its offspring to perfection ? Yes, among the thick boughs the sunlight found its way, and the little flower unfolded itself, and shone like a monarch's crown. —
C. H. SPURGEON.

ANCESTRY, PARENTAGE, BIRTH.

MR. STEVENSON, a worthy English minister of the Wesleyan Church, has written an exceedingly interesting history of Mr. Spurgeon to his forty-third birthday. His description of the great preacher and his collation of facts we copy almost entire. Others have written on the same theme, but we prefer to furnish our readers with Mr. Stevenson's condensed statements and concise narrative. We have supplied some missing links, and reduced the money accounts from pounds sterling to dollars. Those who have written adversely or spoken flippantly of Mr. Spurgeon, know not the man; to us who have the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with him, it seems strange, that one who has given his life to benefit others, should be regarded otherwise than with feelings of gratitude and affection. But he has been graciously shielded, and for more than a quarter of a century the arrows of evil have fallen harmless at his feet. May the Lord of glory preserve to His Church for many years to come His honored servant!

CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON descends from the Essex branch of the same family. Early in his ministry in London, he was introduced, at a book-store in Paternoster Row, to Mr. John Spurgeon, a descendant of the Norwich branch of the family; and on comparing notes of their respective ancestors, piety, uprightness, and loyalty were found alike in both. The same spirit of religious intolerance which sent the immortal Bunyan to Bedford Jail for preaching the gospel, also sent, in 1677, Job Spurgeon to Chelms-

ford Jail, where, for conscience' sake, he lay on a pallet of straw for fifteen weeks, in extremely severe winter weather, without any fire.

The great-grandfather of Pastor Spurgeon was contemporary with the opening period of the reign of King George III. The record preserved of his memory is, that he was a pious man, and ordered his household according to the will of God. From that day to this, the family has never wanted a man to stand before God in the service of the sanctuary.

James, the grandfather of Pastor C. H. Spurgeon, was born at Halstead, in Essex, September 29, 1776. As a boy he was seriously inclined, and whilst yet a youth became a member of the Independent church at Halstead. Whilst an apprentice at Coggeshall, he was accepted as a member of the church there under the pastoral care of the Rev. S. Fielding. Following business pursuits till he was twenty-six years of age, his mind at that period was directed entirely to the work of the ministry, and in 1802 he entered Hoxton Academy. After two years' study, an application from Clare, in Suffolk, was made to him to try and raise a congregation which was very low; and in this he succeeded so far, that in September, 1806, he was appointed pastor, and the church prospered under his pastorate. The protracted ministry of Mr. Beddow in the Independent church at Stambourne, in Essex (a church which had only four ministers during the course of two hundred years), having terminated in 1810, Mr. Spurgeon received a unanimous call to the oversight of that church, which he accepted, and in May, 1811, he was recognized as their pastor. Himself the fourth of a succession of long-lived pastors in that village, he remained pastor over the church more than half a century, during which period he was peaceful, happy, and successful in his labors. He frequently remarked, when more than fourscore years old, "I have not had one hour's unhappiness with my church since I have been over it." Invitations from other churches were sent to him, but the love, harmony, and prosperity which prevailed between pastor and people induced him to decline them all, and he remained true to the people of his choice.

It is a recorded fact, worthy of perpetuation, that the venerable

James Spurgeon never preached in any place away from his own church, but God fulfilled his promise, and gave him to hear of some good being done to persons in the congregation. He had a large head, and much that was good in it. He had a good voice, and was very earnest and practical in preaching the glorious truths of the gospel. The great usefulness of his life-long ministry will be known only in eternity. He was known widely in Essex as a man of the old school, — staid, quiet, and uniform in his dress and habits. He was the very picture of neatness, and in many particulars resembled John Wesley, especially in his manners and stature. He wore a dress cravat, a frilled shirt, and had a vest with deep pockets, as if provided for large collections. He was seldom without a packet of sweets, which he gave generously to the children wherever he went, so that they gathered round him and attached themselves to him with a firmness which riper years did not shake. He was always happy in the company of young people. He wore the breeches, buckled shoes, and silk stockings which marked the reign of George III., and he really looked to be a venerable Nonconformist minister of a past age. For more than half a century his life corresponded with his labors. His gentle manners, his sincere piety, and his uniformity of conduct secured for him the goodwill of his neighbors, and he was as friendly with the parochial clergymen as with his attached Nonconformist friends. He often went to the parish church to hear the sermon when the prayers were over, especially when the cause of missions was to be advocated. He was blessed with a wife whose piety and useful labors made her a valuable helpmeet to her husband in every good word and work. In his last illness he was sustained by divine grace, and the desire he had so often expressed, that he might speak of Christ on his dying bed, was granted to him. He said the gospel was his only hope; he was on the Eternal Rock, immutable as the throne of God. Those who were privileged to witness his departure from earth will never forget his joy and peace, and the glorious prospect he had of heaven.

John Spurgeon, the father of Charles, was born at Stambourne in 1811. He was the second of ten children, of whom four brothers and three sisters are still living. He is a portly looking

man, a good specimen of a country gentleman, and is nearly six feet in height. For many years he was engaged in business at Colchester; but, with so excellent an example of a minister as was his father, it is not strange that his mind should have run in the same direction, though he did not fully enter on the ministry till he had reached the prime of life. For sixteen years he preached on Sundays to a small Independent church at Tollesbury, being occupied with business during the week. He next accepted a call to the pastorate of the Independent church at Cranbrook, Kent, a village of three thousand persons, where he remained five years.

The popularity of his son Charles in London was not without its influence on the father, whose personal worth and whose ministerial ability were not unknown in the metropolis, as he had spoken occasionally at meetings held by his son. The pastorate of the Independent church in Fetter Lane, Holborn, became vacant, and was offered to and accepted by Mr. Spurgeon; but his stay there was not long. A sphere more in accordance with his years and position was offered and accepted by him, and for some time he was pastor of the Independent church worshipping in the Upper Street, Islington. That position he resigned at the end of the year 1876. He did good work in that locality, and was much beloved by the people. His preaching was plain, earnest, and pointed, and he manifested an affectionate solicitude for all under his pastoral care, especially the young people. There are many large places of worship in the locality, and preachers of distinction are numerous in that populous suburb; but even there Mr. Spurgeon gathered a large and important congregation twice on the Sabbath, to whom his preaching was both acceptable and beneficial. The various branches of church work were carried on with energy and fidelity; and those which required female agency were fostered and watched over with affectionate solicitude by Mrs. Spurgeon, whose motherly affection secured for her a welcome in the families of the church.

Mrs. John Spurgeon was the youngest sister of Charles Parker Jervis, Esq., of Colchester, in which town her husband carried on business for many years. Wherever she has resided she has been known and esteemed for her sincere piety, her great usefulness



BIRTHPLACE OF C. H. SPURGEON.

and humility. She is low in stature, and in this respect her son Charles takes after her, but not in features, in which particular the other son, James Archer Spurgeon, assimilates more to his mother. Even to a stranger visiting Mr. John Spurgeon's congregation, it would not be difficult to distinguish the pastor's wife. She has a kind word and a smile for all who come in contact with her, but is perhaps the least assuming lady in the whole assembly of worshippers. The prayerful solicitude with which she trained her children has been rewarded by each one of them making a public profession of their faith in Christ. Two of her sons occupy foremost places in the metropolis as preachers of the gospel; and one of her daughters, the wife of a minister, not only assists her husband in the preparation of his sermons, but occasionally delivers addresses to small audiences. Speaking one day to her son Charles of her solicitude for the best interests of all her children, Mrs. Spurgeon said, "Ah, Charley, I have often prayed that you might be saved, but never that you should become a Baptist." To this Charles replied, "God has answered your prayer, mother, with His usual bounty, and given you more than you asked." Both Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon made great sacrifices of personal comfort to give a good education to their children, and the children were taught habits of thrift and self-denial. The care thus bestowed on their training when young has been to the parents a source of much satisfaction; the good results of that care are manifested in the happy home lives of their children. When, at some future period, the historian of the Metropolitan Tabernacle and of the Stockwell Orphanage is considering the primary causes of those great enterprises, the care which Mrs. Spurgeon bestowed on the early training of her family must be counted as a valuable auxiliary in preparing the way for such exemplary conduct.

The villages of England, more than the towns, have the honor of producing our great men. In the village the faculties develop themselves as nature forms them, while in the large towns a thousand delusive influences are continually diverting the minds of the young into channels of danger and error. The parents of Pastor Spurgeon were residing at the village of Kelvedon, in Essex, when, on June 19, 1834, their son Charles was born. The popu-

lation of the place is only two thousand souls, and the resident clergyman, at the time just stated, the Rev. Charles Dalton, lived long enough to celebrate his jubilee as minister in that parish. The Spurgeon family belonged to the Nonconformists, under whose teaching they were all brought up. Charles and James Spurgeon were much separated during their early years. Charles was of a larger and broader build than James, and the boys in the village are said to have given them names designative of character, which also indicated friendship or attachment. Charles had as a boy a larger head than his brother, and he is represented as taking in learning more readily than James, whilst the latter excelled more in domestic duties. Besides the brothers, there are six sisters living, two of whom are said to resemble Charles in mental energy.

As the children were growing up, the father, like many professional and public men, feared his frequent absence from home would interfere with the religious education of the little ones. But happily for him he had a true helpmeet to co-operate with him in this important work, and happily for those children they had a noble mother who lived for them, and sought to build them up in true Christian character. Nor has she lived unrewarded for her pains. Oh, that all mothers learned the lesson well! Hear the good man speak thus of his wife: —

I had been from home a great deal, trying to build up weak congregations, and felt that I was neglecting the religious training of my own children while I was toiling for the good of others. I returned home with these feelings. I opened the door, and was surprised to find none of the children about the hall. Going quietly upstairs, I heard my wife's voice. She was engaged in prayer with the children; I heard her pray for them one by one by name. She came to Charles, and specially prayed for him, for he was of high spirit and daring temper. I listened till she had ended her prayer, and I felt and said, "Lord, I will go on with Thy work. The children will be cared for."

When just old enough to leave home, Charles was removed to his grandfather's house at Stambourne, where, under the affection-

ate care of a maiden aunt, and directed by the venerable pastor, he soon developed into the thoughtful boy, fonder of his book than of his play. He would sit for hours together gazing with childish horror at the grim figures of "Old Bonner" and "Giant Despair"; or tracing the adventures of Christian in the "Pilgrim's Progress," or of "Robinson Crusoe." The pious precocity of the child soon attracted the attention of all around. He would astonish the grave deacons and matrons who met at his grandfather's house on Sabbath evenings, by proposing subjects for conversation, and making pertinent remarks upon them. At that early period in life he gave indications of that decision of character and boldness of address for which he has since become so remarkable.

In the spring of 1840, and before he was six years old, seeing a person in the village who made a profession of religion standing in the street with others known to be of doubtful character, he made up to the big man, and astonished him by asking, "What doest thou here, Elijah?"

In 1841 he returned to his father's house, which was then at Colchester, that he might secure what improved advantages in education a town could supply. His mental development was even then considerably in advance of his years; and his moral character, especially his love of truth, was very conspicuous.

Spending the summer vacation at his grandfather's, in 1844, when he was just ten years old, an incident occurred which had a material influence on the boy at the time, and even more so as Divine Providence opened his way. Mr. Spurgeon's grandfather first related the incident to the writer, but it has since been written by Mr. Spurgeon himself, with the title of "The Rev. Richard Knill's Prophecy." The account is as follows.

"When I was a very small boy," writes Charles H. Spurgeon, "I was staying at my grandfather's, where I had aforesaid spent my earliest days; and, as the manner was, I read the Scriptures at family prayer. Once upon a time, when reading the passage in the Book of Revelation which mentions the bottomless pit, I paused and said, 'Grandpa, what can this mean?' The answer was kind but unsatisfactory: 'Pooh, pooh, child, go on.' The

child intended, however, to have an explanation, and therefore selected the same chapter morning after morning, Sunday included, and always halted at the same verse to repeat the inquiry. At length the venerable patriarch capitulated at discretion, by saying, 'Well, dear, what is it that puzzles you?' Now, the child had often seen baskets with very frail bottoms, which in course of wear became bottomless, and allowed the fruit placed therein to fall upon the ground. Here, then, was the puzzle: If the pit aforesaid had no bottom, where would all the people fall who dropped out at its lower end? — a puzzle which rather startled the propriety of family worship, and had to be laid aside for explanation at a more convenient season. Questions of the like simple and natural character would frequently break up into paragraphs at the family Bible-reading, and had there not been a world of love and license allowed to the inquisitive reader, he would soon have been deposed from his office. As it was, the Scriptures were not very badly rendered, and were probably quite as interesting as if they had not been interspersed with original and curious inquiries."

On one of these occasions, Mr. Knill, whose name is a household word, whose memory is precious to thousands at home and abroad, stayed at the minister's house on Friday, in readiness to preach at Stambourne for the London Missionary Society on the following Sunday. He never looked into a young face without yearning to impart some spiritual gift. He was all love, kindness, earnestness, and warmth, and coveted the souls of men as misers desire the gold their hearts pine for. He heard the boy read, and commended: a little judicious praise is the sure way to a young heart. An agreement was made with the lad that on the next morning, Saturday, he would show Mr. Knill over the garden, and take him for a walk before breakfast: a task so flattering to juvenile self-importance was sure to be readily entered upon. There was a tap at the door, and the child was soon out of bed and in the garden with his new friend, who won his heart in no time by pleasing stories and kind words, and giving him a chance to communicate in return. The talk was all about Jesus, and the pleasantness of loving him. Nor was it mere talk; there was pleading

too. Into the great yew arbor, cut into the shape of a sugar-loaf, both went, and the soul-winner knelt down; with his arms around the youthful neck, he poured out vehement intercession for the salvation of the lad. The next morning witnessed the same instruction and supplication, and the next also, while all day long the pair were never far apart, and never out of each other's thoughts. The mission sermons were preached in the old Puritan meeting-house, and the man of God was called to go to the next halting-place in his tour as deputation for the Society. But he did not leave till he had uttered a most remarkable prophecy. After even more earnest prayer with his little *protégé*, he appeared to have a burden on his mind, and he could not go till he had eased himself of it. In after years he was heard to say he felt a singular interest in me, and an earnest expectation for which he could not account. Calling the family together, he took me on his knee, and I distinctly remember his saying, 'I do not know how it is, but I feel a solemn presentiment that this child will preach the gospel to thousands, and God will bless him to many souls. So sure am I of this, that when my little man preaches in Rowland Hill's chapel, as he will do one day, I should like him to promise me that he will give out the hymn commencing, —

" God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

This promise was of course made, and was followed by another, — namely, that at his express desire I would learn the hymn in question, and think of what he had said.

"The prophetic declaration was fulfilled. When I had the pleasure of preaching the Word of Life in Surrey Chapel, and also when I preached in Mr. Hill's first pulpit at Wootton-under-Edge, the hymn was sung in both places. Did the words of Mr. Knill help to bring about their own fulfilment? I think so. I believed them, and looked forward to the time when I should preach the Word. I felt very powerfully that no unconverted person might dare to enter the ministry. This made me the more intent on seeking salvation, and more hopeful of it; and when by grace I was enabled to cast myself on the Saviour's love, it was not long before

my mouth began to speak of his redemption. How came that sober-minded minister to speak thus to and of one into whose future God alone could see? How came it that he lived to rejoice with his younger brother in the truth of all that he had spoken? The answer is plain. But mark one particular lesson: would to God that we were all as wise as Richard Knill in habitually sowing beside all waters. Mr. Knill might very naturally have left the minister's little grandson on the plea that he had other duties of more importance than praying with children; and yet who shall say that he did not effect as much by that simple act of humble ministry as by dozens of sermons addressed to crowded audiences? To me his tenderness in considering the little one was fraught with everlasting consequences, and I must ever feel that his time was well laid out."

During the fostering care of his aunt Ann, — his father's unmarried sister at Stambourne, — an attachment grew up which was as sincere in affectionate regard as that which usually exists between parent and child. This aunt had charge of the infant Spurgeon during most of the first six years of his life. He was the first grandchild in the family. Care was taken by his aunt to instruct him gradually as the mind was capable of receiving impressions; but from his childhood his mind seems to have been framed after nature's model. The book he admired at his grandfather's, which had for one of its illustrations the portrait of Bonner, Bishop of London, was the cause of his mind receiving its first impressions against tyranny and persecution; and being told of the persecuting character of Bonner, the child manifested a great dislike to the name, and called the picture which represented the bishop "Old Bonner." Even at that early period of life, before he was six years old, he exhibited a marked attachment to those who were known as the children of God.

Four years of the boy's life were spent at a school at Colchester, where he studied Latin, Greek, and French. He was a diligent student, always carrying the first prize in all competitions. In 1849 he was placed under the care of Mr. Swindell, at Newmarket. There he learned to practise much self-denial. The privations he voluntarily submitted to at that time showed how decided were

his purposes to acquire knowledge, and as far as he knew to try and serve God. But the struggle which was going on in his mind, preparatory to his giving his heart fully to God, can only be described in his own touching words, as recorded in one of his sermons. Speaking of a free-thinker, he remarks: "I, too, have been like him. There was an evil hour in which I slipped the anchor of my faith: I cut the cable of my belief: I no longer moored myself hard by the coast of Revelation: I allowed my vessel to drift before the wind, and thus started on the voyage of infidelity. I said to Reason, Be thou my captain; I said to my own brain, Be thou my rudder; and I started on my mad voyage. Thank God, it is all over now; but I will tell you its brief history: it was one hurried sailing over the tempestuous ocean of free thought." The result was, that from doubting some things, he came to question everything, even his own existence.

But soon he conquered those extremes to which Satan often drives the sinner who is really repenting of his sins. The reader will be glad to hear Pastor Spurgeon's own account of his conversion.

PSALM XV.

LORD, I would dwell with Thee
On Thy most holy hill.
Oh, shed Thy grace abroad in me,
To mould me to Thy will.

Thy gate of pearl stands wide
For those who walk upright ;
But those who basely turn aside
Thou chasest from Thy sight.

Oh, tame my tongue to peace,
And tune my heart to love ;
From all reproaches may I cease,
Made harmless as a dove.

The vile, though proudly great,
No flatterer find in me ;
I count Thy saints of poor estate
Far nobler company.

Faithful, but meekly kind,
Gentle, yet boldly true,
I would possess the perfect mind
Which in my Lord I view.

But, Lord, these graces all
Thy Spirit's work must be ;
To Thee, through Jesu's blood I call,—
Create them all in me.

C. H. SPURGEON.

III.

CONVERSION AND PREACHING.

CONVERSION is a change of masters. Will we not do as much for our new master, the Lord Jesus, as we did once for our old tyrant lusts? We were very ardent and obedient servants unto sin, yielding our members to iniquity unto iniquity; shall we not now be equally earnest servants of righteousness unto holiness? Great Lord, be Thou our helper, that as we once served evil with our whole nature, we may so serve Thee, bowing our necks with delight to Thy easy yoke!— C. H. SPURGEON.

CONVERSION AND PREACHING.

SOME persons suppose that deep conviction is the result of gross sin, but many sinners who had never walked with the ungodly have had such a view of the human heart in the sight of God as compelled them to cry out, "Unclean!" Charles Spurgeon as a youth was chaste, moral, and guarded in his deportment. Yet in the narrative of his conversion we observe how he endured great bitterness of soul through conviction of sin. His heart hungered for the Lord, and was not satisfied till he found Him. Thus he narrates his conversion: —

I will tell you how I myself was brought to the knowledge of this truth. It may happen the telling of that will bring some one else to Christ. It pleased God in my childhood to convince me of sin. I lived a miserable creature, finding no hope, no comfort, thinking that surely God would never save me. At last the worst came to the worst,—I was miserable; I could do scarcely anything. My heart was broken in pieces. Six months did I pray, — prayed agonizingly with all my heart, and never had an answer. I resolved that, in the town where I lived, I would visit every place of worship in order to find out the way of salvation. I felt I was willing to do anything and be anything if God would only forgive me. I set off, determined to go round to all the chapels, and I went to all the places of worship; and though I dearly venerate the men that occupy those pulpits now, and did so then, I am bound to say that I never heard them once fully preach the gospel. I mean by that, they preached truth, great truths, many

good truths that were fitting to many of their congregation, — spiritually-minded people; but what I wanted to know was, How can I get my sins forgiven? And they never once told me that. I wanted to hear how a poor sinner, under a sense of sin, might find peace with God; and when I went I heard a sermon on “Be not deceived: God is not mocked,” which cut me up worse, but did not say how I might escape. I went again another day, and the text was something about the glories of the righteous: nothing for poor me. I was something like a dog under the table, not allowed to eat of the children’s food. I went time after time, and I can honestly say, I don’t know that I ever went without prayer to God, and I am sure there was not a more attentive hearer in all the place than myself, for I panted and longed to understand how I might be saved.

At last, one snowy day, — it snowed so much, I could not go to the place I had determined to go to, and I was obliged to stop on the road, and it was a blessed stop to me, — I found rather an obscure street, and turned down a court, and there was a little chapel. I wanted to go somewhere, but I did not know this place. It was the Primitive Methodists’ chapel. I had heard of these people from many, and how they sang so loudly that they made people’s heads ache; but that did not matter. I wanted to know how I might be saved, and if they made my head ache ever so much I did not care. So, sitting down, the service went on, but no minister came. At last a very thin-looking man came into the pulpit and opened his Bible and read these words: “Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.” Just setting his eyes upon me, as if he knew me all by heart, he said: “Young man, you are in trouble.” Well, I was, sure enough. Says he, “You will never get out of it unless you look to Christ.” And then, lifting up his hands, he cried out, as only, I think, a Primitive Methodist could do, “Look, look, look! It is only look!” said he. I saw at once the way of salvation. Oh, how I did leap for joy at that moment! I know not what else he said: I did not take much notice of it, — I was so possessed with that one thought. Like as when the brazen serpent was lifted up, they only looked and were healed. I had been waiting to do fifty things, but when

I heard this word "Look!" what a charming word it seemed to me. Oh, I looked until I could almost have looked my eyes away! and in heaven I will look on still in my joy unutterable.

I now think I am bound never to preach a sermon without preaching to sinners. I do think that a minister who can preach a sermon without addressing sinners does not know how to preach.

On Oct. 11, 1864, the pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle preached a sermon to five hundred hearers in the chapel at Colchester (in which he was converted), on the occasion of the anniversary in that place of worship. He took for his text the memorable words, Isaiah xlv. 22, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved," &c., and, said the preacher, "That I heard preached from in this chapel when the Lord *converted* me." And pointing to a seat on the left hand, under the gallery, he said: "*I was sitting in that pew when I was converted.*" This honest confession produced a thrilling effect upon the congregation, and very much endeared the successful pastor to many hearts.

Of his conversion Mr. Spurgeon takes delight in speaking on every fitting opportunity, hoping thereby to benefit others. As an example of the advantage which he takes, under the title of "A Bit for Boys," he says, in "The Sword and the Trowel": "When I was just fifteen, I believed in the Lord Jesus, was baptized, and joined the church of Christ. This is twenty-five years ago now, and I have never been sorry for what I then did; no, not even once. I have had plenty of time to think it over, and many temptations to try some other course, and if I had found out that I had been deceived, or had made a gross blunder, I would have made a change before now, and would do my best to prevent others from falling into the same delusion. I tell you, boys, the day I gave myself up to the Lord Jesus, to be His servant, was the very best day of my life. Then I began to be safe and happy; then I found out the secret of living; and had a worthy object for my life's exertions, and an unfailing comfort for life's troubles. Because I would wish every boy to have a bright eye, a light tread, a joyful heart, and overflowing spirits, I plead with him to con-

sider whether he will not follow my example, for I speak from experience."

Early in the month of January, 1856, Mr. Spurgeon preached a sermon to his own congregation on Sunday morning, which is entitled "Sovereignty and Salvation," and it forms No. 60 in the second volume of his published discourses. In that sermon he says: —

"Six years ago to-day, as near as possible at this very hour of the day, I was 'in the gall of bitterness and in the bonds of iniquity,' but had yet, by divine grace, been led to feel the bitterness of that bondage, and to cry out by reason of the soreness of its slavery. Seeking rest and finding none, I stepped within the house of God, and sat there, afraid to look upward, lest I should be utterly cut off, and lest his fierce wrath should consume me. The minister rose in his pulpit, and, as I have done this morning, read this text: 'Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.' I looked that moment; the grace of faith was vouchsafed to me in that instant; and

'Ere since by faith I saw the stream
His flowing wounds supply,
Redeeming love has been my theme,
And shall be till I die.'

I shall never forget that day while memory holds its place; nor can I help repeating this text whenever I remember that hour when first I knew the Lord. How strangely gracious! How wonderfully and marvellously kind, that he who heard these words so little time ago, for his own soul's profit, should now address you this morning as his hearers from the same text, in the full and confident hope that some poor sinner within these walls may hear the glad tidings of salvation for himself also, and may to-day be 'turned from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God!'"

All the letters he sent home at that period were full of the overflowings of a grateful heart; and, although so young in years, he describes the operations of divine grace on the heart and life, and the differences between the doctrines of the gospel and the forms

of the church, in terms so precise and clear, that no merely human teaching could have enabled him so to do.

Brought up, as he had been, among the Independents, his own views on one point of church ordinances now assumed a form differing materially from what his parents had adopted. Having experienced a change of heart, he felt it to be laid upon him as an imperative duty to make a full and public confession of the change by public baptism. He had united himself formally with the Baptist people the year before; now he felt constrained to fully cast in his lot and become one of them entirely. He wrote many letters home to his father, asking for advice and information, but striving to enforce his own conviction for making a public profession of his faith in Christ. At length the father was satisfied that his son had no faith in the dogma of baptismal regeneration; that his motives for seeking to be publicly recognized as a follower of the Lord Jesus were higher than those he had feared; therefore no further opposition was made, and the necessary steps were taken for his immersion.

All the arrangements having been made, the young convert walked from Newmarket to Isleham, seven miles, on May 2d, and staying with the family of Mr. Cantlow, the Baptist minister there, he was by that gentleman publicly baptized in that village on Friday, May 3, 1851, being in his sixteenth year. He thus proceeds in his letter to his father: "It is very pleasing to me that the day on which I shall openly profess the name of Jesus is my mother's birthday. May it be to both of us a foretaste of many glorious and happy days yet to come."

Having thus publicly devoted himself to the service of God, he was more earnest than ever in his efforts to do good. Besides having himself revived an old society for distributing tracts, he undertook to carry out this good work in Newmarket thoroughly. Whenever he walked out he carried these messengers of mercy with him; he was instant in season, and, indeed, was seldom out of season, in his efforts to do good. His duties in school occupied him three hours daily, the remainder of his time being spent in his closet or in some work of mercy. The Sunday-school very soon gained his attention, and his addresses to the children

were so full of love and instruction that the children carried the good tidings home to their parents; and soon they came to hear the addresses in the vestry of the Independent chapel in that town. The place was soon filled.

At one of the examinations of the school he had consented to deliver an oration on missions. It was a public occasion, and in the company was a clergyman. During the examination the clergyman heard of the death of his gardener, and suddenly left for home. But on his way he thus reasoned with himself: The gardener is dead; I cannot restore his life; I will return and hear what the young usher has to say on missions. He returned, heard the oration, and was pleased to show his approval by presenting Mr. Spurgeon with a sovereign.

Having at once identified himself as a member of the Baptist church in Cambridge, he soon found occupation suitable to his mind. His addresses to children, and afterwards to parents and children, had produced a love of the work, and he soon was called to exhort a village congregation. He was then sixteen years old. Connected with the Baptist church meeting in St. Andrew's Street, Cambridge, formerly under the pastoral care of the late learned Robert Hall, there existed a society entitled "The Lay Preachers' Association." Although so young in years, Mr. Spurgeon was accepted as a member of this association. Here he at once found the occupation which his mind most desired; and he was soon appointed to address a congregation.

As this was one of the most important steps in Mr. Spurgeon's life, the reader will be glad to learn from his own pen the circumstances which led to his first attempted sermon. In introducing the text, "Unto you therefore which believe, He is precious," 1 Peter ii. 7, Mr. Spurgeon remarks, in 1873: "I remember well that, more than twenty-two years ago, the first attempted sermon that I ever made was from this text. I had been asked to walk out to the village of Taversham, about four miles from Cambridge, where I then lived, to accompany a young man whom I supposed to be the preacher for the evening, and on the way I said to him that I trusted God would bless him in his labors. 'Oh, dear,' said he, 'I never preached in my life; I never thought of doing such

a thing. I was asked to walk with you, and I sincerely hope God will bless YOU in YOUR preaching.' 'Nay,' said I, 'but I never preached, and I don't know that I could do anything of the sort.' We walked together till we came to the place, my inmost soul being all in a trouble as to what would happen. When we found the congregation assembled, and no one else there to speak of Jesus, though I was only sixteen years of age, as I found that I was expected to preach, I did preach, and the text was that just given."

Considering the results which have followed that sermon, and that the preacher is now the author of twenty-seven large volumes of published sermons, and that nearly two thousand of his sermons have in various forms been printed since that day, it will be interesting to glance at some of the incidents belonging to that early period of his ministry. In the summer of 1875, from inquiries made in the locality, a correspondent of the "Baptist" newspaper reports as follows:—

"A gentleman informed me that he heard Mr. Spurgeon preach his first sermon when about sixteen years of age; and he then read, prayed, and expounded the Word, being attired in a round jacket and broad turn-down collar, such as I remember to have been in fashion at that period.

"Mr. Spurgeon was then living near Cambridge, and his mode of preaching afforded promise that he would become a powerful and popular preacher.

"Mr. C., the schoolmaster of the village in 1850, was impressed with the precocious talent of the young preacher, and at his style of preaching."

Having once entered on this most solemn duty, and finding acceptance with the people, he laid himself out for one service every evening, after attending to his duties in school during the day.

From an aged and experienced Christian, who heard Mr. Spurgeon preach before his call to London, we learn that his addresses were very instructive, and often included illustrations derived from history, geography, astronomy, and from other branches of school occupation, evidently adapted from his daily duties, and thus

made to serve as instruments in religion, as well as in training and informing the mind.

His early ministry was not only gratuitous, but often attended with demands on his small salary, which he willingly gave to God, — not to be seen of men, did he help the needy.

In some of the thirteen village stations around Cambridge and Waterbeach, to which Mr. Spurgeon devoted all his evenings, the preaching was held in a cottage, in others a chapel, and occasionally the open Common could furnish the accommodation required. At the village of Waterbeach, Mr. Spurgeon was received in a marked manner of approval. In most of the places in which he had preached the effect was very much alike, in the large numbers attracted to hear the Word of God, and in the success which God was pleased to bestow on his labors. Even at that early period of his ministerial career, invitations to preach special sermons in towns and villages at a distance soon rapidly increased. At Waterbeach, however, the little church saw in the young man a suitability to their wants, and they gave him an invitation to become their pastor. He was well received by the people, and soon became quite popular. During the few months of his pastorate there, the church members were increased from forty to nearly one hundred.

Mr. Spurgeon has himself supplied an interesting reminiscence of his ministry at that village, which is worth preserving: —

“When we had just commenced our youthful pastorate at Waterbeach, in 1852, Cornelius Elven, as a man of mark in that region, was requested to preach the anniversary sermons in our little thatched meeting-house, and right well we remember his hearty compliance with our desire. We met at the station as he alighted from a third-class carriage which he had chosen in order to put the friends to the least possible expense for his travelling. His bulk was stupendous, and one soon saw that his heart was as large in proportion as his body. He gave us much sage and holy advice during the visit, which came to us with much the same weight as Paul’s words came to Timothy. He bade us study hard, and keep abreast of the foremost Christians in our little church, adding as a reason, that if these men, either in their knowledge

of Scripture or their power to edify the people, once outstrip you, the temptation will arise among them to be dissatisfied with your ministry; and, however good they are, they will feel their superiority, and others will perceive it too, and then your place in the church will become very difficult to hold. His sermons were very homely, and pre-eminently practical. He told anecdotes of the usefulness of addressing individuals one by one about their souls."

It has been remarked a hundred times, by those not well informed on the matter, that Mr. Spurgeon was an uneducated man, and had no college instruction. The experience of a quarter of a century has demonstrated how erroneous were these remarks. Is there in England a man of education who has done more for the extension of the kingdom of Christ by the publication of numerous valuable theological and instructive books than Mr. Spurgeon? Let the list of his works determine.

On the question of not going to college there is also some misconception. The exact facts are worthy of being placed on record. Mr. Spurgeon has himself so clearly stated the case in an article he wrote some time ago in his own magazine, that the reader will be glad to see it here; it is curious and interesting: —

"Soon after I had begun, in 1852, to preach the Word in Water-beach, I was strongly advised by my father and others to enter Stepney, now Regent's Park College, to prepare more fully for the ministry. Knowing that learning is never an incumbrance and is often a great means of usefulness, I felt inclined to avail myself of the opportunity of attaining it, although I believed I might be useful without a college training, I consented to the opinion of friends, that I should be more useful with it. Dr. Angus, the tutor of the college, visited Cambridge, where I then resided, and it was arranged that we should meet at the house of Mr. Macmillan, the publisher. Thinking and praying over the matter, I entered the house at exactly the time appointed, and was shown into a room, where I waited patiently for a couple of hours, feeling too much impressed with my own insignificance and the greatness of the tutor from London to venture to ring the bell and inquire the cause of the unreasonably long delay.

"At last, patience having had her perfect work, the bell was

set in motion, and on the arrival of the servant, the waiting young man of eighteen was informed that the doctor had tarried in another room, and could stay no longer, so had gone off by train to London. The stupid girl had given no information to the family that any one called and had been shown into the drawing-room, consequently the meeting never came about, although designed by both parties. I was not a little disappointed at the moment; but have a thousand times since then thanked the Lord very heartily for the strange providence which forced my steps into another and far better path.

“ Still holding to the idea of entering the Collegiate Institution, I thought of writing and making an immediate application; but this was not to be. That afternoon, having to preach at a village station, I walked slowly in a meditating frame of mind over Midsummer Common to the little wooden bridge which leads to Chesterton, and in the midst of the common I was startled by what seemed to me to be a loud voice, but which may have been a singular illusion: whichever it was, the impression it made on my mind was most vivid; I seemed very distinctly to hear the words, ‘ Seekest thou great things for thyself, seek them not!’ This led me to look at my position from a different point of view, and to challenge my motives and intentions. I remembered my poor but loving people to whom I ministered, and the souls which had been given me in my humble charge; and although at that time I anticipated obscurity and poverty as the result of the resolve, yet I did there and then renounce the offer of collegiate instruction, determining to abide for a season, at least, with my people, and to remain preaching the Word so long as I had strength to do it. Had it not been for those words, I had not been where I am now. Although the ephod is no longer worn by a ministering priest, the Lord guides His people by His wisdom, and orders all their paths in love; and in times of perplexity, by ways mysterious and remarkable, He says to them: ‘ This is the way; walk ye in it.’ ”

One or two extracts from his letters, written at the same time, it is desirable to give to show how anxiously the matter was considered. In his reply to his father, dated March 9, 1852, Mr.

Spurgeon writes: "I have all along had an aversion to college, and nothing but a feeling that I must not consult myself, but Jesus, could have made me think of it. It appears to my friends at Cambridge, that it is my duty to remain with my dear people at Waterbeach; so say the church there unanimously, and so say three of our deacons at Cambridge."

During the summer his decision was taken, in the way previously related; and in a letter he sent to his mother in November following, he says: "I am more and more glad that I never went to college. God sends such sunshine on my path, such smiles of grace, that I cannot regret if I have forfeited all my prospects for it. I am conscious I held back from love to God and His cause; and I had rather be poor in His service than rich in my own. I have all that heart can wish for; yea, God giveth more than my desire. My congregation is as great and loving as ever. During all the time I have been at Waterbeach, I have had a different house for my home every day. Fifty-two families have thus taken me in; and I have still six other invitations not yet accepted. Talk about the people not caring for me because they give me so little! I dare tell anybody under heaven 't is false! They do all they can. Our anniversary passed off grandly; six were baptized; crowds on crowds stood by the river; the chapel afterwards was crammed both to the tea and the sermon."

By these and other exercises of mind, God was preparing his young servant for greater plans of usefulness and a wider sphere of action.

The following verses were written by Mr. Spurgeon, at the age of eighteen: —

IMMANUEL.

When once I mourned a load of sin;
 When conscience felt a wound within;
 When all my works were thrown away;
 When on my knees I knelt to pray,
 Then, blissful hour, remembered well,
 I learned Thy love, Immanuel.

When storms of sorrow toss my soul;
 When waves of care around me roll;

When comforts sink, when joys shall flee ;
 When hopeless griefs shall gape for me,
 One word the tempest's rage shall quell—
 That word, Thy name, Immanuel.

When for the truth I suffer shame ;
 When foes pour scandal on my name ;
 When cruel taunts and jeers abound ;
 When " Bulls of Bashan " gird me round,
 Secure within Thy tower I 'll dwell —
 That tower, Thy grace, Immanuel.

When hell enraged lifts up her roar ;
 When Satan stops my path before ;
 When fiends rejoice and wait my end ;
 When legioned hosts their arrows send,
 Fear not, my soul, but hurl at hell,
 Thy battle-cry, Immanuel.

When down the hill of life I go ;
 When o'er my feet death's waters flow ;
 When in the deep'ning flood I sink ;
 When friends stand weeping on the brink,
 I 'll mingle with my last farewell
 Thy lovely name, Immanuel.

When tears are banished from mine eye ;
 When fairer worlds than these are nigh ;
 When heaven shall fill my ravished sight ;
 When I shall bathe in sweet delight,
 One joy all joys shall far excel,
 To see Thy face, Immanuel.

IV.

CALL TO LONDON.

JAMES I. once said of armor, that "it was an excellent invention; for it not only saved the life of the wearer, but it hindered him from doing harm to anybody else." Equally destructive to all usefulness is that excessive prudence upon which some professors pride themselves; not only do they escape all persecution, but they are never able to strike a blow, much less to fight a battle for the Lord Jesus. — C. H. SPURGEON.

CALL TO LONDON.

THE anniversary meeting of the Cambridge Union of Sunday-schools in 1853 was held at Cambridge, on which occasion Mr. Spurgeon was called upon to speak. The part he took was of remarkable significance. There was nothing in his manner or his remarks which was specially attractive to his audience; but there was an unseen agency at work with the speaker as well as in the audience. There was present at that meeting a gentleman from Essex, on whose mind the address delivered by Mr. Spurgeon made a lasting impression. Shortly afterwards he met in London with one of the deacons of the Baptist church of New Park Street, Southwark, a church which had once flourished like the ancient cedars of Lebanon, but which was then so far shorn of its former glory as to give cause of serious consideration. Anxiously did the thoughtful deacon tell his tale of a scattered church and a diminished congregation. Fresh upon the mind of his hearer was the effect of the speech of the young minister at Cambridge, and he ventured to speak of the youthful evangelist of Waterbeach as a minister likely to be the means of reviving interest in the declining church at New Park Street. The two friends separated, the deacon not much impressed with what he had heard; and things grew worse.

But finally a correspondence was commenced between Deacon James Low and Mr. Spurgeon, which soon resulted in the latter receiving an invitation to come to London and preach before them in their large chapel. The work was altogether of God, man only

made the arrangements. The motto of Julius Cæsar may be modified to express the results of the visit: Mr. Spurgeon came; he preached; he conquered.

For some months the pulpit had been vacant, the pews forsaken, the aisles desolate, and the exchequer empty. Decay had set in so seriously that the deacons lost heart, and, until Mr. Spurgeon arrived, the cause seemed hopeless. In the autumn of 1853 he first occupied New Park-street pulpit. The chapel, capable of holding twelve hundred people, had about two hundred occupants at the first service. The preacher was a young man who had just passed his nineteenth year. In his sermon he spoke with the freedom and boldness which evinced that he believed what he preached, and believed that his message was from God. Some were disappointed; others resolved to oppose, and did oppose; but by far the greater proportion were disposed to hear him again. The result of the first sermon was proved, in a few hours, to have been a success. The evening congregation was greatly increased, partly from curiosity, partly from the youth of the preacher and his unusual style of address. Mr. Spurgeon was again invited to take the pulpit on another Sunday as early as possible, for a feeling of excitement was created, and it required to be satisfied. After consulting with his church at Waterbeach, he arranged to supply the New Park-street pulpit during three alternate Lord's days. The desire to hear the young preacher having greatly extended, it was determined to invite Mr. Spurgeon from his rustic retreat to undertake the heavy responsibility of pastor of one of the most ancient Baptist churches in London, and formerly the most influential; and he entered on that duty in the month of April, 1854.

We are permitted to give two of Mr. Spurgeon's letters to the church at the time of his appointment, which will most clearly state the facts relating to his coming to London. The first of the following letters was written to Deacon Low shortly before Mr. Spurgeon left Cambridge, and the second is dated from his first lodgings immediately after his permanent arrival in London.

NO. 60 PARK STREET, CAMBRIDGE, Jan. 27, 1854.

TO JAMES LOW, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR, — I cannot help feeling intense gratification at the unanimity of the church at New Park Street in relation to their invitation to me. Had I been uncomfortable in my present situation, I should have felt unmixed pleasure at the prospect Providence seems to open up before me; but having a devoted and loving people, I feel I know not how.

One thing I know, namely, that I must soon be severed from them by necessity, for they do not raise sufficient to maintain me in comfort. Had they done so I should have turned a deaf ear to any request to leave them, at least for the present. But now my Heavenly Father drives me forth from this little Garden of Eden, and while I see that I must go out, I leave it with reluctance, and tremble to tread the unknown land before me.

When I first ventured to preach at Waterbeach, I only accepted an invitation for three months, on the condition that if in that time I should see good reason for leaving, or they on their part should wish for it, I should be at liberty to cease supplying, or they should have the same power to request me to do so before the expiration of the time.

With regard to a six months' invitation from you, I have no objection to the length of time, but rather approve of the prudence of the church in wishing to have one so young as myself on an extended period of approbation. But I write after well weighing the matter, when I say positively that I cannot — I *dare* not — accept an unqualified invitation for so long a time. My objection is not to the length of time of probation, but it ill becomes a youth to promise to preach to a London congregation so long, until he knows them and they know him. I would engage to supply for three months of that time, and then, should the congregation fail, or the church disagree, I would reserve to myself liberty, without breach of engagement, to retire; and you would on your part have the right to dismiss me without seeming to treat me ill. Should I see no reason for so doing, and the church still retain their wish for me, I can remain the other three months, either with

or without the formality of a further invitation; but even during the second three months I should not like to regard myself as a fixture, in case of ill success, but would only be a supply, liable to a fortnight's dismissal or resignation.

Perhaps this is not business-like,—I do not know; but this is the course I should prefer, if it would be agreeable to the church. Enthusiasm and popularity are often the crackling of thorns, and soon expire. I do not wish to be a hindrance if I cannot be a help.

With regard to coming at once, I think I must not. My own deacons just hint that I ought to finish the quarter here: though, by ought, they mean simply,—pray do so if you can. This would be too long a delay. I wish to help them until they can get supplies, which is only to be done with great difficulty; and, as I have given you four Sabbaths, I hope you will allow me to give them four in return. I would give them the first and second Sabbaths in February, and two more in a month or six weeks' time. I owe them much for their kindness, although they insist that the debt lies on their side. Some of them hope, and almost pray, that you may be tired in three months, so that I may be again sent back to them.

Thus, my dear sir, I have honestly poured out my heart to you. You are too kind. You will excuse me if I err, for I wish to do right to you, to my people, and to all, as being not mine own, but bought with a price.

I respect the honesty and boldness of the small minority, and only wonder that the number was not greater. I pray God that if He does not see fit that I should remain with you, the majority may be quite as much the other way at the end of six months, so that I may never divide you into parties.

Pecuniary matters I am well satisfied with. And now one thing is due to every minister, and I pray you to remind the church of it, namely, that in private, as well as public, they must all wrestle in prayer to God that I may be sustained in the great work.

I am, with the best wishes for your health, and the greatest respect,

Yours truly,

C. H. SPURGEON.

Viewed in the light of subsequent results, it will not surprise the reader to learn that it did not take the church six months to determine their part of the contract. Before three months had passed away, "the small minority" had been absorbed into the majority, and the entire church united in giving their young minister, not yet twenty years old, an invitation to accept the pastorate, both cordial and unanimous. Mr. Spurgeon's second letter at this period will best explain the real facts:—

75 DOVER ROAD, BOROUGH, April 28, 1854.

To the Baptist Church of Christ worshipping in New Park-street Chapel, Southwark.

DEARLY BELOVED IN CHRIST JESUS,— I have received your unanimous invitation, as contained in a resolution passed by you on the 19th instant, desiring me to accept the pastorate among you. No lengthened reply is required; there is but one answer to so loving and cordial an invitation. I ACCEPT IT. I have not been perplexed as to what my reply shall be, for many things constrain me thus to answer.

I sought not to come to you, for I was the minister of an obscure but affectionate people; I never solicited advancement. The first note of invitation from your deacons came to me quite unlooked for, and I trembled at the idea of preaching in London. I could not understand how it came about, and even now I am filled with astonishment at the wondrous Providence. I would wish to give myself into the hands of our covenant God, whose wisdom directs all things. He shall choose for me; and so far as I can judge this is His choice.

I feel it to be a high honor to be the pastor of a people who can mention glorious names as my predecessors; and I entreat of you to remember me in prayer, that I may realize the solemn responsibility of my trust. Remember my youth and inexperience; pray that these may not hinder my usefulness. I trust, also, that the remembrance of these may lead you to forgive the mistakes I may make, or unguarded words I may utter.

Blessed be the name of the Most High! if He has called me to

this office He will support me in it; otherwise, how should a child, a youth, have the presumption thus to attempt a work which filled the heart and hands of Jesus? Your kindness to me has been very great, and my heart is knit unto you. I fear not your steadfastness; I fear my own. The gospel, I believe, enables me to venture great things, and by faith I venture this. I ask your co-operation in every good work, — in visiting the sick, in bringing in inquirers, and in mutual edification.

Oh, that I may be no injury to you, but a lasting benefit! I have no more to say, only this: that if I have expressed myself in these few words in a manner unbecoming my youth and inexperience, you will not impute it to arrogance, but forgive my mistake.

And now, commending you to our covenant-keeping God, the triune Jehovah, I am yours to serve in the gospel,

C. H. SPURGEON.

Before three months of the new pastorate had expired the fame of the young minister had spread over the metropolis, crowds of people flocked to his chapel at every service, and the newspapers, week by week for some time, were asking: Who is this Spurgeon? For a long time that question was a puzzle to many minds; but one thing was certain, he had secured the ear and the attention of the public, who waited upon his ministry by thousands.

The summer of 1854 will long be remembered for the frightful scourge of Asiatic cholera with which the great city was visited. The black flag could be seen stretched across streets to warn strangers of the close proximity of plague-stricken dwellings. On all sides there was anxious foreboding, sorrow, or bereavement. The young pastor's services were eagerly sought for, his time and strength taxed to their utmost; but he discharged the duties of the emergency with a true and manly courage. A paragraph from his "Treasury of David," on Psalm xci., most graphically describes this trying period: —

"In the year 1854, when I had scarcely been in London twelve months, the neighborhood in which I labored was visited by Asiatic cholera, and my congregation suffered from its inroads. Family after family summoned me to the bedsides of the smitten,



MR. SPURGEON AT THE AGE OF TWENTY-ONE.

and almost every day I was called to visit the grave. I gave myself up with youthful ardor to the visitation of the sick, and was sent for from all corners of the district by persons of all ranks and religions. I became weary in body and sick at heart. My friends seemed falling one by one, and I felt or fancied that I was sickening like those around me. A little more work and weeping would have laid me low among the rest. I felt that my burden was heavier than I could bear, and I was ready to sink under it. As God would have it, I was returning mournfully home from a funeral, when my curiosity led me to read a paper which was wafered up in a shoemaker's window in the Dover Road. It did not look like a trade announcement, nor was it; for it bore in a good bold handwriting these words: 'Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.' The effect upon my heart was immediate. Faith appropriated the passage as her own. I felt secure, refreshed, girt with immortality. I went on with my visitation of the dying in a calm and peaceful spirit; I felt no fear of evil, and I suffered no harm. The Providence which moved the tradesman to place those verses in his window I gratefully acknowledge, and in the remembrance of its marvellous power I adore the Lord my God."

In the autumn of his first year's pastorate he preached a sermon from the words, "Is it not wheat harvest to-day?" The sermon attracted attention, was much talked about by his hearers, and during the following week it appeared under the title of "Harvest Time," and had a large sale. This led the publisher shortly afterwards to print another of his sermons, under the title of "God's Providence." The public at once took to these sermons, and by the end of the year about a dozen had thus been issued. This greatly increased his popularity; for many who had not heard him, read those sermons, were interested in them, and soon found opportunity to go and hear him. The demand for his sermons being considerably greater than for the sermons of other ministers then being published, Mr. Spurgeon made arrangements with the first friend he met in London, who was a printer, and a member of his church, to commence the publication of one sermon

of his every week, beginning with the new year, 1855. Through the good providence of God the sermons have appeared continuously, week by week, without interruption, for more than twenty-seven years, with a steady, improving, and large circulation, which is in itself a marked indication of divine favor. No other minister the world has ever known has been able to produce one printed sermon weekly for so many years. The work still goes on with unabated favor and unceasing interest.

The following description of the preacher's style at this period is one of the earliest we have met with: "His voice is clear and musical; his language plain; his style flowing, but terse; his method lucid and orderly; his matter sound and suitable; his tone and spirit cordial; his remarks always pithy and pungent, sometimes familiar and colloquial, yet never light or coarse, much less profane. Judging from a single sermon, we supposed that he would become a plain, faithful, forcible, and affectionate preacher of the gospel in the form called Calvinistic; and our judgment was the more favorable because, while there was a solidity beyond his years, we detected little of the wild luxuriance naturally characteristic of very young preachers." Want of order and arrangement was a fault the preacher soon found out himself, and he refers to it when he says: "Once I put all my knowledge together in glorious confusion; but now I have a shelf in my head for everything; and whatever I read or hear I know where to stow it away for use at the proper time."

Amongst the multitudes who assembled to hear the popular preacher was a member of the Society of Friends, who, being deeply impressed by what he saw and heard, wrote a lengthened article on the subject. The writer observes: "The crowds which have been drawn to hear him, the interest excited by his ministry, and the conflicting opinions expressed in reference to his qualifications and usefulness, have been altogether without parallel in modern times. It was a remarkable sight to see this round-faced country youth thus placed in a position of such solemn and arduous responsibility, yet addressing himself to the fulfilment of its onerous duties with a gravity, self-possession, and vigor that proved him well fitted for the task he had assumed.

Within one year, New Park-street Chapel had to be enlarged. During the enlargement, Exeter Hall was taken, and it was filled to overflowing every Sabbath morning to hear the young preacher. The chapel, which had been enlarged to the fullest extent of the ground, was soon found to be far too circumscribed for the thousands who flocked to hear him; and by the end of the summer it became necessary to seek for a much larger place to satisfy the demand of the public.

On the 19th of June, 1855, Mr. Spurgeon came of age, and he improved the occasion by preaching a sermon relating thereto. A large congregation heard it, and it was printed, with an excellent likeness of the young preacher, pale and thin as he then was. The sermon was published with the title, "Pictures of Life, and Birthday Reflections." It had a large sale. That was the first portrait of him which had been issued.

At that period the first attempt to issue a penny weekly newspaper was made by Mr. C. W. Banks, and the "Christian Cabinet" was a very spirited publication. The value of a pure and cheap press was fully appreciated by Mr. Spurgeon, who generously furnished articles for the columns of that serial during nearly the whole of its first year's existence. They show a clear and sound judgment on many public events passing more than twenty years ago, and they are the first buddings of that genius which has since ripened so fully, and yielded such an abundant harvest of rich mental food. The books which have since come from Mr. Spurgeon's pen are equally marvellous for their number, variety, and usefulness, and some of them have had most unprecedentedly large sales.

In July of this year, 1855, he paid his first visit to Scotland, and a lively description of his congregation and preaching was printed in the "Cabinet."

On the bright evening of the 4th of September, Mr. Spurgeon preached to about twelve thousand people in a field in King Edward's Road, Hackney. The sermon was printed under the title of "Heaven and Hell," and had a very large sale, doing at the same time a large amount of good. The sermon was closed by the preacher giving the following account of his own conver-

sion, which had a good effect on his audience, proving that experience is the best teacher. There were thousands of young people present who were astonished at what they heard, and many turned that night from their sins. The preacher said: —

“I can remember the time when my sins first stared me in the face. I thought myself the most accursed of all men. I had not committed any very great open transgressions against God; but I recollected that I had been well trained and tutored, and I thought my sins were thus greater than other people’s. I cried to God to have mercy, but I feared that He would not pardon me. Month after month I cried to God, but He did not hear me, and I knew not what it was to be saved. Sometimes I was so weary of the world that I desired to die; but I then recollected that there was a worse world after this, and that it would be an ill matter to rush before my Maker unprepared. At times I wickedly thought God a most heartless tyrant, because He did not answer my prayer; and then at others I thought, ‘I deserve His displeasure; if He sends me to hell, He will be just.’ But I remember the hour when I stepped into a place of worship, and saw a tall, thin man step into the pulpit: I have never seen him from that day, and probably never shall till we meet in heaven. He opened the Bible, and read with a feeble voice: ‘Look unto Me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and beside Me there is none else.’ Ah! thought I, I am one of the ends of the earth; and then, turning round, and fixing his gaze on me, as if he knew me, the minister said: ‘Look, look, look!’ Why, I thought I had a great deal to *do*, but I found it was only to *look*. I thought I had a garment to spin out for myself; but I found that if I looked, Christ could give me a garment. Look, sinner, that is the way to be saved. Look unto Him, all ye ends of the earth, and be saved.”

Preaching is the ordained means for the salvation of sinners: the power of appeal by the human voice is greater than any other; but there is another influence which is potent. Before Mr. Spurgeon had issued more than half a year’s sermons from the press, letters reached him from far-off places recording the good which had been effected by reading them. On one of Mr.

Spurgeon's visits to Scotland he was taken to visit Anne Sims, an aged saint living at the Brae of Killiecrankie, far away up the mountains, who had expressed intense delight in reading his sermons, and prayed for his success in the work, little thinking that in her mountain solitude, and in her ninetieth year, she should ever see the preacher himself, whose visit was to her like that of an angel. It would be difficult to chronicle the results which have followed the reading of the sermons. In the first article in "The Sword and the Trowel" for 1872, the editor himself says, "Our ministry has never been without large results in conversion." Twenty conversions have been reported to him by letter in one week. The last Sunday sermon he preached in 1855, with which the first volume of his printed discourses is closed, had special reference to the war in the Crimea, and it commanded a large sale; its title was, "Healing for the Wounded." It contributed materially to allay public anxiety about the war. Mr. Spurgeon closed the year by holding a Watchnight Service in his chapel. It was a happy and memorable service, and it has been repeated at the close of every year since; the last hours of the closing year and the first moments of the opening new year being devoted to the worship of God, in acts of personal consecration.

It is a gratifying fact, not generally known, that from the first year of Mr. Spurgeon's ministry in London several clergymen have used his sermons weekly, with a little adaptation, in their own churches. This testimony has been given by the clergymen themselves, in person and by letter, to the writer. Some are using the sermons in that way at the present time, and though delivered second-hand in this manner, yet they are not without fruit.

PSALM XXI.

THY strength, O Lord, makes glad our King,
Who once in weakness bowed the head;
Salvation makes His heart to sing,
For Thou hast raised Him from the dead.

Thou hast bestowed His heart's desires,
Showered on His path Thy blessings down;
His royal pomp all Heaven admires;
Thou on His head hast set the crown.

A life eternal as Thy years,
A glory infinite like Thine,
Repays Him for His groans and tears,
And fills His soul with joy divine.

O King, belovèd of our souls,
Thine own right hand shall find Thy foes!
Swift o'er their necks Thy chariot rolls,
And Earth Thy dreadful vengeance knows.

As glowing oven is Thy wrath,
As flame by furious blast upblown;
With equal heat Thy love breaks forth,
Like wall of fire around Thine own.

Be Thou exalted, King of kings!
In Thine own strength sit Thou on high!
Thy Church Thy triumph loudly sings,
And lauds Thy glorious Majesty.

C. H. SPURGEON.

V.

ABUNDANT IN LABORS.

LIFE is so brief that no man can afford to lose an hour of it. It has been well said, that if a king should bring us a great heap of gold, and bid us take as much as we could count in a day, we should make a long day of it; we should begin early in the morning, and in the evening we should not withhold our hand. Now, to win souls, or to grow in grace, or to commune with God, is far nobler work; how is it that we so soon withdraw from it? — C. H. SPURGEON.

ABUNDANT IN LABORS.

THE year 1856 was a remarkable one in the life of Mr. Spurgeon. It was the year of his marriage; the year in which he preached his grandfather's jubilee sermon, and one of the centenary sermons in Whitfield's Tabernacle in Tottenham Court Road.

During the first week of the year Mr. Spurgeon was delighting large audiences at Bath. The second week was made memorable by a service held in his own chapel, in which the young people, more particularly, took a very lively interest. Early in the forenoon of January 8th Mr. Spurgeon was married to Miss Susanna Thompson, daughter of Mr. Robert Thompson, of Falcon Square, London. Twin boys, Charles and Thomas Spurgeon, are the only additions to their family. Both are now settled pastors.

At this period Mr. Spurgeon was daily in the pulpit, often travelling many miles between the services held; and for months together he preached twelve sermons weekly, with undiminished force and unflagging zeal. In the achievement of such herculean tasks he has doubtless been indebted to an excellent constitution and to his simple habits of living. He is the very embodiment of nature, without the usual make-up of art. He throws himself on the tide of social intercourse with the freedom of one who has no tricks to exhibit and no failings to conceal. He is one of the most pleasant of companions: pious without any of the shams of piety; temperate without a touch of asceticism; and devout without the solemnity of the devotee. Preaching for his poorer brethren in

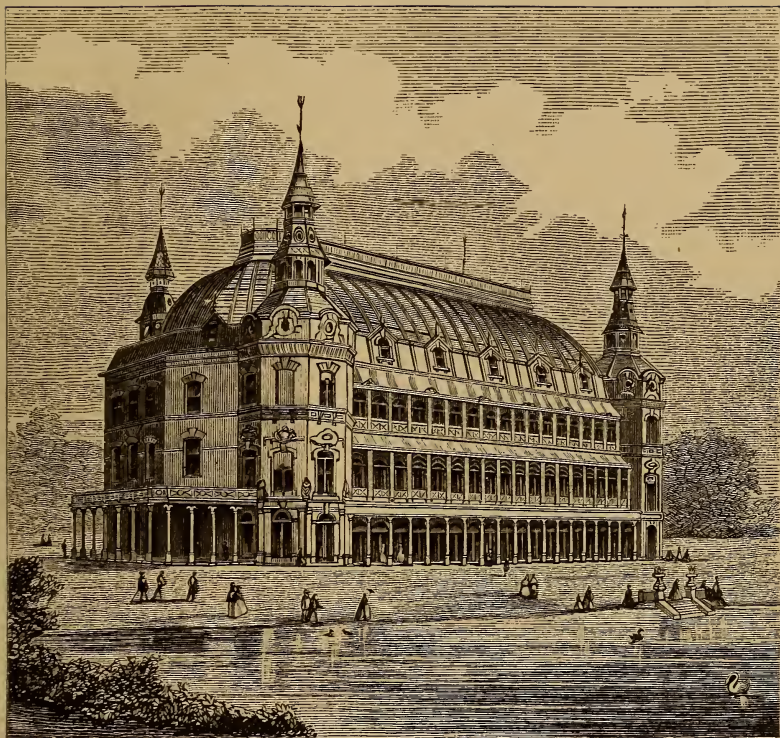
the country, he declined to receive any contribution towards his personal outlay, excepting only in cases where the church could well afford to pay his travelling expenses.

New Park-street Chapel when enlarged soon became utterly inadequate to receive the crowds which flocked to hear Mr. Spurgeon, and the deacons found it necessary to take the largest available building in London,—the Royal Surrey Gardens Music Hall,—and in October, 1856, Mr. Spurgeon commenced to preach every Sabbath in that vast audience-room, continuing the morning service there till the great Metropolitan Tabernacle was opened.

What is known as the Surrey Gardens catastrophe we need not do more than allude to. On October 19th a sad and fatal accident had wellnigh put an end to the large Sabbath gatherings drawn to hear Mr. Spurgeon; but that fatality was overruled for good. Previous to this Mr. Spurgeon knew not what illness was; but this calamity, joined with the wicked calumnies of a portion of the press, laid prostrate even the strong man.

In October, 1856, the first meeting was held for considering the steps necessary to be taken for erecting a great Tabernacle. The proposal was very heartily taken up by Mr. Spurgeon's friends, and in every part of the country sympathy was largely shown with the movement. There were many who laughed at the idea of erecting as a place of worship an edifice to hold five thousand persons. Regardless of these objections the work went on, Mr. Spurgeon travelling all over the land, preaching daily, with the promise of half the proceeds of the collection being devoted to the new Tabernacle. The foundation-stone of the great building was laid by Sir Samuel Morton Peto, Aug. 16, 1859.

During the progress of the work Mr. Spurgeon met on the ground, one evening after the workmen had left, one of his deacons. After some consultation and meditation, surrounded by planks, piles of timber and bricks, in the dim twilight, they both knelt down where no eye could see them but that of God; and with only the canopy of heaven for their covering, the pastor and his friend each poured out most earnest supplications for the prosperity of the work, the safety of the men engaged on the building,



SURREY MUSIC HALL.

and a blessing on the church. Their prayers were not offered in vain, but were abundantly answered. Out of so large a number of men engaged on the work, not one of them suffered harm.

In 1860 a large and enthusiastic meeting was held in the building before it was finished, at which much money was given and more promised. Great preparations were made during the winter for the holding of a large bazaar in the spring, which was probably one of the largest and most productive of the kind ever held in London. The opening services were commenced on March 25, 1861, and were continued without interruption for five weeks. As the result of all these efforts, the great Tabernacle, to hold five thousand people, was free from debt at the end of the special services, and \$155,000 of free-will offerings had been poured into the hands of the treasurer. Since then various improvements have been made in the audience-room, and, using every facility modern invention could suggest, seats have been provided for 5,500 persons, and standing room for 1,000 more, — total, 6,500.

Large as is the accommodation provided, the Tabernacle has always been filled. All the prophets of evil have been found false prophets, and the spirit of faith with which the work was begun has had its full reward in results even greater than ever had been anticipated.

When the church removed from New Park Street, in 1861, it numbered 1,178 members. In ten years from the commencement of his ministry Mr. Spurgeon had received into fellowship by baptism 3,569 persons.

During the period in which Mr. Spurgeon was preaching in the Surrey Music Hall large numbers of the aristocracy attended his ministry; amongst whom were Lord Chief Justice Campbell, the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs of London, Earl Russell, Lord Alfred Paget, Lord Panmure, Earl Grey, Earl Shaftesbury, the Marquis of Westminster, the Duchess of Sutherland, Lord Carlisle, Earl of Elgin, Baron Bramwell, Miss Florence Nightingale, Lady Rothschild, Dr. Livingstone, and many other persons of learning and distinction, some of whom sought and obtained interviews with the preacher. It was during that interim that Mr. Spurgeon paid

one of his visits to Holland, was privileged to preach before the Dutch Court, and had a lengthened interview with the queen of that country. It was reported that some members of the English Royal Family also occasionally attended on his preaching, and not a few distinguished clergymen and professors.

During the present year Mr. Gladstone and his son have formed part of the congregation, and a mutual interview was held at the close of the service between the great premier and the humble pastor. Mr. Gladstone has often spoken very highly of Mr. Spurgeon, calling him "the last of the Puritans."

Dr. Livingstone, the great African explorer, said, on one occasion after hearing Mr. Spurgeon, that no religious service he ever remembered had so deeply impressed his own mind as that he had witnessed and participated in that morning; adding, that when he had retired again into the solitudes of Africa, no scene he had ever witnessed would afford him more consolation than to recall the recollection that there was one man God had raised up who could so effectively and impressively preach to congregated thousands, whilst he should have to content himself by preaching to units, or at most tens, under a tropical sky in Africa; implying, at the same time, that Mr. Spurgeon's sphere of religious influence was a hundred times greater than that of the great and good traveller.

Mr. Spurgeon has often been invited to lecture in this country, but has always declined. The managers of the Redpath Lyceum Bureau having noticed a paragraph in the Boston papers stating that Mr. Spurgeon was about to visit the United States, enclosed it to him, and wrote as follows: —

BOSTON, Mass., June 22, 1876.

DEAR SIR, — Is the above paragraph true? We have tried so long and so hard for many years to secure you that we thought it impossible, and long since gave up all hope. We are the exclusive agents of all the leading lecturers in America. We will give you *a thousand dollars in gold* for every lecture you deliver in America, and pay all your expenses to and from your home, and place you under the most popular auspices in the country. Will you come?

To this invitation Mr. Spurgeon returned the following reply:—

CLAPHAM, LONDON, Eng., July 6.

GENTLEMEN, — I cannot imagine how such a paragraph should appear in your papers, except by deliberate invention of a hard-up editor, for I never had any idea of leaving home for America for some time to come. As I said to you before, if I could come, I am not a lecturer, *nor would I receive money for preaching.*

In the year 1857 Mr. Spurgeon preached two sermons, — one in the ordinary course of his ministrations, the other on a special occasion, — both of which commanded a sale of more than a hundred thousand copies. The first, preached in the autumn, was entitled “India’s Ills and England’s Sorrows,” and had reference to the mutiny in India. The second was preached in the Crystal Palace at Sydenham on the fast day relating to the war in India, when probably not less than twenty thousand formed the preacher’s audience.

It will doubtless interest many to learn something of the personal appearance of the preacher as he stood before that vast audience. One who had some skill in depicting natural life wrote of him as follows:—

“He is of medium height, at present quite stout, has a round and beardless face, not a high forehead, dark hair, parted in the centre of the head. His appearance in the pulpit may be said to be interesting rather than commanding. He betrays his youth, and still wears a boyish countenance. His figure is awkward, — his manners are plain, — his face (except when illumined by a smile) is admitted to be heavy. His voice seems to be the only personal instrument he possesses, by which he is enabled to acquire such a marvellous power over the minds and hearts of his hearers. His voice is powerful, rich, melodious, and under perfect control. Twelve thousand have distinctly heard every sentence he uttered in the open air, and this powerful instrument carried his burning words to an audience of twenty thousand gathered in the Crystal Palace. ‘Soon as he commences to speak,’ says an English critic, ‘tones of richest melody are heard. A voice, full, sweet, and musical, falls on every ear, and awakens agreeable

emotions in every soul in which there is a sympathy for sounds. That most excellent of voices is under perfect control, and can whisper or thunder at the wish of its possessor. Then there is poetry in every feature and every movement, as well as music in the voice. The countenance speaks, the entire form sympathizes. The action is in complete unison with the sentiments, and the eye listens scarcely less than the ear to the sweetly flowing oratory.' To the influence of this powerful voice, he adds that of a manner characterized by great freedom and fearlessness, intensely earnest, and strikingly natural. When to these we add the influence of thrilling description, touching anecdote, sparkling wit, startling episodes, striking similes, all used to illustrate and enforce the deep, earnest home-truths of the Bible, we surely have a combination of elements which must make up a preacher of wonderful attraction and of marvellous power."

Amidst his incessant duties and almost daily journeys and sermons, the devoted pastor still found time to give instruction to the young men he kept under his careful ministry. With Mr. Spurgeon it was work almost night and day, and all day long, with but little intermission, for several years in succession. The germs of what is now known as the Pastors' College were never absent from his mind, and frequently occupied his attention when in London. In 1857 the first student was sent out in charge of a church; in 1858 Mr. Silvertown went forth; in 1859 Mr. Davies and Mr. Genders followed, both of whom have left their mark on society.

On Jan. 1, 1865, appeared the first number of "The Sword and the Trowel;" a record of combat with sin, and labor for the Lord. It had an ornamental cover representing a Jewish doorway of stone, and beyond and within were seen the zealous Jews at work rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, the sword in one hand, the trowel in the other. The work was so wisely planned, and it has been so ably conducted, that it now occupies a prominent, if not a foremost place amongst the periodical literature of the land, and has a circulation of several thousand copies monthly, with a steady advancement.

Besides the other works daily undertaken by Mr. Spurgeon himself, and all his journeys in the country to preach special ser-

mons, he found time to write no less than nineteen articles for the first year's volume of his magazine. At the end of the year the Editor was ill at home, but he informed his friends, through the magazine, that he had finished writing his new book, "Morning by Morning," by which means he hoped to hold hallowed communion with thousands of families all over the world, every morning, at the family altar. He has since added to it a companion volume, "Evening by Evening," both of which works have had a large sale, which is steadily on the increase. Amongst his articles in 1865 were two poems, one entitled "The Fall of Jericho;" the other will find a fitting place in these pages. It was written while on a visit to Hull, in Yorkshire, during the summer: —

MARRIED LOVE — TO MY WIFE.

Over the space that parts us, my wife,
 I'll cast me a bridge of song,
 Our hearts shall meet, O joy of my life,
 On its arch unseen, but strong.

The wooer his new love's name may wear
 Engraved on a precious stone;
 But in my heart thine image I wear,
 That heart has long been thine own.

The glowing colors on surface laid,
 Wash out in a shower of rain;
 Thou need'st not be of rivers afraid,
 For my love is dyed ingrain.

And as every drop of Garda's lake
 Is tinged with sapphire's blue,
 So all the powers of my mind partake
 Of joy at the thought of you.

The glittering dewdrops of dawning love
 Exhale as the day grows old,
 And fondness, taking the wings of a dove,
 Is gone like a tale of old.

But mine for thee, from the chambers of joy,
 With strength came forth as the sun,
 Nor life nor death shall its force destroy,
 Forever its course shall run.

All earth-born love must sleep in the grave,
To its native dust return ;
What God hath kindled shall death out-brave,
And in heaven itself shall burn.

Beyond and above the wedlock tie
Our union to Christ we feel ;
Uniting bonds which were made on high,
Shall hold us when earth shall reel.

Though He who chose us all worlds before,
Must *reign* in our hearts alone,
We fondly believe that we shall adore
Together before His throne.

VI.

REVIVALS:

JUST as the birds, when the eggs are in the nest, have upon them a natural feeling that they must sit on those eggs, and that they must feed those little fledglings which will come from them ; so if God calls you to win souls, you will have a natural love for them, a longing wrought in you by the Holy Spirit, so that the whole force of your being will run out in that direction, seeking the salvation of men. — C. H. SPURGEON.

REVIVALS.

DURING the year 1865 Mr. Spurgeon held in the Tabernacle united meetings for prayer through one entire week, attended by over six thousand persons, which were a source of so much blessing to those attending them, that a second series followed a month later.

Conscious of the power of prayer, the pastor commenced the year 1866 with a month's continuous revival services, at which one hundred and twenty ministers and students were present. Knowing that he should have the sympathy and co-operation of his church in conducting them, in September the whole church had a day of fasting and prayer.

An important work, which had for a long time occupied Mr. Spurgeon's attention, was brought out this year, under the title of "Our Own Hymn Book." The preparation of a new collection of psalms and hymns for congregational use was felt to be an urgent necessity, but there was a nervous fear about the success of such a work. It was prepared with great care, and no pains were spared to make it complete in every respect, giving correct text, author's name to each hymn, with date of first publication, and other interesting particulars in the large edition of the book. The public at once saw the value of the collection, and since that time it has had a very large sale, having been adopted by and is now in use in scores if not hundreds of congregations.

As a student of the times in which Puritanism began to take hold of the mind of the English people, Mr. Spurgeon knew how

great a work was accomplished by the Nonconformists by book-hawking. He had learned by several visits to Scotland how useful and valuable that agency was in the north of England. He therefore, in January, 1866, issued a circular stating his intention to establish a system of colportage, by which his sermons and other works of a moral and religious character might be more widely distributed. At first it was intended to be confined to London and the neglected villages and small country towns around, where access to religious literature was difficult. The result of the appeal made in January led to the formation of THE COLPORTAGE ASSOCIATION in October, which has ever since been one of the important agencies of the Tabernacle, and which is every year increasing its operations and usefulness. It employs colporteurs, whose whole time is directed to the work, and who are paid a moderate salary; also book agents, who are constantly delivering books to purchasers, for which service they receive a liberal discount on sales, and by which they are enabled to make a satisfactory living. The wisdom of the course taken by Mr. Spurgeon in this matter has since been abundantly demonstrated. That association has been a blessing to thousands.

At this time there was a feeling abroad which manifested itself in several articles in public papers, and notably in a New York religious weekly, that Mr. Spurgeon, by means of his College and the large number of new chapels being erected all over the land for his students, was aiming at founding a sect, after the example of Wesley. So soon as this notion reached Mr. Spurgeon, he took the earliest opportunity of repudiating the idea. In a short article entitled "Spurgeonism," he thus records his views:—

"There is no word in the world so hateful to our heart as that word Spurgeonism, and no thought further from our soul than that of forming a new sect. Our course has been, and we hope ever will be, an independent one; but to charge us with separating from the general organization of the religious world, and even of the Baptist denomination, is to perpetrate an unfounded libel. We preach no new gospel, we desire no new objects, and follow them in no novel spirit. We love Christ better than a sect, and

truth better than a party, and so far are not denominational; but we are in open union with the Baptists for the very reason that we cannot endure isolation. He who searches all hearts knows that our aim and object is not to gather a band around self, but to unite a company around the Saviour. 'Let my name perish, but let Christ's name last for ever,' said George Whitfield; and so has Charles Spurgeon said a hundred times. We aid and assist the Baptist churches to the full extent of our power, although we do not restrict our energies to them alone, and in this those churches are far enough from blaming us. Our joy and rejoicing is great in the fellowship of all believers, and the forming of a fresh sect is work which we leave to the devil, whom it befits far more than ourselves. It is true that it has long been in our power to commence a new denomination, but it is not true that it has ever been contemplated by us or our friends. We desire as much as possible to work with the existing agencies, and when we commence new ones our friends must believe that it is with no idea of organizing a fresh community."

The closing days of the year 1866 Mr. Spurgeon spent in Paris, in a successful effort to get the Baptist church in that city brought out of an obscure corner, in which property could not be respected, into a place of prominence, where there was hope of its becoming known and being useful. This effort had long exercised the mind of Pastor Spurgeon, and he had the joy of seeing the work he aimed at fully accomplished. He spent his Christmas in Paris, getting rest for himself and doing a good work for the Parisians.

Reinvigorated by his short trip to the Continent, he returned to his duties at the Tabernacle with renewed energy and a stronger faith, having gained fresh courage from his success in France.

The month of February, 1867, witnessed the usual week of prayer, which that year was marked, on the 18th, by a whole day of fasting and prayer, commencing at seven in the morning and continuing, without a pause or breaking up for meals, until nine at night — a day of prayer in which the Holy Spirit was manifestly present all day. The account of the services held during that week reads like a new chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

The readiness with which Mr. Spurgeon can adapt himself to his audience, whether that audience consists of the educated or affluent, the poor or the ignorant, was never more distinctly seen than when, in the Evangelists' Tabernacle, Golden Lane, City, he preached to a congregation of costermongers. Mr. Orsman, the missionary there, had distributed tickets among the street dealers in Whitecross Street, so as to secure the class for whom the service was intended. An amusing article might be written to describe the singular variety of countenances and callings of those present. The hymns were heartily sung; the prayer won the hearts of the audience when Mr. Spurgeon offered supplication for those who had bodily aches and pains, and whose poverty deprived them of many desired comforts; many deep sighs followed those prayers. The sermon was preached from St. John iv. 15, and it was illustrated by allusions to the habits and manner of life of his congregation, whose acuteness relished the anecdotes and homely hits which the preacher so freely used. A costermonger's living depends much upon his voice. After the service the costers were free in their comments on the preacher's voice, which was described as "Wot a voice!" "Wonderful!" "Stunnin'!" "I never!" "Would make a fine coster!" &c. After the sermon about two hundred remained to be prayed with, and much spiritual good was done that night.

Six years having elapsed since the Tabernacle was opened, the building had suffered much from the massive congregations which had assembled there, and it became necessary to close it for several weeks for repairs. During that period Mr. Spurgeon preached to immense congregations in the Agricultural Hall, Islington. The first of the five special services was held on Sunday, March 24, 1867, when about twelve thousand persons were present. The preacher's delivery was slow, measured, and emphatic; nothing labored; and his voice lost none of its accustomed music. Many thousands heard the gospel at that time who were not accustomed to attend any place of worship. More than twenty thousand were in attendance on the final day.

The heavy responsibilities which rested on the pastor of the Tabernacle in the early part of the year made it necessary for him

to seek a little recreation, and with that he blended a friendly service for his esteemed friend Pastor Oncken, by preaching for him at the opening of his new Baptist church at Hamburg. He included in his travels a visit to Heligoland, which furnished for his ready and fertile pen most interesting matter for an article, which contains information both curious and valuable not to be found elsewhere.

PSALM XXX.

I WILL exalt Thee, Lord of hosts,
For Thou 'st exalted me ;
Since Thou hast silenced Satan's boasts,
I'll therefore boast in Thee.

My sins had brought me near the grave,
The grave of black despair ;
I looked, but there was none to save
Till I looked up in prayer.

In answer to my piteous cries,
From hell's dark brink I'm brought :
My Jesus saw me from the skies,
And swift salvation wrought.

All through the night I wept full sore,
But morning brought relief ;
That hand which broke my bones before,
Then broke my bonds of grief.

My mourning He to dancing turns,
For sackcloth joy He gives :
A moment, Lord, Thine anger burns,
But long Thy favor lives.

Sing with me then, ye favored men,
Who long have known His grace ;
With thanks recall the seasons when
Ye also sought His face.

C. H. SPURGEON.

VII.

MULTIPLYING WORK.

WE must ourselves drink of the living water till we are full, and then out of the midst of us shall flow rivers of living water; but not till then. Out of an empty basket you cannot distribute loaves and fishes, however hungry the crowd may be. Out of an empty heart you cannot speak full things, nor from a lean soul bring forth fat things full of marrow, nor from a dead heart impart life. Be blest, that ye may bless. — C. H. SPURGEON.

MULTIPLYING WORK.

RETURNING home, the industrious pastor found abundance of important work awaiting him. During the April previous the land had been secured at Stockwell for the ORPHAN HOUSES. The work of preparation for their erection had been so far advanced that a great festival was arranged, and on Monday, September 9, 1867, a party of some four thousand persons assembled at Stockwell, a large proportion of the company being collectors; and it was part of the programme for the foundation-stones of three of the houses to be laid, and for the numerous collectors to lay on the stones their respective contributions. It was an auspicious day for Mr. Spurgeon, for his deacons and church-members. A widely extended interest had been felt in the work, and the occasion became a grand holiday in that southern suburb of London. Three of the houses were thus far advanced in their progress, namely, the Silver Wedding House, the Merchants' House, and the Workmen's House. The united sums the collectors laid upon the stones amounted to eleven thousand dollars. The entire spectacle was both novel and touching. Prayers were offered on the occasion, the influence of which it is believed will be felt throughout all time. Appropriate hymns were sung, each ceremony being conducted with verses specially prepared, the first of which was as follows: —

Accept, O Lord, the grateful love
Which yields this house to Thee;
And on the Silver Wedding House
Let blessings ever be.

It was announced at the close of the ceremony that in addition to the one hundred thousand dollars given by Mrs. Hillyard, the money in hand was then twenty-seven thousand five hundred dollars. The assembly returned home highly delighted with the service and the glad tidings they had heard, whilst the pastor, worn out with fatigue and anxiety, retired home to rest.

The mental and physical strain of such heavy responsibilities was too much for Mr. Spurgeon, who was soon after laid aside quite ill. Although physically prostrate, his mind was in active exercise; and after being a sufferer for two months, he wrote an article for his magazine entitled, "On my Back," in which he submissively said, that after two months of ill health and severe pain, yet he believed there was a limit to sickness, and that Jesus knew all about it, feeling assured that the design of sickness was divinely good. This long absence from the pulpit led to the appointment of his brother, James Archer Spurgeon, as co-pastor to the church at the Tabernacle, and he officially entered on those duties in January, 1868.

Although the year 1868 did not furnish occasion for such important events as the preceding one, yet was there much earnest work done by Mr. Spurgeon at his Tabernacle. Not able to do so much physical work, he used his pen very freely. He wrote two articles for his magazine to advocate the claims of the Colportage Association. In March he delivered at the Tabernacle a lecture on "Our History and Work," with Mr. W. McArthur, M.P., in the chair. He also wrote an interesting article relating incidents in the life of his grandfather. In the month of May he preached the Sermon to Young Men at Mr. Martin's Chapel, Westminster, on behalf of the London Missionary Society, — a service rendered the more cheerfully, remembering, as he did, the prophetic words of good Richard Knill, that he would preach in the largest chapel in London. That was probably the largest chapel he had preached in, excepting his own. During the same month he spoke at the Breakfast Meeting of the Congregational Union.

In the month of March a generous friend sent to the pastor five thousand dollars for the College and five thousand dollars for the Orphanage, — such instances of liberality amply testifying



JAMES ARCHER SPURGEON, CO-PASTOR.

the high estimation in which the noble enterprises of Mr. Spurgeon were held by the public. On his birthday, June 19th, a great meeting was held, and liberal contributions made for the Orphanage.

Bright as are these spots in the life of the pastor, and in his work at the Tabernacle and its belongings, yet there hung over his home all the time a dark shadow which Divine Providence saw fit to place there. Mrs. Spurgeon had long been a great sufferer, and to alleviate her sorrows, if possible, a very painful operation had to be undertaken. The most skilful surgeons of the land were engaged, under the direction of Sir James Simpson, of Edinburgh. Prayer was made for her by the whole church, and, by the blessing of God, the operation was so far successful that her sufferings were alleviated and her life prolonged; but it has been a life of pain and weakness, though with less of anguish.

A gratifying fact is recorded by Mr. Spurgeon this year, who publicly acknowledges the kindness of Dr. Palfrey, of Finsbury Square, for his gratuitous and generous professional attendance on the poor members of the Tabernacle.

At Christmastide, and at the opening of the year, the claims of Mr. Spurgeon's benevolent agencies were remembered by his many friends, who sent him of their worldly substance with generous hands, so that he commences the first number of "The Sword and the Trowel" for 1869 with a most jubilant note: "Bless the Lord, O my soul!"

He also made the announcement that a gentleman in Australia had written to say he intended to reprint his sermons weekly in that far-off land, to give them a yet wider circulation.

From the very commencement of his ministry strange tales had been put into circulation by his detractors, most of which Mr. Spurgeon passed by in silence. Several very ludicrous speeches were attributed to him soon after he became popular in London. In the midst of his work, at the opening of the year 1869, the voice of the slanderer was again heard, and many were troubling the busy pastor to know how true were the statements in circulation respecting him. In reply to all these, under the head of "Silly Tales," he wrote in his magazine: "Friends who write us

about silly tales may save themselves the trouble. We have been enabled in our ministry and in our walk before God so to act, through grace, that we have given no occasion for the slanderers, save only that we have kept the faith, and been very jealous for the Lord God of Israel. Many of the absurd stories still retailed everywhere are the very same libels which were repeated concerning Rowland Hill and others long gone to their rest." This reply will serve its purpose in after years as well as now.

Having seen much of the folly too frequently exhibited at funerals, he published his views, with the apt title, "Funerals; or, a Black Business," in which, after exposing the folly of using feathers and gold-headed sticks in carrying a dead body to the grave, he observes: "I would sooner be eaten by crows than have pride and pomp feeding on my little savings, which are meant for my bereaved wife and children, and not for unsuitable, untimely, and unholy show. I have heard that more than four millions of money are squandered every year in funeral fopperies. The money buys or hires silk scarfs, brass nails, feathers for horses, kid gloves and gin for the mutes, and white satin and black cloth for the worms. It seems to me to be mighty fine nonsense, more for the pride of the living than the honor of the dead, more for the profit of the undertaker than any one else."

In June of that year the first report of the Orphanage was issued, which plainly set forth how earnestly the work had been carried on for it in having the houses erected and in getting them furnished and occupied. Twenty-nine boys were then in residence, one of whom was the son of one of the workmen who had assisted in building the workmen's house, the father having died after the house was erected.

Taking a short holiday in July, Mr. Spurgeon, accompanied by a friend, climbed the summit of Hindhead, in the South of England, then paid a brief visit to the Continent. Soon after his return home, in October, he was entirely laid aside from pastoral work by a slight attack of small-pox. His friends became seriously anxious about him, and special prayer was made again and again for his recovery. It came slowly, but in anticipation thereof the first article in the magazine for November was "A

Sermon from a Sick Preacher." Possessed of such mighty faith in God, and with such indomitable courage, Pastor Spurgeon finds opportunities for doing good, and does it, whilst others are considering what had best be done. He even wrote directions "How to bear Affliction."

During the progress of his recovery he wrote a New Year's Letter to his ministering brethren, which commences his magazine for 1870, in which, with much affectionate earnestness, he urges them, even by special means, if ordinary ones fail, *to aim at the salvation of the souls of their congregations*, enforcing this duty upon them by the example of the Ritualists, who are zealous, working to spread their delusions, especially amongst the poor, with whom they know how to succeed by bribes of bread and clothing. He says he writes as a sick man, but feels the urgency and importance of soul-winning.

The prostrate condition of the pastor's health for nearly three months made it necessary for him to appeal with his pen for the aid of his friends in sustaining the benevolent works of the Tabernacle. In March, 1870, his appeal took the following form: "The pastorate of a church of four thousand members, the direction of all its agencies, the care of many churches arising from the College work; the selection, education, and guidance in their settlements of the students; the oversight of the Orphanage, the editing of a magazine, the production of numerous volumes, the publication of a weekly sermon, an immense correspondence, a fair share in public and denominational action, and many other labors, besides the incessant preaching of the Word, give us a right to ask of our friends that we be not allowed to have an anxious thought about the funds needed for our enterprises."

This remarkable picture of energy and activity will scarcely be surpassed by any man living, if indeed it can be equalled by more than one in a million, even in this industrious age. But there were other duties pressing on Mr. Spurgeon's mind, at the time, which he could not throw off. For some months previously a controversy had been warmly carried on in the columns of the "Christian World" newspaper, advocating a curious system of future punishment ending in annihilation. The editor of the paper prohib-

ited in his columns the publication of any letters on the opposite side, excepting only what Mr. Spurgeon might write. Mr. Spurgeon wrote to the editor, pointing out that his conduct was not quite frank, and declining on his part to help the agitation, telling him that the words of our Lord — “These shall go away into everlasting punishment” — finally settled the point; and he held that the publication of views which are opposed to that declaration, and the views themselves, were equally dangerous.

Greatly have the funds of the College been aided by the lectures which its President has given from time to time on its behalf. After one of his visits to Italy Mr. Spurgeon delivered a very interesting and lively lecture on “Rome, and what I saw and heard there.” Some of the reporters for the daily press — not a few of whom are Jesuits — misrepresented some very material portions of the lecture in their abridged account. Mr. Spurgeon was obliged to defend himself; and what he said against such insidious foes in the pages of his own magazine led to another kindred topic being brought before the public about the same time, when these same reporters misled the public mind by applying to King Victor Immanuel of Italy a prayer which belonged only to Immanuel, Victor over sin, the man Christ Jesus.

In May, 1870, Mr. Spurgeon sent forth a new work entitled “Feathers for Arrows,” intended to supply preachers and teachers with useful material for filling up their sermons, lectures, and addresses. Ten thousand copies of the book were sold in three months.

The public mind was considerably agitated at that time by the action of the School Board in reference to religious teaching in their schools; some wanting to exclude the reading of the Bible from them, and so deprive the upgrowing population of the use of the best book in the language. A large meeting was held in Exeter Hall, in July, in defence of the Bible being daily read in elementary schools. Mr. Spurgeon took the chair on the occasion. The result of the meeting was, the Bible retains its place as a daily school book. The wisdom of the decision then made has been abundantly manifested since, and especially so by the

great gathering of Board-School children in the Crystal Palace in July, 1877, when some thousands of prizes were publicly given to the pupils for proficiency in knowledge of the Bible, and when it was most convincingly shown that parents in London (excepting only a few Jews) do not object to their children being taught daily from the Word of God.

PSALM XXXIX.

BEHOLD, O Lord, my days are made
A handbreadth at the most;
Ere yet 'tis noon my flower must fade,
And I give up the ghost.

Then teach me, Lord, to know mine end,
And know that I am frail;
To Heaven let all my thoughts ascend,
And let not Earth prevail.

What is there here that I should wait?
My hope 's in Thee alone.
When wilt Thou open glory's gate,
And call me to Thy Throne?

A stranger in this land am I,
A sojourner with Thee:
Oh, be not silent at my cry,
But show Thyself to me.

Though I 'm exiled from glory's land,
Yet not from glory's King:
My God is ever near at hand,
And therefore I will sing.

C. H. SPURGEON.

VIII.

RESULTS OF OVERWORK.

COME, let us live while we live! Let us serve God to the utmost stretch of our manhood! Let us ask the Lord to brace our nerves, to string our sinews, and make us true crusaders, knights of the blood-red cross, consecrated men and women who, for the love we bear Christ's name, will count labor to be ease, and suffering to be joy, and reproach to be honor, and loss to be gain!—
C. H. SPURGEON.

RESULTS OF OVERWORK.

THE special religious services held in February, at the Tabernacle, were seasons of much blessing. More than one hundred members were added to the church in one month. The people went to the services expecting to receive good, and they were not disappointed.

Soon after the annual College supper, which was held in March, 1871, at which the sum of seven thousand five hundred dollars was given, Mr. Spurgeon was laid aside by a more than usually severe attack of gout, which confined him indoors for three long, weary months; yet in the midst of all his pain and suffering he wrote in July of the great mercies he had received from the hand of God, and by the bounty of his friends to the Orphanage and the College. It was at the close of this protracted attack of bodily pain that he was privileged to preach the sermon which forms No. 1,000 of his published discourses. Its second title is "Bread Enough and to Spare," and it is based on Luke xv. 17. It was the delight of the pastor to receive from a friend five thousand dollars on behalf of the College, in honor of the event just named. Who would not pray that God's blessing may rest forever on that friend?

Taking the advice of his friends, Mr. Spurgeon proceeded to the Continent for a short tour and for rest. His observant eye was constantly discovering some passing beauty which his ever-ready pencil recorded in his note-book, a book which contains a store of incidents which serve to enrich his conversation and fill up his magazine. Accordingly, taking Jersey and Guernsey on

his way, we find before the end of the year an interesting article from his pen, on St. Brelade's Bay.

As the cold raw winter weather set in, the beloved pastor was urged by all his friends to seek a warmer climate. Illness in a severe form again overtook him, on the second day of which he received a telegram from Boston, in America, offering most liberal terms to him if he would go to that country and deliver a series of lectures. So large a sum would have been a strong temptation to most men, but not so to this minister of Jesus Christ, whose prompt reply was, "he had neither time nor strength to go to America." Instead of journeying westward for personal gain, he started on a pilgrimage to sunny Italy and the South of France, taking what he designated a Scriptural holiday, a forty days' rest. Accordingly, leaving gloomy December in England, he spent that month in visiting Pompeii, Venice, Florence, Rome, Naples, and France,—a fitting holiday after having completed nineteen years' labor in London.

In taking a survey of the work of the year, for the preface to his magazine, Mr. Spurgeon sums up the record by saying it had been a year of spiritual drought in the churches generally, but at the Tabernacle they had witnessed much prosperity, and the trained pastors who had gone out from them had been also blessed in like manner. Eleven students were appointed to pastoral duty during 1872. During this year, also, Archibald G. Brown opened his large Tabernacle in the East of London. It is a building for extent and variety of Christian work second only to Mr. Spurgeon's. Mr. Brown is one of the most successful students trained in the Pastors' College.

In the hope that the genial sunshine of Southern Europe, in which he had passed out of the old into the new year, would have established his health for renewed efforts, the pastor appeared once more at the Tabernacle, and at the church meeting in January, 1873, he had the gratification of finding one hundred and thirty-five new members to be received into fellowship, thus demonstrating that there was life in the church, though its chief pastor had been away. The cold, raw, damp weather continuing with the new year, he was again prevented from leaving his own home,

and for many weeks he was unable to preach on the Sabbath. How great a trial that silence was to the preacher, none so well knew as himself. Sorrowing greatly at the privation both to himself and his church, he yet submitted without murmur to the will of God.

Shut in from the outer world, he had an opportunity of surveying the progress of the work which was being done at the Tabernacle. The College reports exhibited the outposts which had already been reached by the students, one of whom was laboring to set forth Jesus as the only Saviour of sinners, in China; one in Sydney, one in Tasmania, one in Adelaide, two in Madrid, one in Ontario, one in Ohio, one in Philadelphia, one in South Africa, and one in Toronto. What a vast prospect of work to be done in the intermediate spaces between each one of those missionary agents and the Tabernacle!

At the Annual Church Meeting held in February, 1873, the total membership was reported at 4,417. The losses during the previous year had been 263, the additions were 571, leaving a net increase for the year of 308 living members. Well may both pastor and deacons rejoice at the presence of the Lord God in their midst. At this date came a renewed application from the United States to come over and lecture. Note the preacher's reply: "An American firm offer Mr. Spurgeon twenty-five thousand dollars to deliver twenty-five lectures in that country, at one thousand dollars each, and further arrangements can be made for one hundred lectures. Although the remuneration offered is very far beyond anything our beloved people are likely to give us, we prefer to have the gospel according to our Lord's words preached freely, rather than to use the Lord's time for earning money for our own purse." Well done, Pastor Spurgeon!!!

Always sympathizing with the oppressed, it did not surprise any one to learn that the Fisk Jubilee Singers received an early invitation from the pastor and deacons to give one of their concerts in the Metropolitan Tabernacle. It would be difficult to determine which party experienced the most delight, the colored singers to go and see and hear Mr. Spurgeon speak in his own church, or his congregation to welcome, with all the heartiness

they could manifest, those liberated slaves, whose vocal powers had by anticipation preceded their visit, to insure them a hearty greeting. It was indeed a pleasant hour, that which introduced the singers to the vast mass of people which crowded every inch of space in the building to hear them. Indeed, hundreds had to go away, unable to crowd in anywhere within sight or hearing. And the collection which followed it was right royal in amount. They cleared about eleven hundred dollars for their University by singing at the Tabernacle alone. The effect on the mind of the pastor himself, he thus describes in his own magazine: "The melodies were rendered by our emancipated friends in a manner altogether unique: we have never heard anything like it; pure nature untrammelled by rule, pouring forth its notes as freely as the wild birds in the spring. The people were charmed: our intercourse with the choir was very pleasant." As soon as the singers arrived in London on their second tour, they received an earnest invitation to repeat their visit to the Metropolitan Tabernacle.

As the practical pastor was again charged with being too personal in preaching, in one of his articles on "Personal preaching," Mr. Spurgeon remarks: "We aim at speaking personally and pointedly to all our hearers; and they are the best judges whether we accomplish it, and also as to whether we use language at which any man ought to be offended. Very seldom does a week occur without our receiving letters from persons unknown to us, thanking us for advising or comforting them in our sermons, the parties evidently being under the impression that some friend had communicated their cases to us, though, indeed, we knew nothing whatever of them. Frequently we have had apologetic notes acknowledging the justice of the rebuke, and correcting us in some minor details of a description supposed to refer to a special sinner; whereas we were unaware of the writer's existence. We have ceased to regard these incidents as curious, for we remember that the Word of God is 'a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.'" Strange and interesting facts have often reached him. At the commencement of Mr. Spurgeon's ministry he related having received a letter from a poor shoemaker during the week,

who said that he was the man who had kept his shop open on the Sunday, who had sold only one pair of old boots for one-and-eightpence, and that, having broken the Sabbath for so small a sum and been so publicly exposed, none but God could have told the facts to the preacher, he had resolved to break the Sabbath no longer. He became converted, and joined the church; but the preacher had no knowledge of the man till he wrote about himself.

During the spring weather of '73 Mr. Spurgeon did not recover his accustomed health, neither did he give up his accustomed work, excepting when really unable to leave home. At the end of April he preached one of the annual sermons before the Wesleyan Missionary Society, in Great Queen-street Chapel, to the largest congregation ever assembled on a similar occasion, at the close of which the collection reached an amount greater than had ever before been made for that object.

In June he took part in the services connected with laying memorial stones for a new Baptist chapel near his own residence at Clapham. He stated that it had long been in his heart to build a chapel in that locality, and he had laid aside one thousand dollars to commence the work, but all his efforts had failed. He was glad that others were doing what he had not been able to do. He had himself been delighted that year to preach for the Wesleyans, and to speak for the Independents; but he urged all Baptists residing in that district to give to the church which intended to assemble in that new erection. In the early part of the year Mr. Spurgeon had made a collection at the Tabernacle on behalf of the new Surrey Chapel for Mr. Newman Hall, which reached five hundred dollars.

In taking a survey of the literary work of "The Sword and the Trowel" for the year, the editor in his preface for 1873 remarks: "I have been hunting up topics of interest with no small degree of anxiety, sending forth the magazine with earnest desires to win a hearing and to produce good results of all kinds. I edit the periodical most conscientiously, giving it my personal attention, and I spare no pains to make it as good as I can."

The applications made to the College for pastors during 1873

were more numerous than had before been made. Thirty of these were supplied. Out of that number two were sent to Spain, one to India, one to China, one to Prince Edward Island, one to Ireland, and one to Scotland. On the 14th of October the foundation-stone of the new College buildings was laid by the President. It was a day which will long be remembered with delight. The people on the occasion gave five thousand dollars, and the students gave fifteen hundred more; but the chief joy of the day was the whole-day prayer-meeting which the students held, that the divine blessing might rest on the work, and upon all connected with the College.

IX.

TRIALS AND DELIVERANCES.

THERE is a trying word and a delivering word, and we must bear the one till the other comes to us. How meekly Joseph endured his afflictions, and with what fortitude he looked forward to the clearing of his slandered character! It will be well if, under similar trials, we are able to imitate him and come forth from the furnace as thoroughly purified as he was, and as well prepared to bear the yet sterner ordeal of honor and power. — C. H. SPURGEON.

TRIALS AND DELIVERANCES.

THE year 1874 presented but few varieties in the life and work of the pastor at the Tabernacle. Of blessings he had many, and of trials not a few; but the work prospered. In May the funds of the Orphanage ran dry, and, as there was urgent need of five hundred dollars for each week, earnest efforts were required. On May the 8th all the debts were paid; but the bank was empty. There was urgent pleading with God, and on that very day two thousand dollars was sent in, so that the orphans were thereby provided for during another month. In October the funds were exhausted again; and again, in answer to prayer and effort, the needed relief came, though the faith of all was tried. At that time the pastor was suffering greatly, both in his person and family; his body was weary with rheumatic pains, his dear wife a suffering invalid, the care of a church of four thousand eight hundred members rested upon him, and the cry of the orphans was heard for bread; in the midst of all, his faith failed not; he wrote his assurance that the Lord will provide. Amongst other kind of help which came, Messrs. Cory, of Cardiff, sent for the good of the Orphanage five thousand dollars.

The annual meetings for prayer in February, the yearly church meeting for reporting the progress of the several agencies at work, and the annual supper in March for the benefit of the College, were each times of refreshing and blessing, in both spiritual and material things. In May the congregation at the Tabernacle had

the delightful satisfaction of hearing the Rev. George Müller, of Bristol, preach to them. After carrying on his wonderful Orphan Houses near that city for forty years, he felt constrained to go forth on a preaching pilgrimage, to declare the goodness of God, and to try and stimulate the faith of the Lord's people, and Mr. Spurgeon's church shared in his ministrations. It was a fitting cordial welcome to a man who was the very embodiment of that faith by which Mr. Spurgeon's Orphanage had been erected and maintained hitherto; and Mr. Müller's discourse embodied much of his own personal experience of what God had done by and through him, in erecting Orphan Houses on Ashley Downs, free from debt, in which two thousand children are daily fed, clothed, and educated. To the long record of God's faithful ones, written by the Apostle Paul, must be added what was done by the faith of George Müller and his helpers at Bristol, and by Pastor C. H. Spurgeon and his helpers at Stockwell.

Having had repeated invitations to preach in Bedford, in what is known as the New Bunyan Meeting, Mr. Spurgeon visited that place in the summer of 1874, but the crowds which assembled to hear him made it impossible for any building for public worship to hold them. Mr. Howard kindly met the people's wants, and had one of his large implement sheds fitted up for worship, and there the voice of praise and prayer ascended to heaven from thousands of voices. It was a memorable day for Bedford, which the people will not let pass from their recollection.

In the summer of 1874 a great cry was raised against Mr. Spurgeon for a public utterance in favor of smoking tobacco, which was made use of by the press and jealous rivals to lessen his influence. In his own defence he wrote as follows: —

“I demur altogether and most positively to the statement that to smoke tobacco is in itself a sin. It may become so, as any other indifferent action may, but as an action it is no sin. Together with hundreds of thousands of my fellow-Christians, I have smoked; and with them I am under the condemnation of living in habitual sin, if certain accusers are to be believed. As I would not knowingly live even in the smallest violation of the law of God, and sin is the transgression of the law, I will not own to sin

when I am not conscious of it. There is growing up in society a Pharisaic system which adds to the commands of God the precepts of men; to that system I will not yield for an hour. The preservation of my liberty may bring upon me the upbraidings of many of the good, and the sneers of the self-righteous: but I shall endure both with serenity, so long as I feel clear in my conscience before God.

“The expression ‘smoking to the glory of God’ standing alone has an ill sound, and I do not justify it; but in the sense in which I employed it I still stand to it. No Christian should do anything in which he cannot glorify God—and this may be done, according to Scripture, in eating and drinking and the common actions of life. When I have found intense pain relieved, a weary brain soothed, and calm, refreshing sleep obtained by a cigar, I have felt grateful to God, and have blessed His name; this is what I meant, and by no means did I use sacred words triflingly. If through smoking I had wasted an hour of my time; if I had stinted my gifts to the poor; if I had rendered my mind less vigorous, I trust I should see my fault and turn from it: but he who charges me with these things shall have no answer but my forgiveness.

“I am told that my open avowal will lessen my influence, and my reply is that if I have gained any influence through being thought different from what I am, I have no wish to retain it. I will do nothing upon the sly, and nothing about which I have a doubt.

“I am most sorry that prominence has been given to what seems to me so small a matter—and the last thing in my thoughts would have been the mention of it from the pulpit; but I was placed in such a position that I must either by my silence plead guilty to living in sin, or else bring down upon my unfortunate self the fierce rebukes of the anti-tobacco advocates by speaking out honestly. I chose the latter; and although I am now the target for these worthy brethren, I would sooner endure their severest censures than sneakingly do what I could not justify, and earn immunity from their criticism by tamely submitting to be charged with sin in an action which my conscience allows.”

This is a noble reply, but let no one for a moment suppose that Pastor Spurgeon advocates the general use of tobacco. By no means. And let his accusers remember that indulgence in expensive dress, or eating and drinking, is not allowable to themselves because they refrain from the use of tobacco. Those who would wash the disciples' feet should do so with clean hands.

One of the most gratifying services at the Tabernacle, during the year 1874, was that held on Monday, September 21, when the pastor's heart was delighted by admitting both of his sons into church fellowship by public baptism. One of Mr. Spurgeon's sisters has long been a member there, and now his two boys, Charles and Thomas, have both a name and a place in the church. Before they had been in communion with the church a year they began to address a small congregation at Bolingbroke Road, Clapham, on the Sabbath day. One of the brothers took the service in the morning, and the other in the evening: thus they were both, in their eighteenth year, following in the footsteps of their father and their ancestors for several generations. May the blessing of their fathers' God rest upon and ever abide with them.

More numerous than ever before were the applications for pastors from the Tabernacle College. During the year 1874 the new buildings had been opened, and they had been found all that could be desired for the convenience, comfort, and health of the men. The educational staff had been increased, and additional facilities for extending the knowledge of the students afforded. Thirty-seven students were located during the year, three of whom were sent to the United States, and one to Scotland. Up to the end of 1874 the total number of students who had gone out as pastors was three hundred and twenty.

Probably no preacher of the present day has received more tokens of affectionate regard, both private and public, personal and collective, than Pastor Spurgeon. These might be mentioned by the score, but it will suffice to allude to one special instance.

When Mr. Spurgeon had completed his pastorate of twenty-one years, some of his friends resolved to mark their sense of the value of his services by a present of ten thousand dollars and a written memorial. On hearing of what was contemplated, the pastor

declined the financial part of the proposal, suggesting that their gifts find their way to the collection at the College supper.

At the annual meeting of church-members held on Jan. 5, 1875, a very elegantly written testimonial, expressive of their devout gratitude to God for having sustained C. H. Spurgeon through twenty-one years of faithful, loving, and eminently successful ministry, beyond all precedent in the history of the Lord's people, was presented. It was a superb and elaborate piece of penmanship, and in the border were inserted correct photographic portraits both of Mr. Spurgeon and his brother James, the co-pastor. The portraits will remain as permanent representations of the two brothers in the prime of life.

The voice of praise and thanksgiving was the foremost theme in "The Sword and the Trowel" for January, 1875. The subject was "Twenty Years of Published Sermons." In an article extending to several pages the Editor gives a brief history of the way his sermons first began to appear in print, followed by a glance at their continuance during a period of twenty years. He informs us that as a youth he took great delight in reading the sermons of Joseph Irons as they appeared; and he even then conceived in his heart that one day he might have a penny pulpit of his own. The dream of his boyhood has been realized, and he gratefully acknowledges the hand of God in permitting him to issue one sermon at the least every week, without a single omission, for the last twenty years. This is a privilege and an honor no other man in England has attained to; and the plain, homely, earnest manner in which the gospel has been set forth in those sermons is set down by the author as the chief cause of their continuance. Commencing with a sale of from one to two thousand weekly, they rapidly increased till the sale was ten thousand each issue. For many years past the sermons have maintained a steady and permanent sale of twenty-five thousand copies. There is a twofold marvel connected with these sermons: the first is that the work should have been continued so many years without interruption; the second, that the sale should have steadily progressed till they had reached so large a weekly demand, and that it has been so many years maintained at that large number. The sermons are

to be found in every country in the world, and at a moderate computation they have been read during the past twenty years by millions of people. Many hundreds of persons have been converted by their perusal, and thousands of preachers have at various times either used them in their published form, or adapted them to the congregations to which they have been preached by others than their author. One Scotch minister translates the sermons into Gaelic, and from his Gaelic translates them back into English, by which process he preserves the thoughts, but totally loses the phraseology used by Mr. Spurgeon; and in that form preaches or reads them to his people.

One gentleman had copies handsomely bound and presented to every crowned head in Europe. A smaller volume was sent, post free, to every student in all the English universities, and to all the members of both houses of Parliament. That gentleman alone gave away two hundred and fifty thousand copies of the sermons, and superintended their distribution himself.

With such a history, well may the preacher close his own account of his sermon-publishing labors with the words of the Psalmist: "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name!"

But however jubilant the tone of the first article in the January magazine, it was not long before the pastor realized how uncertain were earthly joys, and how soon they are mixed with sorrows. Naturally buoyant in spirit, he was preparing to escape from the severe cold of January by a visit to Mentone, where a genial sun shines all the year round. Gout and rheumatic pains came on with such rapidity and severity that removal from home was impossible. His condition will be best described in his own words: —

"Just preparing for a journey to Mentone when gout and rheumatism came on with such rapidity and severity that removal was impossible. Feet and legs became useless except for suffering. We had much to do, but were not permitted even to think of the many plans of usefulness open. Dr. Palfrey attended, and intimated that the disease springs from mental causes, and can be as fairly reckoned upon when an extra pressure of care or labor occurs as the tides may be calculated by the moon.

“We have received many prescriptions for the gout, and should have been dead long ago if we had tried half of them. We are grateful, but cannot utilize them. The best remedy is to prevent our having any anxiety about the College, Orphanage, or the Colportage. If the funds keep up, and the works are carried on, and the Lord’s blessing rests upon the enterprises, they will be better to us than all the lotions, liniments, specifics, and elixirs put together, with twenty sorts of magnetisms thrown in.”

After many weeks of intense suffering relief came; and a brief holiday for change was followed by a renewed application to the numerous daily duties of his active life. Resuming his Sunday morning preaching, he found Mr. Ira D. Sankey one of his auditors, and at the close of the service the American evangelist led the congregation by singing one of his favorite hymns, “Ring the Bells of Heaven.” Mr. Spurgeon shortly afterwards manifested his sympathy with the work carried on by Messrs. Moody and Sankey by inviting them to take part in the College anniversary, and by his delivering addresses for them at the noonday prayer-meetings, and by preaching. Mr. Moody visited Mr. Spurgeon at his residence at Clapham, and after dinner learned from his host some lessons of practical encouragement in his great evangelistic work. Looking over the portraits of Mr. Spurgeon’s twin boys, — for which they both sat annually from infancy till they were seventeen years old, to show their gradual growth, — Mr. Moody has since used the fact as a new illustration for his sermons.

At the annual meeting of the British and Foreign Bible Society, held in Exeter Hall, Mr. Spurgeon moved the adoption of the resolution of thanks to the committee and officers; and in doing so stated very plainly that the distribution of the Bible was the best remedy against infidelity, ritualism, and all other evils; and the study of its pages tended to bring all Christians nearer to each other. He prefaced his address by relating an incident which occurred to him three years previously, which is as follows. Sitting in the Colosseum at Rome with two or three friends, he said: “Is it not glorious to look at this old ruin and see how Christ has conquered here; how all these ruins tell what desolations He hath made in the earth; how He breaketh the bow and scattereth the

spear in sunder? So I said, 'Let us have a tune,' and we sang the verse, —

'Jesus' tremendous name
Has put our foes to flight;
Jesus, the meek, the humble lamb,
A lion is in fight.'

Up came two strangers, and said, 'What is that you are singing? Let us join you.' One was an American and the other an English clergyman, and we sang together the next verse, —

'By all hell's host withstood,
We all hell's host o'erthrow;
And conquering them through Jesus' blood,
We still to conquer go.'

And so we shall mark our track by the ruin of our adversaries; they shall only be remembered by the place which they once inhabited, which shall be a desolation and the habitation of the bittern for ever and ever."

Before closing his address, he related the following anecdote: "I have very seldom found it to be a lost thing to give a present of a Testament. I was greatly astonished about a month ago. A cabman drove me home, and when I paid him his fare, he said: 'A long time since I drove you last, sir!' 'But,' said I, 'I do not recollect you!' 'Well,' he said, 'I think it is fourteen years ago; but,' he said, 'perhaps you will know this Testament!' pulling one out of his pocket. 'What,' I said, 'did I give you that?' 'Oh, yes,' he said, 'and you spoke to me about my soul, and nobody had done that before, and I have never forgotten it.' 'What,' said I, 'have n't you worn it out?' 'No,' he said, 'I would not wear it out; I have had it bound!' — and he had kept it very carefully indeed."

Just at that period Messrs. Moody and Sankey were in the midst of their evangelistic labors in London, and Mr. Spurgeon cheerfully and heartily encouraged those earnest men of God. Early in May he preached for Mr. Moody one Friday evening to ten thousand people in Bow-road Hall, on the healing of the deaf and dumb man, as recorded in Mark vii. 24-27. The sermon occupied nearly an hour in delivery, and was simple, natural, and prac-

tical, and was listened to with the attention of persons who seemed to be listening for life. Few of those who were present, and who admired the power of his voice and the vigor of his thoughts, knew that he had spoken for two hours that afternoon to the students of his College.

A great grief overshadowed the church at the Tabernacle near the end of the month of July, when it was announced that Mrs. Bartlett was seriously ill; and after only a week's illness the labors of her most loving and useful life were terminated on August 2. On Friday, August 6, a funeral service was held in the Tabernacle, and the interment took place the same afternoon in Nunhead Cemetery. The suffering pastor bowed submissively to that divine dispensation, knowing that the hand of God was in it.

PSALM XLI.

JESUS, poorest of the poor!
 Man of sorrows! Child of grief!
 Happy they whose bounteous store
 Ministered to Thy relief.

Jesus, though Thy head is crowned,
 Crowned with loftiest majesty,
 In Thy members Thou art found
 Plunged in deepest poverty.

Happy they who wash Thy feet,
 Visit Thee in Thy distress!
 Honor great, and labor sweet,
 For Thy sake the saints to bless!

They who feed Thy sick and faint,
 For Thyself a banquet find;
 They who clothe the naked saint,
 Round Thy loins the raiment bind.

Thou wilt keep their soul alive,
 From their foes protect their head;
 Languishing, their strength revive,
 And in sickness make their bed.

Thou wilt deeds of love repay;
 Grace shall generous hearts reward
 Here on earth, and in the day
 When they meet their reigning Lord.

C. H. SPURGEON.

X.

DEVISING LIBERAL THINGS.

LET not your zeal evaporate in a mere mist of pious talk, let it flow in streams of practical usefulness. Love the brethren of Him who loved you. If there be a Mephibosheth anywhere who is lame or halt, help him for that Jonathan's sake whose love to us surpasseth the love of women. If there be a poor tried believer, weep with him, and bear his cross for the sake of Him who wept for you and carried the painful burden of your sins. — C. H. SPURGEON.

DEVISING LIBERAL THINGS.

THE work of Mrs. Bartlett at the Tabernacle has been one of the greatest blessings of the place. That lady, born in the country in 1807, was converted to God at the age of twelve, and immediately she began to persuade others around her to give their hearts to God. She became an earnest and devoted praying teacher in the Sunday-school, and soon saw some of the children turning to God. She then began to visit the villages around her house, and was the means of doing much good in that way. After her marriage, and with a family claiming her attention, she came to London, and, attending New Park-street Chapel, good Deacon Olney invited her, in 1859, to take charge of the senior class connected with the Sunday-school, which had then only three in attendance. Suffering from heart disease, she consented to take the class for only one month, during which time it had increased to fourteen. Supported in her work, her strong faith in God led her to say, "God has given me strength for one month, He will surely give me strength for another." In 1861, when the new Tabernacle was opened, the class had increased to fifty. Such was the influence of her earnest, loving words on the young women, that soon they numbered a hundred, then two and three, and in a short time five hundred attended her services every Sabbath day, and many of them came also on Tuesday and Friday; whilst at her own house, which Mr. Spurgeon called the "House of Mercy," she was constantly receiving anxious inquirers after salvation. The blessing of God so abundantly rested upon her labors, that fully one hundred of her members joined the church

annually. They generously collected and gave thousands of dollars to the funds of the Pastors' College, besides contributing to relieve the wants of the poor in the locality.

During the year 1875 twenty-nine of the students from the Pastors' College were sent into the field of ministerial labor, three of whom went into the work abroad, one to Rio Janeiro, one to San Domingo, and one to China.

Before the year closed, a change from the damp cold of the November fogs in London to the genial sunshine at Mentone, in South Europe, was a necessity for the overworked pastor. Whilst resting in the sunny South, Mr. Spurgeon wrote some pleasant Recollections of Dr. Brock. Dining one day at Mr. Spurgeon's house, Father Olney was present, and Dr. Brock stated that he had preached at Park-street Chapel once or twice when a student at Stepney College, but he supposed he was not man enough for them, as he was not invited to succeed Dr. Rippon. The good deacon remarked that the people were much struck with him, but he himself was not in office in those days, so had not dared to interfere with the august authorities then in power. "See how all things are determined by a superintending Providence," replied the Doctor; "for if the Park-street people had chosen me, where would our friend Spurgeon have come to?"

On another occasion Dr. Brock and Mr. Spurgeon were dining together at the mansion of a beloved friend in Regent's Park, when the Orphanage building was in progress, and money was wanted which was not in hand. Mr. Spurgeon, suffering from feeble health, still expressed his strong faith in God that the money would come to hand in due time. Just as the dinner was ended the servant entered the room with a telegram from his private secretary, announcing that an unknown donor had sent five thousand dollars for the Orphanage. Dr. Brock immediately rose and poured forth his utterances of gratitude in the most joyful manner, and they all united in prayer on their knees to magnify the Lord.

About the same time certain newspapers published reports that some sixty Methodist students were yearly received into the classes of the Pastors' College. This is noticed to give an opportunity

for Mr. Spurgeon's reply, which was in these words: "We have never said anything of the kind, nor is it true. We shall not regret if it turns out to be a prophecy. If Methodists improve into Baptists, we shall not lament it; but we do not expect it. The Church of England has been flirting with the Wesleyans, but we have done nothing of the kind; we have been too busy seeking the conversion of the ungodly to have had any time to bait traps for members of any other denominations." This reply may be taken as a general answer to other false reports which sensational editors are too fond of printing in their papers.

At the annual meeting of church members it was reported that 510 had been added to the church during the year 1875, that 208 had removed, leaving the total of church members at 4,813, being an increase of 136 on the year.

The annual meeting of the Colportage Association reported that forty-seven men were employed in forty-three districts, and that \$22,075 had been received for books supplied by that agency.

The weekly offerings at the Tabernacle for 1875, on behalf of the Pastors' College, were reported to be \$9,375.

On March 1st a very lively, loving, and enthusiastic meeting of the collectors was held at the Orphanage, when one thousand dollars was paid in, and the orphans sang like cherubs, and looked as bright and cheerful as the morning. The meeting was interesting in other respects, as will be seen by the following extract: "The Rev. John Spurgeon, Charles H. Spurgeon, and Thomas Spurgeon — grandfather, father, and son — addressed the meeting. The grandsire spoke of twenty years ago, when C. H. Spurgeon preached at his grandfather's — James Spurgeon's jubilee, and three generations of their family were present on that occasion. He blessed God that as the older generations had gone new ones had arisen. We all joined in his gratitude, and the more so when the grandson proved by his cool, clear delivery, and lively, warm-hearted manner, that he would worthily sustain the family name."

There was a still more interesting gathering at the Orphanage, on June 20th, when a *fête* was held to commemorate the anniversary of the pastor's birthday. The crowds which attended were

beyond all precedent, and at the evening meeting, presided over by Sir Henry Havelock, five Spurgeons delivered addresses, namely, the Rev. John Spurgeon, the grandfather; his two sons, Charles and James Spurgeon; and Thomas and Charles, the twin sons of Pastor C. H. Spurgeon. Seldom does a man find himself followed in the ministry by two sons and two grandsons, all living to speak at the same meeting. About one thousand dollars was contributed that day to the funds of the Orphanage, one friend having sent £42 (two hundred and ten dollars), so as to give a golden token of his esteem for every year of the pastor's life. The pastor recorded afterwards that his right arm and hand would long remember the thousands of hearty salutations he had received that day.

It will be recollected that some twenty-five years before, an appointment was made with Dr. Angus, of London, to meet a young man at Cambridge, with the intention of arranging for the young man to become a student of the Baptist College in London. By a very remarkable omission of duty, the college tutor and the young man did not meet on that day, and the young man did not enter a college. Now that young man has a college of his own, in which some of the most able and useful ministers in England have been trained, and about forty new Baptist churches have been raised in London and its suburbs solely by the students sent forth from the Pastors' College. On March 17, 1876, Dr. Angus, who still presides over the Regent's Park Baptist College, went over with his students to pay a fraternal visit to the Pastors' College, and a very pleasant day was thus spent together. Both students and tutors were hearty in their greetings. The Tabernacle men escorted their guests over the College and rooms at the Tabernacle, and many new acquaintances were made, which will surely ripen into enduring friendship when they meet one another on the field of service. The addresses delivered on the occasion were hearty, solid, and well received, and the social and Christian intercourse thus opened will be a blessing to both colleges.

Another form of helpful service at the Tabernacle is an annual gathering of the parents of the children in the Sunday-schools. These schools are conducted with so much energy, wisdom, and

efficiency, that they have no need to resort to treats and prizes to induce the children to comè. They attend in multitudes; and the money usually spent in treats and prizes is devoted to give the parents of the children a free tea, which brings them into personal contact with Mr. Spurgeon and the teachers, and so a mutual sympathy and affection is awakened and sustained, and the parents help the teachers in their work.

The Twelfth Annual Conference of the Pastors' College was held during the week commencing on Monday, April 3d. It was a time of blessing and encouragement to all who took part in the proceedings. The inaugural address of Mr. Spurgeon, based upon the clause in the creed, "I believe in the Holy Ghost," was able, lucid, and instructive. During the conference, Mr. Phillips gave his annual supper, at which the spontaneous gifts to the College reached ten thousand dollars. In writing brief notes of that conference Mr. Spurgeon adds: "Our brain refuses to dictate more. If our friends would earnestly ask for us more health and more grace we should be deeply grateful."

Deeply did Mr. Spurgeon feel the need of prayer at that time; for the illness which he felt coming on lasted for three months, and was to him and to his church a heavy loss and severe trial. The patient pastor poured forth his complaint in the first article in his magazine for May, under the title, "Laid Aside. Why?" In this touching fragment from his pen he remarks: "When the Lord is using a man for His glory it is singular that He should all of a sudden smite him down and suspend his usefulness. It must be right, but the reason for it does not lie near the surface. How is it that a heart eager for the welfare of men and the glory of God should find itself hampered by a sickly frame, and checked in its utmost usefulness by attacks of painful disease? We may ask the question, if we do so without murmuring; but who shall answer it for us? We are content to leave a thousand mysteries unsolved rather than tolerate a single doubt as to the wisdom and goodness of our Heavenly Father."

On Lord's-day evening, July 16th, the great Tabernacle was deserted by its regular attendants, by the special desire of Mr. Spurgeon, who wished to throw open the place for a free service to

strangers. None of the seat-holders were present, — or not more than half a dozen, — which Mr. Spurgeon considered “splendid discipline, worthy of the best-trained army, — the discipline of love”: and he very sincerely thanked the seat-holders for vacating their places so unanimously that the poor might hear the gospel preached to them in comfort, without even a collection. “The Tabernacle was as full as a barrel packed with herrings,” and the heat was intense. Much prayer was offered at various meetings; and the officers had a baptism of fire from heaven in offering prayer before the doors were opened. They also held three prayer-meetings and an out-door service to the crowds who could not get within the building. Much good was done, many sinners were awakened, and additions to the church followed. The experiment was repeated on Sunday, October 22d, three months afterwards; and this has now become an established service periodically. The object of these evangelistic services is to lay hold of those who inhabit a world outside the Church, ignoring the existence of church or chapel, or even of religion itself. Of these there are multitudes amongst both rich and poor. After each service a number of inquirers come forward, desiring further instruction in matters concerning salvation.

The weekly baptismal service at the Tabernacle on Monday, June 26, 1876, was one which awakened deep feelings of gratitude in the breast of the pastor. Amongst those who were baptized were three friends who were led to confess the Saviour through the preaching of the pastor’s two sons, Charles and Thomas Spurgeon, the first-fruits of their useful ministry. Who could refuse to pray, “God bless the lads”?

During half of the month of August Mr. Spurgeon was rambling in Scotland amongst “Highland cattle, sea-gulls, herrings, and heather.” He went north in search of rest, was away thirteen days, and had fifty invitations to preach. He yielded four times to the entreaty of friends. On Sabbath, August 13th, he preached at Blairmore to an immense out-door company, gathered from all the surrounding towns. The two services there were happy occasions, and much Christian fellowship was shown by the Scotch brethren to the Metropolitan pastor.

Seeking by all possible means to rescue the perishing, a series of special revival services were commenced in the Tabernacle on Monday, October 30th, conducted by the College students, hoping thereby to benefit the church, which so greatly promotes the usefulness of the College by its weekly offerings. The services were only intended for one week, but the meetings were seasons of so much blessing that they were continued to November 10th. Various means were used for gathering in the people to hear the Word, and occasionally a band of students resorted to the "highways," and by singing and preaching compelled them to come in. Deep earnestness characterized both speakers and hearers, and on every evening the young brethren had to rejoice over some sinners brought to repentance. On Thursday afternoon, November 2d, the students held a fellowship meeting to seek a blessing on themselves and their work. In the evening Mr. Spurgeon preached to them. The Master was manifestly present, and all were blessed by the service. There were one hundred and ten students in the College when they re-assembled in the autumn.

On Tuesday, December 12th, Mr. Spurgeon was at Nottingham, and preached two of the opening sermons in Mr. Silvertown's new chapel, which he has appropriately named Exeter Hall. It is a building of great capacity, substantial and elegant. It seats two thousand people, yet cost only \$23,500, apart from the site. Mr. Spurgeon said of the services of that day: "The giving and the hearing were of the most enthusiastic order, the amount contributed being one thousand dollars."

At the close of the year 1876 Mr. Spurgeon was assailed by some newspapers in an almost savage manner for a prayer which he offered one Sunday morning, that the Lord would preserve peace, and if our rulers would not learn wisdom, to remove them. He did not trouble much about the abuse of the press, knowing that it is only when he exposes evil and injustice that a clamor is raised. Their fierce language was unheeded, for he received a letter from Austria, informing him that the words of his prayer had been translated into German and Servian, and had been printed in most of the newspapers in those languages, the readers there rejoicing to think that there was one man in England

who seemed to comprehend the atrocities suffered by the victims of Turkish barbarism.

The annual meeting of the College evening classes was held at the Tabernacle on December 22d. By means of these classes two hundred men who are working all day receive such educational advantages as they require; thus they do not forget the Lord's work.

During the year, no less than thirty-three students had been appointed to churches, four of whom have gone into the work abroad, — namely, one to Australia, one to New Zealand, one to the Cape of Good Hope, and one to Basle, Switzerland. Very gratifying reports have already been received from many of those new curates of church work. It is deserving of record that no less than sixty Baptist churches in and around London have been, or now are, under the pastoral care of students from the Pastors' College. More than half the number are entirely new churches, raised out of the world, and amongst them are some of the largest and most prosperous churches in the denomination. About twenty students were sent out during the first half of the year 1877.

Several times during the spring of the year 1877 large audiences of merchants and business men assembled in the great hall at the Cannon-street Hotel, and at the Friends' Meeting-house in Bishopsgate Street, to hear addresses from Mr. Spurgeon on questions of commercial morality and personal salvation. About two thousand persons gathered at midday on each occasion to hear the words of faithful warning and affectionate invitation. The addresses which were delivered have been published at one penny each, with the titles "The Claims of God" and "Faith in Christ."

For more than eighty years the annual sermon before the London Missionary Society was preached in Rowland Hill's chapel. The last of the series in the old sanctuary was preached in May, 1876. Thereafter the official sermon was expected to be preached in Christ Church, Westminster Road, and Mr. Spurgeon was selected as the preacher of the first sermon of the new series. In the course of the sermon he said some plain things about preachers who discoursed on subjects which were not the gospel

of salvation, and sometimes were even opposed to it. A spirit of controversy followed, as is usual, but Mr. Spurgeon wisely left his critics to entertain their own opinions, unquestioned by himself.

No minister knows better than Mr. Spurgeon the advantages to a Christian church of having work for every member, and seeing that the work is done. It was no surprise to many of the friends at the Tabernacle when, in the spring of 1877, a special mission was inaugurated for those young ladies who have leisure, culture, and refined taste; hence a flower mission was commenced. Friends in the country send boxes of cut flowers every Wednesday to the Tabernacle, when young ladies arrange them, and append to them appropriate texts from the Bible, and these are immediately distributed, free, to the hospitals in London, where they are welcomed with the utmost delight by the poor afflicted inmates, and many a blessing is invoked on the committee who distribute them as well as on those who donate the flowers.

The inventive spirit has long been in active exercise at the Tabernacle; hence the variety of agencies which exist in that church, which are, many of them, unknown in most other church organizations. There is a Baptist Country Mission which provides, under Mr. Spurgeon's direction, young brethren who visit villages and country towns near London, who labor to raise new churches in them. These earnest young men are always ready to enter on any opening by preaching on the village green, or in a cottage or room. There is also the Tabernacle Evangelists' Society, which finds speakers for special services in London, and works in connection with the churches. These do not restrict themselves to any denomination, but cheerfully aid all pastors who are willing to accept their help for a short period, or a series of meetings. They carry on open-air preaching and lodging-house visitation. These are branches of home-missionary work.

Our social festivals are always occasions of joy, but how generally do they partake largely of selfishness! Mr. Spurgeon has discovered the way to combine the highest amount of personal happiness with the most extensive benevolence and philanthropy. Who but a man with a large heart and unbounded sympathy could

have conceived the plan, and so successfully have carried it out, of celebrating the anniversary of his birth by devoting all the gifts which loving friends bestowed, to feed the orphan and relieve distress?

Still suffering from the weakness which follows long-continued pain, yet no one was more happy than Pastor Spurgeon on June 19, 1877, when he kept his forty-third birthday. Some thousands of attached personal friends, and friends of the orphan, gathered that day at Stockwell Orphanage. The day was fine; the gentle zephyrs wafted pleasantly over the enclosed grounds, joy sat on every countenance, and a spirit of generosity seemed to animate every breast. The orphans and their guardians met likewise to unite their loving congratulations to the President of the Institution: this feeling of sympathy and kindness being freely manifested by hosts of Tabernacle worshippers, and by kind friends from the locality. In the afternoon the pastor preached a short sermon in the covered playground from Gen. xxx. 27, in which he testified that "I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake," and he acknowledged having received countless blessings through his faithful people.

An open-air meeting was held in the evening on the grass, presided over by Thomas Blake, Esq., M.P., who was ably supported by the Rev. M'Connell Hussey, a neighboring clergyman, and other friends. In the calm air Mr. Spurgeon sat on the platform without his hat, when his son Charles was called on to speak. He referred to his father's sufferings from the gout, and added, "There he sits without his hat, but he has a will of his own." Immediately the hat went on; so his own will at once became the will of the multitude, all of whom were his well-wishers. The pastor himself announced that he had that morning received seventy-one letters of congratulation, all containing help for the orphans, besides which one friend had sent him £43 (two hundred and fifteen dollars), to tally with the number of his years, and one of the trustees of the institution had sent a similar amount. Mr. Spurgeon commended very highly the management of his brother and Mr. Charlesworth in superintending the Orphanage, and of the working staff he said he could not wish them

to be better, as they would then be too good for work on earth, and he assured the meeting that the business of the Orphanage was so well conducted that it gave the President only the minimum of care; and he sincerely thanked the numerous donors who during the day brought in to the treasurer nearly two thousand dollars.

The month of January, 1879, will long be remembered. Having completed the twenty-fifth year of his pastorate, it was decided to celebrate the occasion, which was termed THE PASTORAL SILVER WEDDING, by presenting Mr. Spurgeon with a liberal testimonial. The amount proposed to be raised was twenty-five thousand dollars. A large bazaar was opened, which was well supported, and with the subscription lists the proceeds exceeded the amount originally proposed.

With his usual large-heartedness he declined accepting the amount for his private benefit. There was one important institution connected with the Tabernacle that needed to be placed on a surer footing, and this was a fitting opportunity for securing that end. The Almshouses, affording homes for nineteen poor widows, required a more permanent support, and all the proceeds of the "Pastoral Silver Wedding Fund" were devoted to this laudable object, thereby insuring its future maintenance.

May the perusal of the brief personal history of this earnest, unselfish, laborious man stir many to inquire, "Lord, what wilt Thou have ME to do?"

PSALM XLIV.

OUR ears have heard, O glorious God,
What work Thou didst of old ;
And how the heathen felt Thy rod
Our fathers oft have told.

'T was not Thy people's arm or sword,
But only Thy right hand
Which scattered all the race abhorred,
And gave Thy tribes their land.

Thou hadst a favor to the seed
Which sprang of Jacob's line ;
And still on men afore decreed
Doth love electing shine.

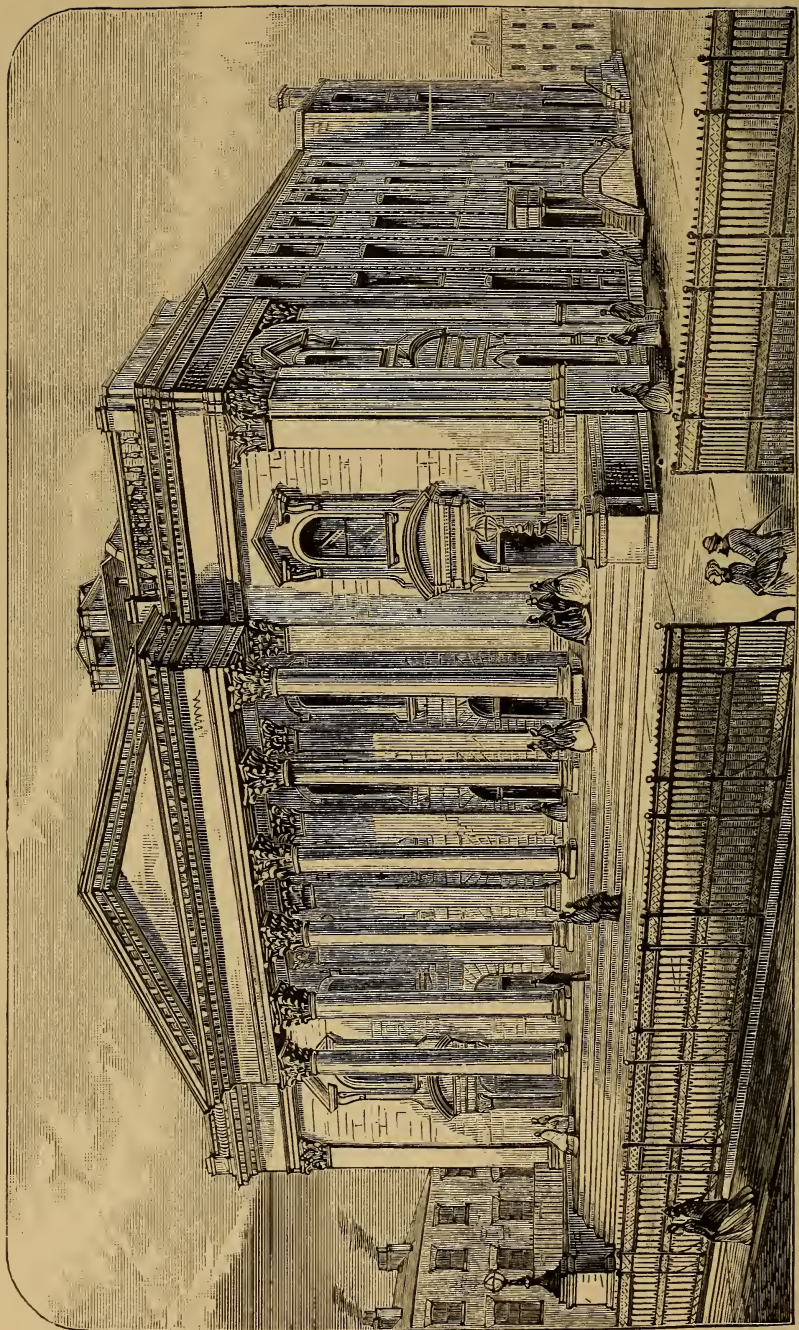
These shall the heritage obtain,
And drive out every sin ;
E'en death and hell shall rage in vain, —
They *must* the conquest win.

From grace alone their strength shall spring,
Nor bow nor sword can save ;
To God alone, their Lord and King,
Shall all their banners wave.

Awake, O Lord, of Thine elect,
Achieve Thy great design ;
Thy saints from Thee alone expect
Salvation's light to shine.

In Thee alone we make our boasts,
And glory all day long ;
Arise at once, thou Lord of hosts,
And fill our mouth with song.

C. H. SPURGEON.



THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, C. H. SPURGEON, PASTOR.

XI.

THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE.

LIVING in the midst of the church of God is like sailing down the Nile in a boat. One is charmed with the luxuriance of either bank, and with much that is beautiful immediately around; but, alas! at a little distance on either side lies a vast uncultivated, we had almost said hopeless, desert. Some are at rest because they never look beyond the borders of the church; but those whose sympathies reach to all humanity will have to carry a life-long "burden of the Lord."— C. H. SPURGEON.

THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE.

THE history of the church of which Mr. Spurgeon is overseer contains a record of information and interest peculiar to itself. For two hundred and thirty years it has stood the test, and some of the best leaders and teachers of Christendom have ministered the Word of life to its members. For many years a pressure was brought to bear upon its present pastor to furnish to the public every possible information regarding its origin, growth, and work. Notwithstanding his arduous labors, he has responded to this legitimate inquiry, and in a book of one hundred and twenty pages has sketched the early history of the Baptists, the founding of the church, the successive pastors, and its present participation in the various branches of education, charity, evangelization, and missionary operations with which it stands connected. Thus Mr. Spurgeon prefaces his history of the Metropolitan Tabernacle: —

When modest ministers submit their sermons to the press they usually place upon the titlepage the words, "Printed by request." We might with emphatic truthfulness have pleaded this apology for the present narrative, for, times without number, friends from all parts of the world have said: "Have you no book which will tell us all about your work? Could you not give us some printed summary of the Tabernacle history?" Here it is, dear friends, and we hope it will satisfy your curiosity and deepen your kindly interest.

The best excuse for writing a history is that *there is something to tell*, and, unless we are greatly mistaken, the facts here placed on record are well worthy of being known. In us they have aroused fervent emotions of gratitude, and in putting them together our faith in God has been greatly established; we hope, therefore, that in some measure our readers will derive the same benefit. Strangers cannot be expected to feel an equal interest with ourselves, but our fellow members, our co-workers, our hundreds of generous helpers, and the large circle of our hearty sympathizers cannot read our summary of the Lord's dealings with us without stimulus and encouragement.

Our young people ought to be told by their fathers the wondrous things which God did in their day "and in the old time before them." Such things are forgotten if they are not every now and then rehearsed anew in the ears of fresh generations. "Why should the wonders He hath wrought be lost in silence and forgot?" We feel that we only discharge a duty to the present and coming generations when we use our pen for such a purpose.

May the reader's belief in prayer be increased, and his reliance upon God strengthened, as he reads our testimony; and should he unhappily be as yet unconverted, may he be led to believe in God, to rest in the sacrifice of Jesus, and cast in his lot with the people of God.

Brethren who have helped us so long, support our enterprises still by your prayers, your efforts, and your gifts, and so shall our Zion become increasingly a praise in the earth. To the Triune God be praise that for two centuries His mercy has surrounded this portion of His Church, and that "His hand is stretched out still."

This church was born in stormy times, when mayors and mobs were formidable foes of all who believed in the crown rights of King Jesus. The practice of the Baptists in dipping was specially obnoxious to the bigots who plied hard the argument that it was wicked to immerse persons in cold weather. Mr. Spurgeon goes on with the history, which we abridge: —

Moved by the feeling that it was the duty of the State to keep men's consciences in proper order, the Parliament set to work to curb the wicked sectaries, and Dr. Stoughton tells us: "By the Parliamentary ordinance of April, 1645, forbidding any person to preach who was not an ordained minister, in the Presbyterian, or some other reformed church, — all Baptist ministers became exposed to molestation, they being accounted a sect, and not a church. A few months after the date of this law, the Baptists being pledged to a public controversy in London with Edmund Calamy, the Lord Mayor interfered to prevent the disputation, — a circumstance which seems to show that, on the one hand, the Baptists were becoming a formidable body in London, and, on the other hand, that their fellow-citizens were highly exasperated against them." Or, say rather, that the Lord Mayor's views not being those of the Baptists, he feared the sturdy arguments which would be brought to bear upon his friends, and concluded that the wisest course he could take was to prevent the truth being heard. No Lord Mayor, or even King, has any right to forbid free public speech, and when in past ages an official has done so, it is no evidence that his fellow-citizens were of the same mind: Jack-in-office is often peculiarly anxious that the consciences of others should not be injured by hearing views different from his own.

From some one of the many Baptist assemblies which met in the borough of Southwark, the Tabernacle Church took its rise. Crosby says: "This people had formerly belonged to one of the most ancient congregations of the Baptists in London, but separated from them, in the year 1652, for some practices which they judged disorderly, and kept together from that time as a distinct body." They appear to have met in private houses, or in such other buildings as were open to them. Their first pastor was WILLIAM RIDER, whom Crosby mentions as a sufferer for conscience' sake, but he is altogether unable to give any further particulars of his life, except that he published a small tract in vindication of the practice of laying on of hands on the baptized believers. The people were few in number, but had the reputation of being men of solid judgment, deep knowledge, and religious stability, and many of them were also in easy circumstances as to worldly

goods. Oliver Cromwell was just at that time in the ascendant, and Blake's cannon were sweeping the Dutch from the seas; but the Presbyterian establishment ruled with a heavy hand, and Baptists were under a cloud. In the following year Cromwell was made Protector, the old Parliament was sent about its business, and England enjoyed a large measure of liberty of conscience.

How long William Rider exercised the ministerial office we are unable to tell, but our next record bears date 1668, when we are informed that, "the pastor having been dead for some time, they unanimously chose Mr. BENJAMIN KEACH to be their elder or pastor." Accordingly he was solemnly ordained with prayer and the laying on of hands in the year 1668, being in the twenty-eighth year of his age. Keach was one of the most notable of the pastors of our church. He was continually engaged in preaching in the towns of Buckinghamshire, making Winslow his headquarters; and so well did the good cause flourish under his zealous labors, and those of others, that the Government quartered dragoons in the district in order to put down unlawful meetings and stamp out dissent. The amount of suffering which this involved, the readers of the story of the Covenanting times in Scotland can readily imagine. A rough soldiery handle with little tenderness those whom they consider to be miserable fanatics. When the favorite court poet was lampooning these poor people and ridiculing their claims to be guided by the Spirit of God, common soldiers of the Cavalier order were not likely to be much under restraint in their behavior to them.

Having written a book called "The Child's Instructor," in which he avowed that children are born in sin, and in need of redemption by Jesus Christ, he was publicly tried and convicted. The merciful (?) judge pronounced upon the culprit the following sentence: —

"Benjamin Keach, you are here convicted for writing, printing, and publishing a seditious and schismatical book, for which the court's judgment is this, and the court doth award: That you shall go to jail for a fortnight without bail or mainprize; and the next Saturday to stand upon the pillory at Aylesbury in the open market, from eleven o'clock till one, with a paper upon your



BENJAMIN KEACH.

head with this inscription: *For writing, printing, and publishing a schismatical book, entitled The Child's Instructor; or, a New and Easy Primer.* And the next Thursday to stand, in the same manner and for the same time, in the market at Winslow; and then your book shall be openly burnt before your face by the common hangman, in disgrace of you and your doctrine. And you shall forfeit to the King's majesty the sum of twenty pounds, and shall remain in jail until you find sureties for your good behavior, and for your appearance at the next assizes; then to



BENJAMIN KEACH IN THE PILLORY.

renounce your doctrines, and make such public submission as shall be enjoined you. Take him away, keeper!"

Keach simply replied, "I hope I shall *never renounce* the truths which I have written in that book."

The attempts made to obtain a pardon or a relaxation of this severe sentence were ineffectual; and the sheriff took care that everything should be punctually performed.

When he was brought to the pillory at Aylesbury, several of his religious friends and acquaintances accompanied him; and when they bemoaned his hard case and the injustice of his suf-

ferings, he said with a cheerful countenance, "The cross is the way to the crown." His head and hands were no sooner placed in the pillory, but he began to address himself to the spectators, to this effect: "Good people, I am not ashamed to stand here this day, with this paper on my head! My Lord Jesus was not ashamed to suffer on the cross for me; and it is for His cause that I am made a gazing-stock. Take notice, it is not for any wickedness that I stand here; but for writing and publishing those truths which the Spirit of the Lord hath revealed in the Holy Scriptures."

Very sweetly did Mr. Keach preach the great fundamental truths of the gospel, and glorify the name and work of Jesus. His "Gospel Mine Opened," and other works rich in savor, show that he was no mere stickler for a point of ceremony, but one who loved the whole truth as it is in Jesus, and felt its power. The doctrine of the Second Advent evidently had great charms for him, but not so as to crowd out Christ crucified. He was very solid in his preaching, and his whole conduct and behavior betokened a man deeply in earnest for the cause of God. In addressing the ungodly he was intensely direct, solemn, and impressive, not flinching to declare the terrors of the Lord, nor veiling the freeness of divine grace. He was a voluminous writer, having written in all forty-three works,—eighteen practical, sixteen polemical, and nine poetical. Some of them were very popular, having reached the twenty-second edition.

Mr. Keach was of a very weak constitution, being often afflicted with illness, and once to such a degree that he was given over by the physicians; and several of the ministers, and his relations, had taken their leave of him as a dying man and past all hope of recovery; but the Reverend Mr. Hanserd Knollys, seeing his friend and brother in the gospel so near expiring, betook himself to prayer, and in a very extraordinary manner begged that God would spare him, and add unto his days the time He granted to His servant Hezekiah. As soon as he had ended his prayer, he said, "Brother Keach, I shall be in heaven before you," and quickly after left him. So remarkable was the answer of God to this good man's prayer, that we cannot omit it; though it may be discredited by some, there

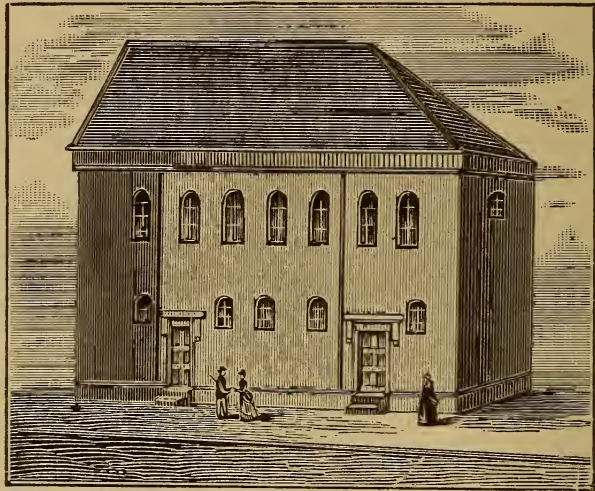
were many who could bear incontestable testimony to the fact. Mr. Keach recovered of that illness, and lived just fifteen years afterwards; and then it pleased God to visit him with that short sickness which put an end to his days. He "fell on sleep" July 16, 1704, in the sixty-fourth year of his age, and was buried at the Baptists' burying-ground, in the Park, Southwark. It was not a little singular that in after years the church over which he so ably presided should pitch its tent so near the place where his bones were laid, and New Park Street should appear in her annals as a well-beloved name.

When Mr. Keach was upon his death-bed he sent for his son-in-law, BENJAMIN STINTON, and solemnly charged him to care for the church which he was about to leave, and especially urged him to accept the pastoral office, should it be offered to him by the brethren. Mr. Stinton had already for some years helped his father-in-law in many ways, and therefore he was no new and untried man. It is no small blessing when a church can find her pastors in her own midst; the rule is to look abroad, but perhaps if our home gifts were more encouraged the Holy Spirit would cause our teachers to come forth more frequently from among our own brethren. Still, we cannot forget the proverb about a prophet in his own country. When the church gave Mr. Stinton a pressing invitation, he delayed awhile, and gave himself space for serious consideration; but at length, remembering the dying words of his father-in-law, and feeling himself directed by the Spirit of God, he gave himself up to the ministry, which he faithfully discharged for fourteen years, — namely, from 1704 to 1718.

Spending himself in various works of usefulness, Mr. Stinton worked on till the 11th of February, 1718, when a sudden close was put to his labors and his life. He was taken suddenly ill, and saying to his wife, "I am going," he laid himself down upon the bed, and expired in the forty-third year of his life. He smiled on death, for the Lord smiled on him. He was buried near his predecessor, in the Park, Southwark.

In the beginning of the year 1719, the church at Horsleydown invited JOHN GILL to preach, with a view to the pastorate; but there was a determined opposition to him in about one half of

the church. The matter was referred to the club of ministers meeting at the Hanover Coffee-house, and they gave the absurd advice that the two parties should each hear their own man turn about till they could agree. Common sense came to the rescue, and this sort of religious duel never came off. The friends, with far greater wisdom, divided. John Gill's friends secured the old meeting-house for the term of forty years, and he was ordained March 22, 1720.



CARTER-LANE CHAPEL.

Little did the friends dream what sort of man they had thus chosen to be their teacher; but had they known it they would have rejoiced that a man of such vast erudition, such indefatigable industry, such sound judgment, and such sterling honesty had come among them. He was to be more mighty with his pen than Keach, and to make a deeper impression upon his age, though perhaps with the tongue he was less powerful than his eminent predecessor. Early in his ministry he had to take up the cudgels for Baptist views against a Pædobaptist preacher of Rowel, near Kettering, and he did so in a manner worthy of that eulogium which Toplady passed upon him in reference to other controversies, when he compared him to Marlborough, and declared that he never fought a battle without winning it.

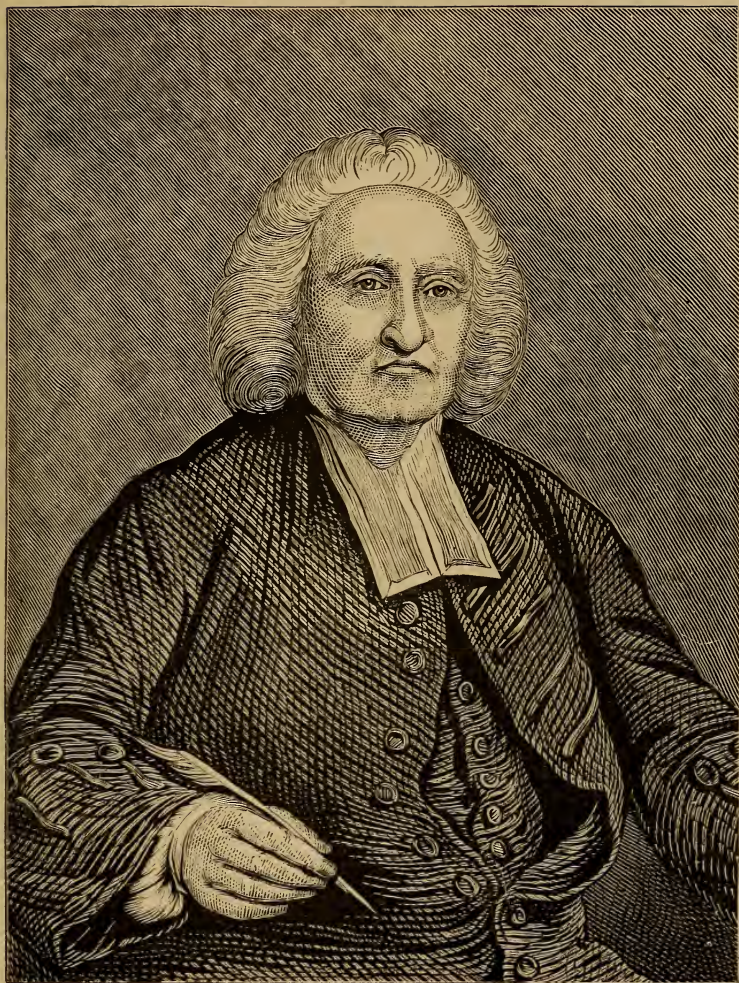
Mr. Gill, being settled in London, became more intimately acquainted with that worthy minister of the gospel, Mr. John Skepp, pastor of the Baptist church at Cripplegate. This gentleman, though he had not a liberal education, yet, after he came into the ministry, through great diligence acquired a large acquaintance with the Hebrew tongue. As Mr. Gill had previously taken great delight in the Hebrew, his conversation with this worthy minister rekindled a flame of fervent desire to obtain a more extensive knowledge of it, and especially of Rabbinical learning. Mr. Skepp dying a year or two after, Mr. Gill purchased most of his Hebrew works, the Baptist Fund making him a grant of eighty-seven dollars for this purpose. Having obtained the books, he went to work with great eagerness, reading the Targums and ancient commentaries, and in a course of between twenty and thirty years' acquaintance with these writings he collected a large number of learned observations. Having also, in this time, gone through certain books of the Old Testament and almost the whole of the New Testament, by way of exposition, in the course of his ministry; he put all the expository, critical, and illustrative parts together, and in the year 1745 issued proposals for publishing his "Exposition of the whole New Testament," in three volumes folio. The work meeting due encouragement, it was put to press the same year, and was finished, the first volume in 1746, the second in 1747, and the third in 1748. Towards the close of the publication of this work, in 1748, Mr. Gill received a diploma from Marischal College, Aberdeen, creating him Doctor in Divinity on account of his knowledge of the Scriptures, of the Oriental languages, and of Jewish antiquities. When his deacons in London congratulated him on the respect which had been shown him he thanked them, pleasantly adding, "I neither thought it, nor bought it, nor sought it."

The ministry of Mr. Gill being acceptable not only to his own people but to many persons of different denominations, several gentlemen proposed among themselves to set up a week-day lecture, that they might have an opportunity of hearing him. Accordingly they formed themselves into a society, and agreed to have a lecture on Wednesday evenings, in Great Eastcheap, and set on foot a subscription to support it. Upon their invita-

tion Mr. Gill undertook the lectureship. He opened it in the year 1729 with a discourse or two on Psalm lxxi. 16: "I will go in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of Thy righteousness, even of Thine only." Through divine grace he was enabled to abide by this resolution to the edification of many, preaching in Great Eastcheap for more than twenty-six years, and only relinquished the lecture when the infirmities of years were telling upon him, and he felt a great desire to give all his time to the completion of his great expository works.

As a pastor he presided over the flock with dignity and affection. In the course of his ministry he had some weak, some unworthy, and some very wicked persons to deal with. To the feeble of the flock he was an affectionate friend and father. He readily bore with their weaknesses, failings, and infirmities, and particularly when he saw they were sincerely on the Lord's side. A godly woman visited him one day, in great trouble, about the singing; for the clerk, in about three years, had introduced two new tunes. Not that he was a famous singer, or able to conduct a great variety of song, but he did his best. The young people were pleased with the new tunes; but the good woman could not bear the innovation. The Doctor, after patiently listening, asked her whether she understood singing? No, she said. "What! can't you sing?" No, she was no singer, nor her aged father before her. And though they had had about a hundred years between them to learn the Old Hundredth tune, they could not sing it, *nor any other tune*. The Doctor did not hurt her feelings by telling her that people who did not understand singing were the last who should complain; but he meekly said: "Sister, what tunes should you like us to sing?" "Why, sir," she replied, "I should very much like David's tunes." "Well," said he, "if you will get David's tunes for us, we can then try to sing them." Such weak good people may be found among all denominations of Christians.

All the stories told of Dr. Gill are somewhat grim. He could not come down to the level of men and women of the common order so far as to be jocose; and when he attempted to do so he looked like Hercules with the distaff, or Goliath threading a needle.



DR. JOHN GILL.

When he verged upon the humorous the jokes were ponderous and overwhelming, burying his adversary as well as crushing him. It is said that a garrulous dame once called upon him to find fault with the excessive length of his white bands. "Well, well," said the Doctor, "what do you think is the right length? Take them and make them as long or as short as you like." The lady expressed her delight; she was sure that her dear pastor would grant her request, and therefore she had brought her scissors with her, and would do the trimming at once. Accordingly, snip, snip, and the thing was done, and the bibs returned. "Now," said the Doctor, "my good sister, you must do me a good turn also." "Yes, that I will, Doctor. What can it be?" "Well, you have something about you which is a deal too long, and causes me no end of trouble, and I should like to see it shorter." "Indeed, dear sir, I will not hesitate," said the dame; "what is it? Here are the scissors, use them as you please." "Come, then," said the pastor, "good sister, *put out your tongue!*" We have often pictured him sitting in the old chair, which is preserved in our vestry, and thus quietly rebuking the gossip.

The comparative asperity of his manner was probably the result of his secluded habits, and also of that sturdy firmness of mind, which in other directions revealed itself so admirably. When he was once warned that the publication of a certain book would lose him many supporters and reduce his income, he did not hesitate for a moment, but replied: "Do not tell me of losing. I value nothing in comparison with gospel truth. I am not afraid to be poor!"

The mighty commentator having been followed to his grave by his attached church and a great company of ministers and Christian people, among whom he had been regarded as a great man and a prince in Israel, his church began to look around for a successor. This time, as in the case of Dr. Gill, there was trouble in store, for there was division of opinion. Some, no doubt, as true Gillites, looked only for a solid divine, sound in doctrine, who would supply the older saints with spiritual food; while another party had an eye to the growth of the church and to the securing to the flock the younger members of their families. They were agreed that they would write to Bristol for a probationer, and Mr.

John Rippon was sent to them. He was a youth of some twenty summers, of a vivacious temperament, quick and bold. The older members judged him to be too young and too flighty; they even accused him of having gone up the pulpit stairs two steps at a time on some occasion when he was hurried, — a grave offence for which the condemnation could hardly be too severe. He was only a young man, and came from an academy, and this alone was enough to make the sounder and older members afraid of him. He preached for a lengthened time on probation, and finally some forty persons withdrew because they could not agree with the enthusiastic vote by which the majority of the people elected him.

John Rippon modestly expressed his wonder that even more had not been dissatisfied, and his surprise that so large a number were agreed to call him to the pastorate. In the spirit of forbearance and brotherly love he proposed that, as these friends were seceding for conscience' sake, and intended to form themselves into another church, they should be lovingly dismissed with prayer and God speed, and that, as a token of fraternal love, they should be assisted to build a meeting-house for their own convenience, and the sum of fifteen hundred dollars should be voted to them when their church was formed and their meeting-house erected. The promise was redeemed, and Mr. Rippon took part in the ordination service of the first minister. This was well done. Such a course was sure to secure the blessing of God. The church in Dean Street thus became another offshoot from the parent stem, and with varying conditions it remains to this day as the church in Trinity Street, Borough.

He will be best known as having prepared the first really good *selection of hymns* for dissenting congregations. Although a Baptist collection, it was extensively used with Dr. Watts's among both classes of Congregationalists. This work was an estate to its author, and he is said to have been more than sufficiently eager to push its sale. One thing we know, his presents of nicely bound copies must have been pretty frequent, for we have seen several greatly prized by their aged owners, who have showed them to us, with the remark, "The dear old Doctor gave me *that* himself."



DR. JOHN RIPPON IN HIS YOUTH.

The happy eccentricity of the Doctor's character may be illustrated by a little incident in connection with royalty. He was deputed to read an address from the Dissenters to George III., congratulating him upon recovery from sickness. The Doctor read on with his usual clear utterance till, coming to a passage in which there was special reference to the goodness of God, he paused and said: "Please your Majesty, we will read that again," and then proceeded with his usual cool dignity to repeat the sentence with emphasis. No other man in the deputation would have thought of doing such a thing, but from Rippon it came so naturally that no one censured him, or if they did it would have had no effect upon *him*.

There are still some in the church who cherish his memory with affectionate and well-deserved reverence; and there are thousands in heaven who were led first to love the Saviour by his earnest exhortations. He quarried fresh stones, and built up the church. He moulded its thought and directed its energies. Without being great he was exceedingly useful, and the period in which he was one of the judges of our Israel was one of great prosperity in spiritual things. It was a good sixty-three years, and with the previous pastorate of Dr. Gill, enabled the church to say that *during one hundred and seventeen years they had been presided over by two ministers only*. Those who are given to change were not numerous in the community. Short pastorates are good when ministers are feeble, but it is a great blessing when the saints are so edified that all are content, and the ministry is so owned of God that vacancies are filled up even before they are felt: in such a case change would wantonly imperil the hope of continued prosperity, and would therefore be criminal.

The next pastor of our church was Mr.—now Doctor—JOSEPH ANGUS, a gentleman whose career since he left us to become secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society, and afterwards the tutor of Stepney Academy, now Regent's Park College, has rendered his name most honorable among living Baptists. He is one of the foremost classical scholars, and is a member of the committee for producing a revised version of the Holy Scriptures. He is the author of those standard books, "The Bible Handbook," "The

Handbook of the English Tongue," and "Handbook of English Literature."

Mr. JAMES SMITH succeeded Dr. Angus, and after a useful pastorate of eight years resigned on account of ill health. In October, 1849, he wrote: "For a considerable time I have felt an oppression on my chest, and great difficulty in breathing. Last week I consulted a doctor upon it, and he advised me to leave London as soon as I could, and get into the country, as my lungs require a purer air. I am seeking wisdom from God: I cannot doubt but He will guide me."

In February, 1850, he said: "I have written my resignation of office, and laid it before the deacons. It is a serious and important step which I have taken. I trust I have taken it in a proper spirit, and from a right motive. My mind is now calm and peaceful, the agitation from which I have long been suffering is at an end, and I feel as if I could now leave the matter with the Lord.

"When my resignation was accepted, the church passed a very kind and affectionate resolution regretting that I felt it necessary to take such a step; but as I had rested it pretty much on the state of my health, they did not feel that they could refuse to accede to my wishes. I cannot say that I have labored in vain here, for many souls have been converted, some backsliders have been restored, and between four hundred and five hundred members have been added to the church during my pastorate of eight years. Many of my poor people deeply feel the step which I have felt it my duty to take, and I have received very affectionate letters from several of them. May they soon be favored with a pastor more suitable and efficient than I have been."

Mr. Smith built up in Cheltenham the strong working church now meeting in Cambray Chapel, which was erected by his exertions. When he was lying upon his dying bed the church at the Tabernacle sent him a heartily affectionate letter, and gratefully reminded him of all the blessing which the Lord had bestowed upon many souls by his means. To this we received a delightful answer, assuring us that our words had greatly cheered him. He died in 1861, and an account of an interview with him may interest the reader if we include it in our pages. "I saw this week

the former pastor of this church, Mr. James Smith of Cheltenham. About a year ago he was struck with paralysis, and one half of his body is dead. But yet I have seldom 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 you have many doubts and fears!' 'Who told you that?' said he, 'for I have none.' 'Never have any? Why, I understood 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 that? I hope I have not led any one to think that. It is a hard battle, but the victory is sure.' Then he said in his own 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. I wish I could hear the whistle now.'"

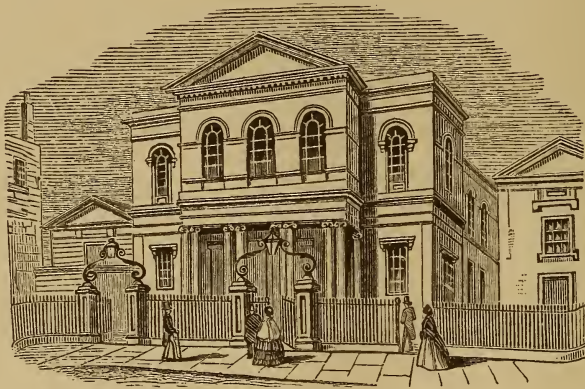
In July, 1851, the church invited the REV. WILLIAM WALTERS, of Preston, to become the pastor, but as he understood the deacons to intimate to him that his ministry was not acceptable, he tendered his resignation, and although requested to remain, he judged it more advisable to remove to Halifax in June, 1853, thus closing a ministry of two years. These changes sadly diminished the church and marred its union. The clouds gathered heavily, and no sunlight appeared.

[But this did not long continue, as in the next year the youthful pastor of Waterbeach, CHARLES H. SPURGEON, in his twentieth year, accepted the invitation of the church, and has continued his fruitful ministry there for eight and twenty years.]

Under date January 6, 1861, there stands in the records the following solemn declaration, signed by the pastor and leading friends: "This church needs rather more than £4,000 (twenty thousand dollars) 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."

Now let the reader mark that, on May 6th of the same year, the pastor and many friends also signed their names to another testi-

mony, which is worded as follows: "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 loving-kindness 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



NEW PARK-STREET CHAPEL,

The first building in which Mr. Spurgeon preached in London.

at all times with confidence, so that in quietness we may possess our souls. To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost we offer praise and thanksgiving, and we set to our seal that God is true."

After about a month of Opening Services, regular work commenced at the Tabernacle in May, 1861, the whole building being *free of debt*, and the accounts showing that \$156,660 had been received, and the same amount expended. Truly we serve a gracious God.

The Tabernacle is 146 feet long, 81 feet broad, and 62 feet high. There are some 5,500 sittings of all kinds. There is room for 6,000 persons without excessive crowding; and we have also a lecture-hall holding about 900, schoolroom for 1,000 children, six

class-rooms, kitchen, lavatory, and retiring rooms below stairs. We have a ladies' room for working meetings, young men's class-room, and secretary's room on the ground floor; three vestries, for pastor, deacons, and elders on first floor, and three store-rooms on the second floor. The accommodation is all too little for the work to be carried on, and we are glad to use the rooms at the Almshouses and the College.

In October, 1867, the pastor having for several years been laid aside at intervals by painful illness, and it having been stated by eminent physicians that this was due to the over-straining of his mental powers, the deacons and elders, after consulting together, recommended the church to request MR. J. A. SPURGEON to become co-pastor with his brother, to relieve him of much of the pastoral work. This happy arrangement was carried out January 9, 1868, and has been a great comfort to the senior pastor, both in church and college work. Mr. James Spurgeon is now also the pastor of a large and growing church in Croydon, for which he has erected a noble chapel, where he is able to exercise his ministry on the Lord's day; his help being mainly required at the Tabernacle upon week days, and in the general oversight of the church. No more efficient or sympathetic helper could possibly have been found.

In addition to the College and Orphanage, the following institutions are also connected with the Tabernacle. Who shall dare say that this is not **A WORKING CHURCH**? We collate from trustworthy documents.

Tabernacle Building Fund. — Capital twenty-five thousand dollars. The capital is lent out without interest to chapels in debt, to encourage them to clear themselves of their liabilities. Thus this capital remains and continues to benefit one church after another. The fund was originally raised in order that the pastor might feel that in case of his death there would be money available to pay for the completion of the studies of the men in College.

Mrs. Spurgeon's Book Fund. — The pastor's beloved wife, touched with the poverty of many ministers, commenced this

fund to supply the most needy with books. She makes this the pleasant business of her life, when she has respite from pain, and sufficient strength.

Mr. Oncken's German Mission.—The church supports two missionaries in Germany, — at Templin and Hamburg.

Mission to the Jews.—There is a small auxiliary to this mission.

Mr. Orsman's Mission in Golden Lane, City, one of the most useful in all London, is an entirely independent enterprise, but Mr. Orsman is still a member at the Tabernacle.

Richmond-street Mission and Schools, Walworth.—In 1875 new premises were erected for this mission at a cost of over four thousand five hundred dollars, which is all paid. Sunday and Ragged Schools, and adult classes. Children in schools, 650. Preaching, tract distribution, Band of Hope, evangelistic work, &c., all in active operation.

Green Walk Mission, Bermondsey.—A mighty warfare against sin has been carried on here, and very many brought to Jesus and added to the Tabernacle church. Hall thronged to hear the gospel. About 350 children in the schools. Mothers' meetings, Band of Hope, Tract Society, Open Air Mission, Bible and Singing Classes, and children's special service. All at work and all alive.

James Grove, Peckham.—Here a chapel has been built and a congregation gathered, with schools. Many members have been added to the Tabernacle church, and we hope ere long to form them into a separate community and let them run alone.

Mr. Hampton's Blind Mission.—Established some years, for the evangelization of the poor blind. There is a Sunday-school for blind children. Tea is given on Sunday afternoon to the blind and their guides, and then service is held. Two hundred blind and guides attend.

Mrs. Thomas's Mothers' Mission.—Our afflicted friend carries on this work with the help of some of our members, and it is a great success. Seventy women are on the books. Clothes, loan-boxes, &c., provided for poor women.

Other mothers' meetings are held by various ladies of the church.

Tabernacle Sunday-school.—Held in the Tabernacle school-room and in the College. Children, 1,000 in regular attendance; 150 in senior classes, each of which deserves separate mention if we had space. Young Christians' Association, 216 members. Children's and teachers' library. The school raises from \$250 to \$300 per annum for the Baptist Missionary Society. There is a Band of Hope and a working class.

Almshouses.—The day-schools are as full as they can hold. Here there are Sunday-schools, and an adult class of 120 members.

Orphanage.—Here, too, Sunday-school work goes on vigorously.

Mrs. Bartlett's Class.—This famous class, since the decease of its invaluable leader, is now presided over by her son Edward, who is an indefatigable laborer in many ways. The class is well attended, numbering from 500 to 700; it carries on many meetings and works of usefulness, and manifests a right royal liberality to the College, for which it raises a large amount annually. Very many have come into the church from this class.

Mr. Perkins's Bible Class.—An earnest, united band of young men, who meet on Sabbath afternoons in the vestry of the Tabernacle. They carry on different works of usefulness and aid the College.

Mr. Bowker's Bible Class is of the same character, and meets in the Octagonal Room of the College. It is an earnest class, helps its own poor, works for Jesus, and aids in supporting the College.

Mr. Charlesworth has a *Ladies' Bible Class* on Thursdays before the service, and a *Young Men's Bible Class* on Sabbath afternoons, both prospering. The two classes support a Bible-carriage.

Baptist Country Mission.—A small society, but full of life. It seeks to evangelize the villages by open-air preaching, and opening rooms for services. With small funds, it has during late years carried on three promising interests,—in Putney, Walthamstow, and Carshalton. Others in past years have become self-supporting churches, and so will these. It is making attempts in villages further afield, and Christ is preached faithfully. It is an

evangelistic effort for the suburbs and country. Its expenditure was only three hundred dollars in one year.

Evangelists' Association.—Is fully at work in halls, lodgings, houses, street corners, the Tabernacle steps, &c. Services have been successfully carried on at Dunn's Institute and Tabernacle Almshouses, and in various chapels where the ministers have allowed evangelistic meetings to be held. This society sends brethren to any church needing such assistance.

Loan Tract Society for Tabernacle District.—Tracts and the pastor's sermons are lent out, and two thousand families visited every week. Several conversions have resulted.

General Loan Tract Society.—Supplies the pastor's sermons in free grants to poor districts, where friends arrange for their loan. With the very best results, this work has been carried on in seventeen counties of England.

Another society, called *The Rock Loan Tract Society*, lends sermons chiefly in country villages.

The Ordinance Poor Fund distributes among the poor members of the church about four thousand dollars annually.

Ladies' Benevolent Society.—For making clothing and relieving the poor. A very useful society.

Ladies' Maternal Society.—For the aid of poor women in their confinements. One hundred and sixty-two boxes of linen lent during the year.

Mrs. Evans's Home and Foreign Missionary Working Society makes up boxes of garments for missionaries, and also for poor ministers and their families at home. This is a blessed work, and has made glad many a poor servant of Jesus.

XII.

THE PASTORS' COLLEGE.

SOULS are not saved by systems, but by the Spirit. Organizations without the Holy Ghost are mills without wind, or water, or steam power. Methods and arrangements without grace are pipes from a dry conduit, lamps without oil, banks without capital. Even the most Scriptural forms of church government and effort are clouds without rain till the "power from on high" be given. — C. H. SPURGEON.

THE PASTORS' COLLEGE.

COLLEGES may become a bane or a blessing. How many of them have been harmful in their unsanctified learning! What responsibility rests upon the faculty of a college! Not always through evil teaching, but by *indifference* on the part of the professors, have there been so many moral wrecks in these halls of learning. Indifference, we say, on the part of teachers who had no care for their students beyond that of teaching the young idea how to shoot a classic bow, or dig up Greek and Latin roots. Nevertheless, the Christian student must take the blame upon himself if he departs from the living God. There are, however, colleges which are "schools of the prophets," where the moral and mental requirements are faithfully considered and judiciously ministered unto. From such training-ground men of might come forth fit for the battle, like David's heroes, bold as lions, and swift as the roes upon the mountains. Oh, that their name were legion!

The unswerving aim of Mr. Spurgeon has been to help his young men in Bible knowledge, so that they may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works. He has had long experience in Christian work, and every year his conviction deepens that there cannot be a healthy church where an unspiritual minister leads. In addition, therefore, to the development of intellect, and as the great desideratum, he prays and labors to bring his students into the life of faith and deep Christian experience. To an unloving heart Jesus will not commit the care of His sheep. The first and only question with Him is, "Lovest thou Me?" And the beloved

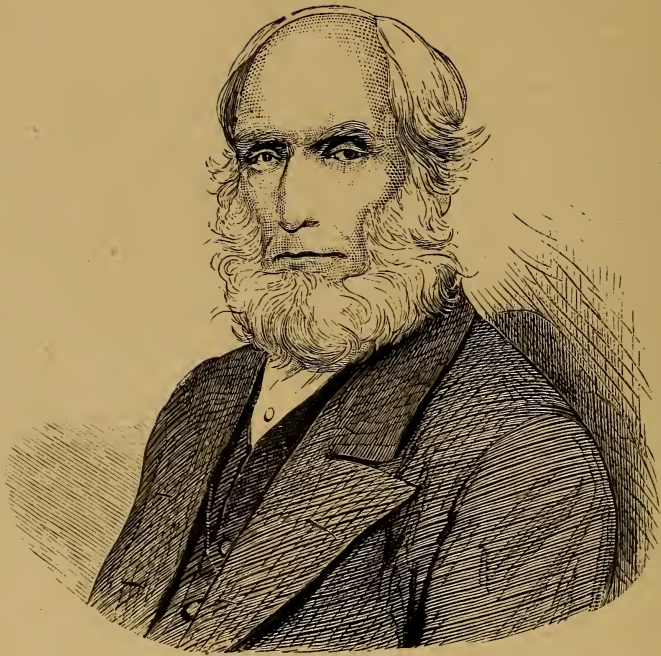
president of the Pastors' College is in sympathy with his gracious Master's purpose, viz., that men filled with divine love may be sent forth duly qualified to preach the gospel and to teach God's Word to the world lying in wickedness.

None is better fitted to speak of the College, from its incipiency to its present successful administration, than its honored president. Its object, methods, and results are thus sketched by his own pen: —

The College was the first important institution commenced by the pastor, and it still remains his first-born and best beloved. To train ministers of the gospel is a most excellent work, and when the Holy Spirit blesses the effort, the result is of the utmost importance both to the Church and to the world.

The Pastors' College commenced in 1856, and during this long period 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 preach they would, though their attainments were very slender, no other course was open but to give them an opportunity to educate themselves for the work.

The Holy Spirit very evidently had set His seal upon the work of one of them, by conversions wrought under his open-air addresses; it seemed therefore to be a plain matter of duty to instruct this youthful Apollos still further, that he might be fitted for wider usefulness. No college at that time appeared to me to be suitable for the class of men that the providence and grace of God drew around me. They were mostly poor, and most of the colleges involved necessarily a considerable outlay to the student; for even where the education was free, books, clothes,



GEORGE ROGERS, FOR MANY YEARS TUTOR IN THE PASTOR'S COLLEGE.

and other incidental expenses required a considerable sum per annum. Moreover, it must be frankly admitted that my views of the gospel and of the mode of training preachers were and are somewhat peculiar. I may have been uncharitable in my judgment, but I thought the Calvinism of the theology usually taught to be very doubtful, and the fervor of the generality of the students to be far behind their literary attainments. It seemed to me that preachers of the grand old truths of the gospel, ministers suitable for the masses, were more likely to be found in an institution where preaching and divinity would be the main objects, and not degrees and other insignia of human learning. I felt that, without interfering with the laudable objects of other colleges, I could do good in my own way. These and other considerations led me to take a few tried young men, and to put them under some able minister, that he might train them in the Scriptures, and in other knowledge helpful to the understanding and proclamation of the truth. This step appeared plain; but how the work was to be conducted and supported was the question, — a question, be it added, solved almost before it occurred.

Two friends, both deacons of the church, promised aid, which, with what I could give myself, enabled me to take one student, and I set about to find a tutor. In Mr. George Rogers, God sent us the very best man. He had been preparing for such work, and was anxiously waiting for it. This gentleman, who has remained during all this period our principal tutor, is a man of Puritanic stamp, deeply learned, orthodox in doctrine, judicious, witty, devout, earnest, liberal in spirit, and withal juvenile in heart to an extent most remarkable in one 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. Into this beloved minister's house the first students were introduced, and for a considerable period they were domiciled as members of his family.

Encouraged by the readiness with which the young men found spheres of labor, 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 three thousand dollars to four thousand dollars in a year in my own favorite 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 one thousand dollars, 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 after, another five hundred dollars came in, from the same bank, as I was informed, from another hand. Soon after Mr. Phillips, 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 given. A dinner was also given by my liberal publishers, Messrs. Passmore and Alabaster, to celebrate the publishing of my five-hundredth weekly sermon, at which twenty-five hundred dollars were raised and presented to the funds. The College grew every month, and the number of students rapidly advanced from one to forty. Friends known and unknown, from far and near, were moved to give little or much to my work, and so the funds increased as

the need enlarged. Then another earnest deacon of the church espoused as his special work the weekly offering, and by the unanimous voice of the church under my care the College was adopted as its own child. Since that hour the weekly offering has been a steady source of income, till in the year 1869 the amount reached exactly £1,869 (\$9,345).

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 five thousand dollars) 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 is firm that the Lord can as readily keep both works in action as one. My own present inability to do so much, by way of preaching abroad, occasions naturally the failure of another great source of income; and as my increasing labors at home will in all probability diminish that stream in perpetuity, there is another trial of faith. Yet, if the Lord wills the work to be continued, He will send His servant a due portion of the gold and silver, which are all His own; and therefore as I wait upon Him in prayer, the All-sufficient Provider will supply all my needs. About twenty-five thousand dollars is annually required for the College, and the same sum is needed for the Orphanage; but God will move His people to liberality, and we shall see greater things than these.

While speaking of pecuniary matters, it may be well to add that, as many of the young men trained in the College have raised new congregations and gathered fresh churches, another need has arisen,—namely, money for building chapels. It is ever so in Christ's work; one link draws on another, one effort makes another needed. For chapel-building, the College funds could do but little, though they have freely been used to support men while they are collecting congregations; but the Lord found for me one of His stewards, who, on the condition that his name remains unknown, has hitherto, as the Lord has prospered him, supplied very princely amounts for the erection of places of worship, of

which more than forty have been built, or so greatly renovated and enlarged as to be virtually new structures. Truly may it be said, "What hath God wrought!"

Pecuniary needs, however, have made up but a small part of our 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 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 pierce 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 have been comparatively light, and are not worthy to be compared with the great joy which we experience in seeing so many 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 eleven 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 young brethren are boarded generally in twos and threes, in the houses of our friends around the Tabernacle, for which the College pays a moderate weekly amount. The plan of separate

lodging we believe to be far preferable to having all under one roof; for, by the latter mode, men are isolated from general family habits, and are too apt to fall into superabundant levity. The circumstances of the families who entertain our young friends are generally such that they are not elevated above the social position which in all probability they will have to occupy in future years, but are kept in connection with the struggles and conditions of every-day life.

Devotional habits are cultivated to the utmost, and the students are urged to do as much evangelistic work as they can. The severe pressure put upon them to make the short term as useful as possible, leaves small leisure for such efforts, but this is in most instances faithfully economized. Although our usual period is two years, whenever it is thought right the term of study is lengthened to three or four years; indeed, there is no fixed rule, all arrangements being ordered by the circumstances and attainments of each individual.

As before hinted, our numbers have greatly grown, and now range from eighty to one hundred. Very promising men, who are suddenly thrown in our way, are received at any time, and others who are selected from the main body of applicants come in at the commencement of terms. The church at the Tabernacle continues to furnish a large quota of men, and as these have usually been educated for two or more years in our Evening Classes, they are more advanced and better able to profit by our two years of study. We have no difficulty in finding spheres for men who are ready and fitted for them. There is no reason to believe that the supply of trained ministers is in advance of the demand. Even on the lowest ground of consideration, there is yet very much land to be possessed; and when men break up fresh soil, as ours are encouraged to do, the field is the world, and the prayer for more laborers is daily more urgent. If the Lord would but send us funds commensurate, there are hundreds of neighborhoods needing the pure gospel, which we could by His grace change from deserts into gardens. How far this is a call upon the reader let him judge as in the sight of God. Shall there be the gifts and graces of the Spirit given to the Church, and shall there not also

be sufficient bestowed of the earthly treasure? How much owest thou unto my Lord?

The College was for some little time aided by the zealous services of Mr. W. Cubitt, of Thrapstone, 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.

As to the quality of the preachers whom we have been enabled to send forth, we need no more impartial witness than the good Earl of Shaftesbury, who was kind enough to express himself publicly in the following generous terms: —

“It was an utter fallacy to suppose that the people of England would ever be brought to a sense of order and discipline by the repetition of miserable services, by bits of wax candle, by rags of

Popery, and by gymnastics in the chancel: nothing was adapted to meet the wants of the people but the Gospel message brought home to their hearts, and he knew of none who had done better service in this evangelistic work than the pupils trained in Mr. Spurgeon's College. They had a singular faculty for addressing the population, and going to the very heart of the people."

Each year the brethren educated at the Pastors' College are invited to meet in conference at the Tabernacle, and they are generously entertained by our friends. The week is spent in holy fellowship, prayer, and intercourse. By this means men in remote villages, laboring under discouraging circumstances and ready to sink from loneliness of spirit, are encouraged and strengthened: indeed, all the men confess that a stimulus is thus given which no other means could confer.

All things considered, gratitude and hope are supreme in connection with the Pastors' College; and with praise to God and thanks to a thousand friends, the president and his helpers gird up the loins of their minds for yet more abundant labors in the future. To every land we hope yet to send forth the gospel in its fulness and purity. We pray the Lord to raise up missionaries among our students and make every one a winner of souls. Brethren, remember this work in your prayers, and in your allotment of the Lord's portion of your substance.

When the necessity for new college buildings was plainly indicated, a friend in May, 1873, sent \$5,000 towards that object. On October 14, 1873, the foundation-stone of those buildings was laid; when the people contributed \$5,000, the students gave \$1,500, and undertook to raise the amount to \$5,000. In 1874 Messrs. Cory and Sons, of Cardiff, sent for the benefit of the fund \$5,000 worth of paid-up shares in their colliery company. In July, 1875, the president received \$25,000 for the same object as a legacy from the late Mr. Matthews. These are named as examples of the various ways in which God has answered prayer and rewarded the faith of His servant in that important work.

Shortly before the new College buildings were commenced, Mr. Spurgeon, by an article in "The Sword and the Trowel,"

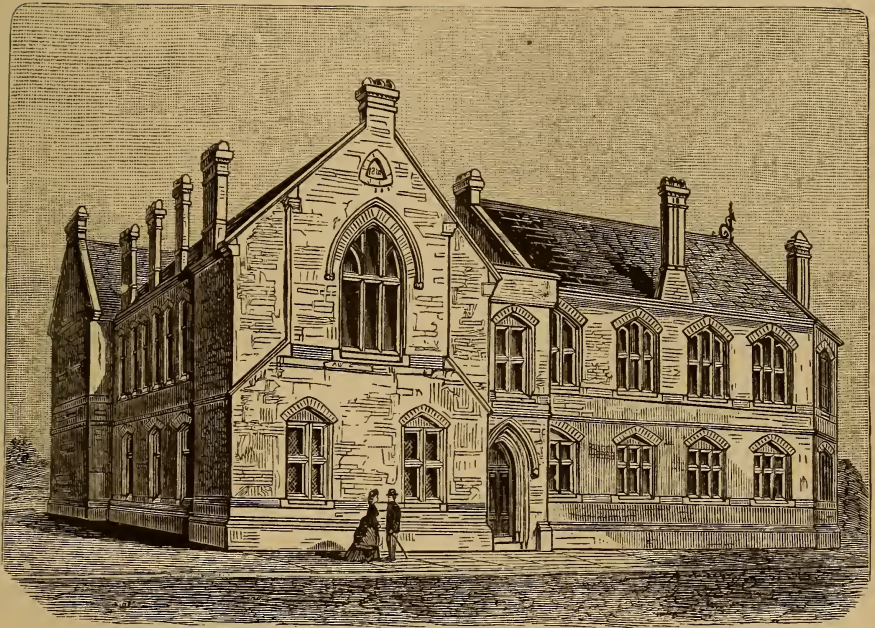
directed public attention to the institution. The following extract will suffice: —

The supply of men as students has been always large, and at this time more are applying than ever. Our one aim has been to train preachers and pastors. The College is made into a home missionary society for the spread of the gospel. One of our students, Mr. F. E. Suddard, was first, in 1872, among seven competitors for one of the Dr. Williams' scholarships at the Glasgow University. In the metropolis alone, forty-five churches have been founded.

One of the students has commenced a cause in Turk's Island; he is now carrying on evangelistic work in St. Domingo, where, if he is spared, he is likely to become the apostle of that island, and also of Hayti. One brother has gone to serve the Lord in China, two others are laboring in Spain. Several are doing a good work in Canada, and more than twenty brethren have become pastors in America, and seven others are gone as far south as Australia. One is a missionary in India, and another in Prince Edward Island.

The suitable and commodious new buildings, which have been erected and furnished, cost about \$75,000, all of which is paid. Here we have a fine hall, excellent class-rooms, a handsome library, and, in fact, all that a college can require. The way in which the money was raised was another instance of divine goodness; \$15,000 was given as a memorial to a dear and lamented husband; \$10,000 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 Evening Classes are in a high condition of prosperity, there being about two hundred men in regular attendance, and a considerable number among them of hopeful ability. Out of this



THE PASTOR'S COLLEGE.

class city missionaries, lay preachers, writers for the press, and colporteurs are continually coming. It is an eminently useful part of the College work.

There are now hundreds of men proclaiming the gospel who have been trained in the College. We are daily expecting more missionaries to be raised up among us.

Our statistics, which are far from being complete, show that these brethren baptized 20,676 persons in ten years (1865-1874), that the gross increase to their churches was 30,677, and the net increase 19,498. LAUS DEO.

PSALM LIII.

THE foes of Zion quake for fright,
Where no fear was they quail ;
For well they know that Sword of might
Which cuts through coats of mail.

The Lord of old defied their shields,
And all their spears He scorned ;
Their bones lay scattered o'er the fields,
Unburied and unmourned.

Let Zion's foes be filled with shame,
Her sons are blessed of God ;
Though scoffers now despise their name,
The Lord shall break the rod.

Oh, would our God to Zion turn,
God with salvation clad ;
Then Judah's harps should music learn,
And Israel be glad.

C. H. SPURGEON.

XIII.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT, 1881.

PETRARCH's works are said to have lain so long in the roof of St. Mark's at Venice, that they became turned into stone; by what process deponent sayeth not. To many men it might well seem that the Word of God had become petrified, for they receive it as a hard, lifeless creed, a stone upon which to sharpen the daggers of controversy, a stumbling-block for young beginners, a millstone with which to break opponents' heads, after the manner experienced by Abimelech at Thebez. A man must have a stout digestion to feed upon some men's theology—no sap, no sweetness, no life, but all stern accuracy and fleshless definition. Proclaimed without tenderness and argued without affection, the gospel from such men rather resembles a missile from a catapult than bread from a Father's table. Teeth are needlessly broken over the grit of systematic theology, while souls are famishing. To turn stones into bread was a temptation of our Master; but how many of His servants yield readily to the far worse temptation to turn bread into stone! Go thy way, metaphysical divine, to the stone-yard, and break granite for McAdam, but stand not in the way of loving spirits who would feed the family of God with living bread. The inspired Word is to us spirit and life, and we cannot afford to have it hardened into a huge monolith or a spiritual Stonehenge—sublime but cold, majestic but lifeless; far rather would we have it as our own household book, our bosom companion, the poor man's counsellor and friend. — C. H. SPURGEON.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT, 1881.

ON enquiring the other day for the secretary of one of our largest societies, I was informed that he had gone to the seaside for a month, in order that he might have quiet to prepare the report. I do not wonder at this if he has aforetime written many descriptions of the same work, for every year increases the difficulty unless a man is prepared to say the same thing over and over again. Very few can, like Paganini, perform so admirably on one string that everybody is charmed with the melody. The task grows still harder when the year has been peaceful and successful. It has been truly said, "Happy is the nation which has no history," because it has been free from changes, wars, convulsions, and revolutions; but I may remark, on the other hand, unhappy is the historian who has to produce a record of a certain length concerning a period which has been 'innocent of striking events, — making bricks without straw is nothing to it. The Pastors' College has of late maintained the even tenor of its way, knowing little of external attack and nothing of internal strife. Regular in its work and fixed in its purpose, its movement has been calm and strong. Hence there are no thrilling incidents, painful circumstances, or striking occurrences with which to fill my page and thrill my reader's soul. *Gratitude writ large* is about the only material at hand out of which to fashion my report. "Bless the Lord, O my soul!" is my one song, and I feel as if I could repeat it a thousand times.

The College started with a definite doctrinal basis. I never affected to leave great questions as moot points to be discussed in the hall, and believed or not believed, as might be the fashion of

the hour. The creed of the College is well known, and we invite none to enter who do not accept it. The doctrines of grace, coupled with a firm belief in human responsibility, are held with intense conviction, and those who do not receive them would not find themselves at home within our walls. The Lord has sent us tutors who are lovers of sound doctrine and zealous for the truth. No uncertain sound has been given forth at any time, and we would sooner close the house than have it so. Heresy in colleges means false doctrine throughout the churches: to defile the fountain is to pollute the streams. Hesitancy which might be tolerated in an ordinary minister would utterly disqualify a teacher of teachers. The experiment of Doddridge ought to satisfy all godly men that colleges without dogmatic evangelical teaching are more likely to be seminaries of Socinianism than schools of the prophets. Old Puritanic theology has been heartily accepted by those received into our College, and on leaving it they have almost with one consent remained faithful to that which they have received. The men are before the public in every part of the country, and their testimony well known.

This institution has now reached its twenty-fifth year, and its object, spirit, and manner of work remain the same. It was intended from the first to receive young men who had been preaching for a sufficient time to test their abilities and their call to the work of the ministry; and such young men have been forthcoming every year in growing numbers. Some bodies of Christians have to lament that their ministry is not adequately supplied: I know of one portion of the Church which is sending up to heaven bitter lamentations because as the fathers depart to their rest there is scanty hope that their places will be filled; but among the Baptists the candidates for the ministry are, if possible, too plentiful. This is a new state of things, and is to be interpreted as indicating growth and zeal. Certainly the applicants are not tempted by rich livings, or even by the prospect of competent support; or, if they are, I take abundant pains to set before them the assured truth that they will find our ministry to be a warfare abounding in long marches and stern battles; but equally notable for meagre rations. Still they come, and it needs a very hard heart

to repel them, and to refuse to eager brethren the drill and equipment which they covet so earnestly. If it were wise to increase the number of students, another hundred of suitable men could at once be added to those who are already under tuition.

From the commencement our main object was to help men who from lack of funds could not obtain an education for themselves. These have been supplied not only with tuition and books, gratis, but with board and lodging, and in some cases with clothes and pocket money. Some very successful brethren needed everything, and if they had been required to pay, they must have remained illiterate preachers to this day. Still, year by year, the number of men who are ready to support themselves in whole or in part has increased, and I believe that it is increasing and will increase. As a college we have had to struggle with a repute based upon falsehood and created by jealousy; but this has not injured us to any great extent; for men come to us from America, Australia, and the Cape, and applications have frequently been made from foreign countries. German students have attended our classes during their own vacations, and members of other colleges are usually to be seen at our lectures. The institution never deserved to be charged with giving a mere apology for an education; and if ever that reproach could have been justly cast upon us, it is utterly undeserved now that the time of study has become more extended, and a fuller course of training has thus become possible. Scholarship for its own sake was never sought and never will be within the Pastors' College; but to help men to become efficient preachers has been and ever will be the sole aim of all those concerned in its management. I shall not, in order to increase our prestige, refuse poor men, or zealous young Christians whose early education has been neglected. Pride would suggest that we take "a better class of men;" but experience shows that they are not better, that eminently useful men spring from all ranks, that diamonds may be found in the rough, and that some who need most pains in the polishing, reward our labor a thousandfold. My friends will still stand by me in my desire to aid the needy but pious brother, and we shall rejoice together as we continually see the ploughman, the fisherman, and the mechanic taught the way of God more

perfectly, and enabled through divine grace to proclaim in the language of the people the salvation of our God.

During the past year about one hundred and twenty men have been with us; but as some have come and others have gone, the average number in actual residence has averaged one hundred. Of these a few have been with us three years, and more have entered upon the third year. The rule is that a man's usual period terminates at the end of two years, and his remaining longer depends upon the judgment formed of him. Certain men will never get beyond an English education, and to detain them from their work is to repress their ardor without bestowing a compensatory advantage. In other cases, the longer the period of study the better. Probably the third year is to many a student more useful than the other two, and he goes forth to his life-work more thoroughly prepared. I could not lengthen the course in former days, when churches tempted the brethren away before the proper time, as they too often did. They told these raw youths that it was a pity to delay, that if they left their studies souls might be saved, and I know not what besides; and some were induced to run away, as Rowland Hill would have said, before they had pulled their boots on. If I constrained them to remain, the good deacons of the eager churches thought me a sort of harsh jailer, who locked up his prisoners and would not give them up at the entreaty of their friends. One wrote and bade me loose the brother, for the Lord had need of him, and I would have let the young man go if I had thought that he was one of the donkeys to whom the passage referred. That a number of brethren may have entered upon their ministry prematurely was no fault of mine, but of those who tempted them to quit their classes too soon. However, there have been periods in which there is a lull in the demand of the churches for ministers, and then we have been able to retain the men for a longer season. Such a time is passing over us just now, and I do not regret it, for I am persuaded it is good to give the brethren a longer space for preparatory study.

I have been very ill through the greater part of the past year, and have therefore been unable to give so much personal service

to the College as I have usually done. This has been a sore trial to me, but it has been much alleviated by my beloved brother, J. A. Spurgeon, the vice-president, who has looked after everything with great care; and I have also been greatly comforted by the knowledge that the tutors are as deeply concerned about the holy service as ever I can be. It has been my joy to learn that the College was never in a better state in all respects than now, and that the men under training give promise of becoming useful preachers. I have had very little weeding work to do on my coming back to my place, and those whom I have removed were not chargeable with any fault, but their capacity was questioned by the tutors. All through the year this painful operation has to be carried on, and it always causes me much grief; but it is a necessary part of my official duty as president. Young men who come to us loaded with testimonials are occasionally found after a while to be lacking in application or in spiritual power; and after due admonishment and trial they have to be sent back to the place from whence they came. Others are as good as gold, but their heads ache, and their health fails under hard study, or from lack of mental capacity they cannot master the subjects placed before them. These must be kindly but firmly set aside; but I always dread the task. This thinning-out process is done with conscientiousness, under the guidance of the tutors; but this year there has been little need of it, and I have rejoiced in the fact, since frequent depression of spirit has made it undesirable to have much trying work to do. I am glad to say that very rarely have I had to deal with a case of *moral* failure. Bad young men have crept in among us, and no men are perfect; but I have great comfort in seeing the earnest and prayerful spirit which has prevailed among the brotherhood.

Foremost among our aims is the promotion of a *vigorous spiritual life* among those who are preparing to be under-shepherds of Christ's flock. By frequent meetings for prayer, and by other means, we labor to maintain a high tone of spirituality. I have endeavored in my lectures and addresses to stir up the holy fire; *for well I know that if the heavenly flame burns low, nothing else will avail.* The earnest action of the College Missionary Society

has been a source of great joy to me; for above all things I desire to see many students devoting themselves to foreign work. The Temperance Society also does a good work, and tends to keep alive among the men a burning hatred of England's direst curse.

We need the daily prayer of God's people that much grace may be with all concerned in this important business; for what can we do without the Holy Spirit? How few ever pray for students! If ministers do not come up to the desired standard, may not the members of the churches rebuke themselves for having restrained prayer on their account? When does a Christian worker more need prayer than in his early days, when his character is forming and his heart is tenderly susceptible both of good and evil influences? I would beseech all who have power with God to remember our colleges in their intercessions. The solemn interests involved in the condition of these schools of the prophets compel me to entreat, even unto tears, that the hopeful youth of our ministry may not be forgotten in the supplications of the saints. For us also, who have the responsible duty of guiding the minds of these young men, much prayer is requested, that we may have wisdom, love, gentleness, firmness, and abounding spiritual power. It is not every man who can usefully influence students, nor can the same men have equal power at all times. The Divine Spirit is needed, and He is given to them that ask for His sacred teaching.

In Great Britain three hundred and fifty-five former students are preaching the Word, some in the more prominent pulpits of the denomination, and others in positions where their patience and self-denial are severely tested by the present depression in trade, and the consequent inability of rural congregations to furnish them with adequate support. The College has reason to rejoice not only in the success of her most honored sons, but in the faithfulness and perseverance of the rank and file, whose services, although they are little noticed on earth, will receive the "well done" of the Lord.

This institution is not alone a College, but a Home and Foreign Missionary Society. Our three evangelists have traversed the

land with great diligence, and the Lord has set His seal to their work.

It is my greatest pleasure to aid in commencing new churches. The oftener brethren can create their own spheres the more glad shall I be. It is not needful to repeat the details of former reports; but many churches have been founded through the College, and there are more to follow. I announced at the beginning of this enterprise that it was not alone for the education of ministers, but for the general spread of the gospel; and this has been adhered to, a part of the income being always expended in that direction.

A very considerable number of Pastors' College men are to be found at the Antipodes. I cannot forget that there I have a beloved son; but next to that in nearness to my heart is the fact that so many of my spiritual sons are there, prospering and bringing glory to God. It was with no little delight that I received the following letter from some of them. Readers must kindly excuse expressions of affection which are so natural from friends; I could not cut them out without destroying the spirit of the letter:—

MELBOURNE, VICTORIA, Nov. 2, 1880.

REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

HONORED AND BELOVED PRESIDENT,—A number of former students of the College being met together at this metropolis of the Antipodes, it was most heartily agreed that we should send you an expression of our warm love. For truly we can say that instead of distance or even time causing any abatement of love towards you personally, or towards the institution which we may with truth style our *Alma Mater*, we find it intensified and hallowed.

The meetings of the Victorian Baptist Association are now being held in this city, which has brought most of us together; but the Melbourne Exhibition has brought to us Brother Harry Woods from South Australia, and Brother Harrison from Deloraine, Tasmania. Our Brother A. J. Clarke's house is the rendezvous for all the brethren, and the cheery hospitality of himself

and wife prove them to be called to the episcopate. Though all the brethren, so far as we know, have had blessing this year, some of them wonderfully so, yet our Brother A. J. Clarke, here at West Melbourne, has experienced a year of toil and harvesting in which we all rejoice, and which exercises a stimulating effect upon all who hail from "the College."

When a number of us were bowing in prayer together, we felt how thoroughly you would have been with us in spirit, as we prayed that we might oppose, in the might of God, the awful world-spirit of this region, and that our souls might be kept wholly loyal to King Jesus, having no "fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness."

Finally, beloved servant of God, we hail you in the name of our Triune Jehovah! No words of ours can express our personal obligation to you. But by fidelity to Christ and to truth, by manifesting that we have caught the spirit of burning love to souls which burns in your own breast, and by serving to our utmost ability, and to the last day of life, in the kingdom and patience of Jesus, we hope to show that all your care and that of the tutors and friends of the Tabernacle has not been ill-bestowed. We remain,

Yours in the bonds of eternal love,

WM. CHRISTR. BUNNING, Geelong.

WILLIAM CLARK, Ballarat.

ALFRED J. CLARKE, West Melbourne.

H. H. GARRETT, Brighton.

HENRY MARSDEN, Kew.

J. S. HARRISON, Deloraine, Tasmania.

HARRY WOODS, Saddleworth, S. Australia.

F. G. BUCKINGHAM, Melbourne.

Similarly in Canada the Lord has been with those who have gone from the College. My brother, J. A. Spurgeon, during his visit to Canada, formed a branch of our Conference there, and from it the annexed loving epistle has lately come.

567 YORK STREET, LONDON, EAST ONTARIO,
CANADA, April 6, 1881.

BELOVED PRESIDENT, — We, the members of the Canadian branch of the Pastors' College Brotherhood, herewith greet you lovingly (and our brethren through you) on the occasion of your Annual Conference, which we hope may surpass even the best of by-gone gatherings, in all holy joy and such spiritual refreshing as may fit all for more abundant service.

Need we say how deeply we feel for all the sufferings by which our President is made to serve, the while we gratefully recognize "the peaceable fruit" of those sufferings in such enriched utterances as we have lately read? We love our dear President as of yore, remembering days of prayerful tryst in which we heard him sigh and groan his longings for our course.

During another year we have been "kept by the power of God," and used in service; and although we are in some cases separated even here by many dreary miles of continent, we still hold and are held to and by the old-day kindness; and, better still, "the form of sound words."

We "shake hands across the vast," loved President and brethren, and wish you every joy in Conference.

For the Canadian Brethren,

Yours affectionately,

JOSEPH FORTH,

President for 1881 of the Canadian Branch of the
Pastors' College Brotherhood.

A point of great interest, to which I hope the Lord may turn the attention of many of His servants, is that of English evangelists for India. Mr. Gregson, the well-known missionary, has urged upon me the great utility of sending out young men who should preach the gospel to those in India who understand the English language, whether British, Eurasian, or educated Hindoo. He advises that the men should be sent out for five years, and therefore be subjected to no remark should they return at the end of that period. He thinks it probable that they would acquire a language and remain abroad as missionaries; but if not, they would

be missionary-advocates on their return home, and arouse among our churches fresh enthusiasm. It is believed that in many cities churches could be gathered which would support these men as their ministers, or that at least a portion of their expenses would be found on the spot. I have determined to enter upon this field as God shall help me; and Mr. H. R. Brown, who has been for years the pastor of the church at Shooter's Hill, has reached Calcutta, on his way to Darjeeling in the hill country. If the Lord shall prosper him there, I hope he will live long in that salubrious region, build up a church, and become the pioneer of a little band of evangelists. Our native tongue is sure to spread among the educated Hindoos, and hence many a heathen may be brought to Jesus by evangelists who do not understand any of the languages of the East; and meanwhile our countrymen, too often irreligious, may be met with by divine grace, and find Christ where the most forget Him. I hope many friends will take an interest in this effort, and assist me to carry it out.

Funds have come in as they have been needed; but apart from a legacy, now nearly consumed, the ordinary income has not been equal to the expenditure of the year. The balance at the banker's is gradually disappearing; but I do not mention this with any regret, for He who has sent us supplies hitherto will continue His bounty, and He will move His stewards to see that this work is not allowed to flag from want of the silver and the gold. With a single eye to His glory I have borne this burden hitherto, and found it light; and I am persuaded from past experience that He will continue to keep this work going so long as it is a blessing to His Church and to the world. I am greatly indebted to the generous donors at the annual supper, and quite as much to the smaller weekly gifts of my own beloved congregation, which, in the aggregate, have made up the noble sum of \$9,100. I am sorry to say that a considerable legacy left to the College will in all probability be lost through the law of mortmain. This is a great disappointment; but if one door is shut another will be opened.

Into the hands of Him who worketh all our works in us we commit the Pastors' College for another year.

XIV.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

WE are not wide enough awake in doing good. Pardon the reference for the sake of the lesson; it shall be borrowed from Dr. Marigold's cart. When a cheap-jack has a little knot of people round his van, he eyes them 'all, and feels sure that the man who is standing over there is a butcher, and that yonder young lad has more money than brains, and that the girl near him is out with her sweetheart and is soon to be married; now, mark, he will hold up the exact articles which are likely to attract these customers, and in his harangue he will have jokes and telling sentences which will turn butcher and lad and lass into purchasers. He cares not a jot for elegance, but very much for force. He knows that his trade will be better pushed by homely remarks and cutting sentences than by the prosiest prettinesses which were ever delivered; and he gains his end, which is more than those of you will do who talk to people about their souls with as much richness of diction as —

“ The girl who at each pretty phrase let drop
A ruby comma, or pearl full-stop,
Or an emerald semicolon.”

C. H. SPURGEON.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

IT is presumed that many students and ministers will read this book. To such we specially commend the following address, delivered by Mr. Spurgeon to his present and former students. Because of its intrinsic merits, its stirring appeals, and its sensible presentation of vital themes, we could not bring our mind to consent to an abridgment. It is suitable for all Christian workers, nor can it fail to interest the general reader. Reading it originally, and again in proof, it has stirred our soul, and breathed upon us a benediction.

I never needed help more than now, and never felt so utterly unfitted to give the key-note to the Conference. As you grow more numerous, more gifted, and more experienced, I feel more and more my unworthiness to stand foremost and lead your ranks. However, I will trust in God, and believe that He will, by His Holy Spirit, send a word that shall be encouraging and quickening.

Years ago an eccentric judge, known as Judge Foster, went upon circuit in extreme old age during a very hot summer, and on one of the most sultry days of that summer he addressed the grand jury at Worcester in some such terms as these: "Gentlemen of the jury, it is very hot, and I am very old; you know your duties very well; go and do them." Following his example, I feel inclined to say to you: "Gentlemen, here you are assembled. I have many infirmities to bear, and you will have great difficulty in bearing with my talk; you know your duties; go and

do them." Action is better than speech. If I speak for an hour I shall scarcely be able to say anything more practical, — you know your duties, go and do them. "England expects every man to do his duty" was the rousing signal of Nelson; need I remind you that our great Lord expects every one of His servants to occupy until He comes, and so to be a good and faithful servant? Go forth and fulfil your Master's high behest, and may God's Spirit work in you the good pleasure of your Lord.

Those who truly serve God are made to feel more and more forcibly that "Life is real, life is earnest," if it be indeed life in Christ. In times of great pain and weakness and depression it has come over me to hope that if I should again recover I should be more intense than ever; if I could be privileged to climb the pulpit stairs again, I resolved to leave out every bit of flourish from my sermons, preach nothing but present and pressing truth, and hurl it at the people with all my might; myself living at high pressure, and putting forth all the energy that my being is capable of. I suppose you, too, have felt like this when you have been laid aside. You have said to yourselves: "Playtime is over with us, we must get to work. Parade is ended, now comes the tug of war. We must not waste a single moment, but redeem the time, because the days are evil." When we see the wonderful activity of the servants of Satan, and how much they accomplish, we may well be ashamed of ourselves that we do so little for our Redeemer, and that the little is often done so badly that it takes as long to set it right as we spent in the doing of it. Brethren, let us cease from regrets, and come to actual amendment.

A great German philosopher has asserted that life is all a dream. He says that "It is a dream composed of a dream of itself." He believes in no actual existence, not even in his own; even *that* he conceives to be but a thought. Surely some in the ministry must be disciples of that philosophy, for they are half asleep, and their spirit is dreamy. They speak of the eternal truth as though it were a temporary system of belief, passing away like all other visions of earth. They live for Christ in a manner which would never be thought of by a person who meant to make money, or to obtain a degree at the university. "Why," said one of a cer-

tain minister, "if I acted with my business as he does in his ministry I should be in the 'Gazette' within three months." It is an unhappy thing that there should be men calling themselves ministers of Christ to whom it never seems to occur that they are bound to display the utmost industry and zeal. They seem to forget that they are dealing with souls that may be lost for ever or saved for ever,—souls that cost the Saviour's heart's blood. They do not appear to have understood the nature of their calling, or to have grasped the Scriptural idea of an ambassador for Christ. Like drowsy wagoners, they hope to get their team safely home, though they themselves are sound asleep. I have heard of ministers who are most lively when playing croquet or cricket, or getting up an excursion, or making a bargain. It was said of one in my hearing, "What a fine minister he would have been if he had only been converted." I heard it said of a very clever man, "He would have been a great winner of souls if he had only believed in souls; but he believed in nothing." It is said of the Russian peasants, that when they have done their work they will lie on the stove, or around it, and there sleep hour after hour; and there is a current opinion among them that they are only awake when they are asleep, and that their waking and working hours are nothing but a horrible dream. The moujik hopes that his dreams are facts, and that his waking sufferings are merely nightmares. May not some have fallen into the same notion with regard to the ministry? They are asleep upon realities, and awake about shadows; in earnest about trifles, yet trifling about solemnities. What God will have to say to those servants who do their own work well and *His* work badly I will not attempt to foreshadow. What shall be done to the man who displayed great capacity in his recreations, but was dull in his devotions? active out of his calling, and languid in it? The day shall declare it. Let us arouse ourselves to the sternest fidelity, laboring to win souls as much as if it all depended wholly upon ourselves, while we fall back in faith upon the glorious fact that everything rests with the eternal God.

I see before me many who are fully aroused, and are eager in seeking the lost; for I speak to some of the most earnest spirits

in the Christian Church, — evangelists and pastors whose meat and drink it is to do the will of their Lord. But even these, who are most awake, will not differ from me when I assert that they could be yet more aroused. My brethren, when you have been at your best you might have been better. Who among us might not have had greater success if he had been ready to obtain it? When Nelson served under Admiral Hotham, and a certain number of the enemy's ships had been captured, the commander said: "We must be contented; we have done very well." But Nelson did not think so, since a number of the enemy's vessels had escaped. "Now," said he, "had we taken ten sail, and allowed the eleventh to escape when it had been possible to have got at her, I could never have called it *well done*." If we have brought many to Christ we dare not boast, for we are humbled by the reflection that more might have been done had we been fitter instruments for God. Possibly some brother will say, "I have done all that I could do." That may be his honest opinion, for he could not have preached more frequently, or held more meetings. Perhaps it is true that he has held enough meetings, and the people have had quite enough sermons; but there might have been an improvement in the spirit of the meetings, and in the sermons too. Some ministers might do more in reality if they did less in appearance. A Bristol Quaker — and Quakers are very shrewd men — years ago stepped into an alehouse and called for a quart of beer. The beer frothed up, and the measure was not well filled. The Friend said to the landlord, "How much trade art thou doing?" "Oh," he answered, "I draw ten butts of beer a month." "Do thee know how thee might draw eleven butts?" "No, sir; I wish I did." "I will tell thee, friend; thee can do it by filling thy pots." To any brother who says, "I do not know how I can preach more gospel than I do, for I preach very often," I would reply, "You need not preach oftener, but fill the sermons fuller of gospel." The Saviour at the marriage-feast said: "Fill the water-pots with water." Let us imitate the servants, of whom we read, "They filled them up to the brim." Let your discourses be full of matter, sound, gracious, and condensed. Certain speakers suffer from an awful flux of words; you can scarcely spy out the

poor little straw of an idea which has been hurried down an awful Ganges or Amazon of words. Give the people plenty of thought, plenty of Scriptural, solid doctrine, and deliver it in a way which is growingly better, — every day better, every year better, that God may be more glorified, and sinners may more readily learn the way of salvation.

I shall now commend to you for the perfecting of your ministry five things, which should be in you and abound. You remember the passage which says, "Salt, without prescribing how much." There is no need for limiting the quantity of any of the matters now commended to you. Here, they are, — *light, fire, faith, life, love*. Their number is five, you may count them on your fingers; their value is inestimable, grasp them with firm hand, and let them be carried in your hearts.

I commend to you most earnestly the acquisition and distribution of light. To that end we must *first get the light*. Get light even of the commonest order, for all light is good. Education upon ordinary things is valuable, and I would stir up certain loitering brethren to make advances in that direction. Many among you entered the College with no education whatever; but when you left it you had learned enough to have formed the resolution to study with all your might, and you have carried it out. I wish that all had done so. It is a great advantage to a minister to commence his public life in a small village where he can have time and quiet for steady reading: that man is wise who avails himself of the golden opportunity. We ought not only to think of what we can now do for God, but of what we may yet be able to do if we improve ourselves. No man should ever dream that his education is complete. I know that my friend Mr. Rogers, though he has passed his eightieth year, is still a student, and perhaps has more of the true student spirit about him now than ever: will any of the younger sort sit down in self-content? We shall continue to learn even in heaven, and shall still be looking deeper and deeper into the abyss of divine love: it were ill to talk of perfect knowledge here below. If a man says: "I am fully equipped for my work, and need learn no more; I have moved here after having been three years in the last place, and

I have quite a stock of sermons, so that I am under no necessity to read any more," I would say to him: "My dear friend, the Lord give you brains, for you talk like one who is deficient in that department." A brain is a very hungry thing indeed, and he who possesses it must constantly feed it by reading and thinking, or it will shrivel up or fall asleep. It is the child of the horse-leech, and it crieth evermore, "Give, give." Do not starve it. If such mind-hunger never happens to you, I suspect you have no mind of any consequence.

But, brethren, see to it that you have in a sevenfold degree light *of a higher kind*. You are to be, above all things, students of the Word of God: this, indeed, is a main point of your avocation. If we do not study Scripture, and those books that will help us to understand theology, we are but wasting time while we pursue other researches. We should judge him to be a foolish fellow who, while preparing to be a physician, spent all his time in studying astronomy. There is a connection of some kind between stars and human bones; but a man could not learn much of surgery from Arcturus or Orion. So there is a connection between every science and religion, and I would advise you to obtain much general knowledge; but universal information will be a poor substitute for a special and prayerful study of the Scriptures, and of the doctrines contained in the revelation of God. We are to study men and our own hearts; we ought to sit as disciples in the schools of providence and experience. Some ministers grow fast because the great Teacher chastens them sorely, and the chastening is sanctified; but others learn nothing by their experience, they blunder out of one ditch into another, and learn nothing by their difficulties but the art of creating fresh ones. I suggest to you all the prayer of a Puritan who during a debate was observed to be absorbed in writing. His friends thought he was taking notes of his opponent's speech, but when they got hold of his paper, they found nothing but these words, "More light, Lord! More light, Lord!" Oh, for more light from the great Father of lights!

Let not this light be only that of knowledge, but seek for the *light of joy and cheerfulness*. There is power in a happy ministry.

A lugubrious face, a mournful voice, a languor of manner, — none of these commend us to our hearers; especially do they fail to attract the young. Certain strange minds find their happiness in misery, but they are not numerous. I once had a letter from one who told me that he came to the Tabernacle, but as soon as he entered he felt it could not be the house of God because there were so many present, and “ Strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” When he looked at me he felt sure that I was unsound, for I should not look so cheerful in the face, neither should I be so bulky in person, if I belonged to the tried people of God. Worst of all, when he looked round upon the congregation and saw their happy countenances, he said to himself: These people know nothing about the depravity of their hearts or the inward struggles of believers. Then he informed me that he wended his way to a very small chapel, where he saw a minister who looked as if he had been in the furnace, and though there were but eight persons present, they all looked so depressed that he felt quite at home. I suppose he sat down and sang: —

“ My willing soul would stay
 In such a frame as this,
 And sit and sing herself away
 From everything like bliss.”

I felt glad that the good man was enabled to enjoy a little comfortable misery with his brethren. I did not feel at all envious; nor do I think that such a ministry of misery will ever draw to itself a number that no man can number. The children of light prefer the joy of the Lord, for they find it to be their strength.

Get plenty of light, brethren, and *when you have obtained it give it out*. Never fall into the notion that mere earnestness will suffice without knowledge, and that souls are to be saved simply by our being zealous. I fear that we are more deficient in heat than in light; but at the same time, that kind of fire which has no light in it is of a very doubtful nature, and cometh not from above. Souls are saved by truth which enters the understanding,

and so reaches the conscience. How can the gospel save when it is not understood? The preacher may preach with a great deal of stamping, and hammering, and crying, and entreating; but the Lord is not in the wind, nor in the fire: the still small voice of truth is needed to enter the understanding, and thereby reach the heart. People must be taught. We must "go and teach all nations," making disciples of them; and I know of no way in which you can save men without teaching on your part and discipleship on theirs. Some preachers, though they know a great deal, do not teach much, because they use such an involved style. Recollect that you are addressing people who need to be taught like children; for though they are grown up, the major part of our hearers, as to the things of God, are still in a state of childhood; and if they are to receive the truth it must be made very plain, and packed up so as to be carried away and laid up in the memory. Therefore, brethren, give forth much holy instruction.

Some give little instruction because of their involved style; but many fail for other reasons,—mainly because they aim at something else. Talleyrand defines a metaphysician as a man who is very clever in drawing black lines upon a black ground. I should like to draw black lines upon a white ground, or else white lines on a black ground, so that they could be seen; but certain preachers are so profound that no one understands them. On the other hand, have you not heard sermons with great oratorical display about them, and nothing more? You have looked on while the angel wrought wondrously. The preacher has been like Blondin on the tight-rope, and as we have looked at him we have trembled lest he should never reach the end of his lofty period. Yet he has balanced himself admirably, and moved along in his elevated position in a marvellous manner. When all is over your mind is unsatisfied; for these acrobatic feats of rhetoric do not feast the soul. Brethren, we must not make it our aim to be grand orators. Certain men are eloquent by nature, and it is not possible for them to be otherwise than oratorical, any more than for nightingales to help singing sweetly: these I do not blame, but admire. It is not the duty of the nightingale to bring down its voice to the same tone as that of the sparrow. Let

it sing sweetly if it can do so naturally. God deserves the best oratory, the best logic, the best metaphysics, the best of everything; but if ever rhetoric stands in the way of the instruction of the people, a curse on rhetoric; if any educational attainment or natural gift which we possess should make it less easy for the people to understand us, let it perish. May God rend away from our thought and style everything which darkens the light, even though it should be like a costly veil of rarest lace. May we use great plainness of speech, that gospel light may shine out clearly.

At this time there is a great necessity for giving much light, for *a fierce attempt is being made to quench or dim the light*. Many are scattering darkness on all sides. Therefore, brethren, keep the light burning in your churches, keep the light burning in your pulpits, and hold it forth in the face of men who love darkness because it favors their aims. Teach the people all truth, and let not our distinctive opinions be concealed. There are sheep-stealers about, who come forth in the night, and run away with our people because they do not know our principles, — the principles of Nonconformists, the principles of Baptists, or even the principles of Christianity. Our hearers have got a general idea of these things, but not enough to protect them from deceivers. We are beset not only by sceptics, but by certain brethren who devour the feeble. Do not leave your children to wander out without the guardianship of holy knowledge, for there are seducers abroad who will mislead them if they can. They will begin by calling them “dear” this, and “dear” that, and end by alienating them from those who brought them to Jesus. If you lose your members, let it be in the light of day, and not through their ignorance. These kidnappers dazzle weak eyes with flashes of novelty, and turn weak heads with wonderful discoveries and marvellous doctrines, which all tend towards division and bitterness, and the exaltation of their own sect. Keep the light of truth burning, and thieves will not dare to plunder your house.

Oh, for a church of believers in Jesus who know why they believe in Him; persons who believe the Bible, and know what it contains; who believe the doctrines of grace, and know the bearings of those

truths; who know where they are and what they are, and who therefore dwell in the light, and cannot be deceived by the prince of darkness. Do, dear friends,—I speak specially to the younger sort among us,—do let there be plenty of teaching in your ministry. I fear that sermons are too often judged by their words rather than by their sense. Let it not be so with you. Feed the people always with knowledge and understanding, and let your preaching be solid, containing food for the hungry, healing for the sick, and light for those who sit in darkness.

I have now, in the second place, to plead with you that you gather and use in your ministry much heavenly FIRE. Upon this subject you will perhaps expect me to speak guardedly; for you have seen the mischief of wild fire, and the perils of strange fire, and perhaps you are anxious to know what I think of a certain "army" which abounds in fire, and blazes away most marvellously. I shall express no opinion, except that none of the supposed evils of fire are equal to those of lukewarmness. Even fanaticism is to be preferred to indifference. I had sooner risk the dangers of a tornado of religious excitement than see the air grow stagnant with a dead formality. It is far better for people to be too hot than to be lukewarm. "I would thou wert cold or hot" is Christ's word still, and it applies to preachers as well as to others. When a man is freezingly cold in the things of Christ we know where he is; and if another is red-hot, or even at a white heat, and is thought to be too enthusiastic, we know where he is; but when a minister preaches in such a way that at the close of his sermon you say, "this is neither cold nor hot," you go away feeling that you have had enough, or even too much of it. There was nothing to excite you; you could almost wish to have been made angry rather than to have been lulled by such discoursing. A lukewarm sermon sickens every healthy mind.

Nor is this evil to be found in the pulpit alone. I should gravely question whether if an angel were to take a thermometer and go round the dissenting churches in London he would not find a large proportion of them certainly not cold, most decidedly not hot, but somewhere else. How is it with you, dear brother? Do you say: "Well, I am not the warmest of all, but then I am

not the coldest of all"? Then I have a suspicion as to your temperature; but I leave the matter to your own judgment, only remarking that I have never yet met with fire that is moderately hot. Should any of you discover such an article you will be wise to patent the article, for it might be of service in many ways. The fire with which I have been acquainted has been such that I have never given it my hand without remembering its warm embrace. Fire is incorrigible in the matter of carrying matters very far: moderation it will never learn. I am told that it is wrong to go to extremes, and upon that ground fire is certainly guilty; for it is not only intensely hot, but it has a tendency to consume and destroy without limit. When it once commenced with this city in the olden time it left little of it but ashes; there is no keeping it within bounds. May God grant us grace to go to extremes in His service! May we be filled with an unrestrainable zeal for His glory! May the Lord answer us by fire, and may that fire fall on the ministers and then upon the people! We ask for the true Pentecostal flame, and not for sparks kindled by human passion. A live coal from off the altar is our need, and nothing can supply its place; but this we must have, or our ministry will be in vain.

Brethren, we must first of all take care that we have the *fire burning in our own souls*. I am happy to know that there are very few, if any, among you that are utterly cold; for you go to be warmed into earnestness if we set about it aright. It is very hard to warm a stone. You may clothe a man in blankets until he is fairly warm, because there is life in him, but you cannot heat a stone in that fashion; life always begets a measure of warmth and the possibility of more, and as you have life there are capacities for heat. Some preachers are of such a cold nature that no known means could warm them. The attempt to find heat in some sermons reminds me of Æsop's fable of the apes and the glowworm. The apes found a glowworm shining on the bank, and straightway gathered round it to warm themselves. They placed sticks over it, and tried to make a fire, but it did not burn. It was a very pretty thing, and looked like flame, but they could not warm their cold hands with its cold light. So have I known ministers, whose light was destitute of heat, and consequently the poor sticks around them

have never kindled into a flame, nor have frozen hearts been melted by their influence. It is dreadful work to listen to a sermon, and feel all the while as if you were sitting out in a snow-storm, or dwelling in a house of ice, clear but cold, orderly, but killing. You have said to yourself: "That was a well-divided and well-planned sermon, but I cannot make out what was the matter with it;" the secret being that there was the wood, but no fire to kindle it. A great sermon without heart in it reminds one of those huge furnaces in Wales which have been permitted to go out; they are a pitiful sight. We prefer a sermon in which there may be no vast talent and no great depth of thought, but what there is has come fresh from the crucible, and like molten metal burns its way. I once knew a lad who when he used to go home from the smithy where he worked was roughly handled by the boys of the village, till his master suggested to him a plan of defence which was wonderfully efficacious. He took a rod of iron, and just before he went home he blew up the fire and made the iron hot. When the boys came round him he warned them not to touch his stick, and after one trial of the same they obeyed the admonition, and reverently kept their distance. I do not quote the example with any commendation of the actual fact, but with this moral in view—heat your sermon red-hot, and it will be likely to be remembered by all who come into contact with it. Everything gives way before fire.

Energy still remains an essential, whatever else in oratory may have changed since the days of old. It is said that the oft-quoted reply of Demosthenes to the question, "What is the first thing in oratory?" was not "action," but "energy." What is the second thing? "Energy." What is the third thing? "Energy." I will not pretend to decide the classical question; but I am sure that as a matter of fact energy is the main thing in the human side of preaching. Like the priests at the altar, we can do nothing without fire. Brethren, speak because you believe the gospel of Jesus; speak because you feel its power; speak under the influence of the truth which you are delivering; speak with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and the result will not be doubtful.

Let it be carefully remembered that *our flame must be kindled*

from on high. Nothing is more to be despised than a mere painted fire, the simulation of earnestness. Sooner let us have an honest death than a counterfeit life. The imitation of Baxter is detestable; but to be like Baxter is seraphic. If you would be like Whitfield, I would say *be* Whitfield. Let the fire be kindled by the Holy Ghost, and not by animal passion, the desire of honor, emulation of others, or the excitement of attending meetings. Let the terrible example of Nadab and Abihu for ever put away strange fire from our censers. Burn because you have been in solemn fellowship with the Lord our God.

Recollect also that the fire which you and I need *will consume us* if we truly possess it. "Spare yourself," may be whispered by friends; but it will not be heeded when this fire is burning. We have given ourselves up to the work of God, and we cannot go back. We desire to be whole burnt-offerings and complete sacrifices to God, and we dare not shun the altar. "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." We can only produce life in others by the wear and tear of our own being. This is a natural and spiritual law, that fruit can only come of the seed by its spending and being spent even to self-exhaustion. Why are many ministers worn and weary till heart and brain give way? They would be of little use if they did not run such a risk. All men who are eminently useful are made to feel their weakness in a supreme degree. Can the Spirit of God, even the Infinite Deity, ride in such frail chariots as these, without straining the axle and making the whole machine to quiver, as if it would be utterly dissolved beneath its sacred burden? When God visits us with soul-saving power, it is as though devouring flame came forth from heaven and made its abode in our bosoms; and where this is the case there may well be a melting away of all strength. Yet let it be so: we humbly invite the sacred burnings. Herod was eaten of worms, being cursed of God; but to be consumed by God for His own service is to be blessed to the full. We have a choice between these two, to be eaten up by our corruptions, or by the zeal of God's house. It needs no hesitation; the choice of every man among us is to be wholly the Lord's, — ardently,

passionately, vehemently the Lord's servants, let the divine fervor cost us what it may of brain and heart and life. Our only hope of honor and glory and immortality lies in the fulfilment of our dedication unto God; as devoted things we must be consumed with fire, or rejected. For us to turn aside from our life-work, and to seek distinction elsewhere, is absolute folly; a blight will be upon us; we shall not succeed in anything but the pursuit of God's glory through the teaching of the Word. "This people have I formed for myself," saith God; "they shall show forth my praise;" and if we will not do this we shall do less than nothing. For this one thing we are created, and if we miss this we shall live in vain. Good Dr. Wayland, the other day, walking in my garden, saw the swans out of the water, and he remarked that they were the true representation of persons who are out of their proper sphere, and attempt to do what they were never made for. How ungainly the swans are on land; they waddle in a ridiculous manner; but as soon as they are in the water, how gracefully they glide along; each one is the model of a ship, the image of beauty; every line about it is perfect. So is it with a man who is content to find in the ministry waters to swim in. As God's sent servant he is everything that is beautiful; but as soon as he dabbles in trade, or becomes a secular lecturer, or seeks his own aggrandizement, he ceases to be admirable, he often becomes notorious, and is always awkward. Brethren, you are not meant for anything but God; therefore surrender yourselves to God, and find in Him your wealth, your honor, and your all. If you do this you shall be the head and not the tail; but if you start aside you shall be lightly esteemed. Let the fire of perfect consecration be heaped upon you, for so shall you glow and shine like molten silver, which brightens amid the heat. Let us not subject ourselves to the shame and eternal contempt which will be the portion of those who quit the service of their Redeemer for the bondage of self-seeking. He that saveth his life loseth it; but he that loseth his life for Christ's sake shall find it unto life eternal.

XV.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

(CONTINUED.)

DR. MARIGOLD is sharp and shrewd because self-interest makes him so ; and his extemporary observations are so patly uttered and adroitly arranged that he wins the attention of all and the custom of many. Would to God that preachers and other workers for God had a tithe as much common sense as cheap-jack, and were half as earnest to bring men to Jesus Christ as cheap-jack is to bring them to buy that tea-tray and set of real china ! Oh, that we were as wise to win the ear and heart of the particular case with which we have to deal, as he is in extorting a laugh and compelling the attention of the passer-by !
— C. H. SPURGEON.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS.

(CONTINUED.)

THE next thing necessary to us is FAITH; I might say the first, second, third, and last thing is FAITH. "Without faith it is impossible to please God," and if we are pleasing God it is not by our talent but by our faith. Just now we much need faith in the form of *fixity of belief*. We know more than we did some time ago; at least I hope we do. I just now heard one of you say to another: "How broad you get!" Well, we do widen out; but not as some men, for we are not of the broad school who believe little or nothing aright because they desire to believe everything. We have cast our anchor; it has taken a firm grip; we have ceased to drift; we remain at rest. Some men have no creed; or, if they have, it is altered so often that it is of no use to them. It must be like the blanket of a gentleman who came from the Emerald Isle, of which he said: "See here! Our skipper has given me a shamefully bad blanket. Just look at it: it is too long at the top and it is too short at the bottom; it gets over my head, and yet my feet are always cold. I cut a whole foot off the top, and I sewed it on to the bottom, but it is not altered a bit; it still comes over my eyes, and is too short to cover my feet." That is what certain "thinkers" do with their creed, they keep cutting it off at one end, and putting it on at the other; but it never gets right,—it is always forming, never formed. Modern creeds are like the clothes of Italian peasants, which I have gazed upon with wondering inquiry. It would puzzle the most learned

geologist to discover the primary formation of a pair of trousers which have been patched and mended with cloth of all patterns and colors from generation to generation. Such and so varied are some men's beliefs and unbeliefs; an agglomeration of philosophic rags, metaphysical tatters, theological remnants, and heretical cast-offs. Certain thinkers have reached the blessed ultimatum of believing nothing at all with anything like certainty of belief. When these cultivated persons speak of us they manifest great scorn, and affect to believe that we are natural fools. Ah, dear! People are not always what they are thought to be, and it may happen that a man sees himself as in a glass when he thinks he is looking out of window at a neighbor. It is a sign of great weakness when persons are full of contempt for others. If in any review or pamphlet a writer parades his culture, you may be sure that he has been lying fallow of late, and his affectations are the weeds which have come of it. If it came to a fair contest upon the matter of education and culture, the orthodox would be quite able to hold their own. Boasting is sorry work; but sometimes persons must be answered according to their folly, and I say boldly that in any sort of mental tournament we should not tremble to tilt with the men of "modern thought." Be it so or not, it is ours to believe. We believe that when the Lord our God gave forth a revelation He knew His own mind, and that He expressed Himself in the best and wisest manner, and in terms that can be understood by those who are teachable and truthful. We therefore believe that no new revelation is needed, and that the idea of other light to come is practically unbelief in the light which now is, seeing the light of truth is one. We believe that though the Bible has been twisted and turned about by sacrilegious hands, it is still the infallible revelation of God. It is a main part of our religion humbly to accept what God has revealed. Perhaps the highest form of adoration possible on this side the veil is the bowing of our entire mental and spiritual being before the revealed mind of God; the kneeling of the understanding in that sacred Presence whose glory causes angels to veil their faces. Let those who please worship science, reason, and their own clear judgments; it is ours to submit ourselves before the Lord our God,

and say: "This God is our God for ever and ever: He shall be our guide even unto death."

Brethren, rally to the old standard. Fight to the death for the old gospel, for it is your life. Whatever forms of expression you may use as you advance in knowledge, ever keep the cross of Jesus Christ in the forefront, and let all the blessed truths which gather around it be heartily maintained.

We must have faith not only in the form of fixity of creed, but also in the shape of *constant dependence upon God*. If I were asked what is the sweetest frame within the whole compass of human feeling, I should not speak of a sense of power in prayer, or abundant revelation, or rapturous joys, or conquest of evil spirits; but I should mention as the most exquisite delight of my being, a condition of conscious dependence upon God. It has been often associated with great pain and humiliation of spirit, but it is inexpressibly delightful to lie passive in the hand of love, to die into the life of Christ. It is deep joy to feel that you do not know, but your Heavenly Father knows; that you cannot speak, but "we have an Advocate"; that you can scarcely lift a hand, but that He worketh all your works in you. The entire submission of our soul to our Lord, the full content of the heart with God's will and way, the sure reliance of the mind upon the heavenly presence and power,—this is the nearest approach to heaven that I know; and it is better than rapture, for one can abide in it without strain or reaction.

"Oh, to be nothing, nothing;
Only to lie at His feet."

It is not so sublime a feeling as soaring aloft on the wings of eagles; but for sweetness—deep, mysterious, indescribable—it bears the palm. It is a blessedness which can bear to be thought of, a joy which never seems to be a stolen one; for surely a poor, frail child has an unquestioned right to depend upon God, a right to be nothing in the presence of the All-supporting One. I love to preach in such a mood, not as though *I* was about to preach at all, but hoping that the Holy Spirit would speak in me. Thus to conduct prayer-meetings, and church-meetings, and all

sorts of business will be found to be our wisdom and our joy. We generally make our worst blunders about things that are perfectly easy, when the thing is so plain that we do not ask God to guide us, because we think our own common sense will be sufficient, and so we commit grave errors; but in the difficulties, the extreme difficulties which we take before God, He gives young men prudence, and teaches youths knowledge and discretion. Dependence upon God is the flowing fountain of success. That true saint of God, George Müller, has always struck me when I have heard him speak as being such a simple, childlike being in his dependence upon God. But, alas! the most of us are far too great for God to use us; we can preach as well as anybody, make a sermon with anybody—and so we fail. Take care, brethren; for if we think we can do anything of ourselves, all we shall get from God will be the opportunity to try. He will thus prove us, and let us see our nothingness. A certain alchemist who waited upon Leo X. declared that he had discovered how to transmute the baser metals into gold. He expected to receive a sum of money for his discovery, but Leo was no such simpleton; he merely gave him a huge purse in which to keep the gold which he would make. There was wisdom as well as sarcasm in the present. That is precisely what God does with proud men: He lets them have the opportunity to do what they boasted of being able to do. I never heard that so much as a solitary gold piece was dropped into Leo's purse, and I am sure you will never be spiritually rich by what you can do in your own strength. Be stripped, brother, and then God may be pleased to clothe you with honor, but not till then.

It is essential that we should exhibit faith in the form of confidence in God. Brothers, it would be a great calamity if it could be said of any one of you: "He had an excellent moral character and remarkable gifts; but he did not trust God." Faith is a chief necessary. "Above all, taking the shield of faith" was the apostolic injunction. Alas! some men go to the fight, but leave their shield at home. It would be dreadful to think of a sermon as all a sermon ought to be in every respect except that the preacher did not trust in the Holy Spirit to bless it to the conversion of

souls; such a discourse is vain. No sermon is what it ought to be if faith be absent: as well say that a body is in health when life is extinct. It is admirable to see a man humbly conscious of weakness, and yet bravely confident in the Lord's power to work through his infirmity. We may glory at large when God is our glory. Attempting great things, we shall not overdo ourselves in the attempt; and expecting great things, we shall not be disappointed in our expectation. Nelson was asked whether a certain movement of his ships was not perilous, and he replied, "Perilous it may be, but in naval affairs nothing is impossible, and nothing is improbable." I make bold to assert that in the service of God nothing is impossible and nothing is improbable. Go on, in the name of God; risk everything on His promise, and according to your faith shall it be done unto you.

The common policy of our churches is that of great prudence. We do not, as a rule, attempt anything beyond our strength. We measure means and calculate possibilities with economical accuracy; then we strike off a large discount for contingencies, and a still larger as provision for our ease, and so we accomplish little because we have no idea of doing much. I would to God we had more "pluck." I know of no fitter word: though the word may better suit the camp than the church, we will for once borrow from the barracks. Bear in mind that there is nothing like courage, even in ordinary things. Sir Richard Sutton, when he was ambassador to Prussia, was taken by Frederick the Great to see his regiment of giants, every one of whom stood six feet six in his shoes. The king said to him, "Do you think any regiment in the English army could fight my men, man for man?" Sir Richard answered, "Please your majesty, I do not know whether the same number could beat your giants, but I know that half the number would try at it." Let us attempt great things, for those who believe in the name of the Lord succeed beyond all expectation. By faith the worker lives. The right noble Earl of Shaftesbury said the other afternoon of Ragged-school teachers and their work, — "It was evident to all thinking persons that we had a great danger in the ignorance of the children of the lower classes, and so the senators began to think of it, and the philosophers

began to think of it, and good men of all sorts began to think of it; but while they were all engaged in thinking, a few plain, humble people opened Ragged Schools, *and did it.*" This is the kind of faith of which we need more and more: we need so to trust in God as to put our hand to the plough in His name. It is idle to spend time in making and altering plans, and doing nothing else; the best plan for doing God's work is to do it. Brothers, if you do not believe in anybody else, believe in God without stint. Believe up to the hilt. Bury yourselves, both as to your weakness and your strength, in simple trust in God. "Oh," said one, "as to that man, there is no telling what mad thing he will start next!" Let the sneer pass, though it may be as well to say: "I am not mad, most noble Festus; but carry out works of truth and soberness." The end of all things will show that faith in God is sanctified common sense, without an atom of folly in it. To believe God's Word is the most reasonable thing we can do, it is the plainest course that we can take, and the safest policy that we can adopt, even as to taking care of ourselves; for Jesus says, "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it." Let us stake all upon the faithfulness of God, and we shall never be ashamed or confounded, world without end.

You must also have faith in God in the form of *expectancy*. Our brethren Smith and Fullerton would not have a blessing on their work if they did not expect the blessing to come; but expecting the blessing, they provide an inquiry-room, and persons to look after the converts. Shall we commence farming and provide no barn? In many a village the Lord has saved souls under the preaching of the gospel, but the minister has never said, "I shall be in the vestry on such and such an evening to see inquirers;" or "I shall stop after the sermon to talk with the anxious." He has never given the people a chance of telling what the Lord has done for them, and if he should hear that a dozen people have been convinced of sin, he would be surprised, and fear that they were hypocrites. We have not so learned Christ. We look to take fish in our nets, and to reap harvests in our fields. Is it so with you, my brethren? Let it be more so. "Open thy mouth

wide," saith the Lord, "and I will fill it." So pray and so preach that if there are no conversions you will be astonished, amazed, and broken-hearted. Look for the salvation of your hearers as much as the angel who will sound the last trump will look for the waking of the dead. Believe your own doctrine! Believe your own Saviour! Believe in the Holy Ghost who dwells in you! For thus shall you see your hearts' desire, and God shall be glorified.

It is time to talk of the fourth thing, namely, LIFE. The preacher must have life; he must have *life in himself*. Are you all alive, my brother? Of course you have been quickened as a plain believer; but as a minister are you altogether alive? If there is a bone in a man's body which is not alive, it becomes the nidus of disease; for instance, a decayed tooth may cause more serious injury than most people imagine. In a living system a dead portion is out of place, and is sure sooner or later to create intense pain. It is a wise arrangement that it should be so, for decay has a tendency to spread, and mischief might be caused imperceptibly if pain did not sound the alarm-bell. I hope that any part of our soul which is not truly alive may pain us till the evil is removed.

Some brethren never seem to be thoroughly alive. Their heads are alive, they are intelligent and studious; but, alas! their hearts are inactive, cold, lethargic. Many preachers never spy out opportunities, for death seems to have sealed up their eyes, and their tongue also is not half quickened, so that they mumble and stumble, and all around them sleep rules the hour. I have been told that if certain preachers would only for once stamp a foot, or lift a handkerchief, or do anything out of their regular way, it would be a relief to their people. I hope none of you have become quite so mechanical; but I know that some are heavy and yet not weighty, solemn and yet not impressive. My brother, I want you to be alive from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head,—alive in brain and heart, in tongue and hand, in eye and ear. The living God should be served by living men.

Labor to be *alive in all your duties*. John Bradford, the martyr, used to say, "I never go away from any part of the service of God till I feel thoroughly alive in it, and know that the Lord is

with me in it." Carry out this rule conscientiously. In confessing sin, go on confessing till you feel that your tears have washed the Saviour's feet. In seeking pardon, continue to seek till the Holy Spirit bears witness to your peace with God. In preparing a sermon, wait upon the Lord until you have communion with Christ in it, until the Holy Spirit causes you to feel the power of the truth which you are to deliver. "Son of man, eat this roll." Before you attempt to give out the word to others, get it into yourself. Is there not too much dead praying, and dead preaching, and dead church work of all sorts? Do you not know churches which are like the ghostly ship in the legend, the captain, the mate, and all the crew are dead men?

"The mariners all do work the ropes
As they've been wont to do;
They raise their limbs like lifeless tools —
They are a ghastly crew.

"The body of my deacon's self
Stands by me knee to knee;
The body and I pull at one rope,
But nothing of life have we."

This is a grim business, but I have beheld such a sight, though never have I seen a ghost. I recollect being years ago in a church which was almost defunct externally, and altogether defunct internally, and after sermon, during which I felt a terrible chill of soul, I went into the vestry, and there I saw two important persons leaning heavily against the fire-place. I said to them, "Are you the deacons of the church?" They answered, "Yes, sir." I replied, "I thought so!" I did not explain further. These pillars of the church evidently needed propping up. Sluggish ease will not do! Brethren, we must have life more abundantly, each one of us, and it must flow out into all the duties of our office: warm spiritual life must be manifest in the prayer, in the singing, in the preaching, and even in the shake of the hand and the good word after service. I delight in these conferences because they are living assemblies; the room does not feel like a vault, nor do you salute each other like a set of living skeletons without hearts, or a company of respectable mandarins fresh from

the tea-shops, who nod and bow mechanically. I cannot endure meetings where the only exhibition of life is seen in heated discussions over points of order, amendments, and movings of the previous question. One marvels at the little things over which an assembly will waste hours of precious time, contending as if the destiny of the whole world and the fate of the starry heavens depended upon the debate. How the mountain heaves, but how small a mouse is born! Brethren, may you be alive, and keep alive, and disseminate your life. We read in Plato that the Egyptian priests said concerning the Greeks, "You Greeks are always youths, there is not an old man among you." Neither, sirs, is there an old man among us at this hour; we are full of youth even unto this day, and if you want to see one whose vigor and cheerfulness prove that his gray hairs are all external, there sits the man [pointing to Mr. George Rogers]. It is a grand thing to be perpetually renewing your youth, never getting into the ruts, but making new tracks with your glowing wheels. Those who are old when they are young, are likely to be young when they are old. I like to see the liveliness of the child associated with the gravity of the father; but especially do I rejoice to see a godly man keep up the vivacity, the joy, the earnestness of his first love. It is a crime to permit our fires to burn low while experience yields us more and more abundant fuel. Be it ours to go from strength to strength, from life to more abundant life.

Be full of life at all times, and let that life *be seen in your ordinary conversation*. It is a shocking state of things when good people say, "Our minister undoes in the parlor what he has done in the pulpit; he preaches very well, but his life does not agree with his sermons." Our Lord Jesus would have us perfect even as our Father who is in heaven is perfect. Every Christian should be holy; but *we* are laid under a sevenfold obligation to it. God help us so to live that we may be safe examples to our flocks: how can we expect the divine blessing if it be not so? In such a case *life will go out of us to others*. The man whom God uses for quickening is the man who is himself quickened. May we and our people become like those ornamental waters which we have seen while travelling in foreign parts; the water leaps up as a

fountain, and descends into a basin; when that basin is full the crystal runs over the brink in a sparkling sheet and rolls into another basin, and the process is repeated again and again till the result charms the eye. At our conference, my brethren, may the living waters flow into us, and then flow from us till thousands shall receive a blessing, and communicate it to others. "He that believeth in Him, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." God fill you to the brim, and cause you to overflow. This is essential: life we must have. If among us there is a slumbering brother, who does everything in a slow way, let him wake up. If any one among us performs his duty in a lifeless manner, as if he were paid by the pound, and would not give half an ounce over, let him also wake up. Our work requires that we serve the Lord with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind, and with all our strength. Ours is no place for half-heartedness. Go, ye dead ones; take a chaplain's place at the cemetery and bury your dead; but work among living men needs life—vigorous, intense life. A corpse among angelic choirs would not be more out of place than a lifeless man in the gospel ministry: God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.

The last thing, but not the least important, is LOVE. Assuredly we must abound in love. It is a hard thing for some preachers to saturate and perfume their sermons with love; for their natures are hard, or cold, or coarse, or selfish. We are none of us all that we ought to be, but some are specially poverty-stricken in point of love. They do not "naturally care" for the souls of men, as Paul puts it. To all, but especially to the harder sort, we would say, Be doubly earnest as to holy charity, for without this you will be no more than sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. Love is power. The Holy Spirit for the most part works by our affection. Love men to Christ; faith accomplishes much, but love is the actual instrument by which faith works out its desires in the name of the Lord of love.

Brethren, *love your work*. You will never preach well unless you are enamored of it: you will never do well in any particular charge unless you love the people, and I would almost say the village and the meeting-house. I would have you believe that

Slocum-in-the-Marsh is a gem among villages. Think that London may be all very well as a city, but as a village Slocum bears the palm. Even your chapel, with all its plainness, should have charms for you: be of opinion that the Tabernacle is very well in its way, but that it has great deficiencies about it; that it is too big for one thing—at least, too big for you. Your meeting-house holds only three hundred and twenty; but in your judgment that is quite as large a number as one man can see after with any hope of success; at least it involves a responsibility quite as large as you desire to bear. When a mother's love to her children leads her to believe that they are the sweetest in the parish, she takes more care in their washing and their dressing; if she thought them ugly, troublesome beings, she would neglect them; and I am sure that until we heartily love our work, and love the people with whom we are working, we shall not accomplish much. I can truly say that I do not know anybody in all the world that I would like to change places with. "Ah," say you, "that is very likely, for you have a fine position." I am quite of that opinion; but I thought just the same of my little pastorate at Waterbeach, and it was with the utmost reluctance that I removed from the first to the second. I still retain the belief that there were people in my first congregation whose like I shall never see again, and that as a position of usefulness there are great attractions about that Cambridgeshire village. It is a rule to which I know of no exception, that to prosper in any work you must have an enthusiasm for it.

You must have also intense *love to the souls of men*, if you are to influence them for good. Nothing can compensate for the absence of this. Soul-winning must be your passion, you must be born to it; it must be the very breath of your nostrils, the only thing for which you count life worth the having. We must hunt after souls even as the Swiss hunter pursues the chamois because the spirit of the chase has mastered him. Above all, we must feel an *intense love to God*. Our dear brother who led us in prayer this morning rightly spoke of the power which girds us when we burn with love to God. Why is it we tell children and young people, "You must *love Jesus* in order to be saved"? This is not the gospel. The gospel is, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be

saved." We are careful to state the matter correctly to the grown people; why give it inaccurately to the young? If we make a difference at all it will be wiser to tell the children to believe, and the old people to love: the error will be less injurious, for love is the great lack of most men. The holy grace of love needs to be more preached among us, and more felt by us. "Oh," said a woman when she was speaking of the Lord to her minister, "He has heard my prayer many a time, and I can have what I want of Him, for by His grace I am very thick with Him." She meant that communion had wrought sweet fellowship, and so her prayers were heard. Oh, that we lived on familiar terms with the Well-beloved, and felt His love within our bosoms always. Love to God will help a man to persevere in service when otherwise he would have given up his work. "The love of Christ constraineth us," said one whose heart was all his Master's. I heard one say the other day that the "love of Christ ought to constrain us." This is true, but Paul did not so much speak of a duty as of a fact: he said, "The love of Christ constraineth us."

Beloved brethren, if you are filled with love to your work, and love to souls, and love to God, you will gladly endure many self-denials which else would be unbearable. The poverty of our country brethren is very trying, and ought by all means to be relieved; but we may well feel proud that so many men are forthcoming who, for the sake of preaching the gospel of Christ, are willing to leave remunerative callings and endure hardness. Other denominations might pay them better, but they spurn the golden bribe, and remain faithful to Christ and to the ordinances as they were delivered. All honor to those life-long martyrs who put up with sore privations for the sake of Christ and His Church. The devil once met a Christian man, so I have heard, and said to him: "You call yourself a servant of God. What do you do more than I do? You boast that you fast: so do I; for I neither eat nor drink. You do not commit adultery; neither do I." The fiend mentioned a long list of sins of which he is incapable, from which he could therefore claim exemption. The saint at last said to him: "I do one thing which thou never didst; I deny myself." That is the point in which the Christian comes out: he

denies himself for Christ's sake; believing in Jesus, he counts all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord. Brethren, do not leave your charges because the stipend is small. Your poor people must be looked after by somebody. Do not despair when times are hard, for they will be better by and by; and meanwhile your Heavenly Father knows your needs. We have heard of men who have remained in plague-stricken cities when others fled, because they could be of service to the sick. Abide, then, with your people when work fails them; be as faithful to your God as many a man has been faithful to his philanthropy. If you can anyhow manage to tide over the present distress, stick to the people. God will help you and reward you if you have faith in Him. May the Lord confirm your confidence, and comfort you in your tribulation!

Go on, brethren, go on preaching the same gospel; but preach it with more faith, and preach it better every day. Do not draw back: your place is to the front. Qualify yourselves for larger spheres, you that are in little places; but do not neglect your studies to look after better positions. Be prepared for an opening when it comes, and rest assured that the office will come to the man who is fit for the office. We are not so cheap that we need go hawking ourselves in every market; the churches are always on the look-out for really efficient preachers. Men whose fitness for the ministry is doubtful are at a great discount nowadays; but for men of ability and usefulness there is great demand.

You cannot hide a candle under a bushel, and you cannot keep a really able man in an insignificant position. Patronage is of the smallest importance; fitness for the work, grace, ability, earnestness, and a loving disposition soon push the man into his place. God will bring His servant into his true position, if he has but faith to trust in Him. I put this word at the tail-end of my address, because I know the discouragements under which you labor. Do not be afraid of hard work for Christ; a terrible reckoning awaits those who have an easy time in the ministry, but a great reward is in reserve for those who endure all things for the elect's sake. You will not regret your poverty when Christ cometh and calleth His own servants to Him. It will be a sweet thing

to have died at your post, not turning aside for wealth, or running from Dan to Beersheba to obtain a better salary, but stopping where your Lord bade you hold the fort.

Brethren, consecrate yourselves to God afresh. Bring hither new cords. Bind the sacrifice again to the altar! Struggle as it may, anxious to escape the knife, fearful of the fire, yet bind it with cords, even with cords, to the horns of the altar; for until death and in death we are the Lord's. Entire surrender of everything to Jesus is our watchword this day. Only may the Lord accept the living sacrifice for Jesus Christ's sake! Amen.

XVI.

STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE.

IN a church in Verona stands, or rather sits, a wooden image of St. Zeno, an ancient bishop, with knees so ludicrously short that there is no lap on which a babe could be dandled. He was not the first nor the last ecclesiastic who has been utterly incapable of being a nursing father to the Church. It were well if all ministers had a heavenly instinct for the nourishing and bringing up of the Lord's little ones. Is there not much lack in this? — C. H. SPURGEON.

STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE.

OF Mr. Spurgeon's Orphanage Mr. Stevenson gives the following account and description: —

It is the Lord's own work to care for the fatherless. Those who have faith in God never need be without success in undertaking the care of the orphan. God helps the helpless; but He uses man as His agent in arranging details. Soon after "The Sword and the Trowel" was commenced Mr. Spurgeon indicated in one of his articles published in its pages several forms of Christian usefulness, and amongst them the care of the orphan.

Shortly afterwards, in September, 1866, Mr. Spurgeon received a letter from a lady, offering to place at his command the sum of \$100,000, with which to commence an orphanage for fatherless boys. At first he felt disposed to avoid the onerous responsibilities of such a work; and, calling at the address given by the lady, tried to prevail upon her to give the money to Mr. Müller, of Bristol. The claims of London for such an institution were urged; and, unable to refuse the request of the generous donor, the money was accepted on trust for the purpose named. Mrs. Hillyard, the widow of a clergyman of the Church of England, was the lady whose benevolence thus originated the Orphanage. The money was in railway debentures, which were not at that time available for use otherwise than as an investment.

After consulting with the leading friends at the Tabernacle, a body of twelve trustees was chosen, in whose names the money was invested, and a resolution was agreed upon to purchase a

suitable plot of land at Stockwell, on which to erect an orphanage. In March, 1867, the deed of incorporation was signed by the trustees, and in May the claims of the projected buildings were urged with so much force and urgency that the people belonging to the Tabernacle took up the case with loving zeal and energy. By the month of August \$5,350 were in hand, and the whole church at the Tabernacle was engaged in collecting on this behalf. Prayer, faith, and prompt, energetic action were all combined in the efforts made, and pastors, trustees, and congregation were of one mind in their purpose to make the work a success.

Within the space of a year the plan of the Orphanage was matured, the foundations laid, the work was making rapid progress, and a large amount of money was in hand for the purpose. Donations from \$5 to \$1,250 had been generously forwarded to help on the work, and a great meeting was held in September, 1867, when the public generally had an opportunity of showing their sympathy with the proceedings. Previously to that large meeting the foundation-stones of three of the houses were laid under circumstances of more than usual interest.

Mrs. Tyson, a lady who had often aided Mr. Spurgeon in the work of the College, and in other enterprises, had been spared to see the twenty-fifth anniversary of her marriage day, on which occasion her beloved husband, a wealthy merchant, presented her with \$2,500. This money the lady at once took to Mr. Spurgeon to be dedicated to God for the erection of one of the orphan houses, to be called Silver-Wedding House. About the same time a merchant in the City called upon the pastor at the Tabernacle, and, after transacting some business with him, left with Mr. Spurgeon's secretary a sealed envelope, in which was \$3,000, to be used in building another house, which, it was afterwards determined, should be called Merchant's House, as the donor refused to have his name given. The way in which God was answering the prayers of His people was further shown by an offer made by the workmen who had built the Tabernacle to give the labor necessary for erecting a third house, whilst their employer volunteered to give the necessary material: this to be called the Workmen's House.



Boys' Home — STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE.

Such manifest tokens of the divine favor attending the work greatly encouraged the pastor and the trustees, and on Monday afternoon, Aug. 9, 1867, the foundation-stones of the three houses named were laid,—one by Mrs. Hillyard, one by Mr. Spurgeon, and one by Mr. Higgs. The scene presented at Stockwell on that day was exceedingly picturesque and intensely interesting. At the monster tea-meeting which followed, the tables extended three hundred and thirty feet in length, and the bright sunshine made the scene one of joy and delight, which will long be remembered, though the rain, which came down so bountifully just as tea was over, caused much discomfort. The subscriptions brought in that day reached \$12,000. In "The Sword and the Trowel" for October the names of 1,120 collectors are printed, with the amounts on their cards, stated to be \$14,010. Amongst the collectors were members of the Church of England, Congregationalists, Methodists, Baptists, and others, so general had been the sympathy which was felt in the work.

The faith of the pastor and trustees of the Orphanage was greatly strengthened by the wonderful manner in which God had answered their prayers and rewarded their efforts. It was announced that eight houses were contemplated, to provide for not less than one hundred and fifty orphans, requiring an outlay of \$15,000 per annum. Messrs. Olney and Sons gave \$2,500 to erect a fourth house, to be called, after the sainted and venerable Mrs. Olney, Unity House.

By the end of the year 1867 the trustees had no less than two hundred names of orphans from whom to select fifty in the following April. The pressing need of providing for these children made the way more easy for extending the work. Accordingly, at the meeting of the Baptist Union, early in 1868, it was resolved that an effort should be made to raise the funds necessary for erecting two houses, at a cost of \$3,000 each. Whilst these efforts were being made amongst the Baptists, Mr. Thomas Olney, as the superintendent of the Tabernacle Sunday-school, aided by the teachers and scholars, was collecting the funds necessary for erecting a house to represent the young children. Simultaneously with that effort was another amongst the students at the College,

who had resolved to show their affection for their pastor by raising money sufficient to erect a house on their behalf, and to perpetuate their institution by having it named the College House.

Two meetings were held at the Orphanage in June, 1868; one on the 1st of June, when the venerable Thomas Olney, sr., laid the foundation-stone of the building which was to form the lecture and dining-hall, the master's house, and the entrance gateway. It was a gladsome sight to witness the joy of the venerable man, who had for nearly threescore years been connected with the church worshipping at the Tabernacle, as he performed the pleasing duty assigned to him.

On the same day the Rev. John Aldis, of Reading, and Alexander B. Goodall, Esq., each laid one of the foundation-stones of the two Testimonial Houses subscribed for by the Baptist churches as a token of regard to Mr. Spurgeon. A monster tea-meeting followed the proceedings, after which addresses were delivered by the Revs. Thomas Binney, Dr. Raleigh, J. T. Wigner, W. Brock, D.D., W. Howieson, A. Mursell, Henry Varley, W. Stott, S. H. Booth, G. Gould, J. Raven, J. H. Millard, John Spurgeon, sr., C. H. Spurgeon, and James A. Spurgeon. Mr. Wigner presented to the pastor an address of affectionate sympathy from the Baptist churches, which was signed by Mr. Goodall and himself on behalf of the subscribers to the fund, and with the address was the sum of \$6,000. That sum was afterwards increased to \$8,720, so as to include the furniture and fittings for the two houses, that the offering might be in every respect complete in all its parts.

The meeting held on June 19th, the thirty-fourth birthday of Mr. Spurgeon, was, if possible, a more joyous and enthusiastic one than any of the preceding. On that day Mr. Thomas Olney, jr., surrounded by a huge mass of children forming the Tabernacle Sunday-schools, laid the foundation-stone of the Sunday-school House, amidst the enthusiastic applause of the delighted children. It was a time of joy they will all long remember. Dear Mrs. Spurgeon, so long a suffering invalid, was there to witness the happiness of the assembly, and by request from the students at the College, and the ministers who had gone from it, she was

induced to lay the foundation-stone of the College House. She was graciously upheld on the occasion, although the surpassing kindness displayed was enough to overcome one of a stronger frame. After the stone-laying was over, twenty-six sweet little girls in white advanced one by one, and presented Mrs. Spurgeon with purses which their parents had subscribed as a token of their affectionate rejoicing at her temporary restoration. It was a touching, beautiful, and unexpected sight, which deserves to be recorded. A large sum of money was presented to Mr. Spurgeon as a birthday offering, *which he put into the Orphanage treasury.*

Another incident occurred at that period which deserves to be placed on record. The Baptist church at Liverpool, over which the Rev. Hugh Stowell Brown presides, was about to be re-opened, and Mr. Spurgeon consented to preach the sermons. He did so: but the church and congregation resolved to defray the cost of the repairs, and gave to Mr. Spurgeon for the Orphanage the whole of the collection, which amounted to \$1,250.

The manner in which the funds have been contributed, first to erect the Orphanage buildings, and since then to maintain the children and officers, and keep the whole establishment in continuous operation, most clearly indicates that from the commencement of the work, up to the present time, the hand of God has been directing the whole.

Each house was occupied as soon as it was finished; but unable to wait until the first was ready, so soon as the plan of the Orphanage was matured and trustees appointed, four orphans were selected and placed under the charge of a sister in her own house. As money came in others were added to them. To manifest still further the interest which Mrs. Hillyard took in the work, when she found several orphans already in charge of a matron, she sold some household plate to give the money for their support. Thus encouraged, by the month of July, 1867, before the foundation-stones were actually laid, seven boys were chosen by the trustees as a commencement. It was wonderful how the money was sent in. One day, just as Mr. Spurgeon finished his sermon in the open air, a lady put into his hand an envelope containing \$100 for the Orphanage and \$100 for the College. In January, 1868,

Mr. Spurgeon announced in his magazine that an unknown gentleman had given him \$5,000 towards two of the houses. In March another sum of \$5,000 was announced, and in June the Baptist churches sent in \$6,000. In September, a year after the work began, a great bazaar was held, which brought in a net profit of \$7,000. How many loving hearts and willing hands were employed to bring about such a result, it would be impossible to tell, though there were but few of the eleven hundred collectors, who so nobly came forward at the first meeting a year before, who did not lend a helping hand to the bazaar. By the end of the year the president announced in his magazine that only \$5,000 more was required to complete the eight houses, "and this," says he, "will surely be sent in; for the Lord will provide." And so it came to pass.

In January, 1869, fifty children had been chosen to occupy the houses as soon as they should be ready, but up to the month of June only twenty-nine orphans were in residence. The chief difficulty which for some time had given anxiety to the trustees was to find a suitable superintendent. Several persons had presented themselves, but not one had satisfied the claims of the institution. When the difficulty seemed to be the greatest, Divine Providence sent the right man. Vernon J. Charlesworth, who had been for seven years co-pastor at Surrey Chapel with Newman Hall, offered his services, and they were accepted. Mr. Charlesworth was at once appointed: and the ability which he has manifested in managing the affairs of the institution is very satisfactory evidence that he is the right man in the right place. By his influence within the Orphanage, and by his pen outside, he has shown himself to be the orphan's friend.

Up to the spring of the year 1870 one hundred and fifty-four orphans had been admitted, six of whom had been removed, leaving one hundred and forty-eight in residence. In 1877 the resident orphans numbered two hundred and thirty.

Each of the eight houses forms a separate family, that plan having after mature consideration been resolved upon as the best. Each family is complete in its own arrangements; each dwelling having a large sitting and four lofty bed-rooms for the boys, with lockers,

which, when closed, form handy seats in the middle of the room; and a sitting-room, bed-room, and kitchen for the matron in charge. A large covered play-room adjoins the houses on the east, and separate from that is the infirmary, forming the east end of the quadrangle. At the west end is the school-room and dining-hall, the master's house and entrance gateway: and in the rear of the dining-hall is the suite of offices for cooking and other domestic purposes.

In selecting the most needy boys for the benefits of the institution, the trustees are in no way influenced by the religious opinions of their parents. Those showing the most pressing want have the preference.

A judicious writer has said of the Stockwell Orphanage: "How superior any real approach to the family ideal is to the barrack system was apparent to us on a mere glance at these fatherless lads. The families are large, about thirty boys in each house; but they are under the care of affectionate and diligent matrons, and everything is done to compensate for the loss of parental rule and training. There is more of the 'home' than of the 'institution' in the atmosphere. To encourage home ideas, and for the sake of industrial training, the boys in turn assist in the domestic work during the morning of the day; each boy's period of service being restricted to one week in six, servants being entirely dispensed with. A working cook superintends the kitchen, aided by the boys. No regimental uniform is suffered. The boys differ in the clothes they wear, in the cut of the hair, and show all the variety of a large family. The boys do not look like loosely connected members of a huge and miscellaneous crowd, but sons and brothers. No traces of ill-disguised dissatisfaction, as though in perpetual restraint, always under orders, were apparent; but a free, healthy, and vigorous homeliness, as if under the genial and robust influence of love, made itself everywhere manifest. With all the care of a Christian father, situations are chosen for the lads, where their spiritual interests will not be in danger; and when they have been passed into them the master corresponds with them, and gives them counsel and assistance as they need. Like a true home, its benediction follows every

inmate throughout his life. We were specially pleased with our visit to the school. The boys are well drilled in elementary knowledge, reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, history, geography, vocal music, Latin, shorthand, science of common things, and Scripture. A French class is held for the elder boys. Military drill is given daily. Drawing is successfully taught, and many boys excel in it. The singing-class did very great credit to its instructor, — singing at sight, with great accuracy and sweetness, music of some difficulty." Two of H. M. Inspectors were deputed from the Local Government Board to visit the institution, and they gave the following report, which reflects the highest credit upon Mr. Spurgeon for his wisdom and prudence: "An admirable institution, good in design, and, if possible, better in execution."

The children are admitted between the ages of six and ten years, and they remain until they are fourteen. From an abstract drawn up by the master in 1873 it was found that the creeds of the parents of the children admitted to that date were in the following proportions: sixty-nine were members of the Church of England; twenty-six Independent; nineteen Wesleyan; fifty-one Baptist; four Presbyterian; one Catholic; and thirty-five made no profession of religion.

In the management of the Orphanage will be found one of its chief attractions, and one which ought to commend its plans to other similar institutions. The author of a book called "Contrasts" cites the Stockwell School as a specimen of admirable administration, proving that large expenditure in some public institutions does not guarantee thorough satisfaction. In some orphan schools and pauper schools the rate of expense per head is from one hundred and fifteen to one hundred and forty-five dollars, whilst in the Stockwell Orphanage, with complete organization and highly satisfactory results in each department, the cost is only seventy-two dollars per head, inclusive of everything. This is the highest testimonial which could be given of its efficiency.

Looking over the list of applications which are entered in the books at Stockwell, it was ascertained that two only out of every

dozen cases could be received. What becomes of the other ten? "Think of widows, some of them sickly and unable to work, with four or five children; families of orphans deprived of both parents; and yet the Stockwell trustees had to decline them because there were more necessitous cases. But there was one comfort, they had not to pay any election expenses." On that subject Mr. Spurgeon has written the following judicious remarks: "No widow ever goes away lamenting over time, labor, and money spent in vain. The worst that can happen is to be refused because there is no room, or her case is not so bad as that of others. Not a shilling will have been spent in purchasing votes, no time lost in canvassing, no cringing to obtain patronage. Her case is judged on its merits, and the most necessitous wins the day. We have now so many applicants and so few vacancies, that women with two or three children are advised not to apply, for while there are others with five, six, or seven children depending upon them, they cannot hope to succeed." A dozen orphanages as large as the one at Stockwell could be filled at once with children needing such help.

The economy with which the Orphanage has been managed has excited the admiration of many who are familiar with the details of kindred institutions. Those who honor Mr. Spurgeon with their contributions make a good investment, and will share in the blessedness of the return. The office expenses are reduced to a minimum, and no paid canvassers are employed. Offerings find their way into the exchequer from all parts of the globe, and though at times there has been a little tightness felt, the children have never lacked a meal. Mr. Spurgeon is a man of unwavering faith in the living God, and though his faith has been put to the severest test, it has never failed him. Friends who have not been able to give money have sent gifts in kind. Flour and potatoes, meat and preserves, are always gladly received. One manufacturer has given all the coverlets for the beds, and the proprietors and pupils of a young ladies' school have endeavored to keep the boys supplied with shirts.

The Orphanage has now existed long enough to form a correct opinion of its merits in every department. Hundreds of boys

have left the school and entered on the duties of life. The reports which have been received annually from those business men who have taken them have been most gratifying. With few exceptions, those who have left keep up communication with the home. Summing up these results, a recent report says: "Almost every boy who has gone into a situation has given satisfaction. Where failure has occurred it has arisen from a craving for the sea, or from the interference of an unwise mother. Some of the lads are in good positions, and command the esteem of their employers."

Nearly all the boys have sent a portion of their first earnings as a donation to the Orphanage, in sums varying from one dollar to five dollars, thus manifesting a spirit of gratitude. Some of the letters received from them are read to the boys, and produce on their minds beneficial results. Many of the boys have, before they have left, become decided Christians, and some have made public confession of their faith by baptism. The head master himself was publicly baptized in 1874, and five of the boys joined him in the same act of dedication. Others have become members of Christian churches in the towns and villages where they have gone to reside. One of the first boys converted is now devoting his evenings and Sundays to missionary work in South London, and showed so much talent for preaching that he was received into the College in January, 1876.

It is gratifying to be able to record that the health of the inmates has been graciously maintained, with but little interruption, through the several years of its existence. A few who entered in feeble health have fallen into consumption and died, although the locality is most favorable to health. Of those who have died, it is pleasing to have to record that their youthful spirits passed away trusting in Jesus.

The 1875 anniversary of the schools was held at the Orphanage on the pastor's birthday, June 19th, which was preceded by a bazaar. The attendance was so numerous that it was necessary to hold two public meetings to accommodate the large number of persons present. The Earl of Shaftesbury was present, and spoke at both the services. The contributions added two thousand five hundred dollars to the funds.

XVII.

ANNUAL REPORT, 1881.

IN dibbling beans the old practice was to put three in each hole: one for the worm, one for the crow, and one to live and produce the crop. In teaching children, we must give line upon line and precept upon precept, repeating the truth which we would inculcate, till it becomes impossible for the child to forget it. We may well give the lesson once, expecting the child's frail memory to lose it; twice, reckoning that the devil, like an ill bird, will steal it; thrice, hoping that it will take root downward, and bring forth fruit upward to the glory of God. — C. H. SPURGEON.

ANNUAL REPORT.

IN issuing the twelfth annual report of the Stockwell Orphanage the Committee write: —

With profound gratitude to our Heavenly Father we issue the Twelfth Report of the Stockwell Orphanage, and our gratitude will be shared, we doubt not, by all who have given of their substance towards the maintenance and development of the institution. We therefore invite all our readers to “rejoice with us” in the tokens of the divine favor which have crowned our labors during another year. “The Lord hath been mindful of us: He will bless us.”

When we remember how this gracious work began by the consecrated thought of a holy woman, and then grew into an actual gift from her hand, and further developed, by the large help of others, into houses and schools, infirmary and dining-hall, and all manner of provision for destitute children, we feel bound to cry, “What hath God wrought!” Our God has supplied all our need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. The story of the Stockwell Orphanage will be worth telling in heaven when the angels shall learn from the Church the manifold wisdom and goodness of the Lord. Incidents which could not be published on earth will be made known in the heavenly city, where every secret thing shall be revealed. How every need has been supplied before it has become a want; how guidance has been given before questions have become anxieties; how friends have been raised up in unbroken succession, and how the One Great Friend

has been ever present, no single pen can ever record. To care for the fatherless has been a work of joyful faith all along, and in waiting upon God for supplies we have experienced great delight. The way of faith in God is the best possible. We could not have carried on the work by a method more pleasant, more certain, more enduring. If we had depended upon annual subscribers we should have had to hunt them up and pay a heavy poundage, or perhaps fail to keep up the roll; if we had advertised continually for funds our outlay might have brought in a scanty return; but dependence upon God has been attended with no such hazards. We have done our best as men of business to keep the Orphanage before the public, but we have desired in all things to exercise faith as servants of God. Whatever weakness we have personally to confess and deplore, there is no weakness in the plan of faith in God. Our experience compels us to declare that He is the living God; the God that heareth prayer; the God who will never permit those who trust in Him to be confounded. The business world has passed through trying times during the last few years, but the Orphanage has not been tried; men of great enterprise have failed, but the home for the fatherless has not failed; for this enterprise is in the divine hand, an eye watches over it which neither slumbers nor sleeps.

Let the people of God be encouraged by the fact of the existence and prosperity of the Stockwell Orphanage. Miracles have come to an end, but God goes on to work great wonders: the rod of Moses is laid aside, but the rod and staff of the Great Shepherd still compass us.

The son of an old Puritan rode some twenty miles to meet his father, who came a similar distance to the half-way house. "Father," said the son, "I have met with a special providence, for my horse stumbled at least a dozen times, and yet it did not fall." "Ah!" replied the father, "I have had a providence quite as remarkable, for my horse did not stumble once all the way." This last is the happy picture of the Orphanage for some time past, and indeed throughout its whole career: we have never had to issue mournful appeals because of exhausted resources, and in this we must see and admire the good hand of the Lord.

We now enter more fully upon a fresh stage of our existence; we shall need to double the amount of our present income, and we shall have it from the ever-opened hand of the Lord our God. Friends will be moved to think of our great family, for our Great



ONE OF THE SCHOOL-ROOMS.

Remembrancer will stir them up. The duty of each Christian to the mass of destitute orphanhood is clear enough, and if pure minds are stirred up by way of remembrance there will be no lack in the larder, no want in the wardrobe, no failing in the funds of our Orphan House.

We labor under one great difficulty: many people say, "Mr. Spurgeon will be sure to get the money, and there is no need for us to send." It is clear that if everybody talked so, our presi-

dent's name would be a hindrance instead of a help. He will be the means of finding money for our institution, for the Lord will honor his faith and hear his prayers, and be glorified in him; but there will be no thanks due to those who fabricate an excuse for themselves out of the faithfulness of God. This difficulty, however, does not distress us: we go forward believing that when we have twice our present number of children the Lord will send us double supplies; we cannot entertain the suspicion that the girls will be left without their portion, for we, being evil, care as much for our daughters as for our sons, and our Heavenly Father will do the same. It is well, however, to remind our friends of this, that each helper of the Orphanage may try to interest another generous heart, and so enlarge the circle of our friends. It may be that by such means the Great Provider will supply us; for we know that when our Lord fed the multitude He first said to His disciples, "Give ye them to eat."

The sanitary condition of the Orphanage has been all that we could desire. Considering that so large a proportion of the children come to us in a delicate condition, and some with the taint of hereditary disease, it is a matter for devout thankfulness that their general health is so good, and that so few deaths have occurred. Out of the entire number who have left, only one boy was unable to enter upon a situation in consequence of an enfeebled constitution. We owe it to an ever-watchful Providence that, during the prevailing epidemic, not a single case of fever or small-pox has occurred in the institution.

Family worship is conducted twice daily, before the morning and evening meals, by the head master or his assistants, the service being taken occasionally by the president, or a member of the committee, or a visitor to the institution who may happen to be present. The Word of God is read and expounded, hymns sung, and prayer offered, and the whole of the boys repeat a text selected for the day. A service is conducted for the elder boys every Wednesday evening by Mr. W. J. Evans, when addresses are given by ministers and other friends.

During their term of residence in the institution all the boys are total abstainers, no alcoholic liquors being allowed except by

order of the doctor, but most of them are pledged abstainers, with the approval of their friends. Band of Hope meetings are held every month, when the children receive instruction from competent speakers; and lectures are given at intervals during the winter months.

The operations of the institution reveal to the managers the wide-spread necessity which exists. The cry of the orphan comes from every part of our beloved land, and the plea of the widow for Christian sympathy and help is restricted to no one class of the community. Faces once radiant with smiles are saddened with grief, for the dark shadow which death casts falls everywhere. How true are the lines of the poet: —

“There is no fireside, howsoe'er defended,
But has one vacant chair.”

It is a constant joy to the president and the committee that they are able to mitigate to such a large extent the misery and need which are brought under their notice; and it must be an equal joy to the subscribers to know that their loving contributions furnish the sinews for this holy war.

As our Sunday-school is affiliated to the Sunday-school Union, we allow the boys who desire to do so to sit for examination. Of the candidates who were successful at the last examination, three gained prizes, twelve first-class certificates, and thirty-eight second-class certificates.

During the year the boys took part in the Crystal Palace Musical Festivals arranged by the Band of Hope Union and the Tonic Sol-fa Association.

In order to make the character and claims of the institution more widely known, the head master and the secretary have held meetings in London and the provinces, and the success which has crowned their efforts is of a very gratifying character. The boys who accompany them to sing and to recite furnish a powerful appeal by their appearance and conduct, and commend the institution to which they owe so much. The local papers speak in terms of the highest praise of their services, and thus a most effective advertisement is secured without any cost to the institu-

tion. So far as the boys are concerned these trips have an educational value, for they get to know a great deal of the products and industries of different parts of the country, besides securing the advantage of being brought into contact with Christian families where they reside during their visit.

The amount realized during the year, after defraying all expenses, is \$3,320, and our thanks are hereby tendered to all who assisted in any way to secure such a splendid result.

The committee record with thankfulness that there has been no lack in the funds contributed for the efficient maintenance of the institution. Friends prefer to give donations rather than pledge themselves to send annual subscriptions, and the benevolence thus manifested is purely spontaneous. The admirable custom of making shirts for the boys is still continued by the young ladies of an educational establishment, who send in a supply of two hundred shirts every year. Their efforts are supplemented by several working associations, but the supply is not yet equal to the demand, and we cordially invite the co-operation of others, to whom we shall be glad to send samples and patterns.

The work of caring for the widow and the fatherless is specially mentioned by the Holy Spirit as one of the most acceptable modes of giving outward expression to pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father, and therefore the Lord's people will not question that they should help in carrying it out. Will it need much pleading? If so, we cannot use it, as we shrink from marring the willingness which is the charm of such a service. The work is carried on in dependence upon God, and as His blessing evidently rests upon it, we are confident the means will be forthcoming as the need arises. While commending the work to our Heavenly Father in prayer, we deem it right to lay before the stewards of His bounty the necessities and claims of the institution.

The year 1880 will be a memorable one in the history of the institution, and we record with gratitude the fact that the foundation-stones of the first four houses for the Girls' Orphanage were laid on the 22d of June, when the president's birthday was celebrated. It was a joy to all present that Mrs. Spurgeon was

able to lay the memorial stone of "The Sermon House, the gift of C. H. Spurgeon and his esteemed publishers, Messrs. Passmore and Alabaster." The memorial stone of another house, the gift of Mr. W. R. Rickett, and called "The Limes, in tender memory of five beloved children," was laid by C. H. Spurgeon, who made a touching allusion to the sad event thus commemorated. Mrs. Samuel Barrow laid the memorial stone of the house called "The Olives," the amount for its erection having been given and collected by her beloved husband. The trustees of the institution having subscribed the funds for the erection of a house, the treasurer, Mr. William Higgs, laid, in their name, the memorial stone which bears the inscription, "Erected by the Trustees of the Orphanage to express their joy in this service of love."

At the present moment the buildings of the Orphanage form a great square, enclosing a fine space for air and exercise. Visitors generally express great surprise at the beauty and openness of the whole establishment. Much remains to be done before the institution is completely accommodated; there is needed an infirmary for the girls, and till that is built one of the houses will have to be used for that purpose, thus occupying the space which would otherwise be filled by thirty or forty children: this should be attended to at an early date. Baths and washhouses will be urgently required for the girls, and we propose to make them sufficiently commodious for the girls to do the washing for the entire community of five hundred children, thus instructing them in household duties and saving a considerable expense. We would not spend a sixpence needlessly. No money has been wasted in lavish ornament or in hideous ugliness. The buildings are not a workhouse or a county jail, but a pleasant residence for those children of whom God declares Himself to be the Father. The additional buildings which we contemplate are not for luxury, but for necessary uses; and as we endeavor to lay out money with judicious economy, we feel sure that we shall be trusted in the future as in the past.

Are there not friends waiting to take a share in the Stockwell Orphanage Building? They cannot better commemorate personal blessings, nor can they find a more suitable memorial for departed

friends. No storied urn or animated bust can half so well record the memory of beloved ones as a stone in an Orphan House. Most of the buildings are already appropriated as memorials in some form or other, and only a few more will be needed. Very soon all building operations will be complete, and those who have lost the opportunity of becoming shareholders in the Home of Mercy may regret their delay. At any rate, none who place a stone in the walls of the Stockwell Orphanage will ever lament that they did this deed of love to the little ones for whom Jesus cares. Honored names are with us already engraven upon the stones of this great Hostelry of the All-merciful; and many others are our co-workers whose record is on high, though unknown among men. Who will be the next to join us in this happy labor?

When the whole of the buildings are complete, the institution will afford accommodation for five hundred children, and prove a memorial of Christian generosity and of the loving-kindness of the Lord.

The next brief chapter, on "The Girls' Orphanage," is from the pen of Mr. Spurgeon.

XVIII.

THE GIRLS' ORPHANAGE.

HE who is the feeder of sparrows will also furnish you with what you need. Sit not down in despair; hope on, hope ever. Take up the arms of faith against a sea of fears, "and by opposing end them." There is One above who cares for you, though all men deny you sympathy. He gave His Son to redeem you, and He will not suffer His redeemed to be famished. He will hear your cry. At any rate, try Him and see. — C. H. SPURGEON.

THE GIRLS' ORPHANAGE.

I N our address at the presentation of the late testimonial, we disclaimed all personal credit for the existence of any one of the enterprises over which we preside, because each one of them has been forced upon us. "I could not help undertaking them," was our honest and just confession. This is literally true, and another illustration of this fact is now to come before the Christian public. Several of us have long cherished the idea that the time would come in which we should have an Orphanage for girls as well as for boys. It would be hard to conceive why this should *not* be. It seems ungentlemanly, not to say unrighteous, to provide for children of one sex only, for are not all needy little ones dear to Christ, with whom there is neither male nor female? We do not like to do such things by halves, and it is but half doing the thing to leave the girls out in the cold. We have all along wished to launch out in the new direction, but we had quite enough on hand for the time being, and were obliged to wait. The matter has been thought of, and talked about, and more than half promised, but nothing has come of it till this present, and now, as we believe at the exact moment, the hour has struck, and the voice of God in providence says, "Go forward." The fund for the Girls' Orphanage has commenced, and there are about a dozen names upon the roll at the moment of our writing. The work will be carried on with vigor as the Lord shall be pleased to send the means, but it will not be unduly pushed upon any one so as to be regarded as a new burden, for we want none but cheerful helpers, who will count it a privilege to have a share in the good work.

We shall employ no collector to make a percentage by dunning the unwilling, and shall make no private appeals to individuals. There is the case: if it be a good one and you are able to help it, please do so; but if you have no wish in that direction, our Lord's work does not require us to go a begging like a pauper, and we do not intend to do so.

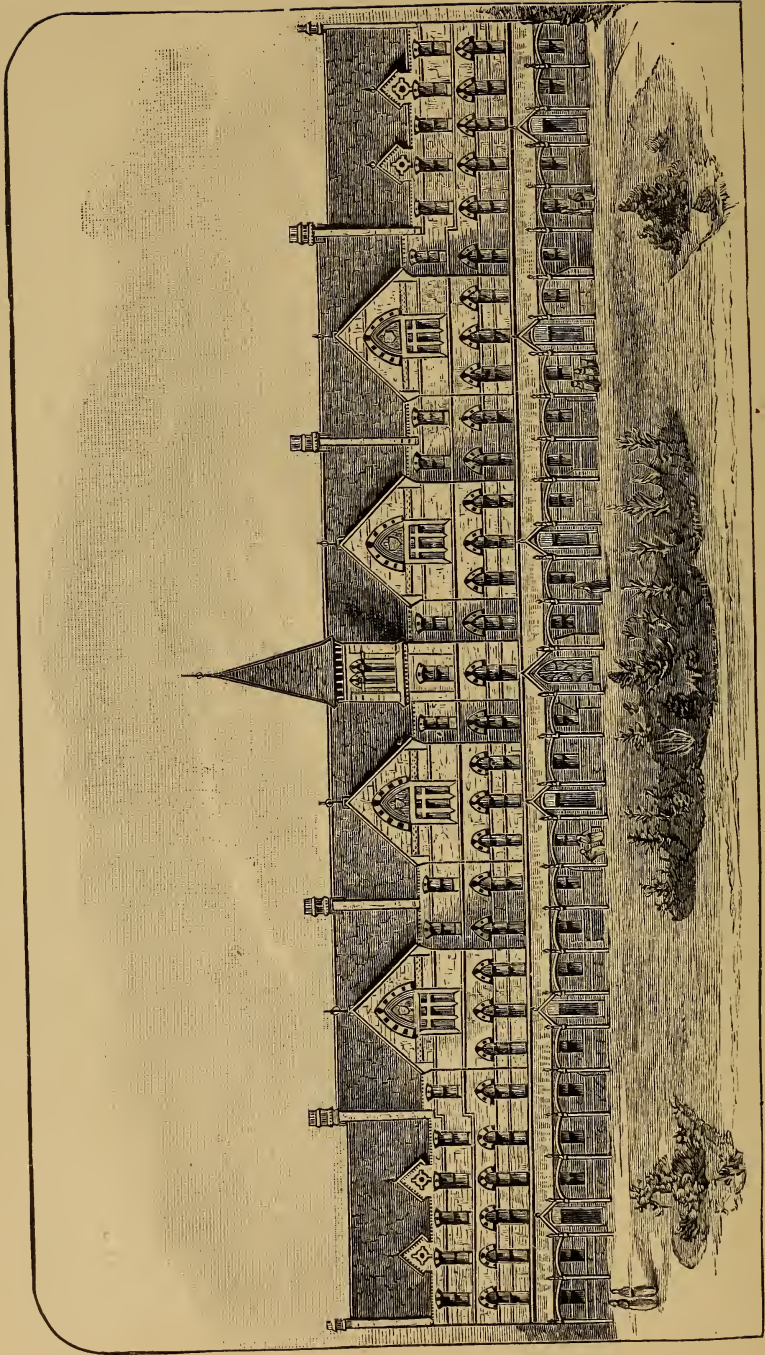
We have never been in debt yet, nor have we had a mortgage upon any of our buildings, nor have we even borrowed money for a time, but we have always been able to pay as we have gone on. Our prayer is that we may never have to come down to a lower platform and commence borrowing.

It has often happened that we have been unable to assist widows in necessitous circumstances with large families, because there did not happen to be a *boy* of the special age required by the rules of our Boys' Orphanage. There were several girls, but then we could not take girls, and however deserving the case, we have been unable to render any assistance to very deserving widows, simply because their children were not boys. This is one reason why we need a Girls' Orphanage.

Everywhere also there is an outcry about the scarcity of good servants, honest servants, industrious servants, well-trained servants. We know where to find the sisters who will try to produce such workers out of the little ones who will come under their care.

We have succeeded by God's grace and the diligent care of our masters and matrons in training the lads so that they have become valuable to business men: why should not the same divine help direct us with the lasses, so that domestics and governesses should go forth from us as well as clerks and artisans? We believe that there are many friends who will take a special interest in the girls, and that there are some whose trades would more readily enable them to give articles suitable for girls than those which are useful to boys.

Here is a grand opportunity for Christian people with means to take their places among the first founders of this new institution, and if they judge that such a work will be good and useful, we hope that they will without fail, *and without delay*, come to our



THE GIRLS' HOME — STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE.

assistance in this fresh branch of service. We cannot afford to lose a single penny from the funds for the boys, but this work for the girls must be something extra and above. You helped Willie and Tommy: will you not help Mary and Maggie?

It is very needful to add that foolish persons often say: Mr. Spurgeon can get plenty of money, and needs no help. If all were to talk in this fashion, where would our many works drift to? Mr. Spurgeon does get large sums, but not a penny more than the various works require, and he gets it because God moves His people to give it, as he hopes, good reader, He may move you. We have no personal end to serve, we do not, directly or indirectly, gain a single penny by the Orphanage, College, or any other societies over which we preside; neither have we any wealthy persons around us who are at a loss to dispose of their property; but our hard-working church keeps continually consecrating its offerings, and our friends far and near think upon us. Our treasury is the bounty of God, our motto is: THE LORD WILL PROVIDE. Past mercy forbids a doubt as to the future, and so in the name of God we set up our banners.

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The girls' part is not yet fully complete, but it soon will be so, and then we must take in the girls. Now it occurs to me to let my friends know the increased need which has arisen, and will arise from the doubling of the number of children. The income must by some means be doubled. My trust is in the Lord alone, for whose sake I bear this burden. I believe that He has led me all along in the erection and carrying on of this enterprise, and I am also well assured that His own hand pointed to the present extension, and supplied the means for making it. I therefore rest in the providence of God alone. But the food for the children will not drop as manna from heaven, it will be sent in a way which is more beneficial, for the graces of His children will be displayed in the liberality which will supply the needs of the orphans. God will neither feed the children by angels nor by ravens, but by the loving gifts of His people. It is needful, therefore, that I tell my friends of our need, and I do hereby tell them. The institution will need, in rough figures, about one thousand dollars a week.

This is a large sum, and when I think of it I am appalled if Satan suggests the question: "What if the money does not come in?" But it is nothing to the Lord of the whole earth to feed five hundred little ones. He has kept two hundred and fifty boys for these years, and He can do the like for the same number of girls. Only let not His stewards say that there is no need at Stockwell, for there is great and crying need that all my friends should inquire whether they may not wisely render me much more aid than they have done. The buildings are not all finished yet, nor the roads made, but this will soon be accomplished, and then the institution will be in full operation, and its requirements will be great. I have written these lines with a measure of reluctance; and I hope it is not in unbelief, but as a reasonable service, that I have thus stated the case.

XIX.

SUNSHINE IN THE HEART.

DEAR friend, whether you die as soon as you are born again, or remain on earth for many years, is comparatively a small matter, and will not materially alter your indebtedness to divine grace. In the one case the great Husbandman will show how He can bring His flowers speedily to perfection; and in the other He will prove how He can preserve them in blooming beauty, despite the frosts and snows of earth's cruel winter: in either case your experience will reveal the same love and power. — C. H. SPURGEON.

SUNSHINE IN THE HEART.

ABUNDANT evidence has been given to assure the founder and patrons of the Orphanage that the aim ever in view, viz., the spiritual good of the children, is being constantly realized. The little ones who have been removed by death have died in the Lord. Mr. Charlesworth, the head master, tells the following pathetic story concerning one of "these little ones": —

During the history of the Orphanage we have received a number of children to whom has been bequeathed a heritage of disease. In many cases, we are thankful to say, delicate boys, of whom at first we stood in doubt, have become strong and healthy youths. God has been very gracious in blessing the ministrations of doctors and nurses to the complete renovation of constitutions enfeebled by disease, neglect, or want. Our death-rate has been very small considering the large proportion of children whose parents died of pulmonary disease and other hereditary complaints. Only thirteen out of five hundred and sixty-seven have been removed by death during their term, and of these one died in a fit within a few hours of his admission, and another of scarlet fever while away for a holiday. With the exception of one boy, who died of scarlet fever, all the rest fell victims to inherited disease.

With devout gratitude to our Heavenly Father we record the pleasing fact that all who have died in the institution not only gave evidence of conversion, but experienced the rapture of saints who are fully assured of their personal interest in the Saviour and of

their eternal home in the house of many mansions. In the little books entitled "Love Jesus and Live for Heaven" and "Little Dicky" we have endeavored to describe the dying experiences of two of the boys, and now it has fallen to our lot to write of another who has only just fallen asleep. The realities thus described may seem to some to belong to the realm of fiction; but we ask to be believed when we affirm that we have not exaggerated, nor even colored, a single expression.

Ernest Edgar Bray, the last of the number called to the fold above, came to us after he had lost both parents. He was a simple-minded, affectionate boy, but for several years he was possessed of very little moral consciousness. His conduct at times was a severe strain upon the patience of his matron and teachers, and on several occasions he brought himself into disgrace by his folly and sin. We mention this at the outset to show that he had no natural bias towards goodness, and that his Christian character was not due to the development of inherited virtues. The child-piety of the theorists is a quality we have never met with during a long experience; but the piety which springs from a regenerated nature is a beautiful adornment we have often witnessed. In every such case the character and conduct after conversion formed a striking contrast to all that had gone before. The change was so radical, that the second phase of experience seemed to belong to another individual. "From darkness to light" indicates the change of which a new-born soul is conscious; "from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son" suggests the altered relationship into which a "child of God" enters. The change is not a development, but a translation. If it be claimed by some that the artless simplicity of childhood carries with it the germs of a Christian character, and that children ought to grow up, under proper nurture, and "never know themselves as other than Christian," we challenge the theory by demanding an illustration. If a case in point be adduced, we shall then claim the liberty to withhold our assent unless we can be certified that no radical change has ever been effected by the grace of God. We believe it to be contrary to the testimony of the Word of God and to the uniform experience of Christians for the twilight of

natural virtues to expand into the full radiance of Christian purity and joy. The divine life in the soul is a heavenly exotic, and sanctification is the result of the Spirit's operation. "Not of works, lest any man should boast," is an inspired dictum, which receives unqualified indorsement from all who belong to the "new creation."

In the case of Ernest Bray, the change in his character was so apparent that no one could question the fact of the divine agency by which it was wrought. It is true, the precise moment of the change cannot be determined, nor can we indicate the special circumstance which culminated in his conversion. From the time of his admission to the Orphanage he was the object of Christian solicitude and prayer, and the subject of Christian instruction and training. Twice every day all the boys assemble for family worship, when a text is repeated from memory, the Word of God read and expounded, addresses delivered, and prayer offered. On Wednesday evening a special service is held, the salvation of the boys being the supreme aim of the friends who conduct it; and on Sundays the following plan is adopted: In the morning one detachment is sent to the Tabernacle, another to Wynne Road Baptist Chapel, and a special service is held at home for the remainder. In the afternoon a Sunday-school is held, the boys being taught in classes by friends interested in the institution. In the evening a separate service is arranged for the elder boys, the younger ones spending the time with their matrons in their respective houses. During the week also all the members of the staff "watch for their souls as those who must give an account," and the Bible is a text-book in all the classes of the school. In all these arrangements human instrumentality is consecrated to the work of soul-winning and Christian nurture, and our Heavenly Father is graciously pleased to bless all the means employed, so that "he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together." Of one thing we are fully assured, that however numerous and distinct the agencies, "God giveth the increase." To Him, therefore, be all the glory.

In the latter half of the year 1879 it became evident that Bray would not survive the winter, his lungs betraying deep-seated dis-

ease. He was very reluctant to enter the infirmary, and bravely tried, as consumptives usually do, to conceal his worst fears respecting himself. For some time after his admission the buoyancy of a child's hope threw the thought of death into the shade, but at length the conviction gained strength that his end was not far distant. The loving ministry of his constant attendant became more and more welcome, and as his hope of salvation deepened into a settled conviction, and the "peace of God" shed a holy calm over his spirit, he conversed freely of the preciousness of Jesus and the prospect of being "for ever with the Lord." His face soon betrayed the secret of his soul's experience, revealing, as in a mirror, the tranquillity of peace and the ecstasy of joy. He said to one of his playmates, who came to see him on his return from the Christmas holidays: "Do you see any difference in my face?" "Yes," he replied; "it is thinner." "Oh," he replied, "that is not what I mean! Don't you see it looks more shining?" "Beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord," he was being changed into the same image, and he was conscious of the transformation. He often remarked, "I have sunshine to the bottom of my heart." One morning he was singing very softly to himself, and one of the boys remarked: "I know why you feel happy just now; it is because the sun is shining!" Bray replied: "It's not that; it is something inside! Jesus!" On another occasion he said: "I do love to talk about Jesus; it makes me so happy. I did not begin to love Jesus until I came into the infirmary. I have loved Him ever since, but not half so much as I do now. The Lord makes me happy all day and all night. I don't mind the long nights as I did, because Jesus is near me." "I want to sing," he remarked to a loving friend who was visiting him, "but I can't!" She said: "Well, you will raise a loud note when you enter heaven, won't you?" He replied: "Ah, I shall sing there! I sing *now*, inside; but I shall sing *out loud* then, and wait and watch for you to come!"

Much of his time was spent in prayer. Entering the room one morning, the nurse heard him say: "So happy! so happy! Oh, Lord, may this be a glorious day! Let me praise Thee! Bless all the boys! May they love Jesus! Forgive all my sins for



INFIRMARY — STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE.

Thy Son's sake!" Not a day passed, as he heard the boys at play, without a prayer for their conversion, and as he lay awake with pain during the long hours of the night his heart went forth in earnest supplication that God would bless and save his companions. He said to the nurse who was with him: "I do want to do something for Jesus. Oh, I know! I will try to write to my brother. I do want him to love the Lord!" He then wrote the following letter: —

DEAR BROTHER, — I have much pleasure in writing these few lines to tell you how the Lord has made me so happy. I used to think I loved and trusted the Lord enough, but something made me feel I must love Him more. If I was strong, oh, how I would work for Jesus! I hope and trust this letter may be the means of making you happy in the Lord. Tell aunt how very happy I am. Good bye, trusting we both shall meet in heaven.

Your loving brother,

ERNEST BRAY.

Added to his prayerfulness and anxiety for others, his patience in enduring pain was another evidence of his thorough conversion. As he lay, week after week, with declining strength, so that the weight of his bed-clothes became at length a burden, and he was unable to shift his position without assistance, not a murmur escaped his lips. Any little service rendered by his loving attendants evoked a cheerful smile or a grateful "Thank you! God bless you!" How much is true piety seen in these little things! They may not strike the reader, but those who actually see the gracious patience and gratitude know how to appreciate them. He said to Miss A., one of the teachers, a few days before his departure: "I have been so worried this morning; Satan came to me and said: 'What's the use of *you* trusting?' but God gave me the victory over him, and I am happy now." She then quoted the lines, —

" Sin, my worst enemy before,
Shall vex my eyes and ears no more;
My inward foes shall all be slain,
Nor Satan break my peace again :"

and the thought of his final and complete triumph over sin and Satan cast a flush of victory over his face. "He then thanked me

so gratefully," this friend writes, "and, putting his thin arms round me, kissing me many times, he said: 'Oh, I do love Jesus and you! You are all such kind friends to me, and I feel Mr. Charlesworth is a father to me. But do pray for me that I may go soon.'" He added to the same friend: "I wish I had strength to do something for nurse; she has done so much for me." With what little strength he could command he tried to sing a simple impromptu couplet, after the manner of the Jubilee Singers, —

"Oh, come along with me to Jesus;
Oh, nurse, come along!"

Mrs. C. said to him, as she sat by his bedside: "You will soon be home." Putting his thin hand on her face, he exclaimed: "Oh, Mrs. C., I do hope I shall, — I am ready;" and then he added: "I will give you another smile." Before she left she kissed him, and said: "If we find you gone we shall not sorrow; it will be your gain." He very sweetly replied: "I should be sorry for you to sorrow; I shall be free from pain; safe at home." So certain was his conviction that he would soon be home that he said one day: "I should like a sandwich, and then I don't want anything more on this earth."

There is a charm about the sweet simplicity of faith and hope which makes the religion of childhood a type of piety worthy of imitation. With all the eloquence of pathos Jesus took a little child and said, as He placed him in the midst of the bystanders, who had conceived a very different ideal: "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." When the sterner virtues of manhood are toned by the feminine graces of childhood the perfection of Christian character is attained.

While Mr. Spurgeon was in Mentone, Bray was very anxious to write and tell him how happy he was in Jesus. The following was the letter he sent: —

INFIRMARY, STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE.

DEAR MR. SPURGEON, — As Dr. Wylie said he was going to Mentone, I thought I should like to send you a few lines. The last time you saw me you thought I should soon be in heaven, and you asked the Lord if you could soon be there too, but the

Lord has spared us both; and may the Lord soon bring you back again to serve and praise Him. I can't do much for Jesus, but I am trying to bear patiently all I have to suffer. I am still in bed, and I feel I can't write any more.

From one of your orphan boys,

E. BRAY.

To which Mr. Spurgeon replied: —

MENTONE, February 5.

DEAR BRAY,—I was so pleased with your little note. It was so good of you, with all your pain, to sit up and write to me. I hope when the spring weather comes you will feel better, but if not, you know of the "sweet fields beyond the swelling flood" which "stand dressed in living green." The Lord Jesus will be very near you. He feels for dear suffering children. He will keep you patient and joyful. Oh, how He loves! If there is anything you want, be sure to let me know.

Your loving friend,

C. H. SPURGEON.

On the pastor's return he came to see him, and the visit seemed to yield an equal pleasure to each. The dear boy was full of gratitude to his kind friend and benefactor, and expressed himself with touching simplicity and clearness as to his faith and hope and joy. He talked with all the freedom of a veteran believer whose long experience of the goodness and faithfulness of God had made doubt impossible and faith a natural impulse. Calling the nurse to his side, Bray requested her to give him his purse, and taking out four shillings which he had saved, he asked Mr. Spurgeon to accept it for the Girls' Orphanage. Such an expression of gratitude was very welcome to the pastor's heart, and, we doubt not, the offering was acceptable to "The Father of the fatherless," whose smile has always rested upon the institution. We suggested that a portion of one of the new houses should be built with the money, and be called "Bray's bricks," as an appropriate memorial of "a folded lamb."

In the course of the interview he said to Mr. Spurgeon: "Do you remember I once came to your house with another boy, and you asked us if we could eat a piece of plum-cake?" It is not

surprising the pastor confessed he had forgotten this special instance of kindness, and after admitting the fact, he said to him, "And can you eat a piece of plum-cake now?" We shall not soon forget how the child's eyes brightened as he replied, "Yes; but only a *piece of yours*." It is scarcely necessary to add that a cake was promised, and that the following morning it was duly forwarded, Mr. Spurgeon sending at the same time some crystallized violets and rose-leaves from Mentone. A very touching prayer from the pastor closed the interview, and kissing the little sufferer, he promised to carry a request to the prayer-meeting, and ask the elders to join in prayer for the conversion of all the boys. The message was duly delivered, and the assembly engaged in prayer in response to the expressed wish of the little sufferer. The following Monday he sent a piece of the cake to the elders, with the message: "Tell them I want them all to pray for me to-night, that I may soon go home. Ask Mr. Spurgeon to pray for me too; and ask him to pray for all the other boys in the Orphanage, that they may meet me in heaven." And then he added, "Oh, I do long to go home!" Poor dear boy, the weariness and languor which come from the wasting of disease and long wakefulness intensified his longing for "the rest that remaineth." Nor was it the craving for *rest* merely which directed his soul heavenward; he said to Mr. Bartlett, who visited him on several occasions: "How good of God to bless me, a poor weak boy! Oh, how happy it makes me! I long now to be with Jesus, and I hope He will soon take me, for *I want to see His face!*" The highest aspiration of an advanced saint never reached beyond this—to find the fulness of heaven's bliss in the vision of the face of Jesus. On the eve of his departure his soul went out in the prayer: "Dear Lord, do come soon! Jesus, come quickly! Take me!" With a peculiar emphasis he seemed to read the text: "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up!" During the last night of his sojourn here, the hours wore wearily away, and the twilight of the early morn had scarcely chased the lingering shadows from the landscape, when it became evident that another and a brighter day was dawning, which would never be succeeded by night.

The friend who had watched him during the first part of his illness, and whose loving ministry had been greatly blessed to him, was early at his bedside. The first request he proffered was, "Don't leave, Miss M——! I can't live through the day!" He meant he could not *live here*; he well knew that life in its fulness awaited him in the bright awakening beyond. When his posture was changed to afford him temporary ease, he lay in silence for a few seconds, and then repeated the consoling message which had reached his spirit as by an angel's whisper: "*My lamb, it's nearly over.*" Oh, the infinite tenderness which that message breathes! Jesus was very near, and the mantle of His dear love was thrown around the sufferer, enfolding him as in an armor of triple steel, to ensure immunity from the darts of the enemy. All heaven stood revealed to his enraptured gaze, and the ward of the Orphanage Infirmary proved again the vestibule of the eternal home. "There He is, Miss M——! There's Jesus! and Cockerton! and Dicky!" was his rapturous exclamation as "things seen and temporal" were fading from his vision. "Can't you seem Him, Miss M——? Oh, look, they're all around my bed!" It seemed impossible to him that the eyes of the watchers by his bed could be closed against the glories of such a transfiguration scene. He wanted all about his bed to enjoy the blessedness of the beatific vision, and they, too, shared the same desire. Though the lips did not give it expression, each heart breathed the prayer: "Let my last end be like his." With the sting of death gone, the terror of the grave vanished, heaven open, Jesus near, and angels waiting, no wonder he exclaimed, with almost his last breath: "Happy! happy! happy!" In a few minutes all was over, and another trophy of grace had joined the company of the redeemed in heaven. As the spring sun shone forth just then, cheering with his bright rays the world which during the winter had been enveloped in fog, nature seemed to say to us: Life's winter months are over now, and the everlasting spring has come; the night of weeping is ended, and the morning of joy has dawned. To the vision of our faith the pathway to heaven stood revealed, and in the ecstasy of the moment we could hear the sweet echoes of the greeting in the world beyond, —

“Come in, thou blessed, sit by Me;
 With My own life I ransomed thee;
 Enjoy My perfect favor:
 Come in, thou ransomed spirit, come,
 Thou now must dwell with Me at home;
 Ye blissful mansions, make him room,
 For he must stay forever.”

In his interesting and remarkable book, entitled “Sunlight and Shadow; or, Gleanings from my Lifework,”* Mr. Gough thus describes a day he spent with Mr. Spurgeon: —

I would like to give you one incident to illustrate the man in his greatness and simplicity. He wished me to visit his Boys' Orphanage at Stockwell. I could go only on Saturday, and his note to me was characteristic:

“Beloved friend,— Although I never go out on Saturdays, my horses, being under the law and not under grace, keep the seventh-day Sabbath, yet we will arrange to visit,” etc.

A beautiful day it was, for London, as we rode together, chatting all the way. The history of the Orphanage is intensely interesting. The commencement was a sum of one hundred thousand dollars to Mr. Spurgeon, from a lady, to commence an orphanage for fatherless boys. All the money that has been expended has been raised by voluntary contributions, and the one hundred thousand dollars is invested as an endowment.

When we entered the grounds, the boys set up a shout of joy at the sight of their benefactor.

I asked, “What are the requirements for admission?”

He said, “Utter destitution. Nothing denominational. We have more of the Church of England than of the Baptists. We have Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists, — all sorts.”

After the boys had gone through their gymnastic exercises and military drill, I spoke a few words to them. Mr. Spurgeon was like a great boy among boys.

He said, “There are two hundred and forty boys, — only think! How many pence are there in a shilling?”

* Hartford: A. D. Worthington & Co.

"Twelve."

"Right. How many shillings in a pound?"

"Twenty."

"Right. Twelve times twenty, how many?"

"Two hundred and forty."

"That's a penny apiece each boy."



BOYS' PLAYGROUND,
STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE.

"Here, Mr. Charlesworth," handing him a sovereign, "give these boys a penny apiece," when a shrill, hearty hurrah was given as Mr. Spurgeon turned away with a laugh of keen enjoyment.

“Will you go to the infirmary? We have an infirmary and quarantine; for sometimes the poor creatures we take in need a good deal of purifying. We have one boy very ill with consumption; he cannot live, and I wish to see him, for he would be disappointed if he knew I had been here and had not seen him.”

We went into the cool and sweet chamber, and there lay the boy. He was very much excited when he saw Mr. Spurgeon. The great preacher sat by his side, and I cannot describe the scene. Holding the boy's hand in his, he said:

“Well, my dear, you have some precious promises in sight all round the room. Now, dear, you are going to die, and you are very tired lying here, and soon will be free from all pain, and you will rest. Nurse, did he rest last night?”

“He coughed very much.”

“Ah, my dear boy, it seems very hard for you to lie here all day in pain, and cough at night. Do you love Jesus?”

“Yes.”

“Jesus loves you. He bought you with His precious blood, and He knows what is best for you. It seems hard for you to lie here and listen to the shouts of the healthy boys outside at play. But soon Jesus will take you home, and then He will tell you the reason, and you will be so glad.”

Then, laying his hand on the boy, without the formality of kneeling, he said: “O Jesus, Master, this dear child is reaching out his thin hand to find Thee. Touch him, dear Saviour, with Thy loving, warm clasp. Lift him as he passes the cold river, that his feet be not chilled by the water of death; take him home in Thine own good time. Comfort and cherish him till that good time comes. Show him Thyself as he lies here, and let him see Thee, and know Thee more and more as his loving Saviour.”

After a moment's pause, he said, “Now, dear, is there anything you would like? Would you like a little canary in a cage, to hear him sing in the morning? Nurse, see that he has a canary to-morrow morning. Good-bye, my dear; you will see the Saviour, perhaps before I shall.”

I have seen Mr. Spurgeon hold by his power sixty-five hundred persons in a breathless interest; I knew him as a great man uni-

versally esteemed and beloved; but as he sat by the bedside of a dying pauper child, whom his beneficence had rescued, he was to me a greater and grander man than when swaying the mighty multitude at his will.

The Stockwell Orphanage receives fatherless boys and girls between the ages of six and ten. It is supported by voluntary contributions and by the revenue from the capital fund, which yields less than one-fourth of the income required. It is conducted on the Cottage System: each home is presided over by a godly matron. It is unsectarian: children are received, irrespective of their denominational connection, from all parts of the United Kingdom. That the most needy, helpless, and deserving may secure the benefits of the institution, candidates are selected by the committee, and are not elected by the expensive and objectionable process of polling the subscribers. No uniform dress is provided, but the children's garments differ, in order that no peculiar garb may mark the children with the badge of poverty. The children receive a plain but thorough English education and training. The supreme aim of the managers is always kept in view — to “bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”

PSALM LXX.

MAKE haste, O God, my soul to bless,
My help and my deliverer Thou!
Make haste! for I 'm in deep distress,
My case is urgent,—help me *now!*

Make haste, O God! make haste to save!
For time is short and death is nigh!
Make haste! ere yet I 'm in my grave,
And with the lost for ever lie.

Make haste! for I am poor and low,
And Satan mocks my prayers and tears;
O God, in mercy be not slow,
But snatch me from my horrid fears.

Make haste, O God, and hear my cries!
Then with the souls who seek Thy face,
And those who Thy salvation prize,
I 'll magnify Thy matchless grace.

C. H. SPURGEON.

XX.

THE COLPORTAGE ASSOCIATION.

THE Church is God's hospice, where He distributes bread and wine to refresh the weary, and entertains wayfarers that else had been lost in the storm. The Church is God's hospital, into which He takes the sick, and there He nourishes them till they renew their youth like the eagles. It is God's great Pharos, with its lantern flashing forth a directing ray, so that wanderers far away may be directed to the haven of peace. But mind, it must be God's Church, and not man's. — C. H. SPURGEON.

THE COLPORTAGE ASSOCIATION.

THE object of this association is the increased circulation of *religious and healthy literature* among all classes, in order to counteract the evil of the vicious publications which abound, and which lead to much immorality, crime, and neglect of religion.

This object is carried out in a twofold manner:

First, by means of Christian colporteurs, who are paid a fixed salary, and devote all their time to the work, visiting every accessible house with Bibles and good books and periodicals for sale, and performing other missionary services such as visitation of the sick and dying, and conducting meetings and open-air services as opportunities occur. This is the most important method, enabling the colporteur to visit every part of the district regularly.

Second, by means of book agents, who canvass for orders for periodicals and supply them month by month; these receive a liberal percentage on the sales to remunerate them for their trouble.

The association is unsectarian in its operations, "doing work for the friends of a full and free gospel anywhere and everywhere."

FOURTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT.

In a recent sermon on "Books," the following striking passage appears: "The printing-press is the mightiest agency on earth for good or evil. The position of a minister of religion standing in his pulpit is a responsible position, but it does not appear so responsible a position as that of the editor and the publisher.

Men die, but the literary influences they project go on for ever. I believe that God has made the printing-press to be a great agent in the world's correction and evangelization, and that the great final battle of the world will be fought, not with guns and swords, but with types and presses, a gossellized and purified literature triumphing over and trampling under foot and crushing out a corrupt literature. God speed the cylinders of an honest, intelligent, aggressive, Christian printing-press!"

To wage this warfare against pernicious literature is the work in which this and kindred associations engage. The printing-press produces the peaceful weapons and ammunition, while the colporteur is the Christian soldier who carries them into the conflict. He fires not at random, but, selecting his ground and opportunity, aims at the enemy now a Bible or Testament, then an attractively illustrated periodical or interesting book, or, failing to find a purchaser, will present a tract with a word in season, accompanied by silent prayer. The accompanying reports speak of many peaceful victories thus won. The circulation of hurtful periodicals and books is immense, but the association thankfully records that during the past year it has put into circulation a total of 396,291 books and periodicals to the gross value of \$37,875, while no less than 630,993 visits to families have been made by the colporteurs, who have also conducted 6,745 religious services, besides frequently praying with the sick and dying.

The colporteurs are frequently told that but for their visits a large number of the people upon whom they call would be entirely neglected by any of the ordinary methods or agencies employed.

Reports from Superintendents, &c., in Districts.

The Rev. D. W. Purdon writes: "The colporteur sticks to his work like a limpet to the rock. Patiently, perseveringly, and I believe very prayerfully, he goes on, increasingly acceptable among those among whom he labors, and in every way satisfactorily to those whose eyes are interestedly on him and his work.

"I see that during the past eleven months he has sold Bibles, 94; Testaments, 140; books, 4,947; magazines, 2,721; packets,

cards, &c., 320: total, 8,222. And he has visited 773 families, held 78 services, and distributed 4,620 tracts.

“Now, considering the character of his sphere, and the times we have been passing through, I consider this a good eleven months’ work, which speaks for itself. I cannot say more.”

R. W. S. Griffith, who has had some years’ practical experience of the working of colportage, writes: “I can only say that we have a very active and earnest colporteur; he works hard and finds a great pleasure in his work, carrying a smiling face to all houses he visits, and finding almost without exception a cordial welcome everywhere. He has a very simple but impressive manner of stating gospel truths, and his visits are, I am sure, calculated to awaken a desire for holy things in many hearts; it has been so in several cases that I have heard of, leading, through divine grace, to a decided conversion. He is doing a good work, and we all like him.

“I am more than ever convinced of the immense practical usefulness of the colportage work, and if I could advise any one looking out for some branch of work for the Lord which he would aid, I would unhesitatingly say: ‘Choose a district as yet unoccupied, and send your subscription to the association, so that a colporteur might be sent to work there.’ Mr. Bellamy, the colporteur, visits seven or eight hundred families every month, and takes two or three cottage services every week, and while I am writing he has gone in his donkey cart about seven miles to take a service this evening; he will hardly get back till ten or eleven o’clock. Hoping this year may prove, by God’s blessing, a very encouraging one to all your men.”

J. S. Hanson writes: “I hope the association is going on prosperously; if all were as satisfied about the usefulness of the work as we are, they would soon find the means to increase the number, till the land was filled with colporteurs.”

A colporteur writes: “In the chapel the Word preached was much blessed. The first summer I was here, the place was crowded; soon, however, the screw was put on, and the second summer the attendance fell off wonderfully. This past summer there was a fair attendance, and lately it has been better, the

average being twenty-four or twenty-six, sometimes over thirty adults in the evening, but the afternoon service is poorly attended. The seals to my ministry are some who have been born again, some quickened in the divine life, and others awakened to a sense of their need of a Saviour. And now for those upon whom the screw was put: these I visit in their own homes in my rounds; here is where the work of a colporteur lies, according to my idea, for with my pack on my back, or in my hand, I have an excuse (if one is needed in the nineteenth century) to call at all the houses in the villages; and here, I may say, eternity alone can reveal the good done by the tract given, read, and blessed! God only knows of the Scriptures read to the sick, of prayers offered at the bedside of the afflicted and those appointed to death, of the Word spoken to the relations or attendants, of words of cheer and comfort spoken to the brethren and sisters in Christ who are cast down, phases of whose life none but the colporteur can see! If you ask me, Have you been blessed in this work? Have the results justified the outlay? I say Yes, yes, yes! But there is what is called the untabulated results, opposite which we will put the Well done, good and faithful servant, and the heavenly reward."

Another testimony: "Sunday newspapers have been given up in some cases, and publications such as 'Sunday at Home,' 'Weekly Welcome,' and the 'Boys' Own Paper' purchased instead. With respect to the sale of Bibles, it may be mentioned as an interesting fact that since his residence in this district the colporteur has supplied one hundred and fifty volumes of 'Cassell's Family Bible.' He has conducted 139 services on the Lord's day, and he himself says that he has never seen so much good resulting from his work as he has seen this year; it has been the year of his greatest encouragement."

Another colporteur says: "My sales in Bibles and Testaments for the last quarter exceed the sales at the two depots of the Bible Society here for the whole of the last year. I think this comparison shows conclusively that the right way to sell the books is to take them to the homes of the people.

"During the past twelve months I have sold 239 Bibles and

1,229 Testaments. Thank God for past success, but I shall not be satisfied until I can see a portion of the Word of God in every house in my district.

"I have found out three houses entirely without the Word of God, but I did not let them remain so. One of the women said she could not afford the money for a Testament; but after I talked to her the little daughter said: 'Mother, I shall open my little bank and pay for it,' so she took it when the little child paid for it. She had been married seven years, and never had God's Word in her possession all that time."

Prevalence of Evil Literature and its Cure.— "Was told of a young female (a governess) who sat in bed reading by candle-light some of the most filthy, low, vulgar, pernicious papers, so bad, indeed, that the woman was ashamed to tell me what they were; succeeded in supplying her with a good magazine.

"My work is still progressing favorably. Several boys at a boarding-school, who used to read bad papers, now take 'Young England' and 'Excelsior' from me. The teacher told me that she was very glad these papers had come out, as her boys used to be so fond of bad ones before.

"In one village which I visit there are several infidel books, and several persons have turned infidels through reading them. One is a very intelligent, quiet young man, and two were Methodist local preachers. Packets of infidel tracts are being sent into the villages; this makes me feel more than ever the pressing need of colportage to counteract this evil work.

"I am glad to report that through a customer I have succeeded in getting a young woman to take the 'Girl's Own Paper,' instead of a trashy paper. She was so delighted with it that she lent it to another young woman, and I expect more orders."

Conversions through Books.— The number of conversions reported by the colporteurs through the books sold is too large to print the cases in detail; the following, however, are a fair sample of others:—

"Saving Faith." — "Two persons have been led to the Saviour through reading this book, — a mother and daughter. I sold the book to a Christian woman, she read it, and lent it to one

of her neighbors who was ill. Through reading it she was led to trust in Jesus as her Saviour, as was her daughter, who had left service to nurse her mother. The book was then sent on to another daughter, hoping that by its perusal she may share the same blessing. The same colporteur speaks of a third case of conversion from reading the same book."

"The Home Beyond." — "A farmer to whom I had previously sold 'The Home Beyond,' when I called again, said: 'What a beautiful book that "Home Beyond" is! I read it, and sent it to a relation of mine, who was very ill, fast wasting away in consumption, and without having a hope in Christ. She read the book I had sent, and it was the means of leading her to the Saviour of the lost, and by being able to die a peaceful and happy death she testified that she had truly embraced the Saviour.'"

Gratuitous Tract Distribution and its Results. — Many thousands of evangelical tracts are given away by the association, and most of the colporteurs report that people receive them readily, and that numerous cases of conversion have resulted from their distribution. Two cases are appended: —

"I was showing my books to a gentleman one day; he had a little tract in his hand entitled 'Taken by Surprise.' I offered this to a lady who was passing by, and she accepted it. Bless the Lord! it was the means of awakening her to a sense of danger, insomuch that she could not find rest until she found it in Jesus. She is now believing and rejoicing in His great salvation."

The Pipe Light. — "Some time ago I held an open-air meeting at one of our villages during the dinner hour of the workmen, as I was not permitted to enter the mill. After speaking some time, I sold several small books, and gave away about two hundred tracts. One of the men screwed the tract up and threw it away, but picked it up again and put it into his pocket, thinking it might come in to light his pipe. At tea-time, however, having nothing else to read, he resorted to the despised tract. It was headed, 'Stop the Clock.' Before he had finished reading it, he trembled from head to foot, and pleaded with God for the forgiveness of his sins; from that moment, he tells me, he has felt a changed man."

Mr. Spurgeon's Sermons.—As usual, many of the colporteurs have met with instances of the great usefulness of these sermons, both in the comfort and instruction of believers and in the salvation of sinners. A few reports are given:—

“About twelve months ago a friend of mine leaving for America took a good supply of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons. I also kept up correspondence, sending other sermons. Having now returned, he speaks of the blessings the sermons were to him and others while there, where the preaching is quite perfection in the flesh. One of these sermons sent was the means of the conversion of one woman, and of stirring up others to find perfection only in Christ Jesus.”

“In soliciting orders, one woman asked me if I carried any of Mr. Spurgeon's works, and when told that I did, seemed pleased, bought several of his writings, telling me that although she had been a member of a Christian church for years, she never saw the gospel in its true light until she read one of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons. It was not until then that she saw Jesus to be her only Saviour, and could rejoice in Him as such.”

Speaking of a young woman who had been in much darkness and perplexity about spiritual things, and seemed to despair of mercy, a colporteur writes: “But when I was there in January I sold her Mr. Spurgeon's ‘Loving Advice for Anxious Seekers’; when I called next month I could see by her countenance that there was a change for the better. She then told me that God in His mercy had blessed that sermon to her; that it seemed as though Mr. Spurgeon must have known of one exactly like her, for every word suited her case.”

Prayer under the Hedge.—“The old man was standing in the sunny side of the hedge on the roadside. I went to him; and on offering a tract he said: ‘I cannot read;’ I then spoke to him of sin and death, of salvation and the Lord Jesus. I appealed to him as to a dying man, beseeching him to prepare to meet the good God whom he had been living without these upwards of eighty years; he trembled as one shivering on the brink of eternity and fearing to launch away, which, according to the nature of things, I assured him he must soon expect to do. Down aside

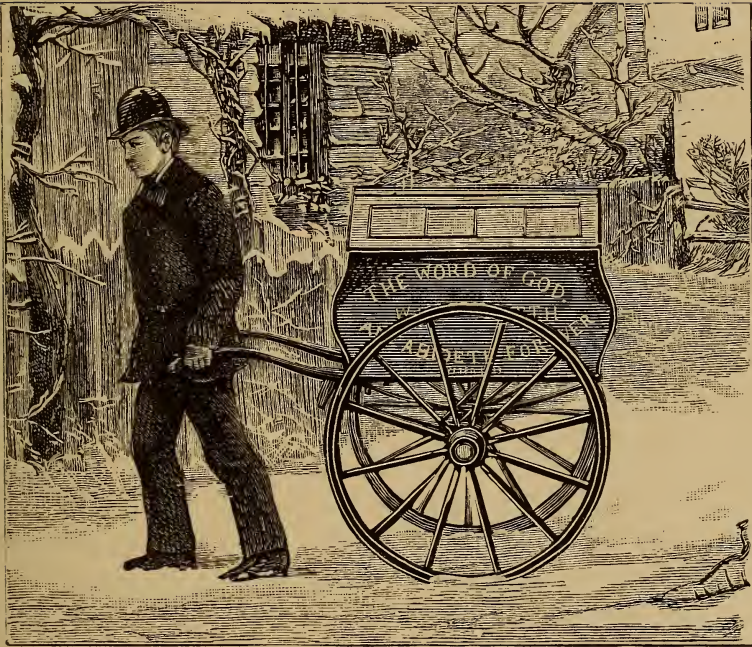
the hedge we both got on our knees, and with liberty of soul earnestly besought that the converting grace and power of the Holy Ghost may be poured upon him that he may be enlightened and saved. Knowing now where he lives, I shall hope, if God spares him and me, ere long to see him again and to see him saved of the Lord."

Preaching the Gospel from House to House. — "I have much encouragement in the Colportage work. I find some of the people very willing to hear the Word of God. Some days I have had what I should term a cottage meeting. Where I have found four and five people in one house I have read, prayed, and sung for about a half-hour. Passing on to another house, where I have found another group, I spent another half-hour. I have had five, some days six, little meetings with the people; at such times the Master has been with us, and much good has been done."

Addressing the Colliers, October 2d. — "Gave a short address to a company of colliers; was received with welcome and delight. Spoke to them about the leper going to Jesus. Told them that we had hearts diseased by sin and wicked works, and they needed cleansing. That we could not do anything to merit our salvation, but we could plead the merits of Jesus Christ; and that He was as willing to cleanse them as when He cleansed the leper, if they opened their hearts to receive Him. They expressed gratitude for speaking to them, and thanked me very much; said I had done them good. Since then two of them have joined the Salvation Army. I believe I have been instrumental in God's hands of their salvation; they thanked me for going."

The Colporteur's Sabbath. — "Visited about fifty homes with tracts, and spoke a few words where I could. Sunday-school, 2.30; gave an address to teachers and scholars. Preached at a lodging house at 5.30, and at Gospel Hall 6.30, and again in the Market at 8.35; then visited some sick people.

"On Sundays I always endeavor to get among the groups of men at the corners, and wait on them at closing time, coming out of the public-houses, to present them with a tract, and persuade them to observe the Sabbath; not only have I been successful with individuals, but in two cases of which I have heard whole



COLPORTEUR AND BIBLE CARRIAGE.

families have been induced to attend regularly the means of grace on the Sabbath day. To God be the glory."

Preaching Services by the Colporteurs. — According to their ability and opportunity many of the colporteurs are regularly engaged preaching the gospel both in the open air and as "supplies" for various denominations. Much blessing rests upon this, which may be called the extra work of a colporteur. A few reports are given of this department of service: —

Conversion Work. — "The preaching of the Word has been much blessed this last few months. One poor woman told me in a meeting that the Lord had made her so unhappy about her soul that she could not work. She then went down on her knees and prayed as best she could, and the Lord had showed her the difference between believing about Christ and believing in Christ, which I had been talking about the last Sunday. She said: 'I have been trying to get Christ and heaven by doings, but now I see it is a done work, and I can say I am in Christ and Christ in me.' Two others have just been brought to know the Lord, and several drunkards have become sober men, who a little time ago would curse the name of such a man as myself.

"There are many things to encourage me. My speaking at the chapel and Sunday-school, and other places, is very acceptable. The congregations have increased, and a greater earnestness is manifested by those who love the Lord, and it has been our joy to hear the cry of the penitent sinner for mercy. One man, in good circumstances, came to me at the close of a Sabbath evening service and asked to be remembered in prayer. I visited him the next day and talked and prayed with him, and I believe he is now a saved man. He is very regular at the week-night service, and it is good to hear him pray. We have three stand proposed for membership, and another was crying for mercy last Thursday night in the meeting, and I believe the Spirit of God is working upon the hearts of several others."

The Colporteur and Temperance. — "I am pleased to inform you that the book 'John Ploughman's Pictures' has been the means of leading one man to give up the drink, and since that has joined the Congregationalists, and he wishes me to tell Mr. Spur-

geon that he owes his conversion to God through reading that book.

“On entering a public-house I found several men drinking. I began to talk to them of the necessity of being decided for Christ. The landlady came and sat down with the men; I then tried to show them what the Saviour had done for them and how He loved them. The landlady wept like a child. It seems as if they can stand as many oaths and curses as can be put upon them, but, thank God! they cannot stand to be told of the love of Jesus without feeling uncomfortable, especially the baser sort of people. I find that the name of Jesus has a power when everything else has failed: angels and men before Him fall, and devils fear and fly.

“Another very interesting case was one day in going to a village. Just as I got to the village there came a dreadful storm of thunder and lightning and rain, and the first house I came to was a public-house. I ran into this house for shelter, and found it full of men drinking and gambling, with much swearing. I had not been in many minutes before one asked me what I had to sell; I at once put my pack on the table and showed what I had. They soon gave over swearing, and I spoke to them and tried to sell them a book each. I sold one ‘John Ploughman’s Talk,’ and another at a shilling, and a few little books, and a number left the house before I did, and went home in the rain; when the rain gave over a bit I started for home without calling at any more houses. I came home with a light heart, though wet through with water.”

During the year 1880 there were seventy-nine colporteurs in the field. They sold 105,114 books and 272,698 magazines, besides distributing gratuitously 794,044 tracts, and making 630,993 visits. Who can tell with what results? Surely here is work enough for one man to superintend, yet it is only a branch of the great tree which Pastor Spurgeon has planted.

XXI.

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL.

IT was an old Pythagorean maxim, "Sepiam ne edito," *Never eat the cuttle-fish*. The cuttle-fish has the power, of emitting a black liquid which dyes the water and enables it to conceal itself. Have nothing to do with those who darken all around them, that they themselves may be unseen; honest men love light, and only the evil find darkness to be congenial. *When an author is too obscure to be understood, leave him till he knows how to write*; when a preacher is mystical, high-flown, sophistical, shun him, for it is most likely he labors to conceal some latent heresy; when a man's policy is deep and artful, flee from him, for he means no good. No deceiver or double-tongued man must be admitted within the circle of your confidence. Remember the advice, *Never eat a cuttle-fish*. — C. H. SPURGEON.

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL.

THIS Record of "Combat with Sin and Labor for the Lord" has closed its seventeenth volume. Eighteen years ago Mr. Spurgeon felt the necessity of having a channel of communication between himself and his many correspondents and the numerous friends who became interested in his work. But the magazine is more than a record of work done; it is an earnest advocate of every legitimate endeavor to win men to the Saviour, and in addition furnishes able expositions of Scripture. Mr. Spurgeon in a very remarkable manner combines the Word and the Work: the Work with him must be the outcome of the Word. We meet in this monthly magazine with stirring articles of great merit, with brief sermons deeply spiritual, with helpful lectures and suggestions to Christian workers, with notes on men and events worthy of study. Unique in itself, this magazine is entirely free from sensational productions and sentimental reading. It is not an advocate of sect or party, and certainly not a cudgel for the Editor with which to beat out the brains of opponents. Its pages are laden with choice fruits; it is spiritual, solid, emotional, pathetic, and humorous. But the vein of humor carries in it the real and substantial, as the rough ore holds the precious metal. Interesting, instructive, profitable, we never meet with an empty paragraph or a wasted word in this journal. The ordinary reader is not puzzled by scholastic expressions unnecessarily introduced, nor diverted from facts by a bombastic style, which, like a wordy address before a jury, may lead twelve men in their befogged condition to hang an innocent man. But the scholar will also find food for thought and solid instruction within its pages. The readers of

"The Sword and the Trowel" are found among the ministers and members of all denominations at home and in foreign lands.

The first number of the Eighteenth Volume lies upon our table. Its cover is familiar to our eyes, having scanned its pages for many years. The first article of this number, by the Editor himself, we commend to the timid and hopeless. Its title, "Unto the End," suggests one secret of Mr. Spurgeon's success. He encourages perseverance in every good and laudable work, and shows that many projects perish in their infancy through lack of this grace. "Perseverance in itself is admirable, but," writes the Editor, "carried on to the last hour, it will be glorious. Happy and honored will he be who endures to the end."

The second article, by Mr. Charlesworth, the head master of the Stockwell Orphanage, is a touching story of a mother seeking a lost daughter, and, thinking she had found her standing beneath a railway arch, touched her on the shoulder. A strange young woman faced the anxious mother, who exclaimed by way of apology, "Oh, I thought it was my daughter!" The words reached the tender spot in this poor crushed girl, who quickly responded, "I wish I had a mother to come after me!" The motherly instinct was called into play when thus accosted, and the grieved parent took this poor stranger child to her own home.

The third article, "Religion in the Eighteenth Century," is based on Dr. John Stoughton's book, and is worthy of perusal.

"Launching Out," by Thomas Spurgeon, is a very enjoyable exposition of the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The following paragraph indicates the drift of the article: "He who learns to swim may keep one foot upon the bottom of the bath; but the precaution which insures his safety in the shallows, means destruction in the deep waters. He who wants to keep one foot on the bottom in mid ocean had better make up his mind to keep both there. In the matter of salvation it is either sink or swim. Have a single self-confidence and we sink; the waters are too deep for us to touch the bottom; trust in Jesus only, and we swim, upheld by His strong arm and loving hand." In illustrating the gospel, Thomas Spurgeon has shown himself a worthy son of a worthy sire.

Next we have two hymns, one for the New Year, and one "All Glory." Then follows an article on the Jesuits. This class of ferrets with all their brood, who are always nosing around after game, are never spared by the sturdy London preacher; the shavelings of Rome are his abomination. He abhors the thought of a sinning human being standing as mediator between the sinner and his God; and those who arrogate to themselves the office of interceding priests are roughly handled by Mr. Spurgeon.

A few pages of the magazine are devoted to a very touching story entitled, "Jock and his Mither." We were not satisfied to dip into it here and there, but read it through even in the midst of pressing engagements. We regretted not having a second handkerchief at hand, for every line touched our emotions and made the tears to flow. We only wish that in our preaching we could relate this story with all the pathos and Scotch accent with which "Jock" told about his "mither."

As we turn over a few pages more we light upon "Journal Jottings and the Hop-picker's Mission," by John Burnham, the Tabernacle evangelist. The hop-pickers are a depraved class, widely neglected except when such men as Mr. Spurgeon's evangelist go forth to tell them of Jesus and His love. And these beloved missionaries are always rewarded in having conversions among this debased class, whose subsequent chaste and temperate lives prove the reality of their conversion.

Next come ten pages of book-notices, followed by "Personal Notes" of the College, the colporteurs' work, and the Orphanage; of Mr. Spurgeon's movements from month to month, and interesting anecdotes of the results of his sermons coming from various parts of the wide world. Each number of the magazine devotes a few pages to the acknowledgment of money and goods sent by subscribers and friends for the various branches of work carried on.

We here append Mr. Spurgeon's preface to the seventeenth volume, which summarizes the work accomplished and indicates the usefulness of the magazine, besides his unwearied and conscientious labors as editor, with a few of those pungent, crisp articles, showing that consummate wit for which the writer has become a universal favorite.

KIND READERS,—Throughout another year you have sustained the magazine; and as very many of you have expressed your satisfaction, and few, if any, have favored me with a complaint, I feel encouraged to believe that you have been pleased with my monthly issues. It was once observed in my hearing by a friend who wished to account for my fulfilment of numerous duties, that as for the magazine, it was a merely nominal thing to be the editor, for few editors ever saw their magazines till they were in print. However this may be as a rule, it does not contain a spark of truth in my case, for I have personally superintended every page, and I do not think a single line of the magazine has passed through the press without having been read by me. Whether I succeed or not, I certainly do not delegate my task to others. If I had more leisure I am sure I could do better, and it is with unfeigned satisfaction that I find my subscribers contented with what I can procure for them.

“The Sword and Trowel” has been the happy means of uniting in gracious service a band of gracious givers and workers, who now for these seventeen years have joined to aid the institutions which, though they locally surround the Tabernacle, are really the offspring of a congregation which is found scattered throughout all lands. By means of this warm-hearted brotherhood the Pastors’ College has been sustained from year to year, until some six hundred ministers have been educated in it, the most of whom are still faithfully preaching the old-fashioned gospel in which they have been trained. In connection with this enterprise three brethren have been supported as evangelists, and their itinerant labors have been signally successful. Testimonies that churches have been aroused and sinners converted by their means, have been plentifully sent in, and these pages have been increased in interest thereby. Hundreds of thousands have heard the gospel through this instrumentality.

The Stockwell Orphanage originated through an article in this magazine, and from time to time its support has been mainly supplied by its readers. During the past year the houses for the girls’ side have been completed and partly furnished; and at the present time the first detachment of little ones has entered into

occupation. More remains to be done by way of furniture for other houses, and the further contracts for the infirmary, baths, and outbuildings have to be met; but it is a great comfort to have seen the project so far in progress, and to feel assured that all that is yet required will be forthcoming in its season. The bazaar which is so soon to be held will, we hope, secure the amount needed to bring the enterprize up to the next stage, and then we may lay our plan for the final outlay on the chapel of the Orphanage, and a few other necessaries. All that has been done has been accomplished without personal solicitation, or the allotment of votes, or the dissemination of heart-rending appeals: it has sufficed to lay the case before the Lord in prayer, and then to mention it to His people in plain and earnest terms, and the funds have come in with marvellous regularity, the larger amounts having been timed to meet the hour of need as exactly as if the whole went by clock-work. The hand of the Lord is in this thing, and to Him be glory. That this institution has brought honor to God is plain enough, for many a time those who would have abused our ministry have admitted that a good work has been wrought, and have had no heart to revile. There is a something about orphan work which wins the sympathy of the most careless, and none can tell till the last great day how many have been by this means led to think well of the gospel, and next to hear it and experience its power.

The Colportage Association has held on its most useful course. It has been sustained with difficulty, for somehow it does not chime in with the tastes and views of large donors, but its influence for good is second to no existing agency. Where there are not enough dissenters to support a minister, or where ministers are unable to cover large and scattered districts, the colporteur makes his way with his pack, and speaks a word for Jesus at every door, either by personal conversation or by leaving a tract. Besides this, he preaches by the roadside or in village chapels, gets up temperance meetings, visits the sick, and above all sells good books. This society, and several other useful works, report themselves in these pages, and enlist good friends thereby.

Mrs. Spurgeon's Book Fund quietly pursues its beneficent course. It is putting sound theology just now upon the shelves of many

a poor curate and ill-paid minister, and this it does so largely that it would be a miracle of a strange sort if it did not greatly affect the ministry of the day. That the sermons distributed and the "Treasury of David" furnish material for preachers is saying very little: that they have evangelized the tone of many has been confessed in numerous instances, and is true of far more.

Brethren and sisters, you have aided me so far in a benevolent enterprise of no small dimensions, and I hope I have in no degree lost your loving confidence. Continue, then, to bear me up in your prayers, and to sustain me by your contributions. More can be done, and more should be done. Every living work is capable of growth; every work which has God's blessing upon it is under necessity to advance. Our watchword still is *forward*. Possibly we cry forward more often than pleases those who lag behind. Some time ago I asked for men and means to send evangelists to India; one man only offered, and that one man was sent. Up till now I have had sufficient money, and I believe that when more men offer I shall have larger funds; but here is room for prayerful uplooking to the Lord. Brethren, pray for us. I would fain live to the utmost of my own life, and I would draw out from all my brethren more and more for God's glory by the propagation of the gospel, the alleviation of suffering, and the arousing of the Church. Thanks to all helpers, and a thousand blessings.

WE notice in an American newspaper a letter signed "The Hornless Deacon." There is no accounting for our Transatlantic cousins, but what can the good man mean by such a title? A hornless buffalo or a hornless cow we could understand, but what is the reason for applying that adjective to a deacon? We have been lying back in our most serious armchair, and have been revolving in our meditative soul the various senses which can be drawn out of this expression, or imputed to it; but we cannot make head or tail of it, and without a head there may well be no horns. The owner of the signature is evidently a deacon, and therefore he must be fully aware that deacons do not possess horns and hoofs. Some pastors, when hardly driven, have thought

they did, but this was a clerical error. We believe that all evil reports about deacons arise from nightmare, and are slanderous and absurd; but still they do arise, and therefore this good deacon may have felt it necessary in his own case to assert that he had no horns, and was not related to any individual whose head is thus adorned. Had not deacons been a much-abused order of men the foul insinuation as to horns would never have cropped up, and none of the race would have found it needful to claim to be hornless. Our own opinion is that when deacons have horns it will generally be found that the minister has a tail. There is six of one and half-a-dozen of the other in most cases of disagreement between the two classes of church-officers.

We would earnestly hope, however, that our friend "The Hornless Deacon" had no thought of the Evil One, but simply meant to say that he was not a fighting man, but was of necessity peaceful because he had no provision in his nature for making an attack.

A horn is an offensive weapon, and a hornless deacon is one who cannot give offence, resent an injury, or inflict a wound. What a splendid acquisition to a quarrelsome church! He would be sure to rule well, and reduce chaos to order by the mere force of Christian patience. Few men believe in the power of non-resistance, but our faith in it is unbounded: he who can yield will conquer, and he who will suffer most for the sake of love will wield the greatest power if he will but bide his time. The longest horns that were ever borne aloft will yet be broken by the submission of "the hornless." To be utterly unable to give offence to anybody would be a sublime incapacity, most useful in these ticklish days, when nine people out of ten are ready to take offence where none is intended. We hope "The Hornless Deacon" is not such a gentle, inoffensive body that he would let people forget quarter-day and their subscriptions, or would allow the minister to draw twice the amount of his salary. This would be carrying a virtue to an extreme, and would be a grave fault, especially in the latter case. We are bound to add that we have never met with such a want of principle as would be implied in this instance: the former error is far more common. The kind, gentle, but

earnest deacon is invaluable. He is as an angel in the church, and does more than angel's service. Excellent man! We cannot say, "May his horn be exalted!" for he has none; but we trust that the place where it ought to be will never ache through the ingratitude of those whom he serves.

Feeling that we had not translated this signature satisfactorily, and not liking to give it up, we consulted a learned friend, who gave us the following elucidation of the mysterious title of "The Hornless Deacon." We are not quite sure that we believe in it. He says that it is the minister's place to carry the horn and blow it, and that "The Hornless Deacon" was evidently a non-preacher, one who minded his own business, and left his minister to blow the ram's horn. We do not think any the better of him for this, for we like a man all the more if, like Stephen, he can both care for the widows and preach the gospel. It would be well for our country churches if more of the deacons would exercise their gifts, and keep the village stations supplied with sound doctrine. Our learned friend suggests that there may be in the term "hornless deacon" a covert allusion to the modesty of the individual who never blew his own trumpet, who in fact had not so much as a horn of his own to blow. This may be, and it may not be. We had excogitated that idea before, and did not feel very proud of it, but there may be something in it. Certainly we know of deacons who from year to year plod away at the pastor's side, glad to perform services of any kind so long as God is glorified and the Church is prospered. Seldom are their names mentioned in public, and yet they are the mainstay of the Church, the regulators of her order, and the guardians of her interests. Some of them have held the fort in troublous times: they have seen a dozen pastors come and go, but they abide at their posts, faithful under discouragement, hopeful under difficulty. They deserve great praise, and as they are "hornless" we would for once sound the horn for them.

This guess hardly satisfied us, and so our friend gave us another. We sometimes drink out of a horn; and a deacon, according to the apostle, is not to be "given to much wine." Is it, therefore, claimed by our friend that if he erred at all he erred on the right

side, for he had no horn at all, and was a pledged teetotaler? Very good, Mr. Deacon! The more of your brethren who will copy you in this the better, so long as they do not make the water-jug the symbol of their lives, and pour cold water over everything and everybody, in season and out of season.

This interpretation we feel also to be a failure, and therefore we will try once more on our own account. Can it mean that the good deacon did not sound a trumpet before him, as the hypocrites do, when he was distributing his alms? Was he so quiet in his generosity that not even a penny whistle or child's horn proclaimed his deed of liberality? Let him be blessed in secret if this was his true character; but surely the very taking of the name of "hornless" is a little like blowing a horn. He who denies a fault claims a virtue; did you forget this, my unhorned friend?

The above expository observations, so far as they come from our learned friend, are exceedingly clever, tolerably far-fetched, and in all respects worthy of his breadth of forehead; but they do not quite enable us to see through the expression, and we abandon it for the present with the consoling reflection that our Yankee brethren have a vivacious style of speech which needs one of themselves to interpret it.

THE Berkshire proverb says, "There be more ways of killing a cat than by choking of him with cream," and surely some preachers appear to know that there are more ways of wearying a hearer than by surfeiting him with good, sound, creamy doctrine. Oh, for a sermon with something in it! Never mind the finicking with the cooking and the carving; do give us a cut of gospel truth! Alas! we too often get "Grantham gruel, — nine grits and a gallon of water," and we are expected to praise the stuff because the basin is of rare china. There is not enough in it to make soup for a grasshopper, and yet we are called upon to go into raptures because what there is of it is soundly evangelical.

At other times the teaching is rather queer and very muddy, and then they tell us that the parson gives us little doctrine

because he is thinking it out and has not yet made up his mind. Verily, "while the grass grows the steed starves," and we should be far better off if the Lord would send us some of the old sort of experienced men of God, who knew what they did know, and fed our fathers with knowledge and understanding. Our modern collegians boast of being independent thinkers, and if that means that they are not to be depended on they are pretty near the mark. They pare down the gospel till, as the Yankees say, "it is shaved off finer than the small end of nothing." It is time this nonsense was exploded. Lord Byron said, "A book's a book, although there's nothing in't!" but country people do not say so of a sermon, and if they did, we are not all bumpkins, and cannot be quite so easily satisfied.

NOW is the season for paragraphs in the newspapers concerning gooseberries which are twice as large as possible. The wonderful information fills up a corner and gratifies the lovers of the marvellous, besides illustrating a style of writing which is by no means rare even among religious people.

We have been surprised to hear of "a great work" in a place where many intelligent residents never heard of any "work" whatever. Accompanied by a plea for funds, we have seen narratives which have been written by excellent persons, in which the descriptive adjectives may have been accurate if judged by the standard of their writers, but were certainly inapplicable to the matter in hand from any ordinary person's standpoint. We thought when we read the article that a whole neighborhood had been convulsed if not converted; but on inquiry of city missionaries and Bible-women we found that nothing particular had happened,—at least, nothing so special as to cause excessive transports to the most hopeful.

We wish certain brethren could be taught to speak within bounds. The common slang of the day talks of things as "awful," "magnificent," "splendid," &c., and this seems to have been imported into religious reporting. It is mischievous, however, and tends to damage the best of causes. When Christian

people find things overstated they lose confidence, and in the case of men of the world it is worse, for they use the exaggeration as material for jests. It is always better to be under the mark than over it when we are describing good works in which we have had a hand. We must not put into print those sanguine ideas of things which our hopeful minds create in our excited brains. The cause of truth can never be aided by a deviation from truth. We may win applause at a public meeting or excite admiration in individuals by highly colored descriptions; but the time comes for investigation, and when the coloring vanishes we are sure to be held in disrepute by those whom we deceived. The whole business of exaggeration is wrong, and must never be tolerated in ourselves or encouraged in others; even the suppression of discouraging facts is a doubtful piece of policy, and policy is always impolitic in Christian work.

Brethren who are rather apt to puff, let us whisper in your ears, leave the monstrous gooseberries to the newspapers, and speak every man truth with his neighbor.

ONE would hardly have thought it worth an author's while to compose a treatise upon "The Art of Tormenting"; yet such a book exists, and contains many ingenious instructions by which masters, husbands, wives, and friends may torture their servants, relatives, and acquaintances to an intolerable degree. To quote any of the writer's suggestions in these pages would be useless, since none of our readers wish to learn the science of plaguing others. The ingenious writer, a lady, by the way, does not recommend the clumsy methods of Roman emperors and Popish inquisitors, by which it is possible to torment the bodies of men and allow the mind and spirit to remain at peace; but she deals with subtler arts, by which the mind can be lacerated beyond all cure while yet no wound is seen. To torture the heart and spirit of a man is far more cruel than to tear his flesh or break his bones. One sentiment in this amusing treatise struck us as singularly instructive to those who are the victims of malicious criticism; the author says: "Be very careful daily to observe whether

your patient continues in good health, and is fat and well-liked; for if so, you may be almost certain that your whole labor is thrown away. As soon, therefore, as you perceive this to be the case, you must (to speak in the phrase of surgeons when they hack and hew a human body) immediately choose another subject. All the pleasure of tormenting is lost as soon as your subject becomes insensible to your strokes." We are almost reconciled to being corpulent as we read these lines. Herein is wisdom. Patience baffles malice: the malicious themselves confess their defeat; what can we do better than to offer the passive resistance which is seen to be so effective? Let us no longer gratify our enemies by taking notice of their cruel observations and venomous insinuations. If we are callous we at once defeat them: there can be no virtue in cultivating a sensitiveness which makes us vulnerable. The more we smart, the more they will scourge; but a back of leather laughs at the cat-o'-nine-tails. By doing our best at all times we shall be able to defy all the criticisms of on-lookers, who, doing nothing themselves, have all the more leisure to find fault with our honest endeavors. In all probability we shall never succeed in any one instance in pleasing all who call themselves our friends; and as to our enemies, they will never be gratified unless they see us guilty of gross folly; therefore our wisest course is to make sure of being right in the sight of God, and then to proceed in a straight line with firm tread, whether we offend or please. The desire to inflict pain is ingrained in some natures, and against these there is no defence except a manly insensibility. As chemists plunge a fabric in a solution of alum and thus enable it to defy the flames, so should we immerse ourselves into the consciousness of desiring to do right before God, and we shall be superior to the fires of slander. We are not able to abate the fury of Nebuchadnezzar's furnace; but if we can walk in the midst of it unharmed, the result will be equally harmless and far more sublime.

Over against the art of tormenting let us set the philosophy of enduring; our bane and antidote are both before us.

XXII.

EDITORIALS.

No man is likely to accomplish much who moodily indulges a desponding view of his own capacities. By God's help the weakest of us may be strong, and it is the way to become so, to resolve never to give up a good work till we have tried our best to achieve it. To think nothing impossible is the privilege of faith. We deprecate the indolent cowardice of the man who always felt assured that every new enterprise would be too much for him, and therefore declined it; but we admire the pluck of the ploughman who was asked on his cross-examination if he could read Greek, and replied he did not know, because he had never tried. Those Suffolk horses which will pull at a post till they drop are worth a thousand times as much as jibbing animals that run back as soon as ever the collar begins to press them. — C. H. SPURGEON.

EDITORIALS.

OUR FIRST SERMON.

WE remember well the first place in which we addressed a congregation of adults, and the wood-block which illustrates this number of the magazine sets it clearly before our mind's eye. It was not our first public address by a great many, for both at Newmarket, and Cambridge, and elsewhere, the Sabbath-school had afforded us ample scope for speaking the gospel. At Newmarket especially we had a considerable admixture of grown-up folks in the audience, for many came to hear "the boy" give addresses to the school. But no regular set discourse to a congregation met for regular worship had we delivered till one eventful Sabbath evening, which found us in a cottage at Teversham, holding forth before a little assembly of humble villagers.

The tale is not a new one, but as the engraving has not before been seen by the public eye we must shed a little light upon it. There is a Preachers' Association in Cambridge connected with St. Andrew's-street Chapel, once the scene of the ministry of Robert Robinson and Robert Hall, and now of our beloved friend Mr. Tarn. A number of worthy brethren preach the gospel in the various villages surrounding Cambridge, taking each one his turn according to plan. In our day the presiding genius was the venerable Mr. James Vinter, whom we were wont to address as Bishop Vinter. His genial soul, warm heart, and kindly manner were enough to keep a whole fraternity stocked with love, and accordingly a goodly company of true workers belonged to the

association, and labored as true yoke-fellows. Our suspicion is that he not only preached himself and helped his brethren, but that he was a sort of recruiting sergeant, and drew in young men to keep up the number of the host; at least, we speak from personal experience as to one case.

We had one Saturday finished morning school, and the boys were all going home for the half-holiday, when in came the afore-said "bishop" to ask us to go over to Teversham next Sunday evening, for a young man was to preach there who was not much used to services, and very likely would be glad of company. That was a cunningly devised sentence, if we remember it rightly, and we think we do; for at the time, in the light of that Sunday evening's revelation, we turned it over and vastly admired its ingenuity. A request to go and preach would have met with a decided negative; but merely to act as company to a good brother who did not like to be lonely, and perhaps might ask us to give out a hymn or to pray, was not at all a difficult matter, and the request, understood in that fashion, was cheerfully complied with. Little did the lad know what Jonathan and David were doing when he was made to run for the arrow, and as little knew we when we were cajoled into accompanying a young man to Teversham.

Our Sunday-school work was over, and tea had been taken, and we set off through Barnwell, and away along the Newmarket Road, with a gentleman some few years our senior. We talked of good things, and at last we expressed our hope that he would feel the presence of God while preaching. He seemed to start, and assured us that he had never preached in his life, and could not attempt such a thing; he was looking to his young friend, Mr. Spurgeon, for that. This was a new view of the situation, and I could only reply that I was no minister, and that even if I had been I was quite unprepared. My companion only repeated that *he*, even in a more emphatic sense, was not a preacher, that he would help *me* in any other part of the service, but that there would be no sermon unless I gave them one. He told me that if I repeated one of my Sunday-school addresses it would just suit the poor people, and would probably give them more satis-



THE COTTAGE IN WHICH MR. SPURGEON PREACHED HIS FIRST SERMON.

faction than the studied sermon of a learned divine. I felt that I was fairly committed to do my best. I walked along quietly, lifting up my soul to God, and it seemed to me that I could surely tell a few poor cottagers of the sweetness and love of Jesus, for I felt them in my own soul. Praying for divine help, I resolved to make an attempt. My text should be, "Unto you therefore which believe He is precious," and I would trust the Lord to open my mouth in honor of His dear Son. It seemed a great risk and a serious trial; but, depending upon the power of the Holy Ghost, I would at least tell out the story of the cross, and not allow the people to go home without a word. We entered the low-pitched room of the thatched cottage, where a few simple-minded farm-laborers and their wives were gathered together; we sang and prayed and read the Scriptures, and then came our first sermon. How long or how short it was we cannot now remember. It was not half such a task as we had feared it would be, but we were glad to see our way to a fair conclusion, and to the giving out of the last hymn. To our own delight we had not broken down, nor stopped short in the middle, nor been destitute of ideas, and the desired haven was in view. We made a finish, and took up the book, but to our astonishment an aged voice cried out, "Bless your dear heart, how old are you?" Our very solemn reply was, "You must wait till the service is over before making any such inquiries. Let us now sing." We did sing, and the young preacher pronounced the benediction, and then began a dialogue which enlarged into a warm, friendly talk, in which everybody appeared to take part. "How old are you?" was the leading question. "I am under sixty," was the reply. "Yes, and under sixteen," was the old lady's rejoinder. "Never mind my age, think of the Lord Jesus and His preciousness," was all that I could say, after promising to come again if the gentlemen at Cambridge thought me fit to do so. Very great and profound was our awe of those "gentlemen at Cambridge" in those days.

Are there not other young men who might begin to speak for Jesus in some such lowly fashion, — young men who hitherto have been mute as fishes? Our villages and hamlets offer fine opportunities for youthful speakers. Let them not wait till they are

invited to a chapel, or have prepared a fine essay, or have secured an intelligent audience. If they will go and tell out from their hearts what the Lord Jesus has done for them, they will find ready listeners.

Many of our young folks want to do great things, and therefore do nothing at all; let none of our readers become the victims of such an unreasonable ambition. He who is willing to teach infants, or to give away tracts, and so to begin at the beginning, is far more likely to be useful than the youth who is full of affectations and sleeps in a white necktie, who is studying for the ministry, and is touching up certain superior manuscripts which he hopes ere long to read from the pastor's pulpit. He who talks upon plain gospel themes in a farmer's kitchen, and is able to interest the carter's boy and the dairymaid, has more of the minister in him than the prim little man who talks for ever about being cultured, and means by that—being taught to use words which nobody can understand. To make the very poorest listen with pleasure and profit is in itself an achievement, and beyond this it is the best possible promise and preparation for an influential ministry. Let our younger brethren go in for cottage preaching, and plenty of it. If there is no lay preachers' association, let them work by themselves. The expense is not very great for rent, candles, and a few forms; many a young man's own pocket-money would cover it all. No isolated group of houses should be left without its preaching-room, no hamlet without its evening service. This is the lesson of the thatched cottage at Teversham.

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO.

TWENTY-FIVE years ago we walked on a Sabbath morning, according to our wont, from Cambridge to the village of Waterbeach, in order to occupy the pulpit of the little Baptist Chapel. It was a country road, and there were four or five honest miles of it, which we usually measured each Sunday foot by foot, unless we happened to be met by a certain little pony and cart which

came half way, but could not by any possibility venture further because of the enormous expense which would have been incurred by driving through the toll-gate at Milton. That winter's morning we were all aglow with our walk, and ready for our pulpit exercises. Sitting down in the table-pew, a letter was passed to us bearing the postmark of London. It was an unusual missive, and was opened with curiosity. It contained an invitation to preach at New Park-street Chapel, Southwark, the pulpit of which had formerly been occupied by Dr. Rippon, — the very Dr. Rippon whose hymn-book was then before us upon the table, the great Dr. Rippon, out of whose Selection we were about to choose hymns for our worship. The late Dr. Rippon seemed to hover over us as an immeasurably great man, the glory of whose name covered New Park-street Chapel and its pulpit with awe unspeakable. We quietly passed the letter across the table to the deacon who gave out the hymns, observing that there was some mistake, and that the letter must have been intended for a Mr. Spurgeon who preached somewhere down in Norfolk. He shook his head, and observed that he was afraid there was no mistake, as he always knew that his minister would be run away with by some large church or other, but that he was a little surprised that the Londoners should have heard of him quite so soon. "Had it been Cottenham, or St. Ives, or Huntingdon," said he, "I should not have wondered at all; but going to London is rather a great step from this little place." He shook his head very gravely; but the time was come for us to look out the hymns, and therefore the letter was put away, and, as far as we can remember, was for the day quite forgotten, even as a dead man out of mind.

On the following Monday an answer was sent to London, informing the deacon of the church at Park Street that he had fallen into an error in directing his letter to Waterbeach, for the Baptist minister of that village was very little more than nineteen years of age, and quite unqualified to occupy a London pulpit. In due time came another epistle, setting forth that the former letter had been written in perfect knowledge of the young preacher's age, and had been intended for him, and him alone. The request of the former letter was repeated and pressed, a date mentioned for

the journey to London, and the place appointed at which the preacher would find lodging. That invitation was accepted, and as the result thereof the boy preacher of the Fens took his post in London.

Twenty-five years ago — and yet it seems but yesterday — we lodged for the night at a boarding-house in Queen Square, Bloomsbury, to which the worthy deacon directed us. As we wore a huge black satin stock, and used a blue handkerchief with white spots, the young gentlemen of that boarding-house marvelled greatly at the youth from the country who had come up to preach in London, but who was evidently in the condition known as verdant green. They were mainly of the evangelical church persuasion, and seemed greatly tickled that the country lad should be a preacher. They did not propose to go and hear the youth, but they seemed to tacitly agree to encourage him after their own fashion, and we were encouraged accordingly. What tales were narrated of the great divines of the metropolis and their congregations! One we remember had a thousand *city* men to hear him, another had his church filled with *thoughtful* people, such as could hardly be matched all over England, while a third had an immense audience, almost entirely composed of the *young men* of London, who were spell-bound by his eloquence. The study which these men underwent in composing their sermons, their herculean toils in keeping up their congregations, and the matchless oratory which they exhibited on all occasions were duly rehearsed in our hearing; and when we were shown to bed in a cupboard over the front door we were not in an advantageous condition for pleasant dreams. Park-street hospitality never sent the young minister to that far-away hired room again; but assuredly the Saturday evening in a London boarding-house was about the most depressing agency which could have been brought to bear upon our spirit. On the narrow bed we tossed in solitary misery and found no pity. Pitiless was the grind of the cabs in the street; pitiless the recollection of the young city clerks whose grim propriety had gazed upon our rusticity with such amusement; pitiless the spare room, which scarce afforded space to kneel; pitiless even the gas-lamps which seemed to wink at us as they flickered amid the December

darkness. We had no friend in all that city full of human beings, but we felt among strangers and foreigners, hoped to be helped through the scrape into which we had been brought, and to escape safely to the serene abodes of Cambridge and Waterbeach, which then seemed to be Eden itself.

Twenty-five years ago it was a clear, cold morning, and we wended our way along Holborn Hill towards Blackfriars and certain tortuous lanes and alleys at the foot of Southwark Bridge. Wondering, praying, fearing, hoping, believing, — we felt all alone and yet not alone. Expectant of divine help, and inwardly borne down by our sense of the need of it, we traversed a dreary wilderness of brick to find the spot where our message must needs be delivered. One word rose to our lip many times, we scarce know why, — “He must needs go through Samaria.” The necessity of our Lord’s journeying in a certain direction is no doubt repeated in His servants, and as our present journey was not of our seeking, and had been by no means pleasing so far as it had gone, — the one thought of a “needs be” for it seemed to overtop every other. At sight of Park-street Chapel we felt for a moment amazed at our own temerity, for it seemed to our eyes to be a large, ornate, and imposing structure, suggesting an audience wealthy and critical, and far removed from the humble folk to whom our ministry had been sweetness and light. It was early, so there were no persons entering, and when the set time was fully come there were no signs to support the suggestion raised by the exterior of the building, and we felt that by God’s help we were not yet out of our depth, and were not likely to be with so small an audience. The Lord helped us very graciously; we had a happy Sabbath in the pulpit, and spent the intervals with warm-hearted friends; and when at night we trudged back to the Queen-square narrow lodging we were not alone, and we no longer looked on Londoners as flinty-hearted barbarians. Our tone was altered; we wanted no pity of any one; we did not care a penny for the young gentlemen lodgers and their miraculous ministers, nor for the grind of the cabs, nor for anything else under the sun. The lion had been looked at all round, and his majesty did not appear to be a tenth as majestic as when we had only heard his roar miles away.

These are small matters, but they rise before us as we look over the twenty-five years' space which has intervened: they are the haze of that other shore between which rolls a quarter of a century of mercy. At the review we are lost in a rush of mingled feelings. "With my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now ——." Our ill health at this moment scarcely permits us either to hold a pen or to dictate words to another; we must therefore leave till another season such utterances of gratitude as the fulness of our heart may permit us. Common blessings may find a tongue at any moment, but favors such as we have received of the Lord throughout this semi-jubilee are not to be acknowledged fitly with the tongues of men or of angels, unless a happy inspiration should bear the thankful one beyond himself.

The following items must, however, be recorded: they are but as a handful gleaned among the sheaves. To omit mention of them would be ingratitude against which stones might justly cry out.

A church has been maintained in order, vigor, and loving unity during all this period. Organized upon the freest basis, even to democracy, yet has there been seen among us a discipline and a compact oneness never excelled. Men and women associated by thousands, and each one imperfect, are not kept in perfect peace by human means; there is a mystic spirit moving among them which alone could have held them as the heart of one man. No schism or heresy has sprung up among us; division has been far from us; co-pastorship has engendered no rivalry, and the illness of the senior officer has led to no disorder. Hypocrites and temporary professors have gone out from us because they were not of us, but we are still one even as at the first; perhaps more truly one than ever at any former instant of our history. One in hearty love to our redeeming Lord, to His glorious gospel, to the ordinances of His house, and to one another as brethren in Christ. Shall not the God of peace receive our humble praises for this unspeakable boon?

The church has continued steadily to increase year by year. There have not been leaps of progress and then painful pauses of decline. On and on the host has marched, gathering recruits each

month, filling up the gaps created by death or by removal, and steadily proceeding towards and beyond its maximum, which lies over the border of five thousand souls. One year may have been better than another, but not to any marked extent; there has been a level richness in the harvest field, a joyful average in the crop. Unity of heart has been accompanied by uniformity of prosperity. Work has not been done in spurts, enterprises have not been commenced and abandoned; every advance has been maintained and has become the vantage ground for yet another aggression upon the enemy's territory. Faults there have been in abundance, but the good Lord has not suffered them to hinder progress or to prevent success. The Bridegroom has remained with us, and as yet the days of fasting have not been proclaimed; rather has the joy of the Lord been from day to day our strength.

The gospel of the grace of God has been continually preached from the first day until now, — the same gospel, we trust, accompanied with growing experience and appreciation and knowledge, but not another gospel, nor even another form of the same gospel. From week to week the sermons have been issued from the press, till the printed sermons now number 1,450. These have enjoyed a very remarkable circulation in our own country, and in the Colonies and America; and, besides being scattered to the ends of the earth wherever the English tongue is spoken, they have been translated into almost every language spoken by Christian people, and into some of the tongues of the heathen besides. What multitudes of conversions have come of these messengers of mercy eternity alone will disclose: we have heard enough to make our cup run over with unutterable delight. Shall not the God of boundless goodness be extolled and adored for this? The reader cannot know so well as the preacher what this *printing* of sermons involves. This is a tax upon the brain of a most serious kind, and yet it has been endured, and still the public read the sermons, — best proof that all their freshness has not departed. O Lord, all our fresh springs are in Thee, else had our ministry long since been dried up at the fountain, the unction would have departed, and the power would have fled. Unto the Eternal Spirit be infinite glory for His long forbearance and perpetual aid.

Nursed up at the sides of the Church, supported by her liberality, fostered by her care, and watched over by her love, hundreds of young men have been trained for the ministry, and have gone forth everywhere preaching the Word. Of these some few have fallen asleep, but the great majority still remain in the ministry at home and in the mission field, faithful to the things which they learned in their youth, and persevering in the proclamation of the same gospel which is dear to the Mother Church. When we think of the four hundred brethren preaching the gospel at this moment, of the many churches which they have formed, and of the meeting-houses they have built, we must magnify the name of the Lord who has wrought by so feeble an instrumentality.

Evangelists are now supported by the agency at the Tabernacle, and sent forth hither and thither to arouse the churches. Upon this effort a special blessing has rested, enough to fill all hearts with delighted thankfulness.

During a considerable period hundreds of orphans have been fed and clothed and trained for time and eternity beneath the wings of the Church of God, and many scores of these are now engaged in honorable business, prospering in life, in membership with Christian churches, and delighting to own themselves in a special manner children of the Tabernacle, sons of the Stockwell Orphanage. This is a well-spring of joy sufficient for a life. Those who have labored with us in this holy work have a wealth of satisfaction in looking back upon the way wherein the Lord hath led us in this benevolent enterprise. Both the providence and the grace of God have been abundantly illustrated in this delightful service. If the story could ever be fully written — as it never can be — it would redound to the praise of the faithful, promise-keeping Saviour, who said to us at the first, "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Nor is this all, nor can all be told. An army of colporteurs at this present moment covers our country; ninety or more men are going from house to house with the Word of God and pure literature, endeavoring to enlighten the dark hamlets, and to reach the neglected individuals who pine alone upon their sick beds. Priestcraft is thus assailed by an agency which it little expected to

encounter. Where a Nonconformist ministry could not be sustained for want of means, a testimony has been kept alive which has sufficed to fetch out the chosen of the Lord from amid the gloom of superstition, and lead the Lord's elect away from priests and sacraments to Christ and the one great Sacrifice for sin. This work grows and must grow from year to year.

The poor but faithful ministers of our Lord have had some little comfort rendered to them by a quiet, unobtrusive work, which has supplied them with parcels of useful books: a work which is only ours, and yet most truly ours, because it is performed in constant pain and frequent anguish by her who is our best of earthly blessings. The book fund has a note all its own, but we could not refrain from hearing it as it swells the blessed harmony of service done during the twenty-five years. "She that tarried at home divided the spoil."

Time would fail us to rehearse the whole of the other enterprises which have sprung up around us; and were we inclined to do so, and to become a fool in glorying, we should not be able, for bodily weakness plucks us by the sleeve and cries "Forbear!" We will forbear, but not till we have exclaimed, "What hath God wrought!" Nor till we have noted with peculiar gratitude that to us is doubly fulfilled the promise, "Instead of the fathers shall be the children." Our sons have already begun to fulfil our lack of service, and will do so more and more if our infirmities increase.

It was right and seemly that at the close of this period of twenty-five years some testimonial should be offered to the pastor. The like has been worthily done in other cases, and brethren have accepted a sum of money which they well deserved, and which they have very properly laid aside as a provision for their families. In our case it did not seem to us at all fitting that the offering should come into our own purse; our conscience and heart revolted from the idea. We could without sin have accepted the gift for our own need, but it seemed not to be right. We have been so much more in the hands of God than most, so much less an agent and so much more an instrument, that we could not claim a grain of credit. Moreover, the dear and honored brethren and

sisters in Christ who have surrounded us these many years have really themselves done the bulk of the work, and God forbid that we should monopolize honor which belongs to all the saints! Let the offering come by all means, but let it return to the source from whence it came. There are many poor in the church, far more than friends at a distance would imagine, — many of the most godly poor, “widows indeed,” and partakers of the poverty of Christ. To aid the church in its holy duty of remembering the poor, which is the nearest approach to remembering Christ Himself, seemed to us to be the highest use of money; the testimonial will, therefore, go to support the aged sisters in the almshouses, and thus it will actually relieve the funds of the church which are appropriated to the weekly relief of the necessitous. May the Lord Jesus accept this cup of cold water which is offered in His name! We see the Lord’s servants fetching for us water from the well of Bethlehem which is within the gate, and as we see them cheerfully and generously setting it at our feet we thank them, — thank them with tears in our eyes, — but we feel that we must not drink thereof; it must be poured out before the Lord. So let it be. O Lord, accept it!

SWEET FRUIT FROM A THORNY TREE.

WHEN our Heavenly Father “puts His hand into the bitter box” and weighs out to us a portion of wormwood and gall in the form of bodily pain we very naturally ask the reason why. Nature suggests the question at times in petulance and gets no answer; faith only asks it with bated breath and gains a gracious reply. Our Lord has a right to do as He wills with us, and His dispensations are not to be challenged as though He were bound to give an account of His doings at the bar of our bewildered reason. Still, with the full persuasion that the Lord ever acts in love and wisdom, we may inquire into His design, and so far as experience can help us we may see what comes of the suffering which He inflicts. What are the “comfortable fruits of righteous-

ness" which are produced by watering the soul from the bitter lakes? What are the jewels of silver and gold with which we are adorned when we come up from the Egyptian bondage of pain and weariness? I, who have of late been a prisoner of the Lord in the sick chamber, would witness my confession as He enables me.

Pain teaches us our nothingness. Health permits us to swell in self-esteem, and gather much which is unreal; sickness makes our feebleness conspicuous, and at the same time breaks up many of our shams. We need solid grace when we are thrown into the furnace of affliction: gilt and tinsel shrivel up in the fire. The patience in which we somewhat prided ourselves, where is it when sharp pangs succeed each other like poisoned arrows setting the blood on flame? The joyful faith which could do all things and bear all sufferings, is it always at hand when the time of trial has arrived? The peace which stood aloft on the mountain's summit and serenely smiled on storms beneath, does it hold its ground quite so easily as we thought it would when at our ease we prophesied our behavior in the day of battle? How have I felt dwarfed and diminished by pain and depression! The preacher to thousands could creep into a nutshell, and feel himself smaller than the worm which bored the tiny round hole by which he entered. I have admired and envied the least of my Lord's servants, and desired their prayers for me, though I felt unworthy of the kind thoughts of the weakest of them. We are most of us by far too great. A soap bubble has a scant measure of material in it for its size, and most of us are after the same order; it is greatly for our good to be reduced to our true dimensions. It is comfortable to be small; one has more room and needs less, and is better able to hide away. When storms are out, a low bush or narrow eaves may shelter a sparrow, while a larger bird must bear the beat of the rain and the wind. To be nothing, and to feel less than nothing, is most sweet, for then we cower down under the great wings of God as the little chick beneath the brooding hen, and in utter helplessness we find our strength and solace. Nothing goes but that which ought to go; the flower falls, but the seed ripens; the froth is blown away, but the wines on the lees are perfected.

When nought remains but the clinging of a weeping child who grasps his Father's hand, nought but the smiting on the breast of the publican who cries, "God be merciful to me a sinner," nought but the last resolve, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him," no real loss has been sustained, say rather a great gain has come to the humbled heart.

Heavy sickness and crushing pain shut out from us a thousand minor cares. We cannot now be cumbered with much serving, for others must take our place and play the Martha in our stead; and it is well if then we are enabled to take Mary's place as nearly as possible and lie at Jesus' feet if we cannot sit there. With me it has been so. That beloved congregation and church, I could do nothing for them; I must perforce leave them with the Great Shepherd and those dear associates whom He has called to share my burden. Those orphans, how could I watch over them? Those students, how could I instruct them? Those colporteurs, how could I provide for them? What if funds run low? They must do so; I could not increase the flow of the brook Cherith, nor even find out a widow of Zarephath whose barrel of meal and cruse of oil should never waste. The Lord must do all or it must remain undone. The weary head could only exaggerate the need; the sinking spirits could not suggest a supply. All must be left; yes, *must* be left. The reins drop from the driver's hands; the ploughman forgets the furrow; the seed-basket hangs no longer on the sower's arm. Thus is the soul shut in with God as within a wall of fire, and all her thought must be of Him and of His promise and His help; grateful if but such thoughts will come, and forced if they come not just to lie as one dead at the feet of the great Lord and look up and hope. This cutting loose from earthly shores, this rehearsal of what must soon be done once for all in the hour of departure is a salutary exercise, tending to cut away the hampering besetments of this mortal life, and make us freer for the heavenly race. It is well to have the windows shut which look towards earth and its cares, that we may be driven to that fairer prospect which lies on the other side of Jordan. This is not the natural effect of pain, but when the Spirit of God works by it the help that way is wonderful.

Sickness has caused many workers to become more intense when they have again been favored to return to their place. We lie and bemoan our shortcomings, perceiving fault where it had in healthier hours escaped observation, resolving, in God's strength, to throw our energies more fully into the weightiest matters, and spend less of force on secondary things. How much of lasting good may come of this! The time apparently wasted may turn out to be a real economy of life if the worker for years to come shall be more earnest, more careful, more prayerful, more dependent upon God, more passionately set upon doing his Lord's business thoroughly. Oh, that we could all thus improve our forced retirements! Then should we come forth like the sun from the chambers of the east, all the brighter for the night's chill darkness, while about us would be the dew of the Spirit and the freshness of a new dawning. Sickness would be as a going into the desert to rest awhile, or as a bath from which a man arises with shining face. Oh, that it might be so with me! My Lord, vouchsafe it for the sake of the many to whom these hands must yet break the bread of life. They say that pearls are bred in the oyster by disease; may our graces be such pearls. Falling leaves enrich the soil about the forest tree; would God that our weeping autumns would yield us fairer springs and larger growths. May the Divine Spirit cause it so to be! If but one or two of His people shall profit by my keen pains, I will thank Him heartily.

Pain, if sanctified, creates tenderness towards others. Alone it may harden and shut up the man within himself, a student of his own nerves and ailments, a hater of all who would pretend to rival him in suffering; but, mixed with grace, our aches and pains are an ointment suppling the heart and causing the milk of human kindness to fill the breast. The poor are tender to the poor, and the sick feel for the sick when their afflictions have wrought after a healthful fashion. One could have wished to give the gruff, unsympathetic boor a twist or two of rheumatism, were it not that our experience would make us for pity's sake spare even him. Surely they who first founded hospitals were not always well themselves. Grief has been full oft the mother of mercy, and the pangs of sickness have been the birth-throes of compassion. If our

hearts learn sympathy they have been in a good school, though the master may have used the rod most heavily and taught us by many a smart. To those who are teachers of others this is of the first importance, for none can bear with the infirmities of others if they have not been made compassionate and filled with a fellow-feeling for the faint and the trembling. The keys of men's hearts hang up in the narrow chamber of suffering, and he who has not been there can scarcely know the art of opening the recesses of the soul. Instinctively the believing sufferer turns to the Lord Jesus, because He has been tempted in all points like as we are; and in a lesser degree he naturally looks most hopefully to those of his brethren who have been most compassed with infirmity and most familiarized with anguish. Happy is the man who has been afflicted, if the Holy Spirit shall thereby make him a son of consolation to the mourners in Zion.

I find my scarcely recovered mind cannot continue this meditation much longer, and therefore, omitting a score of thoughts which would naturally suggest themselves to any devout person, I will only add that pain has a tendency to make us grateful when health returns. We value the powers of locomotion after tossing long upon a bed from which we cannot rise; the open air is sweet after the confinement of the chamber; food is relished when appetite returns, and in all respects the time of recovery is one of marked enjoyment. As birds sing most after their winter's silence, when the warm spring has newly returned, so should we be most praiseful when our gloomy hours are changed for cheerful restoration. Blessed be the Lord, who healeth all our diseases! Jehovah Rophi is a name much treasured by those who know the Lord that healeth them. Gratitude is a choice spice for heaven's altar. It burns well in the censer, and sends up a fragrant cloud, acceptable to the great High Priest. Perhaps God would have lost much praise if His servant had not much suffered. Sickness thus yields large tribute to the King's revenue, and if it be so we may cheerfully endure it. Bow down, frail body and faint heart, if in the bowing ye can yield what ye had never produced if ye had stood erect in manly vigor! Bruise, Lord, the spice, which else had kept its sweetness slumbering and useless!

This is not a hymn, but yet it has heaven's poetry within it, even this agonizing cry, "Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt;" and it is a delicious result of trial if in this hearty utterance we learn to imitate our Lord, and to have fellowship with His sufferings. Here a great ocean opens up before us: pain may aid us in communion with our much-suffering Lord. Anything is a boon by which we are made more fully to be partakers with Him. But we cannot pursue the theme. As when the mariner in northern seas forces his way through an ice-blocked strait, and sees opening up before him a boundless sea, even so do we perceive great truths to which our subject leads the way; but our vessel has so late been tempest-tossed that we can enter on no venturous voyage, but must cast anchor under the shelter of Cape Fellowship, and leave our readers to push onward into the blessed depths. May the good Spirit fill their sails, and bear them into the expanse of holy fellowship!

FROM AN ADDRESS TO THE STUDENTS.

I AM sorry to say that I am made of such ill stuff that my Lord has to chasten me often and sorely. I am like a pen that will not write unless it be often nibbed, and so I have felt the sharp knife many times; and yet I shall not regret my pains and crosses so long as my Lord will write with me on men's hearts. That is the cause of many ministers' afflictions; they are necessary to our work. You have heard the fable of the raven that wished to drink, but the pitcher had so little water in it that he could not reach it, and therefore he took stone after stone and dropped it into the vessel until the water rose to the brim and he could drink. So little grace is in some men that they need many sicknesses, bereavements, and other afflictions to make their graces available for usefulness. If, however, we receive grace enough to bear fruit without continual pruning, so much the better.

It is expected of us, brethren, that from this time we rise to a

higher point. It is the Lord's due, if we think of what He has done for us. Some of my comrades in arms now before me have gone through battles as hard as any men may wish to fight, and after such success they must never say die. After what the Lord has done for us we must never strike our flag, nor turn our backs in the day of battle. Sir Francis Drake, when it was feared that he would be wrecked in the Thames, said: "What! Have I been round the world, and am I now to be drowned in a ditch? Not I." So say I to you, brethren: you have done business in stormy waters, and will you sink in a village pond? We shall not be worse treated than we have been. We are now in fine fighting trim, for we are hardened by former blows. A great pugilist at Rome was so battered, his nose, eyes, face were so disfigured, that he was always ready to fight, because he said: "I cannot look worse than I do." Personally, I am much in the same plight. Men cannot say anything worse of me than they have said. I have been belied from head to foot, and misrepresented to the last degree. My good looks are gone, and none can much damage me now. Some of you have had more to batter you than you are likely to endure again; you have had trial and tribulation and affliction as heavy as you can have them; and after having stood in the lists so long, surely you are not going to yield and slink away like cowards? God forbid it! God forbid it! God grant, on the contrary, that the elder ones among you may have the pleasure, not only of winning battles for Christ, but of seeing others who have been saved under your instrumentality trained to fight better than yourselves for Jesus! I read the other day a story, and with that I will conclude, desiring that I may in spiritual things have the same joy myself, and that it may be the lot of you all. Diagoras the Rhodian had in his time won many wreaths at the Olympian games. He had two boys, and he brought them up to the same profession. The day came when his own force abated, and he was no longer able to strive for masteries in his own person; but he went up to the Olympian games with his two sons. He saw the blows they gave and received, and rejoiced when he discovered that they were both victorious. A Lacedæmonian said to him: "You may die now,

Diagoras ;” meaning that the old man might die content, because he had in his own person and in that of his sons obtained the highest honors. The old man seemed to feel that it was even so ; for when his two sons came and shouldered their father, and carried him through the camp amid the ringing cheers of the great assembly, the old man, flushed with excitement, died under the eyes of the assembled Greeks. It would have been a wiser thing to have lived, for he had a third son who became more renowned than the other two ; but he passed away on a wave of victory. Oh, brethren, may you have spiritual children who shall win battles for the Lord, and may you live to see them doing it ; then may you say with Simeon : “ Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word.”

AGAINST HASTENING TO REMOVE FROM OUR POST OF DUTY.

HE was a wise man who said, “ The roundest peg seldom fits into the roundest hole without some paring.” There is no position in life which, at the first, has not something irksome and trying about it. New comers cannot expect to feel at home at once. We remember our first wretched night at a school where we afterwards became supremely happy. Well do we recollect the misery of the first few months of a calling which we afterwards valued and enjoyed. Our mind was sorely depressed on first coming into that sphere in London which has since been the delight of our life. Let no man, therefore, when he at first commences work in any place feel at all discouraged by the uneasiness which may come over him. It is natural that he should feel strange in a new position. The burden is not yet adapted to the shoulder, and the shoulder is not yet hardened to the load. While feeling the irksomeness of a fresh position, do not be so foolish as to throw it up. Wait a little while, and time will work wonders. You will yet take pleasure in the very things which are now the source of discomfort. The very worst thing will be to

hasten away and make a change, for the change will only bring trial in a fresh form, and you will endure afresh the evils which you have already almost mastered. The time which you have already spent at your new place will be lost, and the same weary first steps will have to be taken upon another ladder. Besides, you may readily leap out of the frying-pan into the fire. Change has charms to some men, but among its roses they find abundant thorns.

Has the minister just entered upon a fresh sphere, and does he miss the affectionate warmth of his old acquaintances? Does he find his new people strange and singular? Do they appear cold and distant? Let him persevere, and all this will wear off, and he will come to love the very people to whom he now feels an aversion, and find his best helpers among those who now seem to be utterly indifferent to him. The call of Providence has brought him where he is, and he must not venture to leave because of inconveniences: often it will be his wisdom to regard these as a part of the tokens that he is in the right way, for the appointed path is seldom easy to the feet.

Has our young friend commenced teaching a class in the Sunday-school, and does she find it far less pleasant work than she imagined? Are the children wild and careless and inattentive, and does her own power of teaching appear to be smaller than she hoped? Let her give double application to her holy toil, and she will come to love it. Should she leave it, she may incur the blame of those who put their hands to the plough and look back. The ice has been already broken; the edge has been taken off from the difficulty; let her persevere, and all will be well.

There is no position in this world without its disadvantages. We may be perpetually on the move to our continual disquiet, and each move may bring us under the same, or even greater, disadvantages. We remember a Scotch story of an unlucky family who attributed all their misfortunes to their house being haunted by mischievous spirits, known to our northern countrymen as "brownies." These superstitious individuals became at length desperate; nothing prospered in house or field, they would therefore pack up all and begone from a spot so mysteriously infested.

All the household goods were loaded up, and the husband and the "gude wife" and the bairns were all flitting, when one of them cried out: "Brownie is in the churn. Brownie is flitting too." Just so; the matters which hinder a man's success are generally in himself, and will move with him; and wherein it is not so, he may yet be sure that if by change of place he avoids one set of brownies, he will find another awaiting him. There is bran in all meal, and there are dregs in all wine. All roads must at times be rough, and all seas must be tossed with tempest. To fly from trouble will need long wings, and to escape discomfort will require more than a magician's skill.

It is wiser to "bear the ills we have, than fly to others that we know not of." It is probable that our present condition is the best possible for us, — no other form of trial would be preferable. What right have we to suspect the wisdom and the goodness of God in placing us where we are? It will be far more prudent to mistrust our own judgment when it leads us to murmuring and discontent. Occasionally it may be prudent to remove, or to change one's form of Christian service; but this must be done thoughtfully, prayerfully, and with a supreme regard to the glory of God, rather than out of respect to our own feelings. A tree that is often transplanted will make but little growth and bear but slender fruit. A man who is "everything by turns and nothing long" will be a sort of "Jack of all trades and master of none." An increase of spiritual strength by greater communion with God, and a more resolute determination to glorify Him in every possible way, will usually conquer difficulties and win success. An extremely hard substance in the world may be cut by something harder: even the adamant can be forced to yield. Double force will make that easy which now seems impossible. Do not, therefore, change the work, but change yourself. Attempt no other alteration till a distinct improvement in your own self has resolutely been carried out.

We speak thus because we believe that many are discouraged at the outset of a career which, if they could see its end, would fill them with thankfulness; and Satan raises these discouragements to tempt them to leave a position in which they may dam-

age his kingdom and glorify Christ. Courage, dear friend, you have a great Helper; look to the Strong for strength. Say with Nehemiah, "Should such a man as I flee?" Who are you that everything should be made smooth for your feet? Are you such a little babe in grace that only the slightest tasks should be allotted to you? Be a man, and play the man. Resolve that even at this present, and where you now are, you will set up the standard and hold the fort. Many are the instances in which men have commenced their life-work under every possible disadvantage, and for months, and even years, they have seemed to make no headway whatsoever, and yet they have ultimately triumphed, and have come to bless the providence which called them into a place so well adapted for their gifts. It would have been their worst calamity if, under a fit of despondency, they had changed their station or relinquished their vocation. The Church would have been the poorer, the world would have been the darker, and themselves the feebler if they had shifted at the first even to the most promising spheres which tempted them. That rock on which they stood, and mourned the hardness of the soil, was more full of the elements of fruitfulness than the softer soil at a little distance which invited them to leave. Tarrying where they were, exercising indomitable perseverance, they have softened the granite, cultured it into fertility, and reaped a golden harvest. He is the greatest man who achieves success where stronger men might have failed. If we desire to glorify God we must not select the comfortable positions and the hopeful fields; it is best to make no selection, but to yield our own will to the will of God altogether. The hole is round enough; it will be difficult to make *it* any rounder. The proper plan is to round ourselves. If we will but adapt ourselves to our position the position will adapt itself to us.

It may be that these lines will furnish counsel to a brother whose choice now lies between being a rolling stone and a pillar in the house of our God. To turn tail under present pressure may be the beginning of a cowardly career, neither honorable to God nor to man: to stand fast at this distressing juncture may be the commencement of an established position of supreme usefulness and honor.

XXIII.

CONTRIBUTED ARTICLES.

I PASSED under a camphor-tree and gathered a few of its leaves and found them full of camphor; indeed, the whole of the tree was saturated with it. Thus should the grace of God show itself in the whole life of the believer. As the inevitable outflow of his renewed nature his most commonplace acts and words should be gracious. Little things best reveal character, for in them a man is less upon his guard. Let even the leaves of your words partake of the grace which dwells in you. — C. H. SPURGEON.

CONTRIBUTED ARTICLES.

VISITING THE POOR.

JOSEPH COOK says: "In every great town there are six or ten strata of society; and it is, one would think, a hundred miles from the fashionable to the unfashionable side of a single brick in a wall. Superfluity and squalor know absolutely nothing of each other, such is the utter negligence of the duty of visiting the poor in any other way than by agents. I do not undervalue these, nor any part of the great charities of our times; but there is no complete theory for the permanent relief of the poor without personal visitation. Go from street to street with the city missionary or the best of the police; but sometimes go all alone, and with your own eyes see the poor in their attics, and study the absolutely unspeakable conditions of their daily lives. Live one day where the children of the perishing poor live, and ask what it is to live there always. I know a scholar of heroic temper and of exquisite culture who recently resolved to live with the poor in a stifling part of this city (Boston), and who, after repeated and desperate illness, was obliged to move his home off the ground in order to avoid the necessity of putting his body underground. You cannot understand the poor by newspapers, nor even by novels."

Rather a sly poke, Mr. Cook, at those who fancy they can see mankind through the spectacles of novels. The world which is depicted in fiction is strangely different from the realm of fact in which men and women starve and die, or end their days in the

workhouse, of which they have felt from their childhood a mortal dread. Novel-readers know a great deal which it will cost them vast pains to unlearn. True knowledge of the poor will not come even out of "Jessica's First Prayer" and the like; it must grow out of actual contact with them.

There is much truth in what Mr. Cook has said; indeed, a great deal more than at first meets the eye. Wealthy Christians are to be educated in the most Christ-like of graces by coming in contact with the poor, and it is a great pity that they should refuse to enter the appointed school; poor saints are to be consoled and cheered by the presence of their richer brethren, and it is cruel for the ordained comforters to refuse their task. More would be given in charity if it were given personally, and it would be more wisely distributed and more gratefully received. The kindly word and sympathetic look would be worth more than the silver or even the gold expended upon the needy, and would often prevent the recipient from becoming a pauper, or rouse the pauper to a desire for independence. Personal visitation is good all round; like mercy, it blesseth him that gives and him that takes.

Our churches have visiting societies connected with them, but we fear they are not quite so flourishing as they ought to be. A few ladies manage the whole business and do all the work. We wish that all the members of the churches who have anything to spare would become visitors of the sick and the poor, either in connection with the societies or on their own account. Of course, those whose time belongs to their employers, and those whose home duties occupy every minute are to be excused; but we have hundreds of ladies without occupation who ought to spend their time in being true sisters of mercy. And why not the gentlemen too? Men of leisure could not do better than hunt out needy merit in the back slums. It would afford more excitement and pleasure than shooting over the moors or watching the fly on the rivers. Gentlemen could safely pioneer the way for ladies, and there are rooms which they might enter more safely than the gentler sex. When we speak of ladies and gentlemen we mean men and women of gentle hearts and generous hands, who would go really to pity and help the poor; we mean working men's

wives who would sit up at night with a sick neighbor, and artisans themselves who would not mind whitewashing a sick man's room, if needed, to make it sweet and healthy. Anyhow, the salt wants to be rubbed in, and not to be kept by itself in the salt-box. There is the city with its sorrows, and here is the Church with its heaven-born love; the question is: How shall these be brought into contact, so that the evil shall find its remedy and the medicine shall reach the disease?

It is of no use waiting till one universal Charity Organization scheme shall be carried out; we might as well tarry till an organized providence drops quartern loaves and pats of butter at every householder's door. Schemes and plans are all very well, but he who waits till a scheme has put a chicken into his pot will go without a pullet for a lifetime. The better way is for those who visit to go on with their work, and for those who do not visit to begin at once, and make one call a day if possible. Just take a walk down Paradise Place as a commencement. Look up Jinks's Rents and down Sheridan's Alley, and pick up an acquaintance with the woman who goes out charing when she can get it, and the widow who has four children, one born since the husband's death, — the consumptive widow, we mean, who cannot earn a penny for herself because three of the little ones need nursing, and the eldest can barely run alone. To give up an evening party in order to make a call in the slums may seem to be insane advice, but we venture to back it up by the assertion that it would afford more sensible entertainment than the most of the stuck-up assemblies where twaddle and ceremony sicken thoughtful minds. Life is never slow to those who live to do good. True romance comes in the way of those whose hearts love the sorrowful. Nobody ever complains of *ennui* who spends his strength in relieving human need for Jesus' sake. Gratitude for our own favored lot is excited by the inspection of a hospital, a workhouse, or the squalid dens where poverty herds with vice.

Society wants to be made into a stir-about. We must mingle for mutual advantage. The walls are getting higher and the ditches deeper; let us each one try to scale the ramparts and bridge the moats. We are one family, and we refuse to be

divided. We cannot be content to be pampered while our brethren pine in want. Down with the barriers, and let the rich and poor meet together, for the Lord is the Maker of them all.

“A CONTINUAL TOOTH-DRAWING.”

WHEN Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton was wearied all day long by incessant requests to alter his procedure upon a great political question, he told his daughter that he could compare the importunities of the members of the House of Commons to nothing but a continual tooth-drawing. This is an image far too striking to be left to Sir Fowell's sole use. Many other persons have been made to know what a continual tooth-drawing means, and we feel persuaded that many more are subjected to similar processes.

We should think that a miserly man, who takes a sitting in a place of worship frequented by a liberal and energetic people, must frequently feel, when he is asked over and over again for a subscription, that he had almost as soon sit in a dentist's chair, and feel the operator's forceps upon his precious dentals. His best plan is to give at once, and so end the pain of the extraction.

The same sort of misery must be experienced by the Christian who is always sighing —

“'Tis a point I long to know,”

and incessantly turning over the experience of his own heart to see if he can extract from it some assuring evidence of his being in Christ. Most of us have undergone this unhappy experience, and even a moment of it is torture: to have to endure it month after month would be agony indeed. Oh, for a childlike faith in Jesus to decide the question at once!

Personally, we have heard utterances in prayer-meetings which were painfully like a continual tooth-drawing. They were hard, cold, heartless, dreary, and both as long and as dismal as a winter's night. All of a sudden we thought and hoped that the brother had done; but, alas, he took up a fresh lease, and entered upon

another lengthened period! To all appearance he was coming to a conclusion a second time, when off he went, like a shot which *ricochets*, or a boy's stone which when thrown into the water goes—duck—duck—drake—upon the surface. The prayer was diluted to the dregs of nothing, but end there seemed to be none. Oh, that the tooth were out! The beloved brother had said all that could be said, and prayed for all that could be prayed for; but he evidently felt it necessary to begin again. We can have too much of a good thing in such a case, and we wish the friend thought so.

Preachers, too, have caused us the same memorable sensation. The style and manner have been painful, and the length of the discourse has made the agony a protracted one. Dragging away at some metaphysical subtlety, which they could not bring into the light; tugging at some unimportant difficulty whose fangs defied their power; or explaining with marvellous perspicuity what was clear as daylight when they began, and marvellously foggy before they came to the end, they have inflicted upon us "a continual tooth-drawing;" at least, our patience was almost as much strained as if a grinder had been slowly drawn from our aching jaw. We are ready to cry, "Out with it, and have done, there's a good man; for we can't stand it much longer."

Worst of all, however, and fullest development of Sir Fowell's simile, is the click, clack, click, clack of a fluent female who has gained your ear, and means to hold it.

"She never tires nor stops to rest,
But on and on she goes."

We have felt ready to open our mouth, and let her draw all our teeth *seriatim*, if she would but leave off talking. She had nothing to say, and she said that nothing at extreme length, with marvellous energy and with unwearied repetition. We have turned our head, we have shut our eyes, we have wished we had gun-cotton in our ears and dynamite in our brain; but our wishes did not deliver us, we were given over to the tormenter, and must abide the fulfilment of our sentence. When the operation has been over we have sometimes asked ourselves what we have done to deserve such a punishment, and

with every desire to make a full confession of our faults, we have not been able to discover anything which deserved so severe a torment under the present rule of mercy. At the second sight of the operator we have fled, feeling that it would be worth while to go a mile round, or leap over hedge and ditch, rather than again experience "a continual tooth-drawing."

MORAL. — Let us all be considerate of the feelings of others, for when we imagine we are merely tickling their ears, we may be causing them as much pain as if we were drawing their teeth.

DOCTRINAL ERROR.

WHEN the heart has got out of order and the spiritual life has run down, men soon fall into actual doctrinal error, not so much because their head is wrong, for many of them have not much of that, but because their heart is in an ill condition. We should never have known that some men had brains at all if they had not addled them. Such departers from the faith usually fall by little and little. They begin by saying very little concerning grace. They serve out homœopathic doses of gospel: it is marvellous what a very small globule of the gospel will save a soul, and it is a great mercy that it is so, or few would be saved. These snatches of gospel, and the preacher who gives them, remind us of the famous dog of Nile, of whom the ancients said that he was so afraid of the crocodiles that he drank of the river in a great hurry, and was away from it directly. These intellectual gentry are so afraid of the critical crocodiles that the moment they touch the living water of the gospel they are away again. Their doubts are stronger than their beliefs. The worst of it is that they not only give us very little gospel, but they give us much that is not the gospel. In this they are like mosquitoes, of whom I have often said, I do not mind their taking a little of my blood, but it is the poison which they put into me which is my great cause of quarrel. That a man should rob me of the

gospel is bad enough; but that he should impregnate me with his poisonous doctrine is intolerable.

When men lose all love to the gospel they try to make up for the loss of its attractions by sparkling inventions of their own. They imitate life by the artificial flash of culture, reminding me of the saline crystals which cover the salt deserts. There is a lifeless plain in the heart of Persia, so sterile and accursed that even saline plants do not thrive; "but the salt itself, as if in bitter mockery, fashions its crystals in the form of stems and stalks, and covers the steppe with a carpet of unique vegetation, glittering and glistening like an enchanted prairie in the dazzling light of the eastern sun." Woe be unto the poor congregations who behold this substitute for life, this saline efflorescence of dainty errors and fascinating inventions! Alas, whatever a man may now propound he will find learned personages to support him in it! Fontenelle used to say, that if he could only get six philosophers to write in its favor, people could be made to believe that the sun is *not* the source of light and heat: and I think there is a great deal of truth in the remark. We are told, "Well, he is a very learned man, he is a Fellow of Brazenface College, and he has written a book in which he upsets the old dogmas." If a learned man writes any nonsense, of course it will have a run, and there is no opinion so insane but, if it has the patronage of so-called scientific men, it will be believed in certain quarters. I have myself watched the labors of novelists in theology, and have tried to get what I could out of their books, but I have been struck with the remarkably poor results of their lucubrations.

ON GEORGE MÜLLER.

A CHRISTIAN man is the noblest work of God, especially a Christian man who has attained to fulness of stature, and has done eminent service for his Master. As in the presence of sublime scenery the renewed heart adores the Creator, and never dreams

of worshipping nature itself, so in communion with a truly consecrated man the spiritual mind rises to a reverent acknowledgment of the Holy Spirit, whose workmanship is seen in all the saints, and the idea of hero-worship is banished from the mind. Within the last few days it has been our joyful privilege to meet with several of the excellent of the earth. . . .

It has been a great means of grace to us in our exile not only to hear the venerable George Müller of Bristol, but to have three long interviews with him, besides uniting with him twice in the breaking of bread and in prayer. Mr. Müller has the look of personified order and simplicity; his appearance is equally removed from show and slovenliness. His face gleams with the quiet cheerfulness which comes of profound restfulness. He believes God with great reality, and practically takes Him at His word, and hence his peace is as a river. His faith has wrought in him great strength of purpose, so far as man is concerned, and something more than submission to the will of the Lord, for he evidently delights himself therein, and, through divine grace, has been made to move in accordance with it. That which struck us most was his evident rejoicing in tribulations, for the only excitement which we noticed in him was at the mention of the trials of his early days, which gave such room for the display of the divine faithfulness. We do not mean that our friend desires trial, but we perceive that when it comes his heart is exceeding glad, and his glory rejoices, because the Lord is now about to reveal Himself more fully, and to honor His divine name yet again. Oh, that we could all learn this lesson and put it into practice!

Mr. Müller gives us more the idea of Enoch than any man we have ever met: he habitually walks with God. Hence his whole life is his religion, and his religion is his whole life. The delightful placidity of the pulpit is retained in the parlor, and the graciousness which is seen in the preacher is just as manifest in the friend. Some may, therefore, suppose that he has about him a sombre air; far from it. He is as bright and happy as a dear, obedient child has a right to be when enjoying his Father's love. He is no monk, and could not be made into a gloomy recluse; the domestic affections are strong within him, and so also is his

love to the brethren, and his desire for the good of all mankind. Nothing cold, austere, or hard has any place with this "man greatly beloved." In our company he displayed to us a special affection, which we heartily reciprocate. We entertain for him a feeling of profound veneration; but in his intercourse with us his humility scarcely allowed him to perceive the fact, and there was an entire absence of anything like a sense of superiority, even of such as greater age and experience might naturally claim. Our communion was very sweet to the younger of the two; may the Lord grant to him a renewal of it. We were deeply humbled at the sight of our friend's beauty of character; not that he said a single word by way of self-praise, but the very reverse, for his total absence of self-consciousness was a leading feature in his conversation. Again and again he said: "The Lord can do without poor George Müller;" but even this was drawn out of him, for with him George Müller is just nothing, and the Lord is all in all. We cannot picture this man of God, he is too bright for our pencil. A soft, subdued light shines upon his image as we try to recall it, a reflection of the moral glory of the Master whom he loves; but mild as is the radiance, it prevents our sketching the man to the life.

With no flash of oratory, or brilliance of poetry, or breadth of thought, or originality of mind, George Müller is enabled to be one of the most useful of living preachers by his simply testifying to facts by which he has for himself proved the love and truth of God. His preaching is the gospel, and nothing else. Of flowers of speech he has none, and we hardly think he cares for them; but of the bread of heaven he has abundance. With speculations he does not intermeddle, but the eternal verities he handles with practical, homely, realizing faith.

No doubts disturb the Director of the Ashley Down Orphanage; how can there be when he sees the Lord daily feeding his 2,050 orphan children in answer to his prayers? Modern thought and the higher criticism never trouble this happy man. He soars aloft. While earth-bound souls are distracted and tormented by the discordant voices of error, he hears the voice of the great Father in heaven, and is deaf to all besides. In his old age, still

hale and strong, he ministers the Word with ceaseless diligence, journeying from place to place as the Lord opens the doors and prepares his way. Free from all anxiety, he enjoys life to the utmost, and if it were right to envy any man we should certainly envy George Müller; we are not, however, under any necessity of so doing, for the same grace worketh in all the saints, and we have but to yield ourselves thereto.

PASTORLESS FLOCKS.

OUR excellent contemporary, "The Watchman," of Boston, United States, has an article upon American churches and their difficulties in finding pastors which is singularly applicable to the condition of things in England. We quote the whole paragraph: —

"It is sad to see sheep without a shepherd, and as sad to see a church without a pastor. At the present time a number of our most able churches are in a pastorless condition. The First Church in Cleveland has no successor to Dr. Gardner. Emanuel Church in Albany has not filled the place of Dr. Bridgman. The First Church in Chicago comes into the number of the pastorless. The old First Church in New York, for the first time in many years, has a vacant pulpit. Warren Avenue Church in Boston still waits. The Tabernacle Church, Albany, parts with Rev. Frank Morse, and puts up the sign, 'Pulpit to let.' The Fourth Church in Philadelphia mourns the withdrawal of its favorite. Other great churches are without pastors. The question arises: 'What is the matter?' We ask not why the pastors left, for in most cases the reason is obvious. But why is not the pulpit filled? Why should Emanuel Church and the Cleveland Church be so many months in securing a new minister? There seems to be a false taste prevailing in our churches which prevents any speedy settlement of a pastor when a vacancy occurs. The habit is to send all about the country to find some wonderful man to do some wonderful work.

When a 'supply committee' is chosen, they look over the field, and get their eyes upon some brilliant man who is supposed to stand at the head of the list. They have the most important field in the country, and feel sure the genius will come. They call, and the call is declined. Then the committee strike a notch lower. Now they are sure, but the elect says, 'No.' Then they try again, a notch lower, with the same result. By this time the committee has learned something. The church is taught humility, and a call is given to some fair man, who accepts, and the machinery gets in motion again. What is to become of these great pastorless churches? They are too big for our theological institutions to fill. They are too important for an ordinary race of ministers. They find nobody in the country equal to their necessities. What is to be done? We might import Spurgeon, but he refuses to be imported. We might call Hugh Stowell Brown, but he will not come. Certain it is that churches must be more moderate in their wants, or we must have a new race of ministers raised up by some special providence. As it is, we have too many big churches, or too many little men. The churches are often made big by fictitious means. They become swollen by self-laudation. Is there no way to swell the ministers? We know of a lot of men good enough for the best of the vacant churches if they could only be swollen a little. An institution to inflate ministers so that they would *fill* vacant pulpits is a desideratum in our times, when so many churches find it so hard to obtain the men they want."

Mr. Watchman is wickedly poking fun when he talks about inflating ministers. No preacher would be improved by being "swollen," and we are quite sure that "The Watchman" would be the very first to object to the process. The remedy lies in the opposite direction. Churches need to be brought down from their exalted notions of themselves, and their self-laudation must come to an end; or else the old proverb will find illustration in unexpected quarters,—"Pride goeth before destruction." When Christian men grow dainty and quarrel with the bread of life because it is not baked in silver tins they are evidently in a sickly condition, and are in need of something else besides an able

preacher. When they are strong and vigorous they can feed on good, wholesome spiritual meat, served up without the condiments of genius and sensationalism: let them judge themselves, and see whether this strength does not still abide with them, and if so, let them shake off their whimsies, and sit down to homely fare like their brethren.

We know at the present moment churches which are worthy of all honor from their past history, their position, and their liberality to the cause of God, — churches which it would be an honor to any man to preside over, for they are composed of intelligent, thoughtful Christian men; and these churches cannot find a minister in all her Majesty's three kingdoms. It would be an injustice to charge any one of the members of those churches with self-conceit, for personally and privately they are each one sober-minded and lowly; but there is a certain something called "the church and its status," of which they are very proud, and when they meet together in their corporate capacity this "church and status" is paramount in their thoughts, and they are as puffed up about it as they well can be. "We must have a man of the first order. It matters not how long we wait, nor where we look, nor what we give; our church is of such a character and occupies such a position that only a first-class preacher can be thought of." Filled with this idea, these brethren have heard some of the excellent of the earth, and have enjoyed their ministry; but they have conscientiously denied themselves the privilege of inviting them to the pastorate, because they have felt that these admirable brethren were lacking in classical attainments or in brilliant oratory. For themselves, and for their children, the esteemed ministers whom they have heard were all they could desire; but there were learned men outside, or men supposed to be learned, persons of influence, or persons thought to be influential, hovering round the church doors, and for the sake of these the sound, edifying divine must be put on one side while they looked for a brother who would be abreast of the times, and would meet the philosophical turn of thought so current among "our more thoughtful young men." We confess to a smile as we write the last five words; for we have heard of these gentlemen so often that we

have the same awe of them as of "the Conservative working man." These churches have several times hit upon the right men, as they thought, and have endeavored to entice them away from the congregations over which they were settled, but their invitations have been respectfully declined. They are still looking out, and probably will be looking out for anything under the next quarter of a century, unless they can modify and moderate their notions of what they ought to find in a minister.

Besides the risks which they run by remaining so long pastorless, risks by no means to be underrated, there is one which they forget, namely, that when they do make their choice they will probably select a man far less worthy of their election than several whom they have passed over. The old story of the boy in the wood who needed a stick, but felt that with so many around him he should be sure to meet with a better one by and by, has been repeated hundreds of times. That worthy, as we all know, came at last to the end of the copse, and was obliged to cut any one he could find, having passed by scores of better ones earlier in the day.

One of the best things that a church can do is to catch a minister young, and train him for themselves. Some of the happiest and longest pastorates in our denomination commenced with the invitation of a young man from the country to a post for which he was barely qualified. His mistakes were borne with, his efforts were encouraged, and he grew, and the church grew with him. His pastorate continued for many a year, since he was under no temptation to leave for another position, because he felt at home, and could say, like one of old, "I dwell among mine own people." If our large churches will not try young men, but must all be provided with tried, experienced, eminent pastors, there will probably be many vacant pulpits, and a great many reasons for their being vacant will be stated by letter-writers in the religious newspapers, — reasons all more or less amusing because they show how men can spin theories, as spiders spin webs, out of their own interiors, making a little substance go a very long way. God has promised to send the churches pastors according to His own heart, but not according to the hearts of those who say: "Our

pulpit is one of the most important in the denomination, and therefore we want something more than sound gospel preaching." Our Lord will never suffer the churches to be destitute of soul-winning and edifying ministers, but He has never promised to give them orators, poets, philosophers, and deep thinkers. The gifts of the Spirit He will not withhold, but there are gifts of mind which are rare, and always will be rare so long as the earth remaineth, and these He may not see fit to give to a larger average of men in this age than in former periods. If the churches direct their choice by these rare mental attainments, the selection of a pastor will be difficult in all cases, and growingly difficult as the number of our churches shall be multiplied.

We by no means suggest that pastors should be chosen in a hurry, or that intelligent churches should select ignorant ministers, or that zeal and spirituality should alone be considered in the election; on the contrary, we heartily recognize the need of care, and we sympathize with the difficulties felt by our larger churches in finding suitable preachers. It is far better to wait for years than to be carried away by a few starring sermons, and choose a man who will cling to the church like a limpet, and suck out its very life like a fungus. Better no man than the wrong man. Our larger and more educated churches might with advantage have refined and learned men as their leaders. We believe that the more a man knows the better, and the more culture he has the better; but at the same time education, refinement, talent, and culture are not everything, and the admiration of them may be carried a great deal too far. Gifts may be exalted above graces, and the flowers of nature made to rival the fruits of the Spirit; and this will be a grievous error. We also believe that large and influential churches should, as a rule, look out men of considerable experience and proved ability to be their spiritual overseers; but even this may be overdone, and so much overdone that, when the Lord sends the right man for the place, he may be rejected, because of his youth, to the church's serious loss. Let the highest and holiest ends of the gospel ministry be well considered, and let a pastor be sought for mainly with the view of edifying the church and glorifying God, and we are persuaded that a pastor will be

found ere long. Let the brethren meet in prayer continually, and lay their case before the great Head of the Church, and we feel persuaded that He who holds the seven stars in His right hand will find a star for each pleading church. We are far from wishing to insinuate that the pastorless churches have not prayed already, but we would urge them to greater importunity in supplication, and beg them to couple with their earnest request a full resolve to have a man not so much of their own choice as of the Lord's own choosing. We may not succeed when we pray for a pastor after our own ideal, but we cannot fail when we lay all our wishes and desires at the Master's feet and cry: "Send by whomsoever Thou wilt send." This business must become more divine and less human; we must look *up* as well as look around, and we shall find the upward glance to be the more successful.

PRAISE OF MEN.

THE youthful worker is very apt to be exalted should he receive a little praise, and there are many injudicious persons who are ready to lavish eulogiums upon any young beginner who seems to be at all promising. How many these foolish talkers have seriously injured it would be hard to say. It may be well to whisper in the young man's ear that very little store is to be set by the approbation of those who will praise a youth to his face; they are mostly fools, and sometimes knaves. "There are that kiss and kill," say the cautious Italians. When a man with a loud mouth praises me, I have good reason to be wary in my dealings with him. The boa-constrictor first covers its victim with saliva and then swallows him; and we have known serpents of both sexes do the same with young preachers. Beware of the net of the flatterer and the bait of the maker of compliments. Human opinion is so changeable, and even while it lasts it is of so mixed a character that it is virtually worth nothing at all. We all remember how the men of Lystra first offered to worship Paul, and then

within an hour began to stone him. Who cares to run for a crown which melts as soon as it wreathes the winner's brow? The flash of a wave or the gleam of a meteor is not more fleeting than popular applause.

Besides, if we are applauded by some we are sure to be obnoxious to others, and it is well to set the one over against the other. It is related of Mr. Kilpin, of Exeter, that, going through the streets of that city, he heard a person say of him as he passed: "If ever there was a good man upon earth, there goes one." This was elevating, but in the next street the effect of this praise was counteracted by Mr. Kilpin's hearing another bystander exclaim: "If ever a man deserved to be hanged, that fellow does! He makes people mad with his preaching." The victim of unwise compliments has only to walk into another room and hear how roundly certain persons are abusing him, and he will find it a very useful tonic. It is never summer all over the world at one time, and no public person is being everywhere esteemed. Probably it is well for the interests of truth that excesses in judgment are relieved by their opposites.

Another consideration is suggested by experience, — namely, that praise is exceedingly weakening. If we allow ourselves to feel its soft and pleasant influence it lays us open to feel the caustic and painful effects of censure. After a judge had passed sentence upon a certain prisoner, the foreman of the jury that had convicted him began to compliment his lordship upon the remarks which he had made and the term of imprisonment which he had awarded; but the judge at once stopped him, knowing well that if he had allowed himself to be praised by one jury he would be liable to be blamed by another. If we are pervious to one influence we shall be subject to its opposite. *We* are quite sure to be slandered and abused, and it is well, therefore, for us to have a somewhat thick skin; but if we listen to commendation it makes us tender, and deprives us of that which might have been like armor to the soul. If we allow ourselves to be charmed by the tinklings of flattery we shall be alarmed by the harsh notes of detraction. We must either be proof against both influences or against neither.

A man who becomes dependent upon the opinions of others lays himself open to contempt. It is impossible to think highly of a person who fishes for compliments. To value esteem so much as to go out of our way after it is the surest possible way to lose it. When we consider how unevenly the human hand holds the balances, we may feel but small concern when we are weighed by our fellow-men. If we consider how infinitely precious is the divine regard, we shall live to gain it, and so shall rise above all slavish consideration of the opinions of our fellows. What said the wise apostle Paul? "But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment: yea, I judge not mine own self. For I know nothing by myself; yet am I not hereby justified: but he that judgeth me is the Lord" (1 Cor. iv. 3, 4).

Individuals there are abroad who can suck in any measure of praise and retain a large receptiveness for more: they take to it, and thrive in it, like fish in water. You may choke a dog with pudding, but you could never satiate, nor even satisfy, these people with praise. To such we tender no advice, for to bid them shun praise would be as useless as to urge the ox to forsake the pasture or the ass its master's crib; such persons are, however, of small worth as a general rule. We have known exceptions. We remember well a man of admirable parts and real graces of character who was nevertheless ridiculously vain; but he was manifestly eccentric, and had to be left as a lot out of catalogue. The rule is that the vain are worthless, and to them the epigram might be applied, —

"Of all speculations the market holds forth
The best that I know for a lover of pelf,
Were to buy Balbus up at the price he is worth,
And sell him at that which he sets on himself!"

BE NOT DISCOURAGED.

WORK for Jesus, when it is done as it ought to be, makes great demands upon the mind and heart. Mere jog-trot routine can keep on by the year together without much wear and tear, and without much result; but when a passion for souls is felt, and the entire being strains its utmost powers in pleading with men, the case is altered. A sermon or an address which sensibly moves the audience makes a large demand upon the heart's blood of the soul: as a rule, it not only costs an ardent preparation and a vehement rush of emotion during delivery, but it tells upon the whole system when it is over, and drains from it much of its force. An express train may put on the continuous brake, and pull up in a short space, but a heart in tremendous action cannot stay itself. For hours, and even for days, the whole man feels the momentum of a thrilling appeal; his soul continues to rise with the theme when his voice is silenced; and when this ceases there is sure to be a reaction, which frequently takes the form of a sinking equal to the previous rise. If not well watched despondency will grow out of this, and the best workers for God will find themselves weak, weary, and tempted to shun the service. This is to be dreaded, and every means must be used to prevent it. Brethren, one who knows by experience what is meant by a downcast spirit, produced by ardent service, would warn you against bringing it upon yourselves. There is need of vehement service, and there must needs be a great draught upon the strength of truly useful men and women; but there is no necessity for our running down too low,—in fact we must not do so, or our usefulness will be marred. We must be careful to guard against monotony of thought, for this eats as doth a canker. We must not dwell so exclusively upon our work and its responsibilities, nor even upon the souls of men and their danger: we must remember more distinctly our Lord and His grace and power to save us and our hearers. We must remember the victories of the cross as well as the ruin of the fall. Even our Lord Jesus did not always reflect

upon the destruction of Jerusalem, or He would have stood weeping over it all His life, and have accomplished nothing for mankind. Let us give the mind a wider sweep, and consider the glories of grace as well as the sorrows of sin. Great joy will help to repair the damage of great work, and with a due measure of rest between we may hope to go on cheerfully from year to year, till our great Master shall call us home.

PERIL FROM THE PULPIT.

THE habit of perpetually mentioning the theories of unbelievers when preaching the gospel, gives a man the appearance of great learning, but it also proves his want of common sense. In order to show the value of wholesome food it is not needful to proffer your guest a dose of poison, nor would he think the better of your hospitality if you did so. Certain sermons are more calculated to weaken faith than to render men believers; they resemble the process through which a poor unhappy dog is frequently passed at the Grotto del Cane at Naples. He is thrown into the gas which reaches up to the spectators' knees, not with the view of killing him, but merely as an exhibition. Lifted out of his vapory bath, he is thrown into a pool of water, and revives in time for another operation. Such a dog is not likely to be a very efficient watch-dog or pursuer of game; and when hearers Sunday after Sunday are plunged into a bath of sceptical thought, they may survive the experiment, but they will never become spiritually strong or practically useful. It is never worth while to make rents in a garment for the sake of mending them, nor to create doubts in order to show how cleverly we can quiet them. Should a man set fire to his house because he has a patent *extincteur* which would put it out in no time, he would stand a chance of one day creating a conflagration which all the patents under heaven could not easily extinguish. Thousands of unbelievers have been born into the family of scepticism by professed preachers of the gospel, who supposed that they were helping them

to faith: the fire fed upon the heaps of leaves which the foolish, well-intentioned speaker cast upon it in the hope of smothering it. Young men in many instances have obtained their first notions of infidelity from their ministers; they have sucked in the poison, but refused the antidote. The devil's catechists in doubt have been the men who were sent to preach "believe and live." This is a sore evil under the sun, and it seems hard to stay it, and yet ordinary common sense ought to teach ministers wisdom in such a matter.

Alas! there are public teachers who do the devil's work wittingly, for if you hear them for a short time you will perceive that nothing is certain with them but their own uncertainty. We one day heard a tradesman selling old lead from off a church to a person who dealt in that metal. "How much have you?" said the buyer. "I will sell you *eighteen* hundredweight," said the seller, "and guarantee the weight if you take it away to-day; but mark you, I will not warrant that there shall be *nine* hundredweight to-morrow." "Why not?" said the buyer. "Why," replied the other, "you know better than I do that lead evaporates very mysteriously." The buyer nodded an understanding nod, and bought for immediate delivery. We also marked the metaphorical statement, and remembered how mysteriously the precious treasure of the gospel "evaporates" in the hands of some workmen who need to be ashamed. "*Heigh, presto!*" and away the wizard makes the essential truth to fly, though every word he uses is as orthodox as the creed. In a book of Indian travels the writer states that he has seen marvellous things performed by jugglers. Believe him who will, he states that he saw two conjurers with a chain fifty cubits long. They threw one end of it into the air, and there it remained suspended. A dog walked up the chain and disappeared; then a goat came forward and did the same; and afterwards a lion and a tiger mounted and vanished in like manner. Our "deep thinkers" perform this trick to perfection. The heavenward end of their chain of thought is fixed somewhere in cloudland, and up this precious chain of theirs they have long ago sent the doctrine of the substitution of Christ, the immortality of the soul, the plenary inspiration of Scripture, and

other eternal verities; and now it is hinted that the deity of our Lord, the resurrection from the dead, and the personality of God are to be regarded as moot points. Up into the air all positive truths are to go one after another till nothing will be left. At what conclusion will they arrive? As yet they have come to no conclusion but this — that nothing can ever be concluded.

But silence! If you say half a word you will be called uncharitable, or perhaps you will be charged with bearing false witness against your neighbor. Rats may undermine a Dutch dyke and drown a province, but to hunt them would be cruelty to animals. Have not the creatures as much right to their own course as you have? Burglars may break into our houses, and even take our lives; but hold off, ye police! be not so uncharitable as to interrupt a dexterity so admirable, or to raise a hue and cry against *artistes* so proficient. They are amiable men in family life, very clever in conversation, and much esteemed in their own circles; why render their occupation uncomfortable? They simply differ upon matters of opinion as to rights of property, and if they are a little heterodox, there are only two letters of difference between *meum* and *tuum*, and it is a shame to make men offenders for so insignificant a distinction. Bah! We execrate the thief, and with equal justice ought we to expose and to condemn the traitor who robs us of heavenly treasure, of truth vital to eternal life, truth which is absolutely needful to our soul's salvation. Pleas of charity to error are arguments for the murder of souls. Life and death hang upon the question of truth or falsehood; if lies be propagated or truth be clouded, the watchmen of the Lord will have to give in their account for permitting it. For our part we shall not cease to warn till the occasion is removed, and at this present time that occasion is by no means gone, for the world swarms with —

“Philosophers who darken and put out
Eternal truth by everlasting doubt;
Discoverers of they know not what, confined
Within no bounds — the blind that lead the blind.”

Till these have all fallen into the ditch and cleared the road for honest teachers we must not cease to warn every man, that none may be fatally deceived by them.

ON BEING IN TIME.

PUNCTUALITY is one of the minor moralities, but it is one which every young man should carefully cultivate. The very smallness of the virtue makes its opposite vice the less excusable. It is as easy to be in time as it is to be five minutes late when you once acquire the habit. Let it be acquired by all means, and never lost again. Upon that five minutes will depend a world of comfort to others, and every Christian should consider this to be a very weighty argument. We have no right to cause worry and aggravation to others, when a little thoughtfulness on our part would prevent it. If the engagement be for twelve o'clock, we have no authority to make it 12.5, and by doing so we shall promote nobody's happiness. That odd five minutes may create discomfort for ourselves throughout the entire day, and this perhaps may touch the sluggard a little more keenly than any less selfish consideration. He who begins a little late in the morning will have to drive fast, will be constantly in a fever, and will scarcely overtake his business at night; whereas he who rises in proper time can enjoy the luxury of pursuing his calling with regularity, ending his work in fit season, and gaining a little portion of leisure. Late in the morning may mean puffing and blowing all the day long, whereas an early hour will make the pace an easy one. This is worth a man's considering. Much evil comes of hurry, and hurry is the child of unpunctuality.

The waste of other people's time ought to touch the late man's conscience. A gentleman, who was a member of a committee, rushed in fifteen minutes behind the appointed hour, and scarcely apologized, for to him the time seemed near enough; but a Quaker, who happened also to be on the committee, and had been compelled to wait, because a quorum could not be made up to proceed with the business, remarked to him: "Friend, thou hast wasted a full hour. It is not only thy quarter of an hour which thou hast lost, but the quarter of an hour of each of the other

three; and hours are not so plentiful that we can afford to throw them away." We once knew a brother whom we named "the late Mr. S——," because he never came in time. A certain tart gentleman, who had been irritated by this brother's unpunctuality, said that the sooner that name was literally true the better for the temper of those who had to wait for him. Many a man would much rather be fined than be kept waiting. If a man *must* injure me, let him rather plunder me of my cash than of my time. To keep a busy man waiting is an act of impudent robbery, and is also a constructive insult. It may not be so intended, but certainly if a man has proper respect for his friend, he will know the value of his time, and will not cause him to waste it. There is a cool contempt in unpunctuality, for it as good as says: "Let the fellow wait; who is he that I should keep my appointment with him?"

In this world, matters are so linked together that you cannot disarrange one without throwing others out of gear; if one business is put out of time, another is delayed by the same means. The other day we were travelling to the Riviera, and the train after leaving Paris was detained for an hour and a half. This was bad enough, but the result was worse, for when we reached Marseilles the connecting train had gone, and we were not only detained for a considerable time, but were forced to proceed by a slow train, and so reached our destination six hours later than we ought to have done. All the subsequent delay was caused through the first stoppage. A merchant once said to us: "A. B. is a good fellow in many respects, but he is so frightfully slow that we cannot retain him in our office, because, as all the clerks work into each other's hands, his delays are multiplied enormously, and cause intolerable inconvenience. He is a hindrance to the whole system, and he had better go where he can work alone." The worst of it is that we cannot send unpunctual people where they can work alone. To whom or whither should they go? We cannot rig out a hermitage for each one, or that would be a great deliverance. If they prepared their own dinners, it would not matter that they dropped in after every dish had become cold. If they preached sermons to themselves, and had no other audience,

it would not signify that they began consistently seven minutes behind the published hour. If they were their own scholars, and taught themselves, it would be of no consequence if the pupil sat waiting for his teacher for twenty minutes. As it is, we in this world cannot get away from the unpunctual, nor get them away from us, and therefore we are obliged to put up with them; but we should like them to know that they are a gross nuisance, and a frequent cause of sin, through irritating the tempers of those who cannot afford to squander time as they do. If this should meet the eye of any gentleman who has almost forgotten the meaning of the word "punctuality," we earnestly advise him to try and be henceforth five minutes *too soon* for every appointment, and then perhaps he will gradually subside into the little great virtue which we here recommend. Could not some good genius get up a Punctuality Association, every member to wear a chronometer, set to Greenwich time, and to keep appointments by the minute-hand? Pledges should be issued, to be signed by all sluggish persons who can summon up sufficient resolution totally to abstain from being behind time in church or chapel, or on committee, or at dinner, or in coming home from the office in the evening. Ladies eligible as members upon signing a special pledge to keep nobody waiting while they run upstairs to pop on their bonnets. How much of sinful temper would be spared, and how much of time saved, we cannot venture to guess. Try it.

XXIV.

REVIEWS.

You will need heavenly teaching, that you may carefully select the wheat, and keep it free from the darnel of error. We must even winnow out of it our own thoughts and opinions, for these may not be according to the mind of God. Men are not saved by our word, but by God's Word. We are bound to see that we know the gospel, and teach the whole of it. We shall have enough to do if we look well to the seed-basket, lest, peradventure, we should sow tares as well as wheat, or should cast good seed wantonly, where it can only feed evil birds. — C. H. SPURGEON.

REVIEWS.

AS soon as our monthly "Sword and Trowel" comes to hand we first glance at the "Personal Notes," reserving the weightier articles for leisure moments. But we somehow manage an after-dinner pause for the "Reviews." Thousands of books pass through Mr. Spurgeon's hands and under his sharp eye, although it cannot be expected that he personally attends to every book sent him for review. Nevertheless, the touch of his hand, the kindness of his heart, his jealousy for the truth, his great good-humor, keen wit, and terrible scalpel-knife are readily discerned, according as the subject commends itself to his judgment or calls forth his righteous indignation. In his brief expositions of other men's works we have found "a feast of reason and a flow of soul." The subjoined specimens will prove a treat, as well as impart instruction.

Paper, Pens, and Ink: a. Brief Sketch of the Principal Writing Materials used in all ages. By DANIEL FRAZER.

A SMALL book upon a fruitful topic. It is conceived in an excellent spirit, but written in an execrable style. We do not like such Frazerized English. If the matter had been clothed in the ordinary language of our country, without new words, slipshod expressions, and inaccuracies, we should have heartily recommended the book. Here is a pretty sentence: "The collection of English rags gives employment to great numbers of itinerant china merchants, *alias* 'bowl-women and men,' as well as to the architects, artificers, and retailers of the gaudily-painted, but non-grinding

'windmills' that bedeck the 'one-wheel carriages' of the 'old iron, old brass' merchants who perambulate, to the infinite delight of 'the young and rising generation,' our urban by-lanes and retired streets, our sequestered villages and secluded hamlets."

The History of the Teacup; with a Descriptive Account of the Potter's Art.
By the Rev. G. R. WEDGWOOD.

It has seldom fallen to our lot to read a book so full of interesting details all directly bearing upon the subject in hand. It is singular that there should be a Rev. Wedgwood to write a history of the teacup, and as appropriate as it is singular. We think that this Wedgwood as much excels in writing the history as the other Wedgwood did in making the teacup itself. Old and young will be equally pleased with this book. There is no "padding" in it, no introduction of foreign themes in order to swell the size of the book. The author is never dry or prolix, he says what he has to say, says it briefly, and says it well. There may be more laborious histories of the art of pottery; we do not doubt that there are several which a man might go to sleep over; but for putting the matter in a nutshell, commend us to the present pretty little volume.

An Examination of the Doctrines of Conditional Immortality and Universalism.

THE doctrine of Conditional Immortality, or, as we prefer to call it, Religious Materialism, is here very thoroughly refuted. The idea that man is but a brute, as soulless as a dog or a lion, until conversion takes place, is to us unaccountably profane and absurd, and yet it is held by many preachers of the modern school. Its logical contradictions are mercilessly exposed in this short volume, and its distortion of the Scriptures made apparent. Heretic-hunting is sorry work, but in the hands of our author it is powerfully and thoroughly performed. May it accomplish the work it designs, in helping many who have been bewildered by strange fancies to return again to the old paths!

The Unsafe Anchor: or, 'Eternal Hope' a False Hope. Being Strictures on Canon Farrar's Westminster Abbey Sermons.

ALTHOUGH the interest and excitement caused by Canon Farrar's sermons have very largely vanished, yet it was well that the antidote here provided should be preserved in a permanent form. The poison — as we believe it to be — was presented in essentially a popular and insidious manner, and the mischief has not yet ceased to work. Hence the value of this little volume, though it comes somewhat late in the day. The author does not play with his opponent, but in his sturdy, trenchant style handles very roughly the stale fallacies and insipid sentimentalities of the Canon. His exposure of the contradictions of the preacher's view — or, rather, position, without definite view — is exceedingly powerful. We heartily agree with his summary of the sermons when he says: "I have never read a work by an Anglican divine of which the theology was so shallow, the reasoning so inconclusive, or the criticism so unsatisfactory. Certainly I never encountered one the style of which was so offensively arrogant, so passionately dogmatic."

A New Basis of Belief in Immortality.

THOSE sceptics of the present day who find in modern culture a motive for repudiating Christian faith are often grievously afflicted with unrest. Their thoughts are like the troubled sea. Gladly would they get into some port where their heads would cease to swim. This is the disease for which this book prescribes a remedy, — a remedy as bad as the disease. With a delicate pathos, such as we meet with in advertisements that describe the symptoms of sufferers, and prescribe patent medicines warranted to effect an immediate cure, Spiritualism is propounded in this treatise as a sure relief and a safe remedy for the soul sickness that is prevalent among agnostics. Modern spiritualism, we are told, was initiated by a little girl named Kate Fox, in the year 1848, at Hydersville, New York. With the phenomena of automatic writing, clairvoyance, and trance-speaking, through the interposition of what they call mediums, we have become too well acquainted, through the impostures that have been recently

practised on credulous victims. There would seem, however, to be educated people on the face of this queer world who not only themselves believe in these lying wonders, but think that the Scriptures give countenance to them. "Was not young Samuel a medium?" they will ask us. We shrink with horror from every species of sorcery. In the hands of some interpreters the Bible is made to teach anything they like to impute to it.

The Epoch of the Mammoth, and the Apparition of Man on the Earth.

THIS is not a theological work, although it is evidently designed to serve a theological end. By the citation of numerous scientific facts it aims to refute certain scientific hypotheses that have too easily become popular in this age of pyrrhonism, and so to reconcile the results of scientific research with the received interpretation of Scripture. The Christian philosopher is not in fashion just now. He gets the cold shoulder in scientific circles. Such circles are very select, and the evidence they admit is rather exclusive. After pursuing their inquiry into the operations of nature with commendable patience, they perplex themselves with endless conjectures as to the explanation of the conflicting phenomena which they have observed. The balance of probabilities has then to be discussed, and when the pros and cons come to be fairly poised, we are left in doubt on which side the verdict is to be entered. Of course it is of little consequence; for whether the fossil-man is to be carried back to the glacial age or not, counsel will be sure to move for a new trial before the rising of the court. Nor is there any difficulty in showing cause. The field is large, new excavations are continually being made, the aid of stronger microscopic power is persistently sought, and a keener sense of entire disinterestedness is emulated among students. Working on his own lines, Dr. Southall has produced a highly interesting volume. Assuming that pretty nearly all that can be known is known(!) he sums up the evidence, and shows that the Scriptures have not been broken. At such an assumption the *savans* may smile: but the bias from which they vaunt themselves to be pure betrays itself too palpably. They are never pleased with any confirmation of the ancient archives; nothing seems to

delight them more than to detect a semblance of discrepancy between sacred testimony and modern discovery. For our own part we hail the light that streams upward from the dark places of the earth. Archæology, geology, and physical geography are the very sciences that God has ordained to be His witnesses, to frustrate the tokens of liars, to make diviners mad, and to confirm the word of His servants the prophets.

Popular Recreation : the Theatre as it is ; and the Ober-Ammergau Play.

By REV. C. BULLOCK, B.D.

MR. BULLOCK has done right well in smiting hip and thigh the modern theatre, which, by the confession even of the daily papers, which make no pretence of being religious, is growing more and more impure. How Christian men and women, above all how Christian ministers, can defend it, we cannot tell. We should like to scatter this little book broadcast by thousands, and let our rising manhood and womanhood be taught to shun these nineteenth-century lazar-houses. Well done, Mr. Bullock; more strength to your arm!

Studies in the Gospel according to St. Matthew. By Rev. J. CYND DYLAN JONES.

YES, these sermons will do. They are far above the average of such productions, and have a dew upon them which sparkles and refreshes. We like everything in this worthy Welshman's book, although we cannot pronounce his name.

What is Truth? As it is manifested by considering the Creator, Creation, Revelation, and Man.

WE do not see how the author answers the question of the title. After trying in vain to read and understand this limp, yellow-covered emanation, we give it up in despair, and say: "How we wish writers would have mercy upon readers, and at least put their nonsense in language that can be understood." Some styles of writing could fairly be described as "pea-soup" styles, — cloudy, thick, muddy; but for ourselves we prefer clear, honest, downright Saxon.

The Fatherhood of God.

ONE of the most poetic, beautiful, pseudo-philosophic, but altogether erroneous books on the Fatherhood of God which we ever read. As insidious and attractive as it can be, but altogether subversive of the very fundamental truths of the gospel concerning man's ruin, regeneration, and redemption. Our advice concerning it would be the same as given with respect to the proper way of preparing cucumber. "Carefully peel and slice it, flavor with pepper, salt, and vinegar, and then — eat it? Oh, no; *throw it on the dunghill!*"

A Man every Inch of Him: or, The Story of Frank Fullerton's School-days.
By J. JACKSON WRAY.

CAPITAL! first-rate! and every other adjective that will express our unmingled admiration of this book of books for English boys. Once let it be seen and dipped into, and no boy will be able to rest until he has read to the end; and then he'll want more. Why, it kept us up long after bedtime, made us laugh and cry just as it liked, and, when we left off, set us longing to be young again, took the wrinkles out of our face, and almost made our creaking limbs to grow supple! Well done, Mr. Wray! you have given young and old boys alike a treat, and in the name of boydom in general we vote you "a brick." It's just the book for a Christmas-box, a birthday present, or a prize gift; and we hope will be as plentifully scattered as snowflakes in January.

Poor Papa.

WE have had enough of this kind of literature. "Helen's Babies" was clever and amusing, but one such book is quite enough for a generation: this poor and strained imitation of it might have been spared us. Are American children of the character here depicted? Is the law of God, which bids children honor and obey their parents, regarded as an obsolete rule? We are sorry, indeed, if this be the case! The rule of the household is the root and foundation of all government; and where it is neglected boys will not grow up to be good citizens, nor will girls

become gracious wives. There are cases around us where children are allowed to be the tyrants of the family, but they are not so many as to be the rule, nor so glaring as to suggest a parallel case to that of "Poor Papa." We should be very hard up for fun before we should waste an hour over such a poor affair as this.

Everlasting Punishment not Everlasting Pain.

IF assumption is as good as argument, and dogmatism as good as demonstration in proof of the truth of a position, then this pamphlet is unassailable, for it is full of dogmatic assumption. Instead of the infallible standard of Scripture we are constantly referred to the "instincts of humanity," and thus a kind of religious rationalism is substituted in place of devout faith in the Bible and its declarations. We should fear the results of the publication of this pamphlet were it not as feeble as it is fallacious, — which is saying a great deal. Materialism, under the guise of annihilation, will need to get more manly and more powerful to win many converts; and even then we shall prefer the manliness and power of Jesus Christ.

Gough's Portrait.

A FINE lithographed portrait of John B. Gough for one shilling. Seldom have we seen so striking a likeness; you can almost hear him say, "Water for me!"

Christianity and the Science of Religion. By Rev. J. S. BANKS.

IT has become fashionable in certain quarters to assert that the Christian religion is only a development of man's genius. The Hibbert Lectures of Max Müller and Renan have made this theory popular and plausible, and now, in place of a Word of God, the Scriptures are turned into a human evolution. Mr. Banks, whose knowledge of the Hindoo mind gained as a missionary gives him peculiar qualifications for the task, sets himself to disprove this from the facts of the Hindoo religion. And very powerful is the result. Ninety-nine Christians out of a hundred have never been troubled on the question; but the hundredth, and Biblical students in general, will be greatly helped by this lecture.

Clear logic and relentless argument make the ghostly theories to fly before our author's piercing analysis; and after the mists and fogs are dissipated, there stands the Word of God as immovable a rock as ever. Well done, Mr. Banks!

The Christian's Plea against Modern Unbelief.

THE argument, the author, and the auspices under which this treatise is brought out, all combine to bespeak for it a favorable consideration. As a manual, prepared at the request of "The Christian Evidence Society," it deals mainly with the outworks of the Church's citadel. In discussing first principles—such as the existence of God, the possibility of revelation, the credibility of miracles, the fulfilment of prophecy, or the canon of Scripture—with professed sceptics and positive opponents of the gospel, those who plead for truth are often awkwardly apologetic. Too much deference is shown to the doubter, and if he has an academical degree, it is supposed to impart authority to his dogged disbelief. Mr. Redford has acquitted himself well in furnishing the Christian advocate with a systematic view, on the one hand, of the various phases of infidelity, skilfully focussed; and, on the other hand, of the facts, historic or rational, which bear witness to those truths that cannot be shaken however much they may be assailed. But what about those individuals whose proclivities are in a greater or lesser degree atheistic? Have we an essay here that is likely to reclaim them? Our author imagines that simple theism may become an *adytum* to the inner sanctuary of more select evidences. "Like travellers passing through various regions [of desert land and cloudy atmosphere!], and being variously affected on the way; having reached the end of the journey, the retrospect is an unbroken and restful assurance." We are not so sanguine. Such pilgrims to the promised land have never crossed our path. We have never witnessed any real converting power till we could get people within those lines that he scrupulously avoids. To his idea it is not only permissible, but helpful, to separate the theism of Christianity from the doctrines of the Christian faith; and the authority of Scripture from the interpretation of its contents; in a word, by reasoning, to break down

their negations without instructing them in any positives in lieu thereof. This is a curious experiment; but let a lady, who had studied more philosophy, ancient and modern, than the most of us, relate her experience in better words than we can aspire to: —

“I read books bad and good — some bad and good
 At once; (good aims not always make good books;
 Well-tempered spades turn up ill-smelling soils
 In digging vineyards even) books that prove
 God's being so definitely, that man's doubt
 Grows self-defined the other side the line,
 Made atheist by suggestion.”

For other reasons than Mrs. Barrett Browning would assign, we are convinced that the cold logic of Christian evidences is a poor specific that has seldom or never proved a cure for unbelief. That department of polite literature called Natural Religion leads nowhere and profiteth nothing, so far as we could ever ascertain. It fills the air with volatile sentiment, and expresses itself in lackadaisical phrases about “the benevolence of the Creator,” “the beauty of His works,” or “the traces of design that are scattered through the universe.” Simple theism is a paltry subterfuge. What these poor souls need is saving faith. Why should we dally with their prejudices? The first postulate is this: “He that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.” The second postulate is: “He that believeth in God must accept Christ as a mediator.” And the third postulate is: “He that accepteth the one Mediator between God and men must receive the atonement.” Or otherwise, should the honest sceptic be persuaded to acknowledge a Deity, he cannot possibly rejoice in God or sing praises unto the Lord with the spirit and the understanding. For a Christian minister to plead with an infidel to become a theist sounds preposterous to us. If it is only an initiative, yet it is such an initiative as one might use in attempting gradually to reform criminals by entreating burglars not to carry firearms. The ministry of the Holy Spirit knows no half measures.

On the works of fiction sent him for review, Mr. Spurgeon writes: We confess that the heaps of tale-books are not person-

ally perused by us; we would sooner break stones. As folks will have these religious fictions, we do our best to let them know which of them are well-intentioned, but we do not advise the reading of them to any great extent. A little pastry may be all very well (our slow digestion suggests that the less the better), but to live upon it would be to generate dyspepsia and all sorts of ills; even so, an interesting story now and again may be a relief and a pleasure, but a constant course of such reading must injure both mind and heart. From the quantity of fiction which we have lately received we should think that its perusal needs no encouraging, and a little repression might be healthy.

Holy-Days and Holidays.

ALTHOUGH most of these holy-days and holidays are the offspring of sheer superstition, yet we may as well know the ways and follies of our neighbors, and this book sets them forth in a pleasant manner. It is clear that our forefathers in the days of "merrie England" went very earnestly into the work of making fools of themselves.

The Doctrines of Annihilation and Universalism viewed in the Light of Reason, Analogy, and Revelation.

THIS is a second edition of a work which we favorably reviewed some two years ago. It is now furnished with additional notes on "Salvator Mundi." It is a good antidote to the pernicious assumptions of the Universalist school, and therefore it deserves a large sale; but we are sick of the whole controversy. It is a remarkable thing to note the limited range of heresy, and how it is obliged to dish up its old, old fragments, and palm them off as novelties labelled "Modern Thought."

John Ploughman's Talk. By C. H. SPURGEON. Three Hundred and Tenth Thousand.

THE sale of our book has amazed its author. It has been said that it is not original, but only a number of proverbs strung together: this is strictly true, and no one is more ready to own it than John Ploughman; but why did not some one else carry out

the idea of putting proverbs together? Any one can make an egg stand on its end when once he has seen it done. Our book is simplicity itself, and quite devoid of genius, and yet here it is, in a new edition, selling still after three hundred thousand have gone forth. We thought it time to improve the shape of the book and throw in a few engravings, and now we hope that John Ploughman will take a new lease and run on to half a million. Its strength lies in the wholesome proverbs which are floating about everywhere, but have here been diligently collected and congenially dovetailed so as to make up lively, continuous reading, intended to convey good morals to the myriads of working men who will never read that which is dull and dreary, however profound may be the instruction contained therein.

The Unwelcome Baby, and what became of Him.

“THE Unwelcome Baby” is the Rev. John Todd, and this book commences with his life. The title looks to us a little like a dodge for selling the book, for “The Unwelcome Baby” only occupies a third part of it, and the rest is made up of the lives of John Coleridge Patteson, Mary Fletcher, Alfred Cookman, Fidelia Fiske, and Emile Cook. We shall never cease to protest against this radically false method of naming a book from one of its articles. In this case, should anybody be led to buy the book by the title he will be able to put it into the hand of a youngster without fear, or rather with the full hope that it will do him good.

Crocker, the Clown.

IF any young gentleman should be inspired with the ambition of figuring in a travelling show, he will probably be delivered from the infatuation by reading this amusing history of Jameson’s Grand American Circus. We believe that such books as this answer a real and practical purpose by dispelling the false charms which surround theatrical performances. If somebody would write a book to take the glory out of “Robinson Crusoe,” it would be one of the best works of our generation, for multitudes of lads are no doubt led astray and ruined for practical business purposes by that masterpiece of fiction.

The Masque Torn Off. By T. DE WITT TALMAGE, D. D.

WITH Mr. Talmage in preaching the gospel we are heartily at one, but from Mr. Talmage as an amateur detective we part company. It may not only be right to enter the dens of New York in order to expose their evils, but it may even be heroic to do so: it is not, however, a work which we would undertake for any consideration, nor one from which, according to our judgment, any great benefit can arise. Mr. Talmage seems to us to make small progress in depth of spirituality and fulness of divine experience, but to be straining himself to say striking things. This is not a state of things to be commended, and we hope that the preacher will grow out of it; at the same time we are sure that his sermons have charms for many minds, and that they do not deserve the savage condemnation which critics have poured upon them.

Infidelity Refuted: or, The Christian Safeguard against its Errors.

EXTERNALLY this book is singularly unattractive, for the paper cover does not bear a line or word of title; but within there is much to commend. Persons in doubt as to vital truths will be helped by the clear, logical arguments here put in order; and those who seek the conversion of the sceptic will find in this treatise a powerful weapon for defence and attack. The form of question and answer spoils a book for consecutive reading, but it has its advantages when the object is controversy. If any of our readers are driven into contact with Atheists, and desire a handy book which may aid them in defending the truth, we would urge them to purchase Mr. Preston's little work.

Companion to the Revised Version of the English New Testament.

By A. ROBERTS, D. D.

EVERY student of the Bible who can afford half-a-crown should get this most useful and entertaining volume. It contains the sort of reading which has the most charm for us, for it deals with the Scriptures themselves and their meaning in a most pleasant manner. Reading this "Companion," the alterations of the Revised Version become vastly more intelligible; for one sees the why

and the wherefore for each of them. Sitting down to these pages with the two versions before us we forget all the worries of life, and beguile the hour in a manner which leaves substantial profit behind. Even if the reader should be innocent of Greek, Dr. Roberts will give him abundant instruction; but if he has a thorough acquaintance with the sacred tongue he will not find the work superfluous. We take the utmost pleasure in commending the little book to all Christian people, especially to those who are teachers of others.

A Reason for the Hope that is in You: or, What the Baptists Believe, and Why. By Rev. W. HANSON.

THIS is a well-written manual, very instructive and convincing. It deserves to be studied by all our Baptist Bible-classes, that our young people may know what their fathers believe, and why. There is a remarkable clearness and completeness about the work for so small a book, and its tone is all that could be desired. It deserves to be bought by every Baptist, and then lent or given to those who as yet have not entered into our liberty. We might differ from the writer here and there, but we much prefer to take off our hat and say, "Mr. Hanson, we are all obliged to you."

The Philosophy of Science, Experience, and Revelation.

WE have heard of metaphysics being defined as "an attempt to tell another what you do not understand yourself;" and such a description would well apply to the philosophy which the author of this work tries to expound. Everything in heaven and in earth is dabbled in; and, where confusion already existed, it is worse confounded by this attempt at explanation. The climax of absurdity is reached when we are told that for man to be renewed in the divine image, all that is needed is the study of the example of Jesus Christ. For "to redeem man the Invisible God manifests Himself as man, and by His life in Jesus Christ shows to men a perfect example of how they ought to live, and to teach them that since God has found a means of being gracious to them, they ought also to be gracious and forgiving towards each other," — a mixture of diluted Socinianism and metaphysical muddle.

Sermons. By the Rev. PHILLIPS BROOKS.

THESE sermons would never have been brought under public notice if they had not come from a rector of an Episcopal church at Boston, in America,—and had they not possessed the modern attraction of originality of thought struggling for expression in a loose and irregular style. They are more rational than evangelical, more intellectual than rational, and more emotional than intellectual. How far the two extremes of this book and the New Testament are apart may be judged by one brief quotation: "Such, then, is the story of Christ's crucifixion, in and with and for humanity. It is no fantastic conception of the imputation to Him of a sinfulness which was not His, of God's counting Him guilty of wickedness which He had never done. It is something infinitely, awfully more real than that." If we inquire what that something is, we are told it is an example of self-sacrifice, or dying unto sin. Such sermons, and their name is legion, remind us of those words of the far-seeing Isaiah: "Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow." "This verse," a certain commentator observes, "is addressed to the Pharisees and Sadducees, and such as refuse the light of the Divine Word, but kindle a fire of their own, compassing themselves about with false doctrines and corrupting the truth. The power of Christ shall extinguish all such, and envelop them with darkness and despair." It is not surely with unrighteous indignation that we thus speak, when we see those in high places of the Church on both sides of the Atlantic who, when for the time they ought to be teachers, have need that one teach them again which be the first principles of the oracles of God.

Social Purity: an Address. By JOSEPHINE E. BUTLER.

WE are sorry that there should be need for a lady to deliver such an address, but as there is such a need we rejoice that the woman is forthcoming who is not ashamed to vindicate her sex. We live in a wretched age, when princes and peers have thought

it an honor to enjoy the society of a strumpet, and Christian newspapers advocate the theatre. Contagious diseases acts are passed to make it safe for men to sin, and licenses are issued for the torturing of dumb animals. It is enough to make the stones to speak, and we wonder not that women, bursting through their natural retirement, rush forward to plead for chastity and humanity while there is yet a relic of it left. May the Social Purity Alliance prosper so greatly that its lady members may yet be able to hold their tongues, and keep clear consciences too.

Thought Blossoms, gathered at Richmond. By J. HUNT COOKE.

REAL poetry! A rare thing to find much of that article among the rhymes which come to us in bewildering profusion. But this little, limp, thin affair is not of the common order after all. We groaned as we picked it up, "Poetry again!" or did we say *Poor try?* However, we groan no longer, for we have been rewarded for our pains by finding amid the ore far more numerous traces of precious metal than we are wont to discover. Mr. Cooke does not rival Cowper or Young, but he sings very sweetly, and strikes out many living thoughts. Here are voices from among the trees, well rendered into the language of mortals: —

THE VOICES OF THE WIND.

"Diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit." — 1 Cor. xii. 4.

I lay in a grove one noonday clear,
And listened, the language of trees to hear.

The selfsame wind that gave them speech
A different message spoke through each.

The elm, that towered in majestic height,
Told of a rushing, unseen might.

The willow, that stood the river by,
Said, "life was sad," with a long-drawn sigh.

The poplar, whose head so high was reared,
Shrieked with alarm, for he danger feared.

The birch, with whispering long and low,
Hinted at mystery none might know.

The oak upreared a noble form,
But solemnly spoke of the power of storm.

The beech clapt together its thousand hands,
And seemed to rejoice in the wind's commands.

The firs in deep low thunder tones
Declared that the breeze came laden with moans.

The linden in whispers seemed to tell,
Though life was mystery all was well.

To each the wind had revealed the same,
But from each a different utterance came.

So does a rumor to men appear, —
To some it brings joy, to others fear.

Some, dark spots on the sun will find;
Some, that each cloud is silver-lined.

Thus the Spirit of God, in various ways,
By men declares His glorious praise.

In each some diverse gift we see,
And learn a lesson of charity.

For harmony only beautifies,
When different sounds together rise.

On a Book on Cookery.

FROM our domestic department comes the verdict, "Very good." If we could multiply Mrs. Warren, in fact, have a warren of Warrens, what a blessing it would be! Cleanliness is next to godliness, and cookery is next to cleanliness. How many times a man is made to sin by seeing good meat spoiled, and excellent food served up in a dirty, sickening manner. Surely it was a grievous temptation to wrath when a hungry traveller ordered chops at an inn within a hundred miles of London, and had them served up swimming in greasy, watery gravy — *fried!* He had been hoping to have them fresh from a clear fire, — but he was assured that they did not cook chops in that way in this part of the country. It is time that missionaries should be sent into such a benighted region. Half the food that is eaten in England is spoiled before it comes to table. Working men's wives, many of them, need to learn to

cook; and to teach them this science would go far towards making their homes comfortable and their husbands sober. It is a pity that the animal, man, should be so much governed by his food, but it is so, and therefore those who would keep a man good-tempered, especially an Englishman, should know how to cook his victuals for him. There is more religion in making home comfortable and cooking food properly than in all the millinery and horticulture of High-Church ceremonials.

Mrs. Warren's book is a valuable help to housewives.

A Book of Remembrance in Relation to the Mystery of God.

WE give it up. The author, probably, had some meaning upon his mind when he wrote his book, but he has concealed it by his words. We have tried a friend or two, getting them to read a page or so, but, like ourselves, they were dead beaten before long, and declared that they could neither make top nor tail of it. Distant approximations to sense occur, but they only tempt the reader onward into some sentences so obscure that he finds himself utterly lost. If anybody wishes to be completely confused and bewildered, let him read this book.

PSALM LXXXII.

THE kings of earth are in the hands
Of God who reigns on high,
He in their council-chamber stands,
And sees with watchful eye.

Though foolish princes tyrants prove,
And tread the godly down,
Though earth's foundations all remove,
He weareth still the crown.

They proudly boast a godlike birth,
In death, like men, they fall
Arise, O God, and judge the earth,
And rule the nations all.

When shall Thy Son, the Prince of Peace,
Descend with glorious power?
Then only shall oppression cease:
Oh, haste the welcome hour.

C. H. SPURGEON.

XXV.

LETTERS.

THE object of the gospel is not to make men anxious, but to calm their anxieties ; not to fill them with endless controversy, but to lead them into all truth. The gospel gives rest of conscience by the complete forgiveness of sin through the atoning blood of Christ ; rest of heart by supplying an object for the affections worthy of their love ; and rest of intellect by teaching it certainties which can be accepted without question. Our message does not consist of things guessed at by wit, nor evolved out of man's inner consciousness by study, nor developed by argument through human reason ; but it treats of revealed certainties, absolutely and infallibly true, upon which the understanding may rest itself as thoroughly as a building rests upon a foundation of rock. — C. H. SPURGEON.

LETTERS.

MR. SPURGEON'S correspondence is simply voluminous. We were present on one occasion when his mail-bag arrived, and soon hundreds of letters lay piled on his table. Naturally, while human nature is what it is, he is questioned on every subject in heaven, and earth, and under the earth. Thousands of letters in the year must reach the waste-basket, but no letter of importance escapes his notice, and he is occupied for hours each Saturday answering correspondents. Many letters reach him, extracts of which find their way to the pages of his magazine. The preacher who receives them must feel deeply thankful that he is so highly honored of God in the ministry of the gospel. Many of them possess peculiar interest, and to gratify our readers we subjoin specimen copies. Their publication is not designed to glorify the preacher, but to magnify the grace of God in him and benefit each reader by their perusal.

A friend in Sydney writes as follows: —

“DEAR MR. SPURGEON, — It seems natural when help is given to acknowledge it, and I hope, therefore, you will not think that I am taking a liberty in writing to thank you for the great assistance you have been to me personally through the medium of two of your published sermons.

“The two sermons I refer to were entitled ‘Prayer Perfumed with Praise’ (No. 1469), and ‘Mistrust of God Deplored and Denounced’ (No. 1498). By reading these I have been led to exercise faith in a way never thought of before, and as a result have experienced a confidence sufficient to secure a long-desired

blessing of a very practical kind; and though the responsibility attaching to such new circumstances is great, the assurance given that I shall be upheld according to His Word, and not be ashamed of my hope, is far greater.

“Allow me then, to thank you on my own behalf, and also on the part of another, for the blessing your sermons have been.

From Victoria: —

“MY DEAR SIR, — I have often felt inclined to write you these last twelve years. At that time I lost a darling boy; everything seemed dark, and nothing brought me any comfort. The Word of God, that had been my stay through many similar 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 consented. I forget the title, but it was that everything was ordered by God — no chance. I felt all the time my friend was reading afraid to breathe. I could only say, ‘Go on, go on.’ When she had finished it I leaped from my couch and said, ‘All is right, thank God, my dark mind is all light again.’ I have had similar trials since, and many other trials, but I could say from my heart, ‘Thy will be done, it is all right.’ At this time my husband ordered your sermons monthly, and we still continue to do so. 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.”

“The son of red Kaffirs or raw Kaffirs” sends the following note from Port Elizabeth, South Africa: —

“DEAR SIR, — I don’t know how to describe my joy and my feelings in this present moment. We never did see each other face to face, but still there is something between you and me which guided me to make these few lines for you. One day as I was going to my daily work I met a friend of mine in the street. We spoke about the Word of God, and he asked me whether I had ever seen one of Mr. Spurgeon’s books. I said, ‘What Mr. Spurgeon is that? One of the Independent ministers in London?’ and I said, ‘No, I never saw such a book in my life.’ He said he bought it from the bookseller. I asked the name of the book,

and he said it was the 'Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit,' and I went straight to the shop and bought one. I have read a good bit of it. On my reading it I arrived on a place where Job said: 'Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him.' I am sure I can't tell how to describe the goodness you have done to us, we black people of South Africa. We are not black only outside, even inside; I wouldn't mind to be a black man only in color. It is a terrible thing to be a black man from the soul to the skin; but still I am very glad to say your sermons have done something good to me. May the Lord bless your efforts and prosper your work! May it please Him to gain many sons into His glory through you as His instrument, not only in London, but also in Africa!"

From Denmark: "Through twelve of your sermons, which are translated into Danish, I and my household have this winter been acquainted with your Christian announcement, and we thank you for every clearing and edifying word. We seceded from the Established Church a year ago, because we have so evidently seen the tragical consequences of the connection between the Church and the State, and we could not possibly act contrary to the conviction forced upon us by the reading of the New Testament, viz., the incorrectness of the infant baptism."

Two missionaries in one of the isles of Greece write: "We read every Sunday a sermon; many times it is one of your sermons. Last Sunday the one we read was 'The Good Samaritan' (No. 1360). It made a deep impression on our minds. Your sermons are to us like rain upon a dry land. We have no church to attend, and no friends to associate with."

A Baptist minister in North America writes: "Mr. Spurgeon's writings have done more for me than the writings of any other uninspired man. Indeed, his influence is felt the wide world over. In the backwoods of this island a dying man the other week confessed that his soul had been impressed and enlightened by a sermon published in the 'Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit;' while Baptists out here speak of 'praying for Mr. Spurgeon' as a special duty. I have also discovered that preachers of other denominations are using these sermons, from introduction to conclusion,

and after the service it is somewhat amusing to find the volume under the seat of the sleigh.”

The following touching epistle comes 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 far 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 chanced 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 London, 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 felt, indeed I longed, to let you know that your influence as an instrument had even reached this place.”

From Michigan: “I have read your sermons many years, they are marrow and fatness to my soul. Toil on, O servant of Jesus! You gave me a pretty good lesson in your sermon entitled ‘The Dromedaries’ (No. 1504). I enclose you twenty-five dollars to buy ‘straw’ for your dromedaries; I leave the word ‘barley’ for such persons as the lady who gave £20,000. I have just been reading ‘John Ploughman’s Talk.’ I think you are pretty tough on us slow folks; but if we all could keep up with you, don’t you think the world would run off her track in less than twenty-four hours?”

From Quebec: —

“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 you and strengthen your hands by letting you know that your labor 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! opened my eyes while reading that sermon, and since then I have found peace in believing.”

One of Mr. Spurgeon’s elders sent him the following letter: —

“MY DEAR SIR, — At a meeting last night I heard the following statement, which I think you will be pleased with: A member of one of our London churches said that, being an engineer, he had to reside for some little time in a foreign town, the name of which I did not catch, where he was entirely surrounded by Portuguese. He said it was very sweet to meet an Englishman anywhere under such circumstances to converse in his native tongue. He heard that there was an Englishman confined for life in the prison, and he determined to call on him and speak to him respecting the love of God to sinners. He got permission to see him, and having entered the prison, commenced at once speaking to him through the iron grating. The poor convict then told him that, a few years before that, a young Englishman called upon him in a similar manner and left behind some English novels, but between the leaves of one of the novels there was a sermon which had been preached in Exeter Hall, in 1856, by C. H. Spurgeon. The convict read it. It was upon ‘Salvation to the Uttermost’ (No. 84), and it referred to the murderer Palmer, then under sentence of death. The words entered into his heart, and he immediately knelt down in his cell and cried for pardon, and he received a sense of forgiveness on the spot, and he was still rejoicing in the assurance that God for Christ’s sake had forgiven him. He told

Mr. B. that he had no hope of liberty in this life, but he was nevertheless rejoicing in the glorious hope set before him in the gospel."

The following letter refers to the fifteen-hundredth published sermon, "Number 1500; or, Lifting up the Brazen Serpent," preached in October, 1881:—

"DEAR SIR,—Yesterday morning my brother passed from us at daybreak. Though unknown to you, I think you will like to hear something he said. On Tuesday evening I asked him, 'What can I do to be as happy as you?' He answered with difficulty, 'It's all in "Instant Salvation," and Number 1500.' Many times he has talked of Number 1500, and has directed me to send one to his brother. A member of your congregation sent me Number 1500 in a letter to him, a sort of sly way, perhaps, of giving it to him. A passer-by on St. Leonard's Parade gave him 'Instant Salvation.' Sir, my brother's words were, 'Only Jesus, nothing but Jesus; Jesus! Jesus!' and he passed away without suffering, perfectly easy, pleasant, contented, joyous, and triumphant, and fully conscious up to five minutes from his death, so gently that I, a medical man, cannot say when he died—not the slightest struggle, only a gradually increasing stillness. Sir, if this letter be like a 'well done' from the Lord through the voice of my brother to you, I am glad, as it will give you pleasure. Don't trouble to answer, I am not a Baptist, but a Church of England man."

The following cheering note comes from the United States: "It will refresh your heart to learn that a beloved pastor in this country (whose teaching and preaching are a striking contrast to the vapid utterances of the humanitarians and sentimentalists who abound in all our cities) received through your ministry some years ago a very great blessing. He visited England, and planned to hear all the men of note in London. On his arrival he happened to learn that you were to speak one afternoon in the neighborhood of his hotel. That sermon did him so much good that he followed you around, and during his six weeks in London heard no other preacher. Your vindication of God's grace and advocacy of His sovereignty in salvation, and your clear presenta-

tion of faith and assurance so filled him and confirmed his own views of divine truth, that he returned to his own country strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. He often speaks of that visit, and I have heard him frequently thank God for your ministry. He is truly a witness to the sufficiency of the Atonement, and a noble opposer of that science, falsely so called, which belittles the word of revelation."

A minister in St. Petersburg, Russia, sends the following: "By your sermons, etc., you are having a part in the great work of spreading Christ's kingdom both in St. Petersburg and in the interior. You are well known among the priests, who seem glad to get hold of your translated sermons, and, strange to say, I know cases in which the censor has readily given consent for your works to be translated when he has been reluctant respecting many."

Mr. Spurgeon adds: "Another friend in the same city, who distributes our sermons, says that he gave one recently to an old Russian pope, or priest, who called upon him one Sunday while engaged at family prayer, and tried to sell him some pork. He says that he will get all the other sermons that are translated, and give them to as many popes as he can find access to."

A Christian sister in India writes: "I enclose you a note which I received from a Mussulman to whom I had lent a book of your sermons, and I request your prayers on his behalf, that he may have grace given him to profess Christ openly, and to come out from Mahometanism." Here is the note: "My dear Miss —. Your sermon-book has, indeed, converted me to Christianity. I do believe in Christ our Lord, and so long as my belief in Him is firmly rooted, I do not care what I may be called in the outer world. Mr. Spurgeon appears to be an extraordinary man."

From Germany comes the following unsolicited testimony to the value of "The Treasury of David:" "I mailed one volume of 'The Treasury' to Dr. Zoekler, and requested him to give me his opinion of it. Dr. Zoekler is considered (even among German pastors) a great bookworm, and I was a little curious to see what he would say. He declared the Commentary to be 'a museum of spiritual treasures,' and thought the publication of it would be to

most German theologians like the discovery of ancient Troy by Schliemann. My Lutheran neighbors beg me to have the work done, if not for money, still for the good it would do, and they beg for the whole work. . . . There is nothing which might benefit Germany more than the publication of this work."

Pastor Spurgeon adds: "A friend informs us that in Toulon, the great seaport and naval arsenal in the southeast of France, where there are many artisans and multitudes of sailors, a work similar to that of Mr. McAll in Paris has been commenced by M. Massis, a Protestant pastor, assisted by his wife and a missionary. Several rooms have been opened for preaching, and converts gathered for worship and work. Recently, when both M. Massis and his helper were compulsorily absent from the service, one of the converts undertook to lead the singing and prayer, but, being unable to preach, he read the French translation of our sermon, 'Remember Lot's Wife' (No. 1491), and this was the means of the conversion of a whole family."

"Another friend, who conducts services in a Hampshire village where a new chapel is being built, tells us that every Sunday evening for the last four years he has preached there, but being engaged in business all the week he cannot give much time to study. He says that he has, therefore, taken our sermons regularly, got all the marrow he could out of them, copied out the leading thoughts, lived in the subject all the week, and then given out to the people the honey he has gathered. He adds that God has blessed this system of working to the salvation of souls and the edification of believers, and that this way of proclaiming the truth has also interested the congregation."

A fisherman in Scotland sends the following pleasing account of his conversion: "I remember a colporteur coming to my mother's house, and he asked me if I would buy a book. 'Yes,' says I, 'if you have got any ballads,' that is, Scotch songs. So he says to me: 'If you give me a piece of fish I will give you something that will do you more good than ballads.' I saw he desired my good, so I gave him half a codfish, and he gave me one of your sermons. The text was: 'Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else'

(‘Sovereignty and Salvation,’ No. 60). While reading that sermon the blessed Spirit of God enlightened my understanding, and I saw Jesus set before me as my Saviour. Blessed hour! Happy day! Jesus washed my sins away.”

The secretary of the China Inland Mission writes: “This morning I received from one of our missionaries in China a letter, from which the following is an extract: ‘I just want to tell you one thing, which is the principal object I had in writing you this time. In “China’s Millions,” of December, I think it is, you mentioned at one of the farewell meetings held on behalf of Messrs. Cooper, Protheroe, and Thompson, that besides Cooper there was another in China (Hunnex, I presume) who had been led to offer himself for the work through Mr. Spurgeon’s sermon, “The Divine Call for Missionaries” (No. 1351). It was that “call” that led me to offer myself to the C. I. M.; previous to that I had thought (D.V.) of applying to the London Missionary Society; but that call gave me no rest nor peace of mind till I had applied to the C. I. M., till I had read the “Millions” sent down for my perusal, till I had again applied, filled up the form, and gone to London. So there are three working in connection with the C. I. M. who were led to give themselves for work in China through Mr. Spurgeon’s sermon.’”

A minister from Tennessee recently bore the following 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 minister of a large and influential church. The Lord’s name be magnified!”

One of the students recently received an application for baptism from a young Swiss lady, who gave this testimony: “My parents were members of the Protestant Established Church in Switzerland; but though I attended the ordinances and observed the ceremonies, I always felt that I was a hypocrite, for I never believed in them, but desired something which I could not get in the church. When I came to England I read a sermon by Mr. Spurgeon, which did me good. ‘John Ploughman’s Talk,’ though funny, was made a great blessing to me. I then bought his sermons, and read them, and I am now happy to say that I am

trusting in Jesus. When I return home I shall distribute these sermons which have been so blessed to me."

Mr. F. H. Newton, of the German Baptist Mission, writes: "I have just returned from a visit to several of our German churches, and especially of those in Russia. I feel sure you will be interested to learn that your printed words (in German) have always free admission into Russia, which is saying a great deal, the only exception being in the case of your sermon on 'Baptismal Regeneration' (No. 573), which one of our brethren translated into Russian and submitted to the censor of the press, who, however, refused to sanction it, as he considered it an attack upon the Greek Church. The brother still hopes to be permitted to print it."

From the State of Virginia comes the following pleasing testimony: "Some years ago, when in the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity, without God and without hope in the world, I was persuaded by a friend to read a volume of your sermons, and now, my dear sir, let me tell you that if ever I felt the love of God shed abroad in my heart, or knew the truth as it is in Jesus, I owe it to the perusal of your sermons, and I am sure you were the means and instrument in the hands of God of my conversion."

"In recent numbers of 'The Sword and the Trowel' several instances have been given of the good effects of Spurgeon's sermons; will you allow the writer to add one more? In one of our resorts for invalids in the Midland Counties is a man of almost world-wide distinction, but who was better known thirty or forty years ago than he is to-day. His history is brimful of interesting incidents, and, when written, will be one of the most remarkable in modern times. He has seen eighty-eight summers, and though his natural force is abated and his eyes somewhat dimmed, he can, with the aid of a lens, see to read the daily papers, and is conversant with all the current events in national and social life. He is as sensitive as a barometer to any change in the diplomacy of the courts of Europe, and especially is this the case with anything connected with the tribes of Israel and their restoration to their own land. He has crossed the desert to visit Palestine, and on his first visit was accompanied by Dr. Black (who spoke nine-

teen languages), McCheyne, and Bonar. He has been the contemporary of some of the most distinguished divines, physicians, and writers that Scotland has ever known. He is now confined to his bed, from which he knows he will never be lifted until he is carried to the place of sepulchre. Not a murmur, however, escapes his lips. He has the piety of a saint and the simplicity of a child; but you can see the old fire burn when the foundation truths are assailed by men of modern thought. His chief joy on the Sabbath, dear Mr. Editor, is to hear one of your sermons. The reader is a little maid; and he avows that he has the *best preacher* and hears the *best sermon* in the town. Need I say that our aged friend is Dr. Alexander Keith, the author of 'The Evidence of Prophecy' and other valuable works. I am not commissioned by the seer to send you the above, but I am commissioned to give you his grateful thanks for the rich feast you give him. He, moreover, wished me to say that, while spending the winter at the Bridge of Allan, two or three years ago, your sermons were read by invalids in five separate rooms of the same establishment every Sunday. Many prayers go up daily to heaven for the continuance of your health and life, but not the least fervent come from the lips of this dear old man."

A brother minister, who signs himself "A Daily Petitioner at the Throne of Grace on your behalf," sends the following note: "About September, 1869, I attended the Tabernacle in company with my wife on a Thursday evening. Your text was: 'And Lot . . . pitched his tent toward Sodom.' As I listened to your earnest appeals, especially to Christians, my soul was stirred to its depths, and I could not but bedew the seat in the gallery with my tears. I felt a new baptism of love for souls, and returning home we both dedicated ourselves afresh to God, to spend and to be spent for those who know not the Saviour. I can truthfully say I have a measure of that power with me up to the present time, and since that memorable occasion I trust I have been enabled, both in the open air and in chapels, to win many souls for my Master, some of whom are gone home, and others are on the journey. To Him be all the praise!"

A friend in Jersey, in sending a donation for the Girls' Orphan-

age, writes: "I have been a reader of your sermons these seventeen years or more, having had sent to me monthly the Australian papers in which they appear weekly. 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 them in any number, and have gladly availed myself of it. I think I have now near 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 good your sermons have afforded and still afford me."

A friend in Glasgow, who signs himself "Your Loving Son in Jesus," gives the following particulars of blessing received from one of the sermons: "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. In this prayer I was led to ask but 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 herself 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!'"

A friend writes from Manchester to tell us that her father, who has been a great drunkard for many years, has become a believer

in the Lord Jesus, and has recently joined a Christian church. She says: "It is all through reading your 'Seven Wonders of Grace.'"

The following is an extract from a letter of one of the missionaries of the China Inland Mission: "We stayed over the Sabbath at Tsông-kô-bu. . . . In the evening, after reading Mr. Spurgeon's sermon on 'The Hiding of Moses by Faith' (No. 1421), I gave the substance of it in Chinese to our native pastor and the preacher at the above place, and then with deep-felt earnestness I prayed God to spare dear Mr. Spurgeon to the Church of Christ and to the world for many years to come. The Chinese cannot pronounce 'Spurgeon' correctly, so we call Mr. Spurgeon in this quarter 'Sze Pah-jing,'—that is, 'The Successor or Continuator of a Hundred Virtues.' The word 'hundred,' in Chinese, stands for an indefinite number."

From Natal comes a cheering letter, which contains the following references to Mr. Spurgeon's sermons: "In 1860 I emigrated to South Africa, and on board the ship 'John Masterman' I received the first of your sermons I ever saw, and during our voyage they were read every Sabbath for divine service for the Presbyterian part of the passengers. I so loved your sermons that if I only got a spare leaf of one I treasured it and put it away. . . . I have a wife and eight children. I live on a small farm twelve miles away from my place of worship, and I have established a school on the farm, and with my own family, the schoolmaster, and some of the children, we muster a small band of from fifteen to twenty-two on the Lord's-day evening to read one of your loved and highly appreciated sermons; and we seem to be as familiar with your name as if we met every Sabbath at the Tabernacle. I write this to let you know that even in this far-away place you have hearers that you knew not of. At the same time I take the opportunity of sending you the small sum of five pounds, which you can appropriate wherever it is most needed."

The following pleasing note comes from Russia: "I came to this country about twenty-four years ago, and have been about in various parts of the interior ever since. Beyond having one volume of your sermons, I have not been much acquainted with the extent of your progress until the past year, during which I have

taken in 'The Sword and Trowel.' Through it I have watched you with great interest and earnest prayer, and the first thing I fly to now on receiving a new number is your Personal Notes. . . . I have a wife and eight children. A few weeks ago I explained to them the meaning of the Orphanage, and appealed to their feelings; the result was that I was authorized to go to their savings' bank and take out three roubles forty kopecks as the children's contribution. We have now made up the sum to fifty-five roubles, which will be forwarded to you from St. Petersburg by a cheque. The amount should not be less than five pounds: please accept it. I am so deeply interested in all your noble institutions that I scarcely know how to divide it, but I think if you will give one pound to Mrs. Spurgeon for the Poor Ministers' Clothing Fund, one pound to the Colportage Fund, and the balance to the Orphanage, we cannot do better."

A Methodist minister in Ireland writes: "Many a time these few years I have wondered whether you know that you are preaching in unnumbered pulpits every Lord's day, in many cases word for word as reported in your volumes. You are aware, I suppose, that the weekly sermon is read by two thirds of the Protestants in Ulster. In some cases ten families join in taking it, and lend it from one to another."

The deacons of a church in South Australia, in sending a donation for the Girls' Orphanage, say: "We have for years past received substantial help from your printed sermons. Christians have been helped on their way, and others have through their instrumentality been introduced into the light and liberty of the gospel."

A sailor friend, who distributes Mr. Spurgeon's sermons and other works wherever his ship goes, writes from Jamaica: "We have given away nearly all the books and sermons that we had. We are saving a few for the poor negroes at the other ports to which we are going. They were so thankful for them at the Falkland Islands, and enjoyed reading them so much. In one house I went in, I saw 'Morning by Morning' and 'Evening by Evening'; they looked quite homely to me, as we use them every morning and evening on board ship."

Another writes: "Though it may be known to you already, I venture to mention one incident which was brought to my notice. The little island of Bryher (one of the Scilly Isles), though it only has one hundred and twenty inhabitants, contains a church and a chapel. Service is held at the church occasionally, and then the chapel is closed. On other Sundays the service is held at the chapel, and the sexton, who is also clerk at the church, reads one of your sermons, and they sing Wesley's hymns."

We subjoin the following letter, written to Mr. Spurgeon in his editorial capacity, as another illustration of the marvellous influence he is wielding over all classes of men. He is always happy in preaching to sailors, and his prayers often ascend on behalf of the sons of the sea: —

DEAR MR. EDITOR, — You have often been called a many-sided man: I shall therefore address your editorial personality, and consider for the moment that you are not the preacher I heard on Thursday evening last. I venture to think the Metropolitan Tabernacle had more sailors and sailor workers to this service than ever before. The good manager of the Sailors' Home sent up two wagon-loads, while Miss Macpherson's lady friends marched at the head of a splendid column of hardy, well-dressed sailors. Very few ports of the world were unrepresented, while captains, officers, and missionaries helped to fill the first gallery. Much prayer had been offered and enthusiasm awakened by Mr. Spurgeon having promised to preach a sailors' sermon. At seven he came down to his quarter-deck looking careworn and overworked, as though he had been watching a week in the Channel. But as he looked at his crew on the starboard and port sides inspiration came, and the buoyancy of his spirit returned.

The intercessory prayer for those at sea and those on shore waiting for missing ships, led many hearts to the throne of grace. As to the sermon, having graduated in God's university, the sea, with wind and wave, rock and sand, sun and star for my professors, I would, as a qualified judge, pronounce it A 1 at Lloyds'. It was simply first-rate, and worthy of the great preacher and his glorious theme, "The sea is His, and He made it." I want, believing that it is calculated to bless the sailor and his cause and to

glorify the God of the sea, to send it out as a tidal wave of blessing to the ends of the earth. Give me fifty thousand, and I can supply every lighthouse and lightship on our coast, every lifeboat and coastguard station, every British consulate and sailors' mission in the world, and the great British mercantile marine. Give me a hundred thousand, and her Majesty's ships and the American navy shall be supplied as well. But *fifty thousand copies* I must have, and I solemnly ask: Who is going to do this for Jesus, the Lord High Admiral of the seas? Some \$1,000 would cover the entire cost, and I would undertake with our staff of the British and Foreign Sailors' Society, and associate societies, a proper distribution. Your readers are not aware that in January of this year the effective tonnage of the mercantile navies of the British Empire was 16,000,000, while the rest of the world only had some 11,500,000. This means that under one flag, and that flag the British, there is now fifty-eight per cent of the shipping of the whole world. Storms that hurled the Tay Bridge into the sea have played havoc with our shipping, both sail and steam. In the past year (1879), not counting the exceptionally disastrous months of this year, no less than 1,688 vessels were *reported* to have been wrecked, with an estimated value, including cargoes, of \$127,500,000!

But what became of those on board? About *five thousand* perished! People have no conception of our ocean empire. Why, there are fifty thousand fishing-boats around the coasts of Britain alone!

Is it, then, too much to ask for a hundred thousand copies of this special sermon? The sailors are absent, they cannot plead for themselves. This is why they are too often forgotten. It will cheer Mr. Spurgeon if we could thus serve the sailor. Who dare estimate the outcome of this effort for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom? Who will thus help to make the sailors the unpaid evangelists of Christ to all the nations? All hands lay hold of this rope and give us a pull; but you, Mr. Editor, must give the command, or few will obey.

Yours faithfully,

EDWARD W. MATTHEWS,
Secretary, British and Foreign Sailors' Society, Shadwell, London.

XXVI.

PERSONAL NOTES.

SOMETIMES our experience is for the good of others, and sometimes it is for our own good. You cannot see the beauty of certain gems unless you place them on black velvet. When you have something black behind, then you see their lustre. So there are promises of God in which you never will discover their very brightest meaning except they are set against some dark soul-trouble. Much of faith's education may be called black-letter learning. Very black the letters are, too, and very ugly looking, but they must be spelt over. You cannot see the stars in the daytime; you must wait till the sun has gone down.— C. H. SPURGEON.

PERSONAL NOTES.

THE monthly "Notes" from Mr. Spurgeon's pen are not the least interesting feature of "The Sword and the Trowel." These brief "Notes" speak volumes. They reveal the pastor's heart and the preacher's faith. They declare how fully identified is the workman with his work, how ceaselessly he watches over every department of labor originated by him. Mr. Spurgeon's friends read the "Notes" with prayerful, grateful hearts; his more distant acquaintances with ever-growing admiration for the man; strangers with awakened interest and amazement. The "Notes" possess a peculiar freshness when first published; but as items of work done, of labors directed, and of energies expended, they are worthy of a more permanent place than the pages of a monthly journal.

The death of President Garfield creates among Christian people a feeling far deeper than that which arises from the decease of an ordinary ruler. He was a member of a section of the Baptist church, and the representative of that party in the United States which is the friend of the freedman. His fall is a serious blow to those in the States whose principles are on the side of righteousness. We believe that it will be overruled for the highest ends, but as it stands his murder is a great calamity. May his widow find a measure of consolation in the sympathy of all civilized nations, and comfort without measure in the tender mercy of her husband's God! England and America have been drawn together as by a common grief; may a feeling of concord thus sown in tears be reaped in joy! Some hundreds of Americans

are to be found at the Tabernacle all through the summer, and thus the pastor is drawn into close fellowship with believers on the other side of the ocean.

We have lately felt more than ever the burden of souls, and a strong desire for a special visitation of grace to our churches. Our heart wanted vent. Hence we begged those of our friends who could spare the time to come together an hour before the week-night services to pray for a blessing. Before the lecture on Thursday we have had some of the most real and intense prayer that we have ever known. Perhaps some brother minister may take the hint, and see whether his people would not assemble with much enthusiasm to pray for a blessing upon their pastor and the service about to be held. Where regular prayer-meetings flag, it is well to hold others at different hours. Better get the people together at dead of night, than let them fall into a dead condition.

In answer to many inquiries, we are glad to speak of improved health. No summer holiday will be taken, for the many Sundays spent in the sick-room forbid any further absence from home. Neither can we travel far afield, for home work is so pressing. What with managing everything, preparing the weekly sermon, editing the magazine, and writing books, we are not doing badly when we fill up our weeks as we do. Here is a specimen week in which we did no more than ordinarily, but a little more than usual was visible to the common observer. Five sermons, three prayer-meetings, chair at two public meetings, speech at a third, one communion, one College afternoon of two hours' lecturing. Some of these occupied far more time in preparation than in the actual doing of them. We are thankful to be able to work. Oh, that we could accomplish far more! We need the prayers of all loving friends that God would give us more of His divine blessing. What is all that we can do without His Spirit?

We rejoice to hear that our sermon on "The Divine Call for Missionaries" (No. 1351) has been the means of leading another young man, besides the one mentioned in our "Notes" for June, to consecrate himself to the work of foreign missions. Mr. Broomhall, of the China Inland Mission, sends us the following extract from the papers of an accepted candidate: "What is your motive



PRESENT HOME OF PASTOR C. H. SPURGEON.

for wishing to become a missionary?" "The glory of God in the salvation of the heathen." "What has led you to think of doing so?" "A sermon by Mr. Spurgeon on 'The Divine Call for Missionaries.'"

One of the bandsmen of the Seventy-third Regiment writes from India to say that he receives our sermon every week by post, and that on a Sunday evening the soldiers will read "Spurgeon's Sermons" when they will read nothing else of a religious character. He states that after a sermon has gone the round of fifty or sixty men it is returned to him all black and fringed through the wear and tear.

Dr. Carson, of Coleraine, says concerning the sermons: "In my professional calling I have had abundant opportunity of knowing the good they do. Space would not allow me to dwell on this point, but I mention the instance of one of my own servants several years since. When he was waiting for me every day at the hospital gate I observed that he sat down on the step of the carriage and began to read. I asked him what he was reading, and he said it was a tract his mistress gave him, and that it was the nicest thing he ever read, as he could understand every word of it, and he wished that every minister would preach like that. I looked at it and found it was one of Spurgeon's sermons."

Mr. Wilhelm Haupt, missionary to the Edinburgh Ladies' Auxiliary to the German Baptist Mission, in his last quarterly report, writes as follows: "My own son Willy, now seventeen years of age, came from Barmen, where he is at school, to spend his Easter holidays with us. Shortly before, I had received some of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons from Dr. B., amongst which was one entitled 'The Seven Sneezes' (No. 1461), from the text, 2 Kings iv. 35, 'And the child sneezed seven times.' Having read this sermon, and believing that it was well suited to his case, I asked my boy to translate it into German for me. During the work of translation I could plainly see that what I had hoped was taking place,—the Lord was touching his heart and showing him his position. When he had finished the translation I asked him whether he too felt any signs of life, and he acknowledged he desired from his whole heart to become a Christian. He has not yet full assurance of faith, but

the Lord has begun His work of grace, and I have every reason to believe He will complete it. I am very grateful for the gift of these splendid sermons, from which I have derived much blessing.”

A Scotch friend, in sending us a contribution for one of our works, explains that it is a thank-offering for the enjoyment and profit derived by him and his late wife from reading our sermons. He tells us that he is so deaf that he cannot hear his own minister's voice in the service of the sanctuary, and his wife was too ill to go to church for two years before she died, so they were both very grateful to get every Saturday the sermon which supplied them with spiritual food for the Lord's day. The writer further says: “Since my wife's death I have, after reading your sermon, given it to a friend, whose wife is also in very weak health, and has not been able to go to church for nearly two years. They enjoy the sermon very much, and after reading it pass it on to a neighbor, who also enjoys it. I think you might take occasion to drop the hint that each reader might seek out some invalid person who is not able to go to church and make a present of the sermon, instead of allowing it to lie idle on the shelf. The sick friend above mentioned was visited by the late Rev. James Robertson a few days before his decease. She told him that her own minister called to see her so seldom that she might now say that she had no church connection; but she greatly enjoyed the reading of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons. ‘Oh, then,’ replied Mr. Robertson, ‘you will just consider you are one of Mr. Spurgeon's people.’”

One of our church-members, in thanking us for our recent sermon on Psalm lvii. 4, “My soul is among lions,” writes: “You may be sure when I had the beer-house in — that my soul was among lions. You may not remember that your preaching was the means of my closing that house on the Sunday in spite of great opposition, persecution, and personal loss. I kept it closed on the Sunday with one exception, when the devil tempted me to open it, but Christ gained the victory, and enabled me to close ever afterwards on the Sunday. I closed on the same Sunday as you opened the Tabernacle. If every minister could be the means of closing one public-house on the Sunday the victory would be

won. The sermon on Zechariah xiv. 20 ('A Peal of Bells,' No. 399) decided me to join the church."

A brother Baptist minister, in sending us a contribution for the Girls' Orphanage, says: "During nearly twenty years' ministry I have been often helped and encouraged by your sermons, which I regularly read and lend to others. May the Lord long spare you to His Church!"

We were amused when we were informed of a notice that recently appeared in a shop window in Newcastle. Underneath a lithographic likeness, or what professed to be such, was the announcement, "Spurgeon reduced to Sixpence!" The kind friend who sent us the intelligence expressed the hope that we were not quite so poor as the notice implied.

In the first spare corner of the magazine let it stand recorded as my experience that the Lord is exceeding tender in His dealings with His afflicted. During the last six months He has tried me with sharp pains, but during that period He has kindly removed all cause for serious care as to the financial needs of my many institutions. Everything has been healthily sustained, and there have been no pitiful appeals by striking advertisement or otherwise. I intend no censure of the plans of others, but I cannot help admiring the considerate providence of our gracious Lord that He has kept off the trial of straitened supplies from His suffering servant. "He stayeth His rough wind in the day of the east wind."

Friends have come forth from the most unexpected quarters in the time of need,—nay before the need had actually come. Every fund, except that which supplies the College, is in better condition than before my illness, and even that is hardly an exception, for the outgoing in that direction will no doubt be made good at the annual supper. Prayerful trust is a way which the Lord will assuredly honor. I do but feebly trust and pray, but God most richly answers; and when in hours of crushing agony both supplication and confidence seem to need an effort beyond the strength of the tortured mind, the Lord deals with me after His own gracious fashion, "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask, or even think."

On Monday, September 29, we expect to say good-bye to our son Thomas and the two ministers who are going with him to Australia, Mr. R. McCulloch, from the College, and Mr. J. S. Harrison, who left the College a few months ago and settled at Blackburn. Mr. Gibson, a generous Christian gentleman of Tasmania, pays the passage of these two brethren, that they may labor in that island. It is a severe trial thus to be separated from a loving and beloved son, but the will of the Lord be done. We commend our son again to the loving care of those Australian friends who so generously received him on his first visit. He will need rest, but after a while we trust he will resume his preaching, go through the Australian colonies, visit New Zealand, and then settle down somewhere in the southern world. Such is the programme which our imagination has mapped out; but how little we know of the future! His parents surrender him to the Lord's work abroad, hoping one day again to see him in the flesh, and firmly believing that he will do good service for the Lord in the colonies. Beloved by the church at the Tabernacle and by all at home, we fondly hoped that our son would have had a useful career in England; but Infinite Wisdom cannot err.

Mr. Broomhall, who is conducting the home affairs of Mr. Hudson Taylor's mission, brought us the other day a copy of our sermon on "The Divine Call for Missionaries," No. 1351. It was scored and underlined, and had been carried about in his pocket by a brother who is now a missionary; the sermon having constrained him to devote himself to that work for the Lord. We prized the discourse more than if the princes of the land had covered it with jewels. To God be all the glory!

A nobleman of Alsace visited us at Mentone, and gave us copies of two of our sermons, which he has translated into French, and lithographed in running hand, to be read in congregations. We found our friend almost as well acquainted with our work as if he had attended the Tabernacle all his life. He came a long way for a short interview, bringing his wife and his son, and by this visit he greatly refreshed our spirit.

A minister, living at Wisbech, authenticates the following singular case of conversion through our sermon on "The Portion

of the Ungodly," No. 444. The writer says in a recent letter to us: "Seventeen years ago it pleased the Lord to permit me to dream that the end of the world was come, and in my dream I saw the saints rising with the Lord Jesus to glory. I was left, and near me, upon a large quantity of stubble, stood an acquaintance, who addressed me thus: 'They used to say in the other world that we should be in fire, but it is not so.' In a moment flames burst out, and in my fright I awoke. A few days after my dream my friend and I heard you preach at the Tabernacle. Judge how great was our surprise when you announced for your text, Isaiah xlvii. 14, 'Behold, they shall be as stubble; the fire shall burn them; they shall not deliver themselves from the power of the flame: there shall not be a coal to warm at, nor fire to sit before it.'" In August, 1876, a severe affliction, the dream, and our sermon resulted in our friend's conversion.

One of our students writes to tell us about the conversion of one whom he has recently baptized, who thus refers to the channel through which the blessing reached her: "Before I was brought to Christ I had a desire to hear Mr. Spurgeon; accordingly, I went to Exeter Hall, and afterwards to the Tabernacle, but still remained in my state of unregeneracy. One day I was entering the drawing-room, and, looking upon the table, my eye fell at once upon a printed sermon. Taking it into my hand, I read the text, Psalm li. 4. I read a little of the sermon, was interested, and read on until I was not only interested in it, but in Christ: this was the means of my conversion." It was our sermon, No. 86, on "Unimpeachable Justice."

A Christian sea-captain writes to tell us about the joyful reception of our sermons at St. Kitts, one of the West Indian islands. He says, "All my sermons that I had in the monthly parts I separated, for the people were so eager for them they came from every quarter to ask for them. We gave some to the master of a little vessel that trades to different islands, and we saw several of the laboring men gather round him as he read the sermons to them. The natives seemed to drink their contents down with as much pleasure as a thirsty ox does water on a summer's day." The mate of our friend's vessel went down among the very poor

who do not go anywhere, and had two meetings among them, which the people very much enjoyed. They wanted another visit, but before the next Sabbath the vessel had sailed.

In "The Preachers' Annual" of 1877, page 544, in an article by the Rev. G. T. Dowling on "Candidating," we chanced to read as follows: "Charles Spurgeon was not even seriously thought of as a prospective pastor the first time he preached in London. Months passed by before he was again invited to spend a Sabbath, and when even a call was extended it was by no means unanimous. Some families even left the church because 'that boy' was called."

This is given as a proof that successful preachers frequently produce a poor impression as candidates. This may be a general fact, but it was a pity to fabricate an instance. The truth is exactly the contrary. The moment after our first sermon was preached we were invited by the principal deacon to supply for six months, for he felt sure that at a church meeting, which would at once be held, such a resolution would be passed. We declined his offer, for we thought it too hasty, but promised to preach alternate Sabbaths during the next month; and this was done, and followed up immediately by a further invitation. No one person left the church to our knowledge, and the resolution inviting us was as nearly unanimous as possible, one man and four women voting to the contrary, all of these becoming in after time most friendly to us. We only mention the incident as a specimen of the manner in which advocates of a theory too often manufacture their instances, and as a warning to our friends to be slow in believing anything which they may hear or read about public persons.

Dr. Blaikie, in a recent letter to us, says of Dr. Livingstone: "I had in my hands the other day one of your sermons, *very yellow*: it lay embedded in one of his journals—had probably been all over Africa—and had in Livingstone's neat hand the simple words, '*Very good.*' Would you like it?" Our reply, as the reader will guess, was an urgent request that we might have the yellow relic.

The Religious Tract Society kindly favors us with the following extract from a letter from a member of the Servian Government, in reference to our sermon, "Come and Welcome," which has

been published in Servia: "Mr. Spurgeon's sermon, 'Come and Welcome,' continues to be much read and appreciated. The Dean of Thabatz writes to thank me that I have procured for Servian Christians such most valuable reading; and also adds that he has never read anything more edifying and more 'filling the soul.' A copy found its way to the State Prison of Posharevatz, and I am informed has been there read with much enjoyment, even by some men who have been pronounced infidels. An old gentleman belonging to the highest rank of our society took the opportunity of an evening party in his house to read the whole sermon to the ladies and gentlemen present. I am mentioning to you all these details, believing them to be hopeful signs of coming harvest, and feeling myself happy and thankful to our merciful Father that the first seed, which by the instrumentality of your committee has been thrown in the earth of Servia, seems to bear with it God's blessing."

Mr. Spurgeon preached at Portsmouth, October 26. He writes: One of the papers seems to wonder that Mr. Spurgeon was nervous! Who could avoid it amid that dense throng, in a frail building, with constant interruptions? The horror of great darkness which passed over the preacher's soul, few can understand but those who have once seen a multitude flying in panic, and people trodden to death in the crush. We should be able to preach abroad far oftener if we could secure moderate audiences, in places full to safety, but not crowded to murder-point. However, the occasion ended well; and to God be praise! The efforts of all friends at Portsmouth to entertain the Baptist Union were most praiseworthy.

For an opportunity of preaching, Southampton, on October 27, bears the palm; for there we had order and quiet throughout, and we trust the Divine Presence was there. It was a singular sight to see at these services men of all grades and creeds, and even more remarkable to observe with what kindness they received the preacher of the Word. Surely there is some softening process at work, some coming together of divergent creeds, some candor towards long-despised truth. In the house of Canon Wilberforce, in concert with Lord Radstock and other friends, we had much

friendly discussion, but far more spiritual communion both in conversation and prayer. The life of God in the souls of believers triumphs over even important differences of ceremonial and doctrine. In honestly dealing with each other in the spirit of love to Christ we shall, by the Holy Ghost's guidance, find the way to mutual edification and enlightenment, and so to real unity. If congresses, and conferences, and meetings, by bringing Christians together, shall continue to increase their knowledge of each other, and their common regard for one another, they will do more towards the unity of Christendom than all the plans and societies which have this for their design, but know not how to compass it.

Altogether, Southampton friends deserve the highest commendation. We were delighted to find three of our College men at Southampton and two at Portsmouth, all favored with the divine blessing, and heartily working together to give entertainment to the denomination which met in such force in the two towns. Others of our own men were to the front, holding their own among the best of their brethren. We are greatly rejoiced when we see a man raised up in the ranks of the Church to serve the Lord valiantly, and there is just a drop of special zest to our joy when it happens to be one of the sons of the Pastors' College.

On Friday evening, October 21, the eleventh annual meeting of the Green Walk Mission, conducted by Mr. William Olney, Jr., was held in the Tabernacle Lecture Hall, when there was a large attendance of the workers and friends of the mission. Pastor C. H. Spurgeon presided. Mr. Bennett read the report, which commenced with a grateful reference to the spirit of prayer which had prevailed among the workers, and a recognition of the Lord's loving care of them at the time when the tempest blew down the tent in August last. It then proceeded to specify the various special and ordinary means which had been used for the purpose of bringing the people of Bermondsey to the feet of Jesus. These include Sunday and Thursday-evening services; five prayer-meetings during the week; magic-lantern lectures illustrating the Scriptures; five open-air services weekly; a tract society, for the distribution of the pastor's sermons by twenty-one friends, who

go from house to house on Sunday afternoons; a Sunday-school, with an average attendance in the afternoon of 386 scholars and twenty-five teachers, more of whom, especially for the girls' classes, are greatly needed; an infant class of about 150 children; a mothers' meeting, on Wednesday afternoons; a Dorcas society; song-services; missionary meetings, and other agencies which could not be mentioned in the "short report." The spiritual results seen since the last annual meeting have been most cheering, over fifty persons having testified to Mr. Olney that they have been led to the Saviour, and many of them having united with the churches at the Tabernacle, Greenwich, Pentonville, and Rye Lane.

It was a good meeting, and greatly cheered the pastor's heart as he saw with what vigor the various branches of Tabernacle work are being carried on. Here was a work large enough for a separate church, and yet only one of many boughs of the old tree.

Orphanage. Christmas Festivities. — The best thanks of the orphans and of the president of the Orphanage are due, and are hereby heartily tendered, to all those who by their generous help made Christmas at the Orphanage to be a time of great enjoyment.

Our son Charles, who took our place on Christmas day, sent us the following lively account of the day's proceedings: —

DEAR FATHER, —

"Christmas day has vanished fleeting,
Gone its merry hours of meeting;
Hearty fun and hearty eating,
Gone like Christmas days of yore," —

so I write to tell you how happy all were at the Stockwell Orphanage. To commence with, the morning service at Newman Hall's was very good. The fog was dense, so a large congregation could not be expected, but all were gratified to see so many there. The collection will realize £50 (two hundred and fifty dollars). A fine Christmas-box indeed! The walk, no doubt, gave the lads a keen appetite for the beef. Before they set to I read your kind letter, amid perfect silence (for a pin might have dropped, as Tom used to say) until I had finished the first sentence, "I wish you all a merry Christmas." Then they burst out, "The same to you, sir," and Mr. Charlesworth observed that it

was no fault of yours if you did not hear it. There was not one heart that did not fervently desire joy for you while absent from the Orphanage. The boys did the cheering well for everybody named in the note, but none exceeded the hurrahs given for the eleven little girls when, with Miss Moore leading the foremost, they walked down the hall to dinner. Dear little mites, they stood on the form for the boys to look at them, and then listened to your loving words. As per usual, ample justice was done to the dinner. Then the grandees had their dinner. A vacant chair again occupied the centre position at the table; I could not fill it, and regretted that my dear father was not there to do so, although I am truly glad you are away from these awful fogs. None forgot the president when they spoke, but all mourned his absence. It fell to my lot to receive a present from the "old boys," consisting of a case of cutlery, — a very handsome gift indeed, and one that will be useful, too, by and by. In the evening we heartily enjoyed ourselves. May the time come round when you will be there to rejoice with those who do rejoice!

The following is the letter which we sent to the Orphanage: —

MENTONE, December 20.

DEAR BOYS, — I wish you all a merry Christmas. My son, Mr. Charles Spurgeon, will tell you that it is a great trouble to me to be away from you all at Christmas, but I hope you will all enjoy yourselves none the less, and be as happy as kittens. I am very pleased to hear that as a rule you are a good lot of fellows, obedient, teachable, and true; therefore you have a right to be happy, and I hope you are. I always wish everything to be done to make you love the Orphanage and feel it to be your home, and in this all the trustees join, and so does Mr. Charlesworth. We want you to be very jolly while you are with us, and then to grow up and go out into business, and to turn out first-rate men and true Christians.

Boys, give three cheers for the trustees, who are your best friends, and then the same for Mr. Charlesworth, the matrons, and the masters. Don't forget the gentlemen who send the shillings and the figs. Hip, hip, hurrah!

Where are the girls?

Dear Children, — I hope you will be happy too, with Miss Moore and the other kind folks. You cannot make quite so much noise as those uproarious boys, but your voices are very sweet, and I shall be glad one day to hear them when I get well and come home. Enjoy yourselves all you can, and try to make everybody happy in your new home. I hope my first little girls will be specially good ones. Ought not the first to be the best?

Your friend always,

C. H. SPURGEON.

Any old boys about? God bless the young men, and make them our strength and honor.

Among the many expressions of brotherly kindness and sympathy which have reached us during our sojourn abroad, one calls for special mention. Just as we were retiring to rest one night, a soft pillow for our head and heart arrived by telegraph from the other side of the Atlantic. This was the form in which the sweet love-token came to hand: "To C. H. Spurgeon, Mentone, France. From New York Baptist Ministers' Conference: Prayers. Sympathy. 2 Corinthians i. 2, 7. Potter, Secretary." The full text of the message is as follows: "Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. . . . And our hope of you is stedfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation."

May the ever-blessed Giver of peace and Lover of concord return to these brethren ten thousand-fold this their deed of love towards their afflicted fellow-servant. Such costly acts of spontaneous sympathy go far to prove that, degenerate as the age may be, there is life and love in the old Church yet.

This telegram was followed on January 15 by the following most touching letter, for which we feel the utmost gratitude: —

REV. CHARLES H. SPURGEON:

BELOVED BROTHER, — The sorrowful tidings reach us that you are entirely prostrated, not being able even to address your weekly epistle of love to your own church. Your sufferings touch the hearts of your American brethren most tenderly, and the New

York Conference of Baptist ministers, numbering more than one hundred, has appointed the undersigned a committee to express their deep sympathy with you in your present trial.

Be assured, precious brother, that this expression is most heartfelt and real: you live in our hearts so truly that your affliction is ours, on the divine principle that if one member suffers all the members suffer therewith. In health, you have sent thrilling words of cheer to the afflicted disciples of the Lamb all round the globe. And now, in the hour of your darkness, their affections cling closer to you than ever. Your pain meets with little mitigation through the livelong day and night while the sun makes his rounds over all lands, and we believe that in most of the nations that see his light the prayers of your brethren are rising to the God of all consolation as from a common altar, that divine succor may be vouchsafed to you every hour.

Truly, Infinite Grace has chosen you in the furnace of affliction. How far your terrible pains in the past have contributed as a holy discipline to the creation of that noble Christian manhood which has marked your life and labors so long, can be known only to our Heavenly Father. But we believe that as our Captain was made perfect through sufferings, He will so sanctify yours, that even a more mellow and gentle ministry will mark your coming years than those which are past. Should our hopes be thus gratified, the sorrowing people of God will draw strength once more from your weakness, and sweetness out of your bitter cup.

Dearly beloved one, we commend to you now those broad and bright promises of our Lord which you have so forcibly applied to the souls of His people in their distresses. Let your Christian fortitude bind you indissolubly to the fidelity of your covenant-keeping Saviour, till a holy courage can humbly say, "Though Thou slay me, yet will I trust Thee." We shall not cease to pray that our sympathetic Redeemer will be at your right hand, that He will fill your room with heavenly light, and your heart with sacred joy. "Be of good cheer," lift up thine eyes, and see thy Lord coming to thy help on the wave, and in the darkest watch of the night. Can he not say to the crazy, creaking vessel, that years are added to its days? This He has said in similar stress heretofore.

And we confidently hope that your valuable life will be still spared to do a glorious work for that General Church of Christ which claims you as its pastor, in common with the brethren at the Tabernacle. The Conference tenders its Christian condolence to your beloved household, in these days when with them hope and fear are struggling so hard for the mastery. May Jehovah keep and bless you all.

Yours affectionately,

THOS. ARMITAGE,
CHRISTOPHER RHODES, } Committee.
JESSE B. THOMAS,

PSALM CXII.

BLESSED is the man that feareth
And delighteth in the Lord!
Wealth, the wealth which truly cheereth,
God shall give him for reward;
And his children
Shall be blest around his board.

He shall not be moved for ever,
Though with evil tidings tried;
Nought from God his faith shall sever,
Fixed his heart shall still abide;
For believers
Are secured on every side.

To the upright light arises,
Darkness soon gives place to day;
While the man who truth despises,
And refuses to obey,
In a moment,
Cursed of God, shall melt away.

Therefore let us praise Jehovah,
Sound His glorious name on high,
Sing His praises, and moreover
By our actions magnify
Our Redeemer,
Who by blood has brought us nigh.

C. H. SPURGEON.

XXVII.

“JOHN PLOUGHMAN’S TALK” AND
“PICTURES.”

IN "John Ploughman's Talk" I have tried to talk for ploughmen and common people. Hence refined taste and dainty words have been discarded for strong old proverbial expressions and homely phrases. I have aimed my blows at the vices of the many, and tried to inculcate those moral virtues without which men are degraded and miserable. Much that needs be said to the toiling masses would not suit well the pulpit and the Sabbath; these lowly pages may teach thrift and industry all the days of the week in the cottage and the workshop; and if some learn these lessons I shall not repent the adoption of the rustic style.

Ploughman is a name I may justly claim. Every minister has put his hand to the plough: it is his business to break up the fallow ground and cast in good seed. That I have written in a semi-humorous vein shall need no apology, if thereby sound moral teaching wins a hearing from the million. There is no particular virtue in being seriously unreadable. — C. H. SPURGEON.

“JOHN PLOUGHMAN’S TALK” AND “PICTURES.”

IF THE CAP FITS, WEAR IT.

FRIENDLY READERS, — Last time I made a book I trod on some people’s corns and bunions, and they wrote me angry letters, asking, “Did you mean me?” This time, to save them the expense of a halfpenny card, I will begin my book by saying, —

Whether I please or whether I tease,
I ’ll give you my honest mind ;
If the cap should fit, pray wear it a bit ;
If not, you can leave it behind.

No offence is meant; but if anything in these pages should come home to a man, let him not send it next door, but get a coop for his own chickens. What is the use of reading or hearing for other people? We do not eat and drink for them: why should we lend them our ears and not our mouths? Please then, good friend, if you find a hoe on these premises, weed your own garden with it.

I was speaking with Will Shepherd the other day about our master’s old donkey, and I said: “He is so old and stubborn, he really is not worth his keep.” “No,” said Will, “and worse still, he is so vicious, that I feel sure he ’ll do somebody a mischief one of these days.” You know they say that walls have ears; we were talking rather loud, but we did not know that there were ears to haystacks. We stared, I tell you, when we saw Joe Scroggs come from behind the stack, looking as red as a turkey-cock and raving like mad. He burst out swearing at Will and me, like a cat spitting at a dog. His monkey was up and no mistake. He ’d let us

know that he was as good a man as either of us, or the two put together, for the matter of that. Talk about *him* in that way; he'd do—I don't know what. I told old Joe we had never thought of him, nor said a word about him, and he might just as well save his breath to cool his porridge, for nobody meant him any harm. This only made him call me a liar and roar the louder. My friend Will was walking away holding his sides; but when he saw that Scroggs was still in a fumè he laughed outright, and



turned round on him and said: "Why, Joe, we were talking about master's old donkey, and not about you; but, upon my word, I shall never see that donkey again without thinking of Joe Scroggs." Joe puffed and blowed, but perhaps he thought it an awkward job, for he backed out of it, and Will and I went off to our work in rather a merry cue, for old Joe had blundered on the truth about himself for once in his life.

The aforesaid Will Shepherd has sometimes come down rather heavy upon me in his remarks, but it has done me good. It is partly through his home-thrusts that I have come to write this new book, for he thought I was idle; perhaps I am, and perhaps I am not. Will forgets that I have other fish to fry and tails to butter; and he does not recollect that a ploughman's mind wants to lie

fallow a little, and can't give a crop every year. It is hard to make rope when your hemp is all used up, or pancakes without batter, or rook-pie without birds; and so I found it hard to write more when I had said just about all I knew. Giving much to the poor doth increase a man's store, but it is not the same with writing; at least I am such a poor scribe that I don't find it come because I pull. If your thoughts only flow by drops, you can't pour them out in bucketfuls.

However, Will has ferreted me out, and I am obliged to him so far. I told him the other day what the winkle said to the pin: "Thank you for drawing me out, but you are rather sharp about it." Still, Master Will is not far from the mark; after three hundred thousand people had bought my book it certainly was time to write another: so, though I am not a hatter, I will again turn cap-maker, and those who have heads may try on my wares; those who have none won't touch them. So, friends, I am,

Yours, rough and ready,

JOHN PLOUGHMAN.

HOPE.

EGGS are eggs, but some are rotten; and so hopes are hopes, but many of them are delusions. Hopes are like women, there is a touch of angel about them all, but there are two sorts. My boy Tom has been blowing a lot of birds' eggs, and threading them on a string; I have been doing the same thing with hopes, and here's a few of them, good, bad, and indifferent.

The sanguine man's hope pops up in a moment like Jack-in-the-box; it works with a spring, and does not go by reason. Whenever this man looks out of the window he sees better times coming, and although it is nearly all in his own eye and nowhere else, yet to see plum-puddings in the moon is a far more cheerful habit than croaking at everything like a two-legged frog. This is the kind of brother to be on the road with on a pitch-dark night, when it pours with rain, for he carries candles in his eyes and a fireside in his heart. Beware of being misled by him, and then you may

safely keep his company. His fault is that he counts his chickens before they are hatched, and sells his herrings before they are in the net. All his sparrows' eggs are bound to turn into thrushes at the least, if not partridges and pheasants. Summer has fully come, for he has seen one swallow. He is sure to make his fortune at his new shop, for he had not opened the door five minutes before two of the neighbors crowded in: one of them wanted a loaf of bread on trust, and the other asked change for a shilling. He is certain that the squire means to give him his custom, for he saw him reading the name over the shop-door as he rode past. He does not believe in slips between cups and lips, but makes certainties out of perhapses. Well, good soul, though he is a little soft at times, there is much in him to praise, and I like to think of one of his odd sayings: "Never say *die* till you are dead, and then it's no use, so let it alone." There are other odd people in the world, you see, besides John Ploughman.

My neighbor Shiftless is waiting for his aunt to die; but the old lady has as many lives as nine cats, and my notion is that when she does die she will leave her little money to the Hospital for Diseased Cats or Stray Dogs, sooner than her nephew Jack shall have it. Poor creature, he is dreadfully down at the heel, and lays it all on the dear old lady's provoking constitution. However, he hopes on, and gets worse and worse, for while the grass grows the horse starves. He pulls at a long rope who waits for another's death; he who hunts after legacies had need have iron shoes. He that waits for dead men's shoes may long go barefoot; he who waits for his uncle's cow need not be in a hurry to spread the butter. He who lives on hope has a slim diet. If Jack Shiftless never had an aunt, he might have tucked up his shirt-sleeves and worked for himself; but they told him that he was born with a silver spoon in his mouth, and that made a spoon of him, so that he is no more use at work than a cow at catching hares. If anybody likes to leave John Ploughman a legacy, he will be very much obliged to them, but they had better not tell him of it for fear he should not plough so straight a furrow; they had better make it twice as much, and take him by surprise. On the whole, it would be better to leave it to the Pastors' College or the Stock-

well Orphanage, for it will be well used in either case. I wish people would think less about windfalls, and plant more apple-trees. Hopes that grow out of graves are grave mistakes; and when they cripple a man's own energies, they are a sort of hangman's rope, dangling round a man's neck.

Some people were born on the first of April, and are always hoping without sense or reason. Their ship is to come home, they are to dig up a pot of gold, or to hear of something to their advantage. Poor sillies, they have wind on the brain, and dream while they are awake. They may hold their mouths open a long while before fried ham and eggs will come flying into them, and yet they really seem to believe that some stroke of luck, some windfall of golden apples, will one day set them up and make gentlemen of them. They hope to ride in their coaches, and by and by find themselves shut up in a place where the coaches won't run over them. You may whistle a long while before goldfinches will hop on to your thumb. Once in a while one man in a million may stumble against a fortune, but thousands ruin themselves by idle expectations. Expect to get half of what you earn, a quarter of what is your due, and none of what you have lent, and you will be near the mark; but to look for a fortune to fall from the moon is to play the fool with a vengeance. A man ought to hope within the bounds of reason and the promises of the good old Book. Hope leans on an anchor, but an anchor must have something to hold by and to hold to. A hope without grounds is a tub without a bottom, a horse without a head, a goose without a body, a shoe without a sole, a knife without a blade. Who but Simple Simon would begin to build a house at the top? there must be a foundation. Hope is no hope, but sheer folly when a man hopes for impossibilities, or looks for crops without sowing seed, and for happiness without doing good. Such hopes lead to great boast and small roast; they act like a jack-o'-lantern, and lead men into the ditch. There's poor Will at the workhouse, who always declares that he owns a great estate, only the right owner keeps him out of it; his name is Jenyns, or Jennings, and somebody of that name he says has left enough money to buy the Bank of England, and one day he is to have a share of it; but meanwhile poor Will

finds the parish broth poor stuff for such a great gentleman's stomach; he has promised me an odd thousand or two when he gets his fortune, and I am going to build a castle in the air with it, and ride to it on a broomstick. Poor soul, like a good many others he has windmills in his head, and may make his will on his thumb-nail for anything that he has to give. Depend upon it, ploughing the air is not half so profitable as it is easy: he who hopes in this world for more than he can get by his own earnings hopes to find apricots on a crab-tree. He who marries a slovenly, dressy girl, and hopes to make her a good wife, might as well buy a goose and expect it to turn out a milch cow. He who takes his boys to the beer-shop, and trusts that they will grow up sober, puts his coffee-pot on the fire and expects to see it look bright as new tin. Men cannot be in their senses when they brew with bad malt and look for good beer, or set a wicked example and reckon upon raising a respectable family. You may hope and hope till your heart grows sick; but when you send your boy up the chimney, he 'll come down black for all your hoping. Teach a child to lie, and then hope that he will grow up honest; better put a wasp in a tar-barrel and wait till he makes you honey. As to the next world, it is a great pity that men do not take a little more care when they talk of it. If a man dies drunk, somebody or other is sure to say, "I hope he is gone to heaven." It is all very well to wish it, but to hope it is another thing. Men turn their faces to hell and hope to get to heaven: why don't they walk into the horse-pond, and hope to be dry? Hopes of heaven are solemn things, and should be tried by the Word of God. A man might as well hope, as our Lord says, to gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles, as look for a happy hereafter at the end of a bad life. There is only one Rock to build good hopes on, and that is not Peter, as the Pope says, neither is it sacraments, as the old Roman beast's cubs tell us, but the merits of the Lord Jesus. There John Ploughman rests, and he is not afraid, for this is a firm footing, and gives him a hope sure and stedfast, which neither life nor death can shake; but I must not turn preacher; so please remember that presumption is a ladder which will break the mounter's neck; and don't try it as you love your soul.

A HANDSAW IS A GOOD THING, BUT NOT TO SHAVE WITH.

OUR friend will cut more than he will eat, and shave off something more than hair, and then he will blame the saw. His brains don’t lie in his beard, nor yet in the skull above it, or he would see that his saw will only make sores. There’s sense in choosing your tools, for a pig’s tail will never make a good arrow, nor will



his ear make a silk purse. You can’t catch rabbits with drums, nor pigeons with plums. A good thing is not good out of its place. It is much the same with lads and girls; you can’t put all boys to one trade, nor send all girls to the same service. One chap will make a London clerk, and another will do better to plough and sow, and reap and mow, and be a farmer’s boy. It’s no use forcing them; a snail will never run a race, nor a mouse drive a wagon.

“Send a boy to the well against his will,
The pitcher will break and the water spill.”

With unwilling hounds it is hard to hunt hares. To go against nature and inclination is to row against wind and tide. They say you may praise a fool till you make him useful: I don't know so much about that, but I do know that if I get a bad knife I generally cut my finger, and a blunt axe is more trouble than profit. No, let me shave with a razor if I shave at all, and do my work with the best tools I can get.

Never set a man to work he is not fit for, for he will never do it well. They say that if pigs fly they always go with their tails forward, and awkward workmen are much the same. Nobody expects cows to catch crows, or hens to wear hats. There's reason in roasting eggs, and there should be reason in choosing servants. Don't put a round peg into a square hole, nor wind up your watch with a corkscrew, nor set a tender-hearted man to whip wife-beaters, nor a bear to be a relieving-officer, nor a publican to judge of the licensing laws. Get the right man in the right place, and then all goes as smooth as skates on ice; but the wrong man puts all awry, as the sow did when she folded the linen.

It is a temptation to many to trust them with money: don't put them to take care of it if you ever wish to see it again. Never set a cat to watch cream, nor a pig to gather peaches, for if the cream and the peaches go a-missing you will have yourself to thank for it. It is a sin to put people where they are likely to sin. If you believe the old saying, that when you set a beggar on horseback he will ride to the devil, don't let him have a horse of yours.

If you want a thing well done, do it yourself, and pick your tools. It is true that a man must row with such oars as he has, but he should not use the boat-hook for a paddle. Take not the tongs to poke the fire, nor the poker to put on the coals. A newspaper on Sunday is as much out of place as a warming-pan on the first of August, or a fan on a snowy day: the Bible suits the Sabbath a deal better.

He who tries to make money by betting uses a wrong tool, and is sure to cut his fingers. As well hope to grow golden pippins on the bottom of the sea as to make gain among gamblers if you are an honest man. Hard work and thrifty habits are the right razor, gambling is a handsaw.

Some things want doing gently, and telling a man of his faults is one of them. You would not fetch a hatchet to break open an egg, nor kill a fly on your boy’s forehead with a sledge-hammer, and so you must not try to mend your neighbor’s little fault by blowing him up sky-high. Never fire off a musket to kill a midge, and don’t raise a hue and cry about the half of nothing.

Do not throw away a saw because it is not a razor, for it will serve your turn another day, and cut your ham-bone if it won’t shave off your stubble. A whetstone, though it cannot cut, may sharpen a knife that will. A match gives little light itself, but it may light a candle to brighten up the room. Use each thing and each man according to common-sense, and you will be uncommonly sensible. You don’t milk horses nor ride cows, and by the same rule you must make of every man what he is meant for, and the farm will be as right as a trivet.

Everything has its use, but no one thing is good for all purposes. The baby said, “The cat crew, and the cock rocked the cradle;” but old folks knew better: the cat is best at mousing, and the cock at rousing. That’s for that, as salt is for herrings, and sugar for gooseberries, and Nan for Nicholas. Don’t choose your tools by their looks, for that’s best which does best. A silver trowel lays very few bricks. You cannot curry a horse with a tortoiseshell comb, or fell oaks with a penknife, or open oysters with a gold toothpick. *Fine* is not so good as *fit* when work is to be done. A good workman will get on pretty well with a poor tool, and a brave soldier never lacks a weapon; still, the best is good enough for me, and John Ploughman does not care to use a clumsy tool because it looks pretty. Better ride on an ass that carries you than on a steed which throws you; it is far better to work with an old-fashioned spade which suits your hand than with a new-fangled invention you don’t understand.

In trying to do good to your fellow-men the Gospel is out of sight the best instrument to work with. The new doctrine which they call “modern thought” is nothing better than a handsaw, and it won’t work a bit. This fine new nothing of a gospel would not save a mouse, nor move the soul of a tomtit; but the glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ is suited to man’s need, and by God’s grace

does its work famously. Let every preacher and teacher keep to it, for they will never find a better. Try to win men with its loving words and precious promises, and there's no fear of labor in vain. Some praise the balm of Gilead, or man's morality; many try the Roman salve, or the oil of Babylon; and others use a cunning ointment mixed by learned philosophers; but for his own soul's wounds, and for the hurts of others, John Ploughman knows but one cure, and that is given gratis by the Good Physician to all who ask for it. A humble faith in Christ Jesus will soon bring you this sovereign remedy. Use no other for no other is of use.

ON PATIENCE.

PATIENCE is better than wisdom: an ounce of patience is worth a pound of brains. All men praise patience, but few enough can practise it; it is a medicine which is good for all diseases, and therefore every old woman recommends it; but it is not every garden that grows the herbs to make it with. When one's flesh and bones are full of aches and pains, it is as natural for us to murmur as for a horse to shake his head when the flies tease him, or a wheel to rattle when a spoke is loose; but nature should not be the rule with Christians, or what is their religion worth? If a soldier fights no better than a ploughboy, off with his red coat. We expect more fruit from an apple-tree than from a thorn, and we have a right to do so. The disciples of a patient Saviour should be patient themselves. Grin and bear it is the old-fashioned advice, but sing and bear it is a great deal better. After all, we get very few cuts of the whip, considering what bad cattle we are; and when we do smart a little, it is soon over. Pain past is pleasure, and experience comes by it. We ought not to be afraid of going down into Egypt, when we know we shall come out of it with jewels of silver and gold.

Impatient people water their miseries and hoe up their comforts; sorrows are visitors that come without invitation, but com-

plaining minds send a wagon to bring their troubles home in. Many people are born crying, live complaining, and die disappointed; they chew the bitter pill which they would not even know to be bitter if they had the sense to swallow it whole in a cup of patience and water. They think every other man’s burden to be light, and their own feathers to be heavy as lead; they are hardly done by in their own opinion; no one’s toes are so often trodden on by the black ox as theirs; the snow falls thickest round their door, and the hail rattles hardest on their windows; and yet, if the truth were known, it is their fancy rather than their fate, which makes things go so hard with them. Many would be well off if they could but think so. A little sprig of the herb called content put into the poorest soup will make it taste as rich as the Lord Mayor’s turtle. John Ploughman grows the plant in his garden, but the late hard winter nipped it terribly, so that he cannot afford to give his neighbors a slip of it; they had better follow Matthew xxv. 9, and go to those who sell and buy for themselves. Grace is a good soil to grow it in, but it wants watering from the fountain of mercy.

To be poor is not always pleasant, but worse things than that happen at sea. Small shoes are apt to pinch, but not if you have a small foot; if we have little means it will be well to have little desires. Poverty is no shame, but being discontented with it is. In some things the poor are better off than the rich; for if a poor man has to seek meat for his stomach, he is more likely to get what he is after than a rich man who seeks a stomach for his meat. A poor man’s table is soon spread, and his labor spares his buying sauce. The best doctors are Dr. Diet, Dr. Quiet, and Dr. Merryman, and many a godly ploughman has all these gentlemen to wait upon him. Plenty makes dainty, but hunger finds no fault with the cook. Hard work brings health, and an ounce of health is worth a sack of diamonds. It is not how much we have, but how much we enjoy, that makes happiness. There is more sweet in a spoonful of sugar than in a cask of vinegar. It is not the quantity of our goods, but the blessing of God on what we have that makes us truly rich. The parings of a pippin are better than a whole crab; a dinner of herbs with peace is better than a

stalled ox and contention therewith. "Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble therewith." A little wood will heat my little oven; why, then, should I murmur because all the woods are not mine?

When troubles come, it is of no use to fly in the face of God by hard thoughts of providence; that is kicking against the pricks and hurting your feet. The trees bow in the wind, and so must we. Every time the sheep bleats, it loses a mouthful, and every time we complain we miss a blessing. Grumbling is a bad trade and yields no profit, but patience has a golden hand. Our evils will soon be over. After rain comes clear shining; black crows have wings; every winter turns to spring; every night breaks into morning.

"Blow the wind never so fast,
It will lower at last."

If the door shall be shut God will open another; if the peas do not yield well, the beans may; if one hen leaves her eggs, another will bring all her brood; there's a bright side to all things, and a good God everywhere. Somewhere or other in the worst flood of trouble, there always is a dry spot for contentment to get its foot on, and if there were not, it would learn to swim.

Friends, let us take to patience and water-gruel, as the old folks used to tell us, rather than catch the miserables, and give others the disease by wickedly finding fault with God. The best remedy for affliction is submitting to Providence. What can't be cured must be endured. If we cannot get bacon, let us bless God that there are still some cabbages in the garden. Must is a hard nut to crack, but it has a sweet kernel. "All things work together for good to them that love God." Whatever falls from the skies is, sooner or later, good for the land; whatever comes to us from God is worth having, even though it be a rod. We cannot by nature like trouble any more than a mouse can fall in love with a cat, and yet Paul by grace came to glory in tribulations also. Losses and crosses are heavy to bear, but when our hearts are right with God, it is wonderful how easy the yoke becomes. We must needs go to glory by the way of Weeping Cross; and as we were never

promised that we should ride to heaven in a feather-bed, we must not be disappointed when we see the road to be rough, as our fathers found it before us. All’s well that ends well; and therefore let us plough the heaviest soil with our eye on the sheaves of harvest, and learn to sing at our labor while others murmur.

ALL ARE NOT HUNTERS THAT BLOW THE HORN.

HE does not look much like a hunter! Nimrod would never own him. But how he blows! Goodness gracious, what a row! as the linnet said when he heard a donkey singing his evening hymn.



There’s more goes to ploughing than knowing how to whistle; and hunting is not all tally-ho and horn-blowing. Appearances are deceitful. Outward show is not everything. All are not butchers that carry a steel, and all are not bishops that wear aprons. You must not buy goods by the label, for I have heard

that the finer the trade-mark the worse the article. Never have we seen more horn or less hunter than in our picture. Blow away, my hearty, till your toes look out of your boots; there's no fear of your killing either fox or stag!

Now, the more people blow, the more they may, but he is a fool who believes all they say. As a rule, the smallest boy carries the biggest fiddle, and he who makes most boast has least roast. He who has least wisdom has most vanity. John Lackland is wonderfully fond of being called Esquire, and there's none so pleased at being dubbed a doctor as the man who least deserves it. Many a D. D. is fiddle-de-dee. I have heard say, "Always talk big, and somebody will think you great;" but my old friend Will Shepherd says: "Save your wind for running up a hill, and don't give us big words off a weak stomach. Look," said he once to me, "there's Solomon Braggs holding up his head like a hen drinking water, but there's nothing in it! With him it's much din and little done."

" Of all speculations the market holds forth,
The best that I know for a lover of pelf
Were to buy up this Braggs at the price he is worth,
And sell him — at that which he sets on himself."

Before honor is humility; but a prating fool shall fall, and when he falls very few will be in a hurry to pick him up.

A long tongue generally goes with a short hand. We are most of us better at saying than doing. We can all tattle away from the battle, but many fly when the fight is nigh. Some are all sound and fury, and when they have bragged their brag all is over, and *amen*. The fat Dutchman was the wisest pilot in Flushing, only he never went to sea; and the Irishman was the finest rider in Connaught, only he would never trust himself on a horse, because, as he said, "he generally fell off before he got on." A bachelor's wife is always well managed, and old maids always bring up their children in prime style. We think we can do what we are not called to, and if by chance the thing falls to our lot we do worse than those we blamed. Hence it is wise to be slow in foretelling what we will do, for, —

“ Thus saith the proverb of the wise,
 ‘ Who boasteth least tells fewest lies.’ ”

There is another old rhyme which is as full of reason as a pod is full of peas, —

“ Little money is soonest spended ;
 Fewest words are soonest mended.”

Of course, every potter praises his own pot, and we can all toot a little on our own trumpet; but some blow as if nobody ever had a horn but themselves. “After me the flood,” says the mighty big man, and whether it be so or no we have floods enough while he lives. I mean floods of words, words, words, enough to drown all your senses. Oh that the man had a mouth big enough to say all he has to say at one go, and have done with it! But then one had need get to the other end of the world till his talk had run itself dry. Oh for a quiet hayloft, or a sawpit, or a dungeon, where the sound of the jawbone would no more be heard! They say a brain is worth little if you have not a tongue; but what is a tongue worth without a brain? Bellowing is all very well, but the cow for me is that which fills the pail. A braying ass eats little hay, and that’s a saving in fodder; but a barking dog catches no game, and that’s a loss to the owner. Noise is no profit, and talk hinders work.

When a man’s song is in his praise, let the hymn be short metre, and let the tune be in the minor key. He who talks forever about himself has a foolish subject, and is likely to worry and weary all around him. Good wine needs no bush, and a man who can do well seldom boasts about it. The emptiest tub makes the loudest noise. Those who give themselves out to be fine shots kill very few birds, and many a crack ploughman does a shorter day’s work than plain John, though he is nothing off the common; and so on the whole it is pretty clear that the best huntsmen are not those who are for everlastingly blowing the horn.

HE LIVES UNDER THE SIGN OF THE CAT'S FOOT.

THE question was once asked, When should a man marry? and the merry answer was, that for young men it is too soon, and for old men it is too late. This is all very fine, but it will not wash. Both the wisdom and the folly of men seem banded together to make a mock of this doctrine. Men are such fools that they must and will marry, even if they marry fools. It is wise to



marry when we can marry wisely, and then the sooner the better. How many show their sense in choosing a partner it is not for me to say, but I fear that in many cases love is blind, and makes a very blind choice. I don't suppose that some people would ever get married at all if love had its wits about it. It is a mystery how certain parties ever found partners; truly there's no accounting for tastes. However, as they make their bed they must lie on it, and as they tie the knot they must be tied by it. If a man catches a tartar, or lets a tartar catch him, he must take his dose of tartaric

acid, and make as few ugly faces as he can. If a three-legged stool come flying through the air, he must be thankful for such a plain token of love from the woman of his choice, and the best thing he can do is to sit down on it and wait for the next little article.

When it is said of a man, “He lives under the sign of the cat’s foot,” he must try and please his pussy, that she may not scratch him more than such cats generally do. A good husband will generally have a good wife, or make a bad wife better. Bad Jack makes a great noise about bad Jill, but there’s generally twenty of one where there’s a score of the other. They say a burden of one’s own choosing is never felt to be heavy; but I don’t know, some men are loaded with mischief as soon as they have a wife to carry. Yet

A good woman is worth, if she were sold,
The fairest crown that’s made of gold.

She is a pleasure, a treasure, and a joy without measure. A good wife and health are a man’s best wealth; and he who is in such a case should envy no man’s place. Even when a woman is a little tart, it is better than if she had no spirit, and made her house into a dirt pie. A shrew is better than a slut, though one can be quite miserable enough with either. If she is a good housewife, and looks well after the children, one may put up with a Caudle lecture now and then, though a cordial lecture would be a deal better. A husband is in a pickle indeed if he gets tied up to a regular scold; he might as well be skinned and set up to his neck in a tub of brine. Did you ever hear the scold’s song? Read it, you young folks who think of committing matrimony, and think twice before you get married once.

When in the morn I ope mine eyes
To entertain the day,
Before my husband e’en can rise,
I scold him, — then I pray.

When I at table take my place,
Whatever be the meat,
I first do scold, — and then say grace,
If so disposed to eat.

Too fat, too lean, too hot, too cold,
 I always do complain ;
 Too raw, too roast, too young, too old, —
 Faults I will find or feign.

Let it be flesh, or fowl, or fish,
 It never shall be said
 But I'll find fault with meat or dish,
 With master or with maid.

But when I go to bed at night
 I heartily do weep,
 That I must part with my delight, —
 I cannot scold and sleep.

However, this doth mitigate
 And much abate my sorrow,
 That though to-night it be too late,
 I'll early scold to-morrow.

When the husband is not a man, it is not to be wondered at if the wife wears the top-boots: the mare may well be the best horse when the other horse is a donkey. Well may a woman feel that she is lord and master when she has to earn the living for the family, as is sometimes the case. She ought not to be the head, but if she has all the brains, what is she to do? What poor dawdles many men would be without their wives! As poor softy Simpkins says, if Bill's wife becomes a widow, who will cut the pudding up for him, and will there be a pudding at all? It is grand when the wife knows her place, and keeps it, and they both pull together in everything. Then she is a helpmeet indeed, and makes the house a home. Old friend Tusser says, —

“When husband is absent let housewife be chief,
 And look to their labor who live from their sheaf;
 The housewife's so named for she keepeth the house,
 And must tend on her profit as cat on a mouse.”

He is very pat upon it that much of household affairs must rest on the wife, and he writes:

“Both out, not allow,
 Keep home, housewife thou.”

Like the old man and woman in the toy which shows the weather, one must be sure to be in if the other goes out. When the king is abroad the queen must reign at home, and when he returns to

his throne he is bound to look upon her as his crown, and prize her above gold and jewels. He should feel, “If there’s only one good wife in the whole world, I’ve got her.” John Ploughman has long thought just that of his own wife, and after five and twenty years he is more sure of it than ever. He never bets, but he would not mind wagering a farthing cake that there is not a better woman on the surface of the globe than his own, very own beloved. Happy is the man who is happy in his wife. Let him love her as he loves himself, and a little better, for she is his better half.

Thank God that hath so blest thee,
And sit down, John, and rest thee.

There is one case in which I don’t wonder if the wife does put her mate under the cat’s foot, and that is when he slinks off to the public and wastes his wages. Even then love and gentleness is the best way of getting him home; but, really, some toppers have no feeling, and laugh at kindness, and therefore nobody can be surprised if the poor wife bristles up and gives her lord and master a taste of tongue. Nothing tries married love more than the pothouse. Wages wasted, wife neglected, children in rags: if she gives it him hot and strong, who can blame her? Pitch into him, good woman, and make him ashamed of himself, if you can. No wonder that you lead a cat-and-dog life while he is such a sorry dog.

Still, you might as well go home and set him a better example, for two blacks will never make a white, and if you put him in hot water he’s sure to get some spirits to mix with it.

A GOOD WORD FOR WIVES.

WE pulled up the horses at the sign of the “Good Woman;” and as there is good entertainment for man, if not for beast, under that sign, we will make a stay of it, and dip our pen into some of that superfine ink which has no galls in it. When he writes on so fair a subject, John Ploughman must be on his best behavior.

It is astonishing how many old sayings there are against wives: you may find nineteen to the dozen of them. The men years ago showed the rough side of their tongues whenever they spoke of their spouses. Some of these sayings are downright shocking; as, for instance, that very wicked one, "Every man has two good days with his wife,—the day he marries her and the day he buries her;" and that other, "He that loseth his wife and a farthing, has a great loss of the farthing."

I recollect an old ballad that Gaffer Brooks used to sing about a man's being better hung than married; it shows how common it was to abuse the married life. It is almost too bad to print it; but here it is as near as I remember it, —

" There was a victim in a cart,
One day for to be hanged,
And his reprieve was granted,
And the cart made for to stand.

" 'Come, marry a wife and save your life,'
The judge aloud did cry;
'Oh, why should I corrupt my life?'
The victim did reply.

" 'For here 's a crowd of every sort,
And why should I prevent their sport?
The bargain 's bad in every part,
The wife 's the worst, — drive on the cart.'"

Now this rubbish does not prove that the women are bad, but that their husbands are good for nothing, or else they would not make up such abominable slanders about their partners. The rottenest bough cracks first, and it looks as if the male side of the house was the worse of the two, for it certainly has made up the most grumbling proverbs. There have, no doubt, been some shockingly bad wives in the world, who have been provoking enough to make a man say, —

" If a woman were as little as she is good,
A peashell would make her a gown and a hood."

But how many thousands have there been of true helpmeets, worth far more than their weight in gold! There is only one Job's wife mentioned in the Bible and one Jezebel, but there are

no end of Sarahs and Rebekahs. I am of Solomon’s mind, that, as a rule, he that findeth a wife findeth a good thing. If there’s one bad shilling taken at the grocer’s, all the neighbors hear of it, but of the hundreds of good ones report says nothing. A good woman makes no noise, and no noise is made about her; but a shrew is noted all over the parish. Taking them for all in all, they are most angelical creatures, and a great deal too good for half the husbands.

It is much to the women’s credit that there are very few old sayings against husbands, although in this case sauce for the goose would make capital sauce for the gander; and the mare has as good reasons for kicking as the horse has. They must be very forbearing, or they would have given the men a Roland for every Oliver. Pretty dears, they may be rather quick in their talk, but is it not the nature of bells and belles to have tongues that swing easy? They cannot be so very bad after all, or they would have had their revenge for the many cruel things which are said against them; and if they are a bit masterful, their husbands cannot be such very great victims, or they would surely have sense enough to hold their tongues about it. Men don’t care to have it known when they are thoroughly well henpecked, and I feel pretty certain that the old sayings are nothing but chaff, for if they were true men would never dare to own it.

A true wife is her husband’s better half, his lump of delight, his flower of beauty, his guardian angel, and his heart’s treasure. He says to her: “I shall in thee most happy be. In thee, my choice, I do rejoice. In thee I find content of mind. God’s appointment is my contentment.” In her company he finds his earthly heaven; she is the light of his home, the comfort of his soul, and (for this world) the soul of his comfort. Whatever fortune God may send him, he is rich so long as she lives. His rib is the best bone in his body.

The man who weds a loving wife,
 Whate’er betideth him in life,
 Shall bear up under all;
 But he that finds an evil mate,
 No good can come within his gate,
 His cup is fill’d with gall.

A good husband makes a good wife. Some men can neither do without wives nor with them; they are wretched alone in what is called single blessedness, and they make their homes miserable when they get married; they are like Tompkin's dog, which could not bear to be loose, and howled when it was tied up. Happy bachelors are likely to be happy husbands, and a happy husband is the happiest of men. A well-matched couple carry a joyful life between them, as the two spies carried the cluster of Eshcol. They are a brace of birds of Paradise. They multiply their joys by sharing them, and lessen their troubles by dividing them: this is fine arithmetic. The wagon of care rolls lightly along as they pull together; and when it drags a little heavily, or there's a hitch anywhere, they love each other all the more, and so lighten the labor.

When a couple fall out, there are always faults on both sides, and generally there is a pound on one and sixteen ounces on the other. When a home is miserable, it is as often the husband's fault as the wife's. Darby is as much to blame as Joan, and sometimes more. If the husband won't keep sugar in the cupboard, no wonder his wife gets sour. Want of bread makes want of love; lean dogs fight. Poverty generally rides home on the husband's back, for it is not often the woman's place to go out working for wages. A man down our parts gave his wife a ring with this on it: "If thee don't work, thee sha'n't eat." He was a brute. It is no business of hers to bring in the grist, — she is to see it is well used and not wasted; therefore, I say, short commons are not her fault. She is not the bread-winner, but the bread-maker. She earns more at home than any wages she can get abroad.

It is not the wife who smokes and drinks away the wages at the "Brown Bear" or the "Jolly Topers." One sees a drunken woman now and then, and it's an awful sight; but in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred it is the man who comes home tipsy and abuses the children, — the woman seldom does that. The poor drudge of a wife is a teetotaler, whether she likes it or no, and gets plenty of hot water as well as cold. Women are found fault with for often looking into the glass, but that is not so bad a glass as men drown

their senses in. The wives do not sit boozing over the taproom fire; they, poor souls, are shivering at home with the baby, watching the clock (if there is one), wondering when their lords and masters will come home, and crying while they wait. I wonder they don't strike. Some of them are about as wretched as a cockchafer on a pin, or a mouse in a cat's mouth. They have to nurse the sick girl, and wash the dirty boy, and bear with the crying and noise of the children, while his lordship puts on his hat, lights his pipe, and goes off about his own pleasure, or comes in at his own time to find fault with his poor dame for not getting him a fine supper. How could he expect to be fed like a fighting-cock, when he brought home so little money on Saturday night, and spends so much in worshipping Sir John Barleycorn? I say it, I know it, there's many a house where there would be no scolding wife if there was not a skulking, guzzling husband. Fellows not fit to be cut up for mops drink and drink till all is blue, and then turn on their poor hacks for not having more to give them. Don't tell me, I say it and will maintain it, a woman can't help being vexed when with all her mending and striving she can't keep house, because her husband won't let her. It would provoke any of us if we had to make bricks without straw, keep the pot boiling without fire, and pay the piper out of an empty purse. What can she get out of the oven when she has neither meal nor dough? You bad husbands, you are thoroughbred sneaks, and ought be hung up by your heels till you know better.

They say a man of straw is worth a woman of gold, but I cannot swallow it; a man of straw is worth no more than a woman of straw, let old sayings lie as they like. Jack is no better than Jill, as a rule. When there is wisdom in the husband, there's generally gentleness in the wife, and between them the old wedding wish is worked out: “One year of joy, another of comfort, and all the rest of content.” Where hearts agree, there joy will be. United hearts death only parts. They say *marriage* is not often *merry-age*, but very commonly *mar-age*; well, if so, the coat and waistcoat have as much to do with it as the gown and petticoat. The honeymoon need not come to an end; and when it does, it is often the man's fault for eating all the honey, and leaving nothing

but moonshine; when they both agree that whatever becomes of the moon they will each keep up their share of honey, there's merry living. When a man dwells under the sign of the cat's foot, where faces get scratched, either his wife did not marry a man, or he did not marry a woman. If a man cannot take care of himself, his wit must be as scant as the wool of a blue dog. I don't pity most of the men martyrs; I save my pity for the women. When the Dunmow-flitch is lost, neither of the pair will eat the bacon; but the wife is the most likely to fast for the want of it. Every herring must hang by its own gill, and every person must account for his own share in home quarrels; but John Ploughman can't bear to see all the blame laid on the women. Whenever a dish is broke the cat did it, and whenever there is mischief, there's a woman at the bottom of it: here are two as pretty lies as you will meet with in a month's march. There's a why for every wherefore, but the why for family jars does not always lie with the housekeeper. I know some women have long tongues, then the more's the pity that their husbands should set them going; but for the matter of talk, just look into a bar parlor when the men's jaws are well oiled with liquor, and if any women living can talk faster or be more stupid than the men, my name is not John Ploughman.

When I had got about as far as this, in stepped our minister, and he said, "John, you've got a tough subject, a cut above you; I'll lend you a rare old book to help you over the stile." "Well, sir," said I, "a little help is worth a great deal of fault-finding, and I shall be uncommonly obliged to you." He sent me down old William Secker's "Wedding Ring," and a real wise fellow that Secker was. I could not do any other than pick out some of his pithy bits; they are very flavory, and such as are likely to glue themselves to the memory. He says: "Hast thou a soft heart? It is of God's breaking. Hast thou a sweet wife? She is of God's making. The Hebrews have a saying, 'He is not a man that hath not a woman.' Though man alone may be good, yet it is not good that man should be alone. 'Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above.' A wife, though she be not a perfect gift, is a good gift, a beam darted from the Sun of mercy. How happy are those marriages where Christ is at the wedding! Let none but those

who have found favor in God’s eyes, find favor in yours. Husbands should spread a mantle of charity over their wives’ infirmities. Do not put out the candle because of the snuff. Husbands and wives should provoke one another to love, and they should love one another notwithstanding provocations. The tree of love should grow up in the midst of the family as the tree of life grew in the garden of Eden. Good servants are a great blessing; good children a greater blessing; but a good wife is the greatest blessing; and such a help let him seek for her that wants one; let him sigh for her that hath lost one; let him delight in her that enjoys one.”

To come down from the old Puritan’s roast beef to my own pot herbs, or, as they say, to put Jack after gentleman, I will tell my own experience, and have done.

My experience of my first wife, who will, I hope, live to be my last, is much as follows: matrimony came from Paradise, and leads to it. I never was half so happy before I was a married man as I am now. When you are married, your bliss begins. I have no doubt that where there is much love there will be much to love, and where love is scant faults will be plentiful. If there is only one good wife in England, I am the man who put the ring on her finger, and long may she wear it! God bless the dear soul! if she can put up *with* me, she shall never be put down *by* me.

If I were not married to-day, and saw a suitable partner, I would be married to-morrow morning before breakfast. What think you of that? “Why,” says one, “I think John would get a new wife if he were left a widower.” Well, and what if he did; how could he better show that he was happy with his first? I declare I would not say as some do, that they married to have some one to look after the children; I should marry to have some one to look after myself. John Ploughman is a sociable soul, and could not do in a house by himself. One man, when he married his fourth wife, put on the ring, —

“If I survive, I’ll make it five.”

What an old Bluebeard! Marriages are made in heaven; matrimony in itself is good, but there are fools who turn meat into

poison, and make a blessing into a curse. "This is a good rope," said Pedley, "I'll hang myself with it." A man who has sought his wife from God, and married her for her character, and not merely for her figure-head, may look for a blessing on his choice. They who join their love in God above, who pray to love and love to pray, will find that love and joy will never cloy.

He who respects his wife will find that she respects him. With what measure he metes, it shall be measured to him again, good measure, pressed down and running over. He who consults his spouse will have a good counsellor. I have heard our minister say, "Women's instincts are often truer than man's reason;" they jump at a thing at once, and they are wise off-hand. Say what you will of your wife's advice, it's as likely as not you will be sorry you did not take it. He who speaks ill of women should remember the breast he was nursed at, and be ashamed of himself. He who ill treats his wife ought to be whipped at the cart-tail, and would not I like a cut at him! I would just brush a fly or two off, trust me for that. So no more at present, as the thatcher said when he had cleared every dish on the table.

STICK TO IT AND DO IT.

SET a stout heart to a stiff hill, and the wagon will get to the top of it. There's nothing so hard but a harder thing will get through it; a strong job can be managed by a strong resolution. Have at it and have it. Stick to it and succeed. Till a thing is done, men wonder that you think it can be done, and when you have done it they wonder it was never done before.

In my picture the wagon is drawn by two horses; but I would have every man who wants to make his way in life pull as if all depended on himself. Very little is done right when it is left to other people. The more hands to do work the less there is done. One man will carry two pails of water for himself; two men will only carry one pail between them; and three will come home with

never a drop at all. A child with several mothers will die before it runs alone. Know your business and give your mind to it, and you will find a buttered loaf where a sluggard loses his last crust.

In these times it’s no use being a farmer if you don’t mean work. The days are gone by for gentlemen to make a fortune off



of a farm by going out shooting half their time. If foreign wheats keep on coming in, farmers will soon learn that, —

“He who by the plough would thrive,
Himself must either hold or drive.”

Going to Australia is of no use to a man if he carries a set of lazy bones with him. There’s a living to be got in old England at almost any trade if a fellow will give his mind to it. A man who works hard and has his health and strength is a great deal happier than my lord Tom Noddy, who does nothing and is always ailing. Do you know the old song of “The Nobleman’s Generous Kindness”? You should hear our Will sing it. I recollect some of the verses. The first one gives a picture of the hard-working laborer with a large family, —

“ Thus careful and constant, each morning he went,
 Unto his day labor with joy and content ;
 So jocular and jolly he 'd whistle and sing,
 As blithe and as brisk as the birds in the spring.”

The other lines are the ploughman's own story of how he spent his life, and I wish that all countrymen could say the same, —

“ I reap and I mow, I harrow and I sow,
 Sometimes a-hedging and ditching I go ;
 No work comes amiss, for I thrash and I plough,
 Thus my bread I do earn by the sweat of my brow.

“ My wife she is willing to pull in a yoke,
 We live like two lambs, nor each other provoke ;
 We both of us strive, like the laboring ant,
 And do our endeavors to keep us from want.

“ And when I come home from my labor at night,
 To my wife and my children in whom I delight,
 I see them come round me with prattling noise.
 Now these are the riches a poor man enjoys.

“ Though I am as weary as weary may be,
 The youngest I commonly dance on my knee ;
 I find in content a continual feast,
 And never repine at my lot in the least.”

So, you see, the poor laborer may work hard and be happy all the same ; and surely those who are in higher stations may do the like if they like.

He is a sorry dog who wants game and will not hunt for it: let us never lie down in idle despair, but follow on till we succeed.

Rome was not built in a day, nor much else, unless it be a dog-kennel. Things which cost no pains are slender gains. Where there has been little sweat there will be little sweet. Jonah's gourd came up in a night, but then it perished in a night. Light come, light go ; that which flies in at one window will be likely to fly out at another. It's a very lean hare that hounds catch without running for it, and a sheep that is no trouble to shear has very little wool. For this reason a man who cannot push on against wind and weather stands a poor chance in this world.

Perseverance is the main thing in life. To hold on, and hold

out to the end, is the chief matter. If the race could be won by a spurt, thousands would wear the blue ribbon; but they are short-winded, and pull up after the first gallop. They begin with flying, and end in crawling backward. When it comes to collar work, many horses turn to jibbing. If the apples do not fall at the first shake of the tree, your hasty folks are too lazy to fetch a ladder, and in too much of a hurry to wait till the fruit is ripe enough to fall of itself. The hasty man is as hot as fire at the outset, and as cold as ice at the end. He is like the Irishman's saucepan, which had many good points about it, but it had no bottom. He who cannot bear the burden and heat of the day is not worth his salt, much less his potatoes.

Before you begin a thing, make sure it is the right thing to do: ask Mr. Conscience about it. Do not try to do what is impossible: ask Common Sense. It is of no use to blow against a hurricane, or to fish for whales in a washing-tub. Better give up a foolish plan than go on and burn your fingers with it: better bend your neck than knock your forehead. But when you have once made up your mind to go a certain road, don't let every molehill turn you out of the path. One stroke fells not an oak. Chop away, axe, you'll down with the tree at last! A bit of iron does not soften the moment you put it into the fire. Blow, smith! Put on more coals! Get it red hot and hit hard with the hammer, and you will make a ploughshare yet. Steady does it. Hold on, and you have it! Brag is a fine fellow at crying “Tally-ho!” but Perseverance brings home the brush.

We ought not to be put out of heart by difficulties: they are sent on purpose to try the stuff we are made of; and depend upon it they do us a world of good. There's a sound reason why there are bones in our meat and stones in our land. A world where everything was easy would be a nursery for babies, but not at all a fit place for men. Celery is not sweet till it has felt a frost, and men don't come to their perfection till disappointment has dropped a half-hundred weight or two on their toes. Who would know good horses if there were no heavy loads? If the clay was not stiff, my old Dapper and Violet would be thought no more of than Tomkins's donkey. Besides, to work hard for success

makes us fit to bear it: we enjoy the bacon all the more because we have got an appetite by earning it. When prosperity pounces on a man like an eagle, it often throws him down. If we overtake the cart, it is a fine thing to get up and ride; but when it comes behind us at a tearing rate, it is very apt to knock us down and run over us, and when we are lifted into it we find our leg is broken, or our arm out of joint, and we cannot enjoy the ride. Work is always healthier for us than idleness; it is always better to wear out shoes than sheets. I sometimes think, when I put on my considering cap, that success in life is something like getting married: there's a very great deal of pleasure in the courting, and it is not a bad thing when it is a moderate time on the road. Therefore, young man, learn to wait, and work on. Don't throw away your rod, the fish will bite some time or other. The cat watches long at the hole, but catches the mouse at last. The spider mends her broken web, and the flies are taken before long. Stick to your calling, plod on, and be content; for, make sure, if you can undergo you shall overcome.

If had be your prospects, don't sit still and cry,
But jump up, and say to yourself, "I will try."

Miracles will never cease! My neighbor, Simon Gripper, was taken generous about three months ago. The story is well worth telling. He saw a poor blind man, led by a little girl, playing on a fiddle. His heart was touched, for a wonder. He said to me, "Ploughman, lend me a penny, there's a good fellow." I fumbled in my pocket, and found two halfpence, and handed them to him. More fool I, for he will never pay me again. He gave the blind fiddler one of those halfpence, and kept the other, and I have not seen either Gripper or my penny since, nor shall I get the money back till the gate-post outside my garden grows Ribstone pippins. There's generosity for you! The old saying which is put at the top of this bit of my talk brought him into my mind, for he sticks to it most certainly: he lives as badly as a church-mouse, and works as hard as if he was paid by the piece and had twenty children to keep; but I would no more hold him up for an example than I would show a toad as a specimen of a pretty bird.

While I talk to you young people about getting on, I don’t want you to think that hoarding up money is real success; nor do I wish you to rise an inch above an honest ploughman’s lot, if it cannot be done without being mean or wicked. The workhouse, prison as it is, is a world better than a mansion built by roguery and greed. If you cannot get on honestly, be satisfied not to get on. The blessing of God is riches enough for a wise man, and all the world is not enough for a fool. Old Gripper’s notion of how to prosper has, I dare say, a good deal of truth in it, and the more’s the pity. The Lord deliver us from such a prospering, I say. That old sinner has often hummed these lines into my ears when we have got into an argument, and very pretty lines they are *not*, certainly: —

“To win the prize in the world’s great race,
 A man should have a brazen face;
 An iron arm to give a stroke,
 And a heart as sturdy as an oak;
 Eyes like a cat, good in the dark,
 And teeth as piercing as a shark;
 Ears to hear the gentlest sound,
 Like moles that burrow in the ground;
 A mouth as close as patent locks,
 And stomach stronger than an ox;
 His tongue should be a razor-blade,
 His conscience india-rubber made;
 His blood as cold as polar ice,
 His hand as grasping as a vice.
 His shoulders should be adequate
 To bear a couple thousand weight;
 His legs, like pillars, firm and strong,
 To move the great machine along;
 With supple knees to cringe and crawl,
 And cloven feet placed under all.”

It amounts to this: Be a devil in order to be happy. Sell yourself outright to the old dragon, and he will give you the world and the glory thereof. But remember the question of the old Book: “What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?”

MEN WITH TWO FACES.

EVEN bad men praise consistency. Thieves like honest men, for they are the best to rob. When you know where to find a man, he has one good point at any rate; but a fellow who howls with the wolves, and bleats with the sheep, gets nobody's good word, unless it be the devil's. To carry two faces under one hat is, however, very common. Many roost with the poultry, and go shares with Reynard. Many look as if butter would not melt in their mouths, and yet can spit fire when it suits their purpose. I read the other day an advertisement about reversible coats: the tailor who sells them must be making a fortune. Holding with the hare and running with the hounds is still in fashion. Consistency is about as scarce in the world as musk in a dog-kennel.

You may trust some men as far as you can see them, but no further, for new company makes them new men. Like water, they boil or freeze according to the temperature. Some do this because they have no principles; they are of the weathercock persuasion, and turn with the wind. You might as well measure the moon for a suit of clothes as know what they are. They believe in that which pays best. They always put up at the Golden Fleece. Their mill grinds any grist which you bring to it if the ready money is forthcoming; and they go with every wind, north, south, east, west, northeast, northwest, southeast, southwest, nor'-nor'-east, southwest-by-south, or any other in all the world. Like frogs, they can live on land or water, and are not at all particular which it is. Like a cat, they always fall on their feet, and will stop anywhere if you butter their toes. They love their friends dearly, but their love lies in the cupboard, and if that be bare, like a mouse, their love runs off to some other larder. They say, "Leave you, dear girl? Never, while you have a shilling." How they scuttle off if you come to the bad! Like rats, they leave a sinking ship.

When good cheer is lacking,
Such friends will be packing.

Their heart follows the pudding. While the pot boils they sit by the fire; when the meal-tub is empty they play at turnabout. They believe in the winning horse; they will wear anybody's coat who may choose to give them one; they are to be bought by the dozen, like mackerel, but he who gives a penny for them wastes his money. Profit is their god, and whether they make it out of you or your enemy, the money is just as sweet to them. Heads or tails are alike to them so long as they win. High road or back lane, all's the same to them so that they can get home with the loaf in the basket. They are friends to the goose, but they will eat his giblets. So long as the water turns their wheel, it is none the worse for being muddy; they would burn their mother's coffin if they were short of firing, and sell their own father if they could turn a penny by the old gentleman's bones. They never lose a chance of minding the main chance.

Others are shifty because they are so desperately fond of good fellowship. “Hail fellow, well met!” is their cry, be it traveller or highwayman. They are so good-natured that they must needs agree with everybody. They are cousins of Mr. Anything. Their brains are in other people's heads. If they were at Rome they would kiss the Pope's toe, but when they are at home they make themselves hoarse with shouting, “No Popery!” They admire the Vicar of Bray, whose principle was to be the Vicar of Bray, whether the Church was Protestant or Popish. They are mere time-servers, in hopes that the times may serve them. They belong to the party which wears the yellow colors, not in their button-holes, but in the palms of their hands. Butter them, and, like turnips, you may eat them. Pull the rope, and, like the bells, they will ring as you choose to make them, funeral knell or wedding peal, come to church or go to the devil. They have no backbones; you may bend them like willow wands, backwards or forwards, whichever way you please. Like oysters, anybody may pepper them who can open them. Sweet to you and sweet to your enemy. They blow hot and cold. They try to be Jack-o'-both-sides, and deserve to be kicked like a football by both parties.

Some are hypocrites by nature; slippery as eels, and piebald like Squire Smoothey's mare. Like a drunken man, they could

not walk straight if they were to try. Like corn-dealers, they are rogues in-grain. They wind in and out like a Surrey lane. They were born of the breed of St. Judas. The double shuffle is their favorite game, and honesty their greatest hatred. Honey is on their tongue, but gall in their hearts. They are mongrel bred, like the gypsy's dog. Like a cat's feet, they show soft pads, but carry sharp claws. If their teeth are not rotten, their tongues are, and their hearts are like dead men's graves. If speaking the truth and lying were equally profitable, they would naturally prefer to lie, for, like dirt to a pig, it would be congenial. They fawn, and flatter, and cringe, and scrape; for, like snails, they make their way by their slime; but all the while they hate you in their hearts, and only wait for a chance to stab you. Beware of those who came from the town of Deceit. Mr. Facing-both-ways, Mr. Fair-speech, and Mr. Two-tongues are neighbors who are best at a distance. Though they look one way, as boatmen do, they are pulling the other; they are false as the devil's promises, and as cruel as death and the grave.

Religious deceivers are the worst of vermin, and I fear they are as plentiful as rats in an old wheatstack.

They are like a silver pin,
Fair without but foul within.

They cover up their black flesh with white feathers. Saturday and Sunday make a wonderful difference in them. They have the fear of the minister a deal more before their eyes than the fear of God. Their religion lies in imitating the religious; they have none of the root of the matter in them. They carry Dr. Watts's hymn-book in their pocket, and sing a roaring song at the same time. Their Sunday coats are the best part about them; the nearer you get to their hearts the more filth you will find. They prate like parrots, but their talk and their walk do not agree. Some of them are fishing for customers, and a little pious talk is a cheap advertisement; and if the seat at the church or the meeting costs a trifle, they make it up out of short weights. They don't worship God while they trade, but they trade on their worship. Others of the poorer sort go to church for soup and bread and coal tickets.

They love the communion because of the alms’ money. Some of the dear old Mrs. Goodbodies want a blessed almshouse, and so they profess to be so blessed under the blessed ministry of their blessed pastor every blessed Sabbath. Charity suits them if faith does not; they know which side their bread is buttered on.

Others make a decent show in religion to quiet their consciences; they use it as a salve for their wounds,—and if they could satisfy heaven as easily as they quiet themselves, it would be a fine thing for them. It has been my lot to meet with some who went a long way in profession, as far as I could see, for nothing but the love of being thought a deal of. They got a little knot of friends to believe in their fine talk, and take all in for gospel that they liked to say. Their opinion was the true measure of a preacher’s soundness; they could settle up everything by their own know, and they had gallons of XXX experience for those who liked something hot and strong. But dear, dear! if they had but condescended to show a little Christian practice as well, how much better their lives would have weighed up! These people are like owls, which look to be big birds, but they are not, for they are all feathers; and they look wonderfully knowing in the twilight, but when the light comes they are regular boobies.

Hypocrites of all sorts are abominable, and he who deals with them will rue it. He who tries to cheat the Lord will be quite ready to cheat his fellow men. Great cry generally means little wool. Many a big chimney in which you expect to see bacon and hams, when you look up it, has nothing to show you but its empty hooks and black soot. Some men’s windmills are only nut-crackers — their elephants are nothing but sucking-pigs. It is not all who go to church or meeting that truly pray, nor those who sing loudest that praise God most, nor those who pull the longest faces who are the most in earnest.

What mean animals hypocrites must be! Talk of polecats and weasels, they are nothing to them. Better be a dead dog than a live hypocrite. Surely when the devil sees hypocrites at their little game, it must be as good as a play to him; he tempts genuine Christians, but he lets these alone, because he is sure of

them. He need not shoot at lame ducks; his dog can pick them up any day.

Depend upon it, friends, if a straight line will not pay, a crooked one won't. What is got by shuffling is very dangerous gain. It may give a moment's peace to wear a mask, but deception will come home to you, and bring sorrow with it. Honesty is the best policy. If the lion's skin does not do, never try the fox's. Be as true as steel. Let your face and hands, like the church clock, always tell how your inner works are going. Better be laughed at as Tom Tell-truth than be praised as Crafty Charlie. Plain dealing may bring us trouble, but it is better than shuffling. At the last the upright will have their reward; but for the double-minded to get to heaven is as impossible as for a man to swim across the Atlantic with a millstone under each arm.

ALL IS LOST THAT IS POURED INTO A CRACKED DISH.

COOK is wasting her precious liquor, for it runs out almost as fast as it runs in. The sooner she stops that game the better. This makes me think of a good deal of preaching; it is labor in vain, because it does not stay in the minds of the hearers, but goes in at one ear and out at the other. When men go to market they are all alive to do a trade, but in a place of worship they are not more than half awake, and do not seem to care whether they profit or not by what they hear. I once heard a preacher say, "Half of you are asleep, half are inattentive, and the rest —" He never finished that sentence, for the people began to smile, and here and there one burst out laughing. Certainly, many only go to meeting to stare about.

"Attend your church, the parson cries:
To church each fair one goes;
The old ones go to close their eyes,
The young to eye their clothes."

You might as well preach to the stone images in the old church as to people who are asleep. Some old fellows come into our

meeting, pitch into their corner, and settle themselves down for a quiet snooze as knowingly as if the pew was a sleeping-car on the railway. Still, all the sleeping at service is not the fault of the poor people, for some parsons put a lot of sleeping stuff into their sermons. Will Shepherd says they *mesmerize* the people. (I think that is the right word, but I’m not sure.) I saw a verse



in a real live book, by Mr. Cheales, the vicar of Brockham, a place which is handy to my home. I’ll give it you:—

“The ladies praise our curate’s eyes:
 I never see their light divine,
 For when he prays he closes them.
 And when he preaches closes mine.”

Well, if curates are heavy in style, the people will soon be heavy in sleep. Even when hearers are awake, many of them are forgetful. It is like pouring a jug of ale between the bars of a grid-iron, to try and teach them good doctrine. Water on a duck’s back does have some effect, but sermons by the hundred are as much lost upon many men’s hearts as if they had been spoken to a kennel of hounds. Preaching to some fellows is like whipping

the water or lashing the air. As well talk to a turnip, or whistle to a dead donkey, as preach to these dull ears. A year's sermons will not produce an hour's repentance till the grace of God comes in.

We have a good many hangers-on who think that their duty to God consists in hearing sermons, and that the best fruit of their hearing is to talk of what they have heard. How they do lay the law down when they get argifying about doctrines! Their religion all runs to ear and tongue: neither their heart nor their hand is a scrap the better. This is poor work, and will never pay the piper. The sermon which only gets as far as the ear is like a dinner eaten in a dream. It is ill to lie soaking in the gospel like a bit of coal in a milkpan, never the whiter for it all.

What can be the good of being hearers only? It disappoints the poor preacher, and it brings no blessing to the man himself. Looking at a plum won't sweeten your mouth, staring at a coat won't cover your back, and lying on the bank won't catch the fish in the river. The cracked dish is never the better for all that is poured into it: it is like our forgetful heart, it wants to be taken away, and a new one put instead of it.

TRY.

OF all the pretty little songs I have ever heard my youngsters sing, that is one of the best which winds up, —

“If at first you don't succeed,
Try, try, try again.”

I recommend it to grown-up people who are down in the mouth, and fancy that the best thing they can do is to give up. Nobody knows what he can do till he tries. “We shall get through it now,” said Jack to Harry, as they finished up the pudding. Everything new is hard work, but a little of the “Try” ointment rubbed on the hand and worked into the heart makes all things easy.

Can't do it sticks in the mud, but Try soon drags the wagon

out of the rut. The fox said Try, and he got away from the hounds when they almost snapped at him. The bees said Try, and turned flowers into honey. The squirrel said Try, and up he went to the top of the beech-tree. The snowdrop said Try, and bloomed in the cold snows of winter. The sun said Try, and the spring soon threw Jack Frost out of the saddle. The young lark said Try, and he found his new wings took him over hedges and ditches, and up where his father was singing. The ox said Try, and ploughed the field from end to end. No hill too steep for Try to climb, no clay too stiff for Try to plough, no field too wet for Try to drain, no hole too big for Try to mend.

“By little strokes
Men fell great oaks.”

By a spadeful at a time the navvies digged the cutting, cut a big hole through the hill, and heaped up the embankment.

“The stone is hard, and the drop is small,
But a hole is made by the constant fall.”

What man has done man can do, and what has never been may be. Ploughmen have got to be gentlemen, cobblers have turned their lapstones into gold, and tailors have sprouted into Members of Parliament. Tuck up your shirt-sleeves, young Hopeful, and go at it. Where there's a will there's a way. The sun shines for all the world. Believe in God and stick to hard work, and see if the mountains are not removed. Faint heart never won fair lady. Cheer, boys, cheer, God helps them that help themselves. Never mind luck: that's what the fool had when he killed himself with eating suet-pudding; the best luck in all the world is made up of joint-oil and sticking-plaster.

Don't wait for helpers. Try those two old friends, your strong arms. Self's the man. If the fox wants poultry for his cubs he must carry the chickens himself. None of her friends can help the hare; she must run for herself, or the greyhounds will have her. Every man must carry his own sack to the mill. You must put your own shoulder to the wheel and keep it there, for there's plenty of ruts in the road. If you wait till all the ways are paved, you will have light shining between your ribs. If you sit still till

great men take you on their backs, you will grow to your seat. Your own legs are better than stilts: don't look to others, but trust in God and keep your powder dry.

Don't be whining about not having a fair start. Throw a sensible man out of a window, he'll fall on his legs and ask the nearest way to his work. The more you have to begin with, the less you will have at the end. Money you earn yourself is much brighter and sweeter than any you get out of dead men's bags. A scant breakfast in the morning of life whets the appetite for a feast later in the day. He who has tasted a sour apple will have the more relish for a sweet one; your present want will make future prosperity all the sweeter. Eighteenpence has set up many a pedler in business, and he has turned it over till he has kept his carriage.

As for the place you are cast in, don't find fault with that. You need not be a horse because you were born in a stable. If a bull tossed a man of mettle sky-high, he would drop down into a good place. A hard-working young man with his wits about him will make money while others do nothing but lose it.

Who loves his work and knows to spare
May live and flourish anywhere.

As to a little trouble, who expects to find cherries without stones, or roses without thorns? Who would win must learn to bear. Idleness lies in bed sick of the mulligrubs where industry finds health and wealth. The dog in the kennel barks at the fleas; the hunting dog does not even know they are there. Laziness waits till the river is dry, and never gets to market; "Try" swims it and makes all the trade. "Can't do it," could n't eat the bread and butter which was cut for him, but Try made meat out of mushrooms.

Everybody who does not get on lays it all on competition. When the wine was stolen they said it was the rats; it's very convenient to have a horse to put the saddle on. A mouse may find a hole, be the room ever so full of cats. Good workmen are always wanted. There's a penny to be turned at the worst booth in the fair. No barber ever shaves so close but another barber

will find something left. Nothing is so good but that it might be better; and he who sells the best wins the trade. We were all going to the workhouse because of the new machines, so the prophets down in the taproom were always telling us; but, instead of it, all these threshing and reaping and hay-making machines have helped to make those men better off who had sense enough to work them. If a man has not a soul above clodhopping, he may expect to keep poor; but if he opens his sense-box, and picks up here a little and there a little, even Johnny Raw may yet improve. “Times are bad,” they say; yes, and if you go gaping about and send your wits wool-gathering, times always will be bad.

Many don’t get on, because they have not the pluck to begin in right earnest. The first pound laid by is the difficulty. The first blow is half the battle. Over with that beer-jug, up with the “Try” flag, then cut to your work, and away to the savings-bank with the savings, and you will be a man yet. Poor men will always be poor if they think they must be. But there’s a way up out of the lowest poverty if a man looks after it early, before he has a wife and half-a-dozen children; after that he carries too much weight for racing, and most commonly he must be content if he finds bread for the hungry mouths and clothes for the little backs. Yet, I don’t know, some hens scratch all the better for having a great swarm of chicks. To young men the road up the hill may be hard; but at any rate it is open, and they who set stout heart against a stiff hill shall climb it yet. What was hard to bear will be sweet to remember. If young men would deny themselves, work hard, live hard, and save in their early days, they need not keep their noses to the grindstone all their lives, as many do. Let them be teetotalers for economy’s sake; water is the strongest drink; it drives mills. It’s the drink of lions and horses, and Samson never drank anything else. The beer money would soon build a house.

If you want to do good in the world, the little word “Try” comes in again. There are plenty of ways of serving God, and some that will fit you exactly, as a key fits a lock. Don’t hold back because you cannot preach in St. Paul’s; be content to talk

to one or two in a cottage; very good wheat grows in little fields. You may cook in small pots as well as big ones. Little pigeons can carry great messages. Even a little dog can bark at a thief, and wake up the master and save the house. A spark is fire. A sentence of truth has heaven in it. Do what you do right thoroughly, pray over it heartily, and leave the result to God.

Alas! advice is thrown away on many, like good seed on a bare rock. Teach a cow for seven years, but she will never learn to sing the Old Hundredth. Of some it seems true that when they were born Solomon went by the door, but would not look in. Their coat-of-arms is a fool's cap on a donkey's head. They sleep when it is time to plough, and weep when harvest comes. They eat all the parsnips for supper, and wonder they have none left for breakfast. Our working people are shamefully unthrifty, and so old England swarms with poor. If what goes into the mash-tub went into the kneading-troughs, families would be better fed and better taught. If what is spent in waste were only saved against a rainy day, workhouses would never be built.

Once let every man say "Try,"
 Very few on straw would lie,
 Fewer still of want would die;
 Pans would all have fish to fry;
 Pigs would fill the poor man's sty;
 Want would cease and need would fly;
 Wives and children cease to cry;
 Poor-rates would not swell so high;
 Things would n't go so much awry,—
 You'd be glad, and so would I.

BEWARE OF THE DOG!

JOHN PLOUGHMAN did not in his first book weary his friends by preaching; but in this one he makes bold to try his hand at a sermon, and hopes he will be excused if it should prove to be only a ploughman's preachment.

If this were a regular sermon, — preached from a pulpit, of course, — I should make it long and dismal, like a winter's night,

for fear people should call me eccentric. As it is only meant to be read at home, I will make it short, though it will not be sweet, for I have not a sweet subject. The text is one which has a great deal of meaning in it, and is to be read on many a wall. “Beware of the Dog!” You know what dogs are, and you know how you beware of them when a bull-dog flies at you to the full length of his chain; so the words don’t want any clearing up.

It is very odd that the Bible never says a good word for dogs: I suppose the breed must have been bad in those eastern parts,



or else, as our minister tells me, they were nearly wild, had no master in particular, and were left to prowl about half starved. No doubt a dog is very like a man, and becomes a sad dog when he has himself for a master. We are all the better for having somebody to look up to; and those who say they care for nobody and nobody cares for them, are dogs of the worst breed, and, for a certain reason, are never likely to be drowned.

Dear friends, I shall have heads and tails like other parsons, and I am sure I have a right to them, for they are found in the subjects before us.

Firstly, let us *beware of a dirty dog*, — or, as the grand old Book calls them, “evil workers,” — those who love filth and roll in it. Dirty dogs will spoil your clothes, and make you as foul as themselves. A man is known by his company; if you go with loose fellows your character will be tarred with the same brush as theirs. People can't be very nice in their distinctions; if they see a bird always flying with the crows, and feeding and nesting with them, they call it a crow, and ninety-nine times out of a hundred they are right. If you are fond of the kennel, and like to run with the hounds, you will never make the world believe that you are a pet lamb. Besides, bad company does a man real harm, for, as the old proverb has it, if you lie down with dogs you will get up with fleas.

You cannot keep too far off a man with the fever and a man of wicked life. If a lady in a fine dress sees a big dog come out of a horse-pond, and run about shaking himself dry, she is very particular to keep out of his way; and from this we may learn a lesson, — when we see a man half gone in liquor, sprinkling his dirty talk all around him, our best place is half a mile off at the least.

Secondly, *beware of all snarling dogs*. There are plenty of these about; they are generally very small creatures, but they more than make up for their size by their noise. They yap and snap without end. Dr. Watts said, —

“Let dogs delight to bark and bite,
For God has made them so.”

But I cannot make such an excuse for the two-legged dogs I am writing about, for their own vile tempers and the devil together have made them what they are. They find fault with anything and everything. When they dare they howl, and when they cannot do that they lie down and growl inwardly. Beware of these creatures! Make no friends with an angry man; as well make a bed of stinging-nettles or wear a viper for a necklace. Perhaps the fellow is just now very fond of you; but beware of him, for he who barks at others to-day without a cause will one day howl at you for nothing. Don't offer him a kennel down your yard unless he will let you chain him up. When you see that a man has a bitter spirit, and gives nobody a good word, quietly walk away

and keep out of his track if you can. Loaded guns and quick-tempered people are dangerous pieces of furniture; they don’t mean any hurt, but they are apt to go off and do mischief before you dream of it. Better go a mile out of your way than get into a fight; better sit down on a dozen tin-tacks with their points up than dispute with an angry neighbor.

Thirdly, *beware of fawning dogs*. They jump up upon you and leave the marks of their dirty paws. How they will lick your hand and fondle you as long as there are bones to be got: like the lover who said to the cook, “Leave you, dear girl? Never, while you have a shilling!” Too much sugar in the talk should lead us to suspect that there is very little in the heart. The moment a man praises you to your face, mark him, for he is the very gentleman to rail at you behind your back. If a fellow takes the trouble to flatter he expects to be paid for it, and he calculates that he will get his wages out of the soft brains of those he tickles. When people stoop down it generally is to pick something up, and men don’t stoop to flatter you unless they reckon upon getting something out of you. When you see too much politeness you may generally smell a rat if you give a good sniff. Young people need to be on the watch against crafty flatterers. Young women with pretty faces and a little money should especially *beware of puppies!*

Fourthly, *beware of a greedy dog*, or a man who never has enough. Grumbling is catching; one discontented man sets others complaining, and this is a bad state of mind to fall into. Folks who are greedy are not always honest, and if they see a chance they will put their spoon into their neighbor’s porridge; why not into yours? See how cleverly they skin a flint; before long you will find them skinning you, and as you are not quite so used to it as the eels are, you had better give Mr. Skinner a wide berth. When a man boasts that he never gives anything away, you may read it as a caution, “Beware of the dog!” A liberal, kind-hearted friend helps you to keep down your selfishness, but a greedy grasper tempts you to put an extra button on your pocket. Hungry dogs will wolf down any quantity of meat, and then look out for more; and so will greedy men swallow farms and houses,

and then smell around for something else. I am sick of the animals: I mean both the dogs and the men. Talking of nothing but gold, and how to make money and how to save it, — why, one had better live with the hounds at once, and howl over your share of dead horse. The mischief a miserly wretch may do to a man's heart no tongue can tell; one might as well be bitten by a mad dog, for greediness is as bad a madness as mortal can be tormented with. Keep out of the company of screw-drivers, tight-fists, hold-fasts, and blood-suckers: "Beware of dogs!"

Fifthly, *beware of a yelping dog*. Those who talk much tell a great many lies, and if you love truth you had better not love them. Those who talk much are likely enough to speak ill of their neighbors, and of yourself among the rest; and therefore if you do not want to be town talk, you will be wise to find other friends. Mr. Prate-apace will weary you out one day, and you will be wise to break off his acquaintance before it is made. Do not lodge in Clack Street, nor next door to the Gossip's Head. A lion's jaw is nothing compared to a tale-bearer's. If you have a dog which is always barking, and should chance to lose him, don't spend a penny in advertising for him. Few are the blessings which are poured upon dogs which howl all night and wake up honest householders, but even these can be better put up with than those incessant chatterers who never let a man's character rest either day or night.

Sixthly, *beware of a dog that worries the sheep*. Such get into our churches, and cause a world of misery. Some have new doctrines as rotten as they are new; others have new plans, whims, and crotchets, and nothing will go right till these are tried; and there is a third sort which are out of love with everybody and everything, and only come into the churches to see if they can make a row. Mark these, and keep clear of them. There are plenty of humble Christians who only want leave to be quiet and mind their own business, and these troublers are their plague. To hear the gospel and to be helped to do good is all that the most of our members want; but these worries come in with their "ologies" and puzzlements and hard speeches, and cause sorrow upon sorrow. A good shepherd will soon fetch

these dogs a crack of the head; but they will be at their work again if they see half a chance. What pleasure can they find in it? Surely they must have a touch of the wolf in their nature. At any rate, beware of the dog!

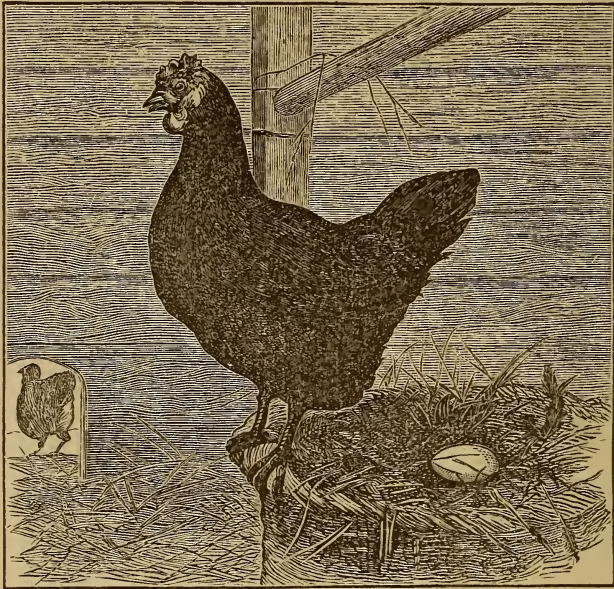
Seventhly, *beware of dogs who have returned to their vomit.* An apostate is like a leper. As a rule, none are more bitter enemies of the cross than those who once professed to be followers of Jesus. He who can turn away from Christ is not a fit companion for any honest man. There are many abroad now-a-days who have thrown off religion as easily as a ploughman puts off his jacket. It will be a terrible day for them when the heavens are on fire above them, and the world is ablaze under their feet. If a man calls himself my friend, and leaves the ways of God, then his way and mine are different; he who is no friend to the good cause is no friend of mine.

Lastly, finally, and to finish up, *beware of a dog that has no master.* If a fellow makes free with the Bible and the laws of his country and common decency, it is time to make free to tell him we had rather have his room than his company. A certain set of wonderfully wise men are talking very big things, and putting their smutty fingers upon everything which their fathers thought to be good and holy. Poor fools, they are not half as clever as they think they are. Like hogs in a flower-garden, they are for rooting up everything; and some people are so frightened that they stand as if they were struck, and hold up their hands in horror at the creatures. When the hogs have been in my master’s garden, and I have had the big whip handy, I warrant you I have made a clearance, and I only wish I was a scholar, for I would lay about me among these free-thinking gentry, and make them squeal to a long-metre tune. As John Ploughman has other fish to fry and other tails to butter, he must leave these mischievous creatures, and finish his rough ramshackle sermon.

“Beware of the dog!” Beware of all who will do you harm. Good company is to be had; why seek bad? It is said of heaven, “without are dogs.” Let us make friends of those who can go inside of heaven, for there we hope to go ourselves. We shall go to our own company when we die; let it be such that we shall be glad to go to it.

A BLACK HEN LAYS A WHITE EGG.

THE egg is white enough, though the hen is black as a coal. This is a very simple thing, but it has pleased the simple mind of John Ploughman, and made him cheer up when things have gone hard with him. Out of evil comes good, through the great goodness of God. From threatening clouds we get refreshing showers; in dark mines men find bright jewels; and so from our worst



troubles come our best blessings. The bitter cold sweetens the ground, and the rough winds fasten the roots of the old oaks. God sends us letters of love in envelopes with black borders. Many a time have I plucked sweet fruit from bramble-bushes, and taken lovely roses from among prickly thorns. Trouble is to believing men and women like the sweetbrier in our hedges, and where it grows there is a delicious smell all around, if the dew do but fall upon it from above.

Cheer up, mates, all will come right in the end. The darkest night will turn to a fair morning in due time. Only let us trust in God, and keep our heads above the waves of fear. When our hearts are right with God everything is right. Let us look for the silver which lines every cloud, and when we do not see it let us believe that it is there. We are all at school, and our great Teacher writes many a bright lesson on the blackboard of affliction. Scant fare teaches us to live on heavenly bread, sickness bids us send off for the good Physician, loss of friends makes Jesus more precious, and even the sinking of our spirits brings us to live more entirely upon God. All things are working together for the good of those who love God, and even death itself will bring them their highest gain. Thus the black hen lays a white egg.

“Since all that I meet shall work for my good,
 The bitter is sweet, the medicine is food;
 Though painful at present, ’t will cease before long,
 And then, oh how pleasant the conqueror’s song!”

HE HAS A HOLE UNDER HIS NOSE, AND HIS MONEY
 RUNS INTO IT.

THIS is the man who is always dry, because he takes so much heavy wet. He is a loose fellow who is fond of getting tight. He is no sooner up than his nose is in the cup, and his money begins to run down the hole which is just under his nose. He is not a blacksmith, but he has a spark in his throat, and all the publican’s barrels can’t put it out. If a pot of beer is a yard of land, he must have swallowed more acres than a ploughman could get over for many a day, and still he goes on swallowing until he takes to wallowing. All goes down Gutter Lane. Like the snipe, he lives by suction. If you ask him how he is, he says he would be quite right if he could moisten his mouth. His purse is a bottle, his bank is the publican’s till, and his casket is a cask: pewter is his precious metal, and his’ pearl¹ is a mixture of gin and beer. The dew of his youth comes from Ben Nevis, and the comfort of his

¹ Purl.

soul is cordial gin. He is a walking barrel, a living drain-pipe, a moving swill-tub. They say "loath to drink and loath to leave off," but he never needs persuading to begin, and as to ending,—that is out of the question while he can borrow twopence. This is the gentleman who sings,—

He that buys land buys many stones,
 He that buys meat buys many bones,
 He that buys eggs buys many shells,
 He that buys good ale buys nothing else.

The old Scotchman said, "Death and drink-draining are near neighbors," and he spoke the truth. They say that drunkenness



makes some men fools, some beasts, and some devils; but according to my mind it makes all men fools, whatever else it does. Yet when a man is as drunk as a rat he sets up to be a judge, and mocks at sober people. Certain neighbors of mine laugh at me for being a teetotaler, and I might well laugh at them for being drunk, only I feel more inclined to cry, that they should be such fools. Oh that we could get them sober, and then perhaps we might make men of them! You cannot do much with these fellows, unless you can enlist them in the Coldstream Guards.

He that any good would win,
At his mouth must first begin.

As long as drink drowns conscience and reason, you might as well talk to the hogs. The rascals will promise fair and take the pledge, and then take their coats to pledge to get more beer. We smile at a tipsy man, for he is a ridiculous creature; but when we see how he is ruined, body and soul, it is no joking matter. How solemn is the truth that “No drunkard shall inherit eternal life.”

There’s nothing too bad for a man to say or do when he is half-seas over. It is a pity that any decent body should go near such a common sewer. If he does not fall into the worst of crimes it certainly is not his fault, for he has made himself ready for anything the devil likes to put into his mind. He does least hurt when he begins to be top-heavy and to reel about: then he becomes a blind man with good eyes in his head, and a cripple with legs on. He sees two moons and two doors to the public-house, and tries to find his way through both the doors at once. Over he goes, and there he must lie, unless somebody will wheel him home in a barrow or carry him to the police-station.

Solomon says the glutton and the drunkard shall come to poverty; and that the drinker does in no time. He gets more and more down at the heel, and as his nose gets redder and his body is more swollen, he gets to be more of a shack and more of a shark. His trade is gone, and his credit has run out, but he still manages to get his beer. He treats an old friend to a pot, and then finds that he has left his purse at home, and of course the old friend must pay the shot. He borrows till no one will lend him a groat, unless it is to get off lending him a shilling. Shame has long since left him, though all who know him are ashamed of him. His talk runs like the tap, and is full of stale dregs; he is very kind over his beer, and swears he loves you, and would like to drink your health, and love you again. Poor sot! much good will his blessing do to any one who gets it; his poor wife and family have had too much of it already, and quake at the very sound of his voice.

Now, if we try to do anything to shut up a boozing-house, or shorten the hours for guzzling, we are called all sorts of bad

names, and the wind-up of it all is, "*What! rob a poor man of his beer?*" The fact is that they rob the poor man *by* his beer. The ale-jug robs the cupboard and the table, starves the wife and strips the children; it is a great thief, housebreaker, and heartbreaker; and the best possible thing is to break it to pieces, or keep it on the shelf bottom upward. In a newspaper which was lent me the other day I saw some verses by John Barleycorn, jr., and as they tickled my fancy I copied them out, and here they are, —

What! rob a poor man of his beer,
And give him good victuals instead!
Your heart's very hard, sir, I fear,
Or at least you are soft in the head.

What! rob a poor man of his mug,
And give him a house of his own,
With kitchen and parlor so snug!
'T is enough to draw tears from a stone.

What! rob a poor man of his glass,
And teach him to read and to write!
What! save him from being an ass!
'T is nothing but malice and spite.

What! rob a poor man of his ale,
And prevent him from beating his wife, —
From being locked up in a jail,
With penal employment for life!

Having given you a song, I now hand you a handbill to stick up in the "Rose and Crown" window, if the landlord wants an advertisement. It was written many years ago, but it is quite as good as new. Any beer-seller may print it who thinks it likely to help his trade.

DRUNKARDS, READ THIS!

—♦—
 DRUNKENNESS
 EXPELS REASON,
 DISTEMPERS THE BODY,
 DIMINISHES STRENGTH,
 INFLAMES THE BLOOD;
 CAUSES { INTERNAL }
 { EXTERNAL } WOUNDS;
 { ETERNAL }
 { INCURABLE }

IS
 A WITCH TO THE SENSES,
 A DEMON TO THE SOUL,
 A THIEF TO THE PURSE,
 A GUIDE TO BEGGARY, LECHERY, AND VILLANY.

IT IS
 THE WIFE’S WOE AND
 THE CHILDREN’S SORROW,
 MAKES A MAN
 WALLOW WORSE THAN A BEAST, AND
 ACT LIKE A FOOL.

HE IS
 A SELF-MURDERER
 WHO DRINKS TO ANOTHER’S GOOD HEALTH,
 AND
 ROBS HIMSELF OF HIS OWN.

HE HAS GOT THE FIDDLE, BUT NOT THE STICK.

IT often comes to pass that a man steps into another’s shoes, and yet cannot walk in them. A poor tool of a parson gets into a good man’s pulpit, and takes the same texts, but the sermons are chalk, and not cheese. A half-baked young swell inherits his father’s money, but not his generosity, his barns, but not his brains, his title, but not his sense,—he has the fiddle without the stick, and the more’s the pity.

Some people imagine that they have only to get hold of the plough-handles, and they would soon beat John Ploughman. If they had his fiddle they are sure they could play on it. J. P. presents his compliments, and wishes he may be there when it is done.

“That I fain would see,
 Quoth blind George of Hollowee.”

However, between you and me and the bedpost, there is one secret which John does not mind letting out. John’s fiddle is poor enough, but the stick is a right good one, too good to be called a fiddlestick. Do you want to see the stick with which John plays



his fiddle? Here it is—Looking to God for help, John always tries to do his best, whatever he has to do, and he has found this to be the very best way to play all kinds of tunes. What little music there is in John's poor old fiddle comes out of it in that way. Listen to a scrape or two,—

If I were a cobbler, I'd make it my pride
 The best of all cobblers to be ;
 If I were a tinker, no tinker beside
 Should mend an old kettle like me.

And being a ploughman, I plough with the best,
 No furrow runs straighter than mine ;
 I waste not a moment, and stay not to rest,
 Though idlers to tempt me combine.

Yet I wish not to boast, for trust I have none
 In aught I can do or can be ;
 I rest in my Saviour, and what He has done
 To ransom poor sinners like me.

THOUGHTS ABOUT THOUGHT.

THIS paper is very little of it to be set down to the account of John Ploughman, for our minister, as I may say, found the horses and held the plough-handles, and the ploughman only put in a smack of the whip every now and then, just to keep folks awake. "Two heads are better than one," said the woman when she took her dog with her to market; begging his pardon, our minister is the woman, and the only sensible head in the whole affair. He is a man who is used to giving his people many things of a very different sort from anything which a ploughman is likely to turn out of his wallet; but I have, at his request, dropped in a few homely proverbs into his thoughts, as he says, "by way of salt;" which is his very kind way of putting it. I only hope I have not spoiled his writing with my rough expressions. If he thinks well of it, I should like a few more of his pieces to tack my sayings to; and the public shall always be honestly told whether the remarks are to be considered as altogether "John Ploughman's Talk," or as the writing of two characters rolled into one.

There are not so many hours in a year as there may be thoughts in an hour. Thoughts fly in flocks, like starlings, and swarm like bees. Like the sere leaves in autumn, there is no counting them; and like the links in a chain, one draws on another. What a restless being man is! His thoughts dance up and down like midges in a summer's evening. Like a clock full of wheels with a pendulum in full swing, his mind moves as fast as time flies. This makes thinking such an important business. Many littles make a muckle; and so many little thoughts make a great weight of sin. A grain of sand is light enough, but Solomon tells us that a heap of sand is heavy. Where there are so many children, the mother has need to look well after them. We ought to mind our thoughts, and if they turn to be our enemies, they will be too many for us, and will drag us down to ruin. Thoughts from heaven, like birds in spring, will fill our soul with music; but thoughts of evil will sting us like vipers.

There is a notion abroad that thought is free; but I remember reading, that although thoughts are toll-free, they are not hell-free; and that saying quite agrees with the good old Book. We cannot be summoned before an earthly court for thinking; but depend upon it we shall have to be tried for it at the Last Assizes. Evil thoughts are the marrow of sin; the malt that sin is brewed from; the tinder which catches the sparks of the devil's temptations; the churn in which the milk of imagination is churned into purpose and plan; the nest in which all evil birds lay their eggs. Be certain, then, that as sure as fire burns brushwood as well as logs, God will punish thoughts of sin as well as deeds of sin.

Let no one suppose that thoughts are not known to the Lord; for He has a window into the closest closet of the soul, a window to which there are no shutters. As we watch bees in a glass hive, so does the eye of the Lord see us. The Bible says, "Hell and destruction are before the Lord: how much more then the heart of the children of men?" Man is all outside to God. With heaven there are no secrets. That which is done in the private chamber of the heart is as public as the streets before the All-seeing eye.

But some will say that they cannot help having bad thoughts; that may be, but the question is, Do they hate them or not? We cannot keep thieves from looking in at our windows, but if we open our doors to them and receive them joyfully, we are as bad as they. We cannot help the birds flying over our heads; but we may keep them from building their nests in our hair. Vain thoughts will knock at the door, but we must not open to them. Though sinful thoughts *rise*, they must not *reign*. He who turns a morsel over and over in his mouth, does so because he likes the flavor; and he who meditates upon evil, loves it, and is ripe to commit it. Think of the devil, and he will appear; turn your thoughts toward sin, and your hand will soon follow. Snails leave their slime behind them, and so do vain thoughts. An arrow may fly through the air and leave no trace; but an ill thought always leaves a trail like a serpent. Where there is much traffic of bad thinking, there will be much mire and dirt; every wave of wicked thought adds something to the corruption which rots upon the

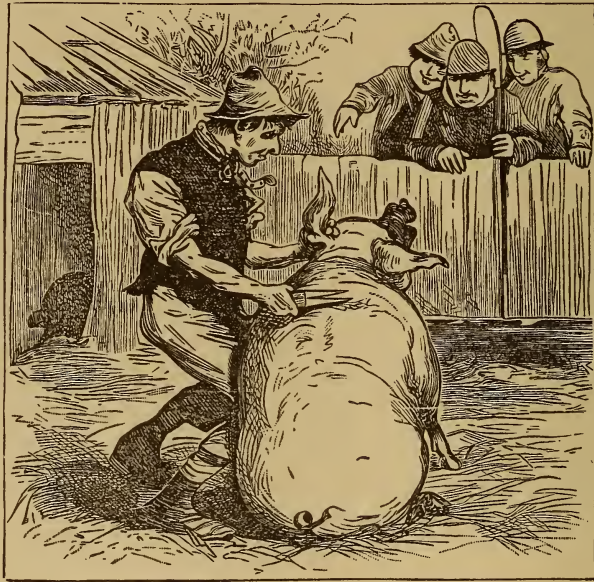
shore of life. It is dreadful to think that a vile imagination once indulged gets the key of our minds, and can get in again very easily whether we will or no, and can so return as to bring seven other spirits with it more wicked than itself; and what may follow, no one knows. Nurse sin on the knees of thought, and it will grow into a giant. Dip tow in naphtha, and how it will blaze when fire gets to it! Lay a man asoak in depraved thought, and he is ready to flame up into open sin as soon as ever opportunity occurs. This shows us the wisdom of watching, every day, the thoughts and imaginations of our hearts. Good thoughts are blessed guests, and should be heartily welcomed, well fed, and much sought after. Like rose-leaves, they give out a sweet smell if laid up in the jar of memory. They cannot be too much cultivated; they are a crop which enriches the soil. As the hen broods her chickens under her wings, so should we cherish all holy thoughts. As the poor man’s ewe lamb ate of his own bread and lay in his bosom, even so should godly meditation be very dear to us. Holy thoughts breed holy words and holy actions, and are hopeful evidences of a renewed heart. Who would not have them? To keep chaff out of a bushel, one sure plan is to fill it full of wheat; and to keep out vain thoughts, it is wise and prudent to have the mind stored with choice subjects for meditation: these are easy to find, and we should never be without them. May we all be able to say with David, “In the multitude of my thoughts within me, Thy comforts delight my soul.”

“GREAT CRY AND LITTLE WOOL,” AS THE MAN SAID
WHO CLIPPED THE SOW.

OUR friend Hodge does not seem to be making much of an out at shearing. It will take him all his time to get wool enough for a blanket, and his neighbors are telling him so: but he does not heed them, for a man never listens to reason when he has made up his mind to act unreasonably. Hodge gets plenty of music of

a sort: Hullah's system is nothing to it, and even Nebuchadnezzar's flutes, harps, sackbuts, and dulcimers could not make more din. He gets "cry" enough to stock a Babylon of babies, but not wool enough to stop his ears with.

Now is not this very like the world with its notions of pleasure? There is noise enough: laughter and shouting and boasting; but where is the comfort which can warm the heart and give peace to the spirit? Generally there's plenty of smoke and very little fire in what is called pleasure. It promises a nag and gives an egg.



Gayety is a sort of flash in the pan, a fifth-of-November squib, all fizz and bang and done for. The devil's meal is all bran, and the world's wine turns to vinegar. It is always making a great noise over nutshells. Thousands have had to weep over their blunder in looking for their heaven on earth; but they follow each other like sheep through a gap, not a bit the wiser for the experience of generations. It seems that every man must have a clip at his own particular pig, and cannot be made to believe that, like all the rest, it will yield him nothing but bristles. Men are not all of one mind as to what is best for them; they no more agree than the

clocks in our village, but they all hang together in following after vanity, for to the core of their hearts they are vain.

One shears the publican’s hog, which is so fond of the swill-tub, and he reckons upon bringing home a wonderful lot of wool; but everybody knows that he who goes to the “Woolpack” for wool will come home shorn; the “Blue Boar” is an uncommonly ugly animal to shear, and so is the “Red Lion.” Better sheer off as fast as you can; it will be sheer folly to stop. You may loaf about the tap of the “Half-moon” till you get the full moon in your noddle, and need a keeper; it is the place for men whose wits go wool-gathering, but wool there is none.

Another is covetous, and hopes to escape misery by being a miser: his greedy mind can no more be filled than a lawyer’s purse: he never has enough, and so he never has a feast. He makes money with his teeth, by keeping them idle. That is a very lean hog to clip at, for poverty wants some things, luxury many things, but covetousness wants all things. If we could hoard up all the money in the world, what would it be to us at last? To-day at good cheer, to-morrow on the bier: in the midst of life we are in death.

Some, like old Mrs. Too-good, go in for self-righteousness, and their own mouths dub them saints. They are the pink of perfection, the cream of creation, the gems of their generation, and yet a sensible man would not live in the same house with them for all the money you could count. They are saints abroad, but ask their maids what they are at home. Great cry and little wool is common enough in religion: you will find that those who crack themselves up are generally cracked, and those who despise their neighbors come to be despised themselves.

Many try wickedness, and run into bad company, and rake the kennels of vice. I warrant you they may shear the whole sty-ful of filthy creatures and never find a morsel of wool on the whole lot of them. Loose characters, silly amusements, gambling, wantonness, and such like, are swine that none but a fool will try his shears upon. I don’t deny that there’s plenty of swinish music, — who ever expected that there would be silence in a piggery? But then noise cannot fill the heart, nor laughter lighten the soul.

John Ploughman has tried for himself, and he knows by experience that all the world is nothing but a hog that is not worth the shearing: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." But yet there is wool to be had; there are real joys to be got for the asking if we ask aright. Below, all things deceive us, but above us there is a true Friend. "Wherefore do ye spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which satisfieth not?" This is John Ploughman's verdict, which he wishes all his readers to take note of, —

"Faith in Jesus Christ will give
Sweetest pleasures while we live;
Faith in Jesus must supply
Solid comfort when we die."

YOU CAN'T CATCH THE WIND IN A NET.

SOME people get windmills in their heads and go in for all sorts of silly things. They talk of ruling the nation as if men were to be driven like sheep, and they prate of reforms and systems as if they could cut out a world in brown paper with a pair of scissors. Such a body thinks himself very deep, but he is as shallow as a milkpan. You can soon know him as well as if you had gone through him with a lighted candle, and yet you will not know a great deal after all. He has a great head, and very little in it. He can talk by the dozen or the gross, and say nothing. When he is fussing and boasting of his fine doings, you soon discover that he makes a long harvest of very little corn. His tongue is like a pig's tail, going all day long and nothing done.

This is the man who can pay off the national debt, and yet, in his little shop he sells two apples in three days; he has the secret of high farming, and loses more at it than any man in the county. The more he studies the more he misses the mark; he reminds me of a blind man on a blind horse, who rode out in the middle of a dark night, and the more he tried to keep out of ditches the more he fell in.

When they catch live red herrings on Newmarket Heath he will

bring out a good thing, and line his pockets with gold; up till now, he says, he has been unlucky, and he believes that if he were to make a man a coffin he would be sure not to die. He is going to be rich next year, and you will then see what you shall see: just now he would be glad of half a crown on account, for which he will give you a share in his invention for growing wheat without ploughing or sowing.

It is odd to see this wise man at times when his wits are all up in the moon: he is just like Chang the Chinaman, who said, “Here’s my umbrella, and here’s my bundle; but *where am I?*” He cannot find his spectacles, though he is looking through them; and when he is out riding on his own ass, he pulls up and says, “Wherever is that donkey?”



I have heard of one learned man who boiled his watch and stood looking at the egg, and another who forgot that he was to be married that day, and would have lost his lady if his friend had not fetched him out of his study. Think of that, my boy, and don't fret yourself because you are not so overdone with learning as to have forgotten your common sense.

The regular wind-catcher is soft as silk and as green as grass, and yet he thinks himself very long-headed; and so indeed he would be if his ears were taken into the measurement. He is going to do — well — there's no telling what. He is full of wishes but short of will, and so his buds never come to flowers or fruit. He is like a hen that lays eggs, and never sits on them long enough to hatch a single chick.

Moonshine is the article our friend deals in, and it is wonderful what he can see by it. He cries up his schemes, and it is said that he draws on his imagination for his facts. When he is in full swing with one of his notions, he does not stick at a trifle. Will Shepherd heard one of these gentry the other day telling how his new company would lead all the shareholders on to Tom Tiddler's ground to pick up gold and silver; and when all the talk was over, Will said to me, "That's a lie with a lid on, and a brass handle to take hold of it." Rather sharp this of Will, for I do believe the man was caught on his own hook and believed in his own dreams; yet I did not like him, for he wanted us poor fellows to put our little savings into his hands, as if we could afford to fly kites with laborers' wages.

What a many good people there are who have religious crazes! They do nothing, but they have wonderful plans for doing everything in a jiffy. So many thousand people are to give half a crown each, and so many more a crown, and so many more a sovereign, and the meeting-house is to be built just so, and nohow else. The mischief is that the thousands of people do not rush forward with their money, and the minister and a few hard-working friends have to get it together little by little in the old-fashioned style, while your wonderful schemer slinks out of the way and gives nothing. I have long ago found out that pretty things on paper had better be kept there. Our master's eldest son had a plan for growing plum-trees in our hedges as they do in Kent; but he never looked to see whether the soil would suit, and so he lost the trees which he put in, and there was an end of his damsons.

"Circumstances alter cases;
Different ways suit different places."

New brooms sweep clean, but they mostly sweep up dirt. Plough with what you please, I stick to the old horses which have served me so well. Fine schemes come to nothing; it is hard work that does it, whether it be in the world or in the Church.

“In the laborious husbandman you see
What all true Christians are or ought to be.”

ON THE PREACHER’S APPEARANCE.

A GOOD horse cannot be a bad color, and a really good preacher can wear what he likes, and none will care much about it; but though you cannot know wine by the barrel, a good appearance is a letter of recommendation even to a ploughman. Wise men neither fall into love nor take a dislike at first sight; but still the first impression is always a great thing, even with them; and as to those weaker brethren who are not wise, a good appearance is half the battle. What is a good appearance? Well, it’s not being pompous and starchy, and making one’s self high and mighty among the people, for proud looks lose hearts, and gentle words win them. It’s not wearing fine clothes either, for foppish dress usually means a foul house within, and the doorstep without fresh whitened: such dressing tells the world that the outside is the best part of the puppet. When a man is proud as a peacock, all strut and show, he needs converting himself before he sets up to preach to others. The preacher who measures himself by his looking-glass may please a few silly girls, but neither God nor man will long put up with him. The man who owes his greatness to his tailor will find that needle and thread cannot long hold a fool in a pulpit. A gentleman should have more in his pocket than on his back, and a minister should have more in his inner man than on his outer man. I would say, if I might, to young ministers, Do not preach in gloves, for cats in mittens catch no mice; don’t curl and oil your hair like dandies, for nobody cares to hear a peacock’s voice; don’t have your own pretty self in your mind at all, or

nobody else will mind you. Away with gold rings and chains and jewelry; why should the pulpit become a goldsmith's shop? For ever away with surplices and gowns, and all those nursery doll-dresses, — men should put away childish things. A cross on the back is the sign of a devil in the heart; those who do as Rome does, should go to Rome and show their colors. If priests suppose that they get the respect of honest men by their fine ornamental dresses, they are much mistaken, for it is commonly said, "Fine feathers ne'er make fine birds," and

"An ape is ne'er so like an ape
As when he wears a Popish cape."

Among us Dissenters the preacher claims no priestly power, and therefore should never wear a peculiar dress; let fools wear fools' caps and fools' dresses, but men who make no claim to be fools should not put on fools' clothes. None but a very silly sheep would wear wolf's clothing. It is a singular taste which makes honest men covet the rags of thieves. Besides, where's the good of such finery? Except a duck in pattens, no creature looks more stupid than a Dissenting preacher in a gown which is of no manner of use to him. I could laugh till I held my sides, when I see our doctors in gowns and bands, puffed out with their silks, and touched up with their little bibs, for they put me so much in mind of our old turkey-cock when his temper is up and he swells to his biggest. They must be weak folks indeed who want a man to dress like a woman before they can enjoy his sermon; and he who cannot preach without such milliner's trumpery may be a man among geese, but he is a goose among men. At the same time, the preacher should endeavor, according to his means, to dress himself respectably; and as to neatness, he should be without spot, for kings should not have dirty footmen to wait at their table, and they who teach godliness should practise cleanliness. I should like white neckties better *if they were always white*, but dirty brown is neither here nor there. From a slovenly, smoking, snuff-taking, beer-drinking parson, may the Church be delivered! Some that I meet with may, perhaps, have very good manners, but they did not happen to have them about them at the time: like the Dutch captain with his anchors, they had left them at home. This should

never be the case, for if there be a well-behaved man in the parish, it should be the minister. A worn coat is no discredit, but the poorest may be neat, and men should be scholars, rather than teachers, till they are so. You cannot judge a horse by his harness; but a modest, gentlemanly appearance, in which the dress is just such as nobody could make a remark upon, seems to me to be the right sort of thing. This little bit of my mind is meant to warn you young striplings who have just started in the ministry, and if any of you get cross over it, I shall tell you that sore horses cannot bear to be combed, and again, “those whom the cap fits must wear it.” John Ploughman, you will say, had better mend his own smock and let the parsons alone; but I take leave to look about me and speak my mind, for a cat may look at a king, and a fool may give wise men good advice. If I speak too plainly, please remember that an old dog cannot alter his way of barking; and he who has long been used to plough a straight furrow is very apt to speak in the same straightforward manner.

NEVER STOP THE PLOUGH TO CATCH A MOUSE.

THERE’S not much profit in this game. Think of a man and a boy and four horses all standing still for the sake of a mouse! What would old friend Tusser say to that? I think he would rhyme in this fashion, —

A ploughman deserveth a cut of the whip,
If for idle pretence he let the hours slip.

Heaps of people act like the man in our picture. They have a great work in hand which wants all their wits, and they leave it to squabble over some pretty nothing, not worth a fig. Old Master Tom would say to them, —

No more tittle-tattle, go on with your cattle.

He could not bear for a farmer to let his horses out for carting even, because it took their work away from the farm, and so I am

sure he would be in a great stew if he saw farmers wasting their time at matches and hunts and the like. He says, —

“ Who slacketh his tillage a carter to be,
For groat got abroad, at home shall lose three;
For sure by so doing he brings out of heart
Both land for the corn and horse for the cart.”

The main chance must be minded, and the little things must be borne with. Nobody would burn his house down to kill the black-beetles, and it would never answer to kill the bullocks to feed the cats. If our baker left off making bread for a week while he cracked the cockroaches, what should we all do for breakfast?



If the butcher sold no more meat till he had killed all the blow-flies, we should be many a day without mutton. If the water companies never gave the Londoners a drink till they had fished every gudgeon out of the Thames, how would the old ladies make their tea? There's no use in stopping your fishing because of the seaweed, nor your riding because of the dust.

Now, our minister said to me the other day: "John, if you were on the committees of some of our societies you would see this mouse-hunting done to perfection. Not only committees, but

whole bodies of Christian people go mouse-hunting.” “Well,” said I, “minister, just write me a bit, and I will stick it in my book; it will be beef to my horse-radish.” Here’s his writing: —

“A society of good Christian people will split into pieces over a petty quarrel, or mere matter of opinion, while all around them the masses are perishing for want of the gospel. A miserable little mouse, which no cat would ever hunt, takes them off from their Lord’s work. Again, intelligent men will spend months of time and heaps of money in inventing and publishing mere speculations, while the great field of the world lies unploughed. They seem to care nothing how many may perish so long as they can ride their hobbies. In other matters a little common sense is allowed to rule, but in the weightiest matters foolishness is sadly conspicuous. As for you and me, John, let us kill a mouse when it nibbles our bread, but let us not spend our lives over it. What can be done by a mousetrap or a cat should not occupy all our thoughts.

“The paltry trifles of this world are much of the same sort. Let us give our chief attention to the chief things, — the glory of God, the winning of souls for Jesus, and our own salvation. There are fools enough in the world, and there can be no need that Christian men should swell the number. Go on with your ploughing, John, and I will go on with my preaching, and ‘in due season we shall reap if we faint not.’”

HOME.

THAT word *home* always sounds like poetry to me. It rings like a peal of bells at a wedding, only more soft and sweet, and it chimes deeper into the ears of my heart. It does not matter whether it means thatched cottage or manor-house, home is home, be it ever so homely, and there’s no place on earth like it. Green grow the houseleek on the roof for ever, and let the moss flourish on the thatch. Sweetly the sparrows chirrup and the swallows twitter around the chosen spot which is my joy and rest. Every

bird loves its own nest; the owl thinks the old ruins the fairest spot under the moon, and the fox is of opinion that his hole in the hill is remarkably cosey. When my master's nag knows that his head is towards home he wants no whip, but thinks it best to put on all steam; and I am always of the same mind, for the way home, to me, is the best bit of road in the country. I like to see the smoke out of my own chimney better than the fire on another man's hearth; there's something so beautiful in the way in which it curls up among the trees. Cold potatoes on my own table taste better than roast meat at my neighbor's, and the honeysuckle at my own door is the sweetest I ever smell. When you are out, friends do their best, but still it is not home. "Make yourself at home," they say, because everybody knows that to feel at home is to feel at ease.

"East and west,
Home is best."

Why, at home you are at home, and what more do you want? Nobody grudges you, whatever your appetite may be; and you don't get put into a damp bed. Safe in his own castle, like a king in his palace, a man feels himself somebody, and is not afraid of being thought proud for thinking so. Every cock may crow on his own dunghill; and a dog is a lion when he is at home. A sweep is master inside his own door. No need to guard every word because some enemy is on the watch, no keeping the heart under lock and key; but as soon as the door is shut it is liberty hall, and none to peep and pry. There is a glorious view from the top of Leith Hill, in our dear old Surrey, and Hindhead and Martha's Chapel and Boxhill are not to be sneezed at; but I could show you something which to my mind beats them all to nothing for real beauty, — I mean John Ploughman's cottage, with the kettle boiling on the hob, singing like an unfallen black angel, while the cat is lying asleep in front of the fire, and the wife in her chair mending stockings, and the children cutting about the room, as full of fun as young lambs. It is a singular fact, and perhaps some of you will doubt it — but that is your unbelieving nature — our little ones are real beauties, always a pound or two plumper than others of their age; and yet it don't tire you half so much to nurse them

as it does other people’s babies. Why, bless you, my wife would knock up in half the time, if her neighbor had asked her to see to a strange youngster, but her own children don’t seem to tire her at all. Now my belief is that it all comes of their having been born at home. Just so is it with everythiᅡ else: our lane is the most beautiful for twenty miles round, because our home is in it; and my garden is a perfect paradise, for no other particular reason than this very good one, that it belongs to the old house at home.

I cannot make out why so many working men spend their evenings at the public-house, when their own fireside would be so much better, and cheaper too. There they sit, hour after hour, boozing and talking nonsense, and forgetting the dear good souls at home, who are half starved, and weary with waiting for them. Their money goes into the publican’s till, when it ought to make their wives and children comfortable; as for the beer they get, it is just so much fools’ milk to drown their wits in. Such fellows ought to be horsewhipped; and those who encourage them and live on their spendings deserve to feel the butt end of the whip. Those beershops are the curse of this country; no good ever can come of them, and the evil they do no tongue can tell. The publics were bad enough, but the beershops are a pest: I wish the man who made the law to open them had to keep all the families that they have brought to ruin. Beershops are the enemies of home, and therefore the sooner their licenses are taken away, the better. Poor men don’t need such places, nor rich men either; they are all worse and no better, like Tom Norton’s wife. Anything that hurts the home is a curse, and ought to be hunted down as gamekeepers do the vermin in the copses.

Husbands should try to make home happy and holy. It is an ill bird that fouls its own nest, a bad man who makes his home wretched. Our house ought to be a little church, with holiness to the Lord over the door; but it ought never to be a prison, where there is plenty of rule and order, but little love and no pleasure. Married life is not all sugar, but grace in the heart will keep away most of the sours. Godliness and love can make a man, like a bird in a hedge, sing among thorns and briars, and set others a-singing too. It should be the husband’s pleasure to please his wife, and

the wife's care to care for her husband. He is kind to himself who is kind to his wife. I am afraid some men live by the rule of self, and when that is the case home happiness is a mere sham. When husbands and wives are well yoked; how light their load becomes! It is not every couple that is a pair, and the more's the pity. In a true home all the strife is which can do the most to make the family happy. A home should be a Bethel, not Babel. The husband should be the house-band, binding all together like a corner-stone, but not crushing everything like a millstone. Unkind and domineering husbands ought not to pretend to be Christians, for they act clean contrary to Christ's demands. Yet a home must be well ordered, or it will become a Bedlam, and be a scandal to the parish. If the father drops the reins, the family-coach will soon be in the ditch. A wise mixture of love and firmness will do it; but neither harshness nor softness alone will keep home in happy order. Home is no home where the children are not in obedience: it is rather a pain than a pleasure to be in it. Happy is he who is happy in his children, and happy are the children who are happy in their father. All fathers are not wise. Some are like Eli, and spoil their children. Not to cross our children is the way to make a cross of them. Those who never give their children the rod must not wonder if their children become a rod to them. Solomon says: "Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight to thy soul." I am not clear that anybody wiser than Solomon lives in our time, though some think they are. Young colts must be broken in, or they will make wild horses. Some fathers are all fire and fury, filled with passion at the smallest fault; this is worse than the other, and makes home a little hell instead of a heaven. No wind makes the miller idle, but too much upsets the mill altogether. Men who strike in their anger generally miss their mark. When God helps us to hold the reins firmly, but not to hurt the horses' mouths, all goes well. When home is ruled according to God's Word, angels might be asked to stay a night with us, and they would not find themselves out of their element.

Wives should feel that home is their place and their kingdom, the happiness of which depends mostly upon them. She is a wicked wife who drives her husband away by her long tongue. A

man said to his wife the other day, “Double up your whip.” He meant, keep your tongue quiet: it is wretched living with such a whip always lashing you. When God gave to men ten measures of speech, they say the women ran away with nine, and in some cases I am afraid the saying is true. A dirty, slatternly, gossiping wife is enough to drive her husband mad; and if he goes to the public-house of an evening, she is the cause of it. It is doleful living where the wife, instead of reverencing her husband, is always wrangling and railing at him. It must be a good thing when such women are hoarse, and it is a pity that they have not as many blisters on their tongues as they have teeth in their jaws. God save us all from wives who are angels in the streets, saints in the church, and devils at home! I have never tasted of such bitter herbs, but I pity from my very heart those who have this diet every day of their lives.

Show me a loving husband, a worthy wife, and good children, and no pair of horses that ever flew along the road could take me in a year where I could see a more pleasing sight. Home is the grandest of all institutions. Talk about parliament, give me a quiet little parlor. Boast about voting and the Reform Bill if you like, but I go in for weeding the little garden and teaching the children their hymns. Franchise may be a very fine thing, but I should a good deal sooner get the freehold of my cottage, if I could find the money to buy it. Magna Charta I don’t know much about; but if it means a quiet home for everybody, three cheers for it.

I wish our governors would not break up so many poor men’s homes by that abominably heartless Poor law. It is far more fit for a set of Red Indians than Englishmen. A Hampshire carter told me the other day that his wife and children were all in the union and his home broken up, because of the cruel working of the Poor law. He had eight little ones and his wife to keep on nine shillings a week, with rent to pay out of it; on this he could not keep body and soul together. Now if the parish had allowed him a mere trifle, a loaf or two and a couple of shillings a week, he would have jogged on; but no, not a penny out of the house: they might all die of starvation unless they would all go into the workhouse. So, with many bitter tears and heartaches, the poor

soul had to sell his few little bits of furniture, and he is now a houseless man, and yet he is a good, hard-working fellow, and served one master nearly twenty years. Such things are very common, but they ought not to be. Why cannot the really deserving poor have a little help given them? Why must they be forced into the union house? Home is the pillar of the British Empire, and ought not to be knocked to pieces by these unchristian laws. I wish I was an orator and could talk politics: I would not care a rush for Whigs or Tories, but I would stand up like a lion for the poor man's home, which, let me tell the Lords and Commons, is as dear to him as their great palaces are to them, and sometimes dearer.

If I had no home the world would be a big prison to me. England for me a country, Surrey for a county, and for a village give me — no, I sha'n't tell you, or you will be hunting John Ploughman up. Many of my friends have emigrated, and are breaking up fresh soil in Australia and America. Though their stone has rolled, I hope they may gather moss, for when they were at home they were like the sitting hen which gets no barley. Really these hard times make a man think of his wings, but I am tied by the leg to my own home, and, please God, I hope to live and die among my own people. They may do things better in France and Germany, but old England for me, after all.

DON'T CUT OFF YOUR NOSE TO SPITE YOUR FACE.

ANGER is a short madness. The less we do when we go mad the better for everybody, and the less we go mad the better for ourselves. He is far gone who hurts himself to wreak his vengeance on others. The old saying is: "Don't cut off your head because it aches;" and another says: "Set not your house on fire to spite the moon." If things go awry, it is a poor way of mending to make them worse, as the man did who took to drinking because he could not marry the girl he liked. He must be a fool who cuts

off his nose to spite his face; and yet this is what Dick did when he had vexed his old master, and because he was chid must needs give up his place, throw himself out of work, and starve his wife and family. Jane had been idle, and she knew it; but sooner than let her mistress speak to her, she gave warning, and lost as good a service as a maid could wish for. Old Griggs was wrong, and could not deny it; and yet because the parson's sermon fitted him rather close, he took the sulks, and vowed he would never hear the good man again. It was his own loss, but he would n't listen to reason, but was as wilful as a pig.



Do nothing when you are out of temper, and then you will have the less to undo. Let a hasty man's passion be a warning to you: if he scalds you, take heed that you do not let your own pot boil over. Many a man has given himself a box on the ear in his blind rage; ay, and ended his own life out of spite! He who cannot curb his temper carries gunpowder in his bosom, and he is neither safe for himself nor his neighbors. When passion comes in at the door, what little sense there is indoors flies out at the window. By and by a hasty man cools and comes to himself, like MacGibbon's gruel when he put it out of the window; but if his nose is off, in

the mean time, who is to put it on again? He will only be sorry once, and that will be all the rest of his life. Anger does a man more hurt than that which made him angry. It opens his mouth and shuts his eyes, and fires his heart and drowns his sense, and makes his wisdom folly. Old Tompkins told me that he was sorry that he lost his temper, and I could not help thinking that the pity was that he ever found it again, for it was like an old shoe with the sole gone and the upper leathers worn out, only fit for a dunghill. A hot-tempered man would be all the better for a new heart and a right spirit. Anger is a fire which cooks no victuals and comforts no household: it cuts and curses and kills, and no one knows what it may lead to; therefore, good reader, don't let it lodge in your bosom, and if it ever comes there, pass the vagrant on to the next parish.

Gently, gently, little pot;
 Why so hasty to be hot?
 Over you will surely boil,
 And I know not what you'll spoil.

The old gent in our picture has a fine nose of his own, and though he will be a fool to cut it off, he would be wise to cut off the supplies which have made it such a size. That glass and jug on the table are the paint-pots that he colors his nose with, and everybody knows, whether he knows it or knows it not, that his nose is the outward and visible sign of a good deal of inward and spirituous drink, and the sooner he drops his drops the better. So here we will cut off, not our nose, but the present subject.

LIKE CAT LIKE KIT.

MOST men are what their mothers made them. The father is away from home all day, and has not half the influence over the children that the mother has. The cow has most to do with the calf. If a ragged colt grows into a good horse, we know who it is that combed him. A mother is therefore a very responsible

woman, even though she may be the poorest in the land, for the bad or the good of her boys and girls very much depends upon her. As is the gardener, such is the garden; as is the wife, such is the family. Samuel's mother made him a little coat every year, but she had done a deal for him before that: Samuel would not have been Samuel if Hannah had not been Hannah. We shall never see a better set of men till the mothers are better. We must have Sarahs and Rebekahs before we shall see Isaacs and Jacobs.



Grace does not run in the blood, but we generally find that the Timothies have mothers of a goodly sort.

Little children give their mother the headache; but if she lets them have their own way, when they grow up to be great children they will give her the heartache. Foolish fondness spoils many, and letting faults alone spoils more. Gardens that are never weeded will grow very little worth gathering; all watering and no hoeing will make a bad crop. A child may have too much of its mother's love, and in the long run it may turn out that it had too little. Soft-hearted mothers rear soft-hearted children; they hurt them for life because they are afraid of hurting them

when they are young. Coddle your children, and they will turn out noodles. You may sugar a child till everybody is sick of it. Boys' jackets need a little dusting every now and then, and girls' dresses are all the better for occasional trimming. Children without chastisement are fields without ploughing. The very best colts want breaking in. Not that we like severity; cruel mothers are not mothers, and those who are always flogging and fault-finding ought to be flogged themselves. There is reason in all things, as the madman said when he cut off his nose.

Good mothers are very dear to their children. There's no mother in the world like our own mother. My friend Sanders, from Glasgow, says, "The mither's breath is aye sweet." Every woman is a handsome woman to her own son. That man is not worth hanging who does not love his mother. When good women lead their little ones to the Saviour, the Lord Jesus blesses not only the children, but their mothers as well. Happy are they among women who see their sons and their daughters walking in the truth.

He who thinks it easy to bring up a family never had one of his own. A mother who trains her children aright had need be wiser than Solomon, for his son turned out a fool. Some children are perverse from their infancy: none are born perfect, but some have a double share of imperfections. Do what you will with some children, they don't improve. Wash a dog, comb a dog, still a dog is but a dog: trouble seems thrown away on some children. Such cases are meant to drive us to God, for He can turn blackamoors white, and cleanse out the leopard's spots. It is clear that whatever faults our children have, we are their parents, and we cannot find fault with the stock they came of. Wild geese do not lay tame eggs. That which is born of a hen will be sure to scratch in the dust. The child of a cat will hunt after mice. Every creature follows its kind. If we are black, we cannot blame our offspring if they are dark too. Let us do our best with them, and pray the mighty Lord to put His hand to the work. Children of prayer will grow up to be children of praise; mothers who have wept before God for their sons will one day sing a new song over them. Some colts often break the halter, and yet become quiet in harness.

God can make those new whom we cannot mend, therefore let mothers never despair of their children as long as they live. Are they away from you across the sea? Remember, the Lord is there as well as here. Prodigals may wander, but they are never out of sight of the Great Father, even though they may be “a great way off.”

Let mothers labor to make home the happiest place in the world. If they are always nagging and grumbling they will lose their hold of their children, and the boys will be tempted to spend their evenings away from home. Home is the best place for boys and men, and a good mother is the soul of home. The smile of a mother’s face has enticed many into the right path, and the fear of bringing a tear into her eye has called off many a man from evil ways. The boy may have a heart of iron, but his mother can hold him like a magnet. The devil never reckons a man to be lost so long as he has a good mother alive. Oh, woman, great is thy power! See to it that it be used for Him who thought of His mother even in the agonies of death.

VERY IGNORANT PEOPLE.

I HAVE heard tell of a man who did not know a great A from a bull’s foot, and I know a good many who certainly could not tell what great A, or little A either, may mean; but some of these people are not the most ignorant in the world for all that. For instance, they know a cow’s head from its tail, and one of the election gentlemen said lately that the candidate from London did not know that. They know that turnips don’t grow on trees, and they can tell a mangel-wurzel from a beet-root, and a rabbit from a hare, and there are fine folk who play on pianos who could hardly know as much as that. If they cannot read they can plough and mow, and reap and sow, and bring up seven children on ten shillings a week, and yet pay their way; and there’s a sight of people who are much too ignorant to do that. Ignorance of spelling-books is very bad, but ignorance of hard work is

worse. Wisdom does not always speak Latin. People laugh at smock-frocks, and indeed they are about as ugly garments as could well be contrived; but some who wear them are not half such fools as people take them for. If no ignorant people ate bread but those who wear hobnail shoes, corn would be a fine deal cheaper. Wisdom in a poor man is like a diamond set in lead, only judges can see its value. Wisdom walks often in patched shoes, and men admire her not; but I say, never mind the coat, give me the man: nutshells are nothing, the kernel is everything. You need not go to Pirbright to find ignoramuses, there are heaps of them near St. Paul's.

I would have everybody able to read and write and cipher; indeed, I don't think a man can know too much; but, mark you, the knowing of these things is not education, and there are millions of your reading and writing people who are as ignorant as neighbor Norton's calf, that did not know its own mother. This is as plain as the nose on your face, if you only think a little. To know how to read and write is like having tools to work with; but if you don't use these tools, and your eyes and your ears too, you will be none the better off. Everybody should know what most concerns him and makes him most useful. It is little use for a horse to know how to fly, it will do well enough if it can trot. A man on a farm ought to learn all that belongs to farming, a blacksmith should study a horse's foot, a dairymaid should be well up in skimming the milk and making the butter, and a laborer's wife should be a good scholar in the sciences of boiling and baking, washing and mending; and John Ploughman ventures to say that those men and women who have not learned the duties of their callings are very ignorant people, even if they can tell the Greek name for a crocodile, or write an ode on a black-beetle. It is too often very true, —

“Jack has been to school
To learn to be a fool.”

When a man falls into the water, to know how to swim will be of more use to him than all his mathematics; and yet how very few boys learn swimming. Girls are taught dancing and French, when stitching and English would be a hundred per cent more use

to them. When men have to earn their livings in these hard times, a good trade and industrious habits will serve their turn a world better than all the classics in Cambridge and Oxford; but who now-a-days advocates practical training at our schools? School-masters would go into fits if they were asked to teach poor people’s boys to hoe potatoes and plant cauliflowers. If you want a dog to be a pointer or a setter, you train him accordingly: why ever don’t they do the same with men? It ought to be, “Every man for his business, and every man master of his business.” Let Jack and Tom learn geography by all means, but don’t forget to teach them how to black their own boots and put a button on to their own trousers; and as for Jane and Sally, let them sing and play the music if they like, but not till they can darn a stocking and make a shirt. When they bring on the new act for general education, I hope they will put in a clause to teach children practical common-sense home duties, as well as the three R’s and the folderols which I think they call “accomplishments.” There’s poor Gent with six girls, and about fifty pounds a year to keep his family on, and yet not one of them can do a hand’s turn, because their mother would go into fits lest Miss Sophia Elfrida should have chapped hands through washing the family linen, or lest Alexandra Theodora should spoil her complexion in picking a few gooseberries for a pudding. It’s enough to make a cat laugh to hear the poor things talk about fashion and etiquette, when they are not half so well off as the higgler’s daughters down the lane, who earn their own living, and are laying money by against the time when some young farmer will pick them up. Trust me, he who marries these highy-tighty young ladies will have as bad a bargain as if he married a wax doll. How the fat would be in the fire if Mrs. Gent heard me say it! but I do say it for all that: she and the girls are *ignorant, very ignorant*, because they do not know what would be of most service to them.

Every sprat now-a-days calls itself a herring; every donkey thinks itself fit to be one of the queen’s horses; every candle thinks itself the sun. But when a man with his best coat on, and a paper collar, a glass in his eye, a brass chain on his waistcoat, a cane in his hand, and emptiness in his head, fancies that people

cannot see through his swaggers and brags, he must be *ignorant*, *very ignorant*, for he does not know himself. Flats, dressed up to the top of the fashion, think themselves somebodies, but nobody else does. Dancing-masters and tailors may rig up a fop, but they cannot make a nothing into a man. You may color a millstone as much as you like, but you cannot improve it into a cheese.

When tradesmen put their earnings into companies and expect to see it again; when they take shares in railways and look for dividends; when they lend money at high interest and think to make their fortunes, they must be *ignorant*, *very ignorant*. As well hang a wooden kettle over the fire and get ready for tea, or sow beans in a river and look for a fine crop.

When men believe in lawyers and money-lenders (whether Jews or Gentiles), and borrow money and speculate, and think themselves lucky fellows, they are shamefully *ignorant*. The very gander on the common would not make such a stupid of himself, for he knows when any one tries to pluck him, and won't lose his feathers and pride himself in the operation.

The man who spends his money with the publican, and thinks that the landlord's bows and "How do ye do, my good fellow?" mean true respect, is a perfect natural; for with them it is, —

If you have money, take a seat;
If you have none, take to your feet.

The fox admires the cheese, **not** the raven. The bait is not put into the trap to feed the mouse, but to catch him. We don't light a fire for the herring's comfort, but to roast him. Men do not keep pot-houses for the laborer's good; if they do they certainly miss their aim. Why, then, should people drink "for the good of the house"? If I spend money for the good of any house, let it be my own, and not the landlord's. It's a bad well into which you must put water; and the beerhouse is a bad friend, because it takes your all, and leaves you nothing but heeltaps and headaches. He who calls those his friends who let him sit and drink by the hour together is *ignorant*, *very ignorant*. Why, Red Lions and Tigers and Eagles and Vultures are all creatures of prey, and

why do so many put themselves within the power of their jaws and talons?

He who believes that either Whigs or Tories will let us off with light taxes, must have been born on the day after the last of March; and he who imagines that parish boards and vestries will ever have either heads or bowels, must have been educated in an idiot asylum. He who believes in promises made at elections has long ears, and may try to eat thistles. Mr. Plausible has been round asking all the working men for their votes, and he will do all sorts of good things for them. Will he? Yes, the day after to-morrow, a little later than never. Poor men who expect the “friends of the working man” to do anything for them must be *ignorant, very ignorant*. When they get their seats, of course they cannot stand up for their principles, except when it is to their interest to do so.

To lend umbrellas and look to have them sent home, to do a man a good turn and expect another from him when you want it, to hope to stop some women’s tongues, to try to please everybody, to hope to hear gossips speak well of you, or to get the truth of a story from common report,—is all evidence of great ignorance. Those who know the world best trust it least; those who trust it at all are not wise; as well trust a horse’s heel or a dog’s tooth. Trusting to others ruins many. He who leaves his business to bailiffs and servants, and believes that it will be well done, must be *ignorant, very ignorant*. The mouse knows when the cat is out of the house, and servants know when the master is away. No sooner is the eye of the master gone than the hand of the workman slackens. “I’ll go myself,” and “I’ll see to it,” are two good servants on a farm. Those who lie in bed and reckon that their trade will carry on itself are *ignorant, very ignorant*.

Such as drink and live riotously, and wonder why their faces are so blotchy and their pockets so bare, would leave off wondering if they had two grains of wisdom. They might as well ask an elm-tree for pears as look to loose habits for health and wealth. Those who go to the public-house for happiness climb a tree to find fish. We might put all their wit in an eggshell, or they would never be such dupes as to hunt after comfort where it is

no more to be found than a cow in a crow's nest; but, alas! good-for-nothings are common as mice in a wheat-rick. I only wish we could pack them off to Lubberland, where they have half a crown a day for sleeping. If some one could let them see the sure result of ill living, perhaps they might reform; and yet I don't know, for they do see it, and yet go on all the same, like a moth that gets singed and flies into the candle again. Certainly, for loitering lushingtons to expect to thrive by keeping their hands in their pockets, or their noses in a pewter pot, proves them to be *ignorant, very ignorant*.

When I see a young lady with a flower garden on her head and a draper's shop on her body, tossing her head about as if she thought everybody was charmed with her, I am sure she must be *ignorant, very ignorant*. Sensible men don't marry a wardrobe or a bonnet-box; they want a woman of sense, and these dress sensibly.

To my mind, those who sneer at religion and set themselves up to be too knowing to believe in the Bible are shallow fellows. They generally use big words and bluster a great deal; but if they fancy they can overturn the faith of thinking people, who have tried and proved the power of the grace of God, they must be *ignorant, very ignorant*. He who looks at the sunrise and the sunset, and does not see the footprints of God, must be inwardly blinder than a mole, and only fit to live under ground. God seems to talk to me in every primrose and daisy, to smile upon me from every star, to whisper to me in every breath of morning air, and call aloud to me in every storm. They say that man is the god of the dog: that man must be worse than a dog who will not listen to the voice of God, for a dog follows at his master's whistle. They call themselves philosophers, don't they? Their proper name is fools, for the fool hath said in his heart, "There is no God." The sheep know when rain is coming, the swallows foresee the winter, and even the pigs, they say, can see the wind; how much worse than a brute must he be who lives where God is everywhere present, and yet sees Him not! So you see a man may be a great hand at learning, and yet be *ignorant, very ignorant*.

HE LOOKS ONE WAY AND PULLS THE OTHER.

HE faces the shore, but he is pulling for the ship: this is the way of those who row in boats, and also of a great many who never trust themselves on the water. The boatman is all right, but the hypocrite is all wrong, whatever rites he may practise. I cannot endure Mr. Facing-both-ways, yet he has swarms of cousins.

It is ill to be a saint without and a devil within, to be a servant of Christ before the world in order to serve the ends of self



and the devil, while inwardly the heart hates all good things. There are good and bad of all classes, and hypocrites can be found among ploughmen as well as among parsons. It used to be so in the olden times, for I remember an old verse which draws out just such a character: the man says, —

“I'll have a religion all of my own,
 Whether Papist or Protestant shall not be known ;
 And if it proves troublesome I will have none.”

In our Lord's day many followed Him, but it was only for the loaves and fishes: they do say that some in our parish don't go quite so straight as the Jews did, for they go to the church for the loaves, and then go over to the Baptist chapel for the fishes. I don't want to judge, but I certainly do know some who, if they do not care much for faith, are always following after charity.

Better die than sell your soul to the highest bidder. Better be shut up in the workhouse than fatten upon hypocrisy. Whatever else we barter, let us never try to turn a penny by religion, for hypocrisy is the meanest vice a man can come to.

It is a base thing to call yourself Christ's horse, and yet carry the devil's saddle. The worst kind of wolf is that which wears a sheep's skin. Jezebel was never so ugly as when she had finished painting her face. Above all things, then, brother laborers, let us be straight as an arrow and true as a die, and never let us be time-servers or turncoats. Never let us carry two faces under one hat, nor blow hot and cold with the same breath.

DEBT.

WHEN I was a very small boy, in pinafores, and went to a woman's school, it so happened that I wanted a stick of slate-pencil, and had no money to buy it with. I was afraid of being scolded for losing my pencils so often, for I was a real careless little fellow, and so did not dare to ask at home; what then was John to do? There was a little shop in the place, where nuts and tops and cakes and balls were sold by old Mrs. Dearson, and sometimes I had seen boys and girls get trusted by the old lady. I argued with myself that Christmas was coming, and that somebody or other would be sure to give me a penny then, and perhaps even a whole silver sixpence. I would therefore go into debt for a stick of

slate-pencil, and be sure to pay at Christmas. I did not feel easy about it, but still I screwed my courage up, and went into the shop. One farthing was the amount, and as I had never owed anything before, and my credit was good, the pencil was handed over by the kind dame, and *I was in debt*. It did not please me much, and I felt as if I had done wrong, but I little knew how soon I should smart for it. How my father came to hear of this little stroke of business I never knew, but some little bird or other whistled it to him, and he was very soon down upon me in right earnest. God bless him for it! He was a sensible man, and none of your children-spoilers; he did not intend to bring up his children to speculate and play at what big rogues call financing, and therefore he knocked my getting into debt on the head at once, and no mistake. He gave me a very powerful lecture upon getting into debt, and how like it was to stealing, and upon the way in which people were ruined by it; and how a boy who would owe a farthing might one day owe a hundred pounds, and get into prison and bring his family into disgrace. It was a lecture indeed; I think I can hear it now, and can feel my ears tingling at the recollection of it. Then I was marched off to the shop like a deserter marched into barracks, crying bitterly all down the street, and feeling dreadfully ashamed, because I thought everybody knew I was in debt. The farthing was paid amid many solemn warnings, and the poor debtor was set free, like a bird let out of a cage. How sweet it felt to be out of debt! How did my little heart vow and declare that nothing should ever tempt me into debt again! It was a fine lesson, and I have never forgotten it. If all boys were inoculated with the same doctrine when they were young, it would be as good as a fortune to them, and save them wagon-loads of trouble in after life. God bless my father, say I, and send a breed of such fathers into old England to save her from being eaten up with villany; for what with companies and schemes and paper money, the nation is getting to be as rotten as touch-wood.

Ever since that early sickening I have hated debt as Luther hated the Pope, and if I say some fierce things about it, you must not wonder. To keep debt, dirt, and the devil out of my cottage

has been my greatest wish ever since I set up housekeeping; and although the last of the three has sometimes got in by the door or the window, for the old serpent will wriggle through the smallest crack, yet thanks to a good wife, hard work, honesty, and scrubbing-brushes, the two others have not crossed the threshold. Debt is so degrading, that if I owed a man a penny I would walk twenty miles, in the depth of winter, to pay him, sooner than feel that I was under an obligation. I should be as comfortable with peas in my shoes, or a hedgehog in my bed, or a snake up my back, as with bills hanging over my head at the grocer's and the baker's and the tailor's. Poverty is hard, but debt is horrible; a man might as well have a smoky house and a scolding wife, which are said to be the two worst evils of our life. We may be poor, and yet respectable, which John Ploughman and wife hope they are and will be; but a man in debt cannot even respect himself, and he is sure to be talked about by the neighbors, and that talk will not be much to his credit. Some persons appear to like to be owing money; but I would as soon be a cat up a chimney with the fire alight, or a fox with the hounds at my heels, or a hedgehog on a pitchfork, or a mouse under an owl's claw. An honest man thinks a purse full of other people's money to be worse than an empty one; he cannot bear to eat other people's cheese, wear other people's shirts, and walk about in other people's shoes, neither will he be easy while his wife is decked out in the milliner's bonnets and wears the draper's flannels. The jackdaw in the peacock's feathers was soon plucked, and borrowers will surely come to poverty, — a poverty of the bitterest sort, because there is shame in it.

Living beyond their incomes is the ruin of many of my neighbors; they can hardly afford to keep a rabbit, and must needs drive a pony and chaise. I am afraid extravagance is the common disease of the times, and many professing Christians have caught it, to their shame and sorrow. Good cotton or stuff gowns are not good enough now-a-days; girls must have silks and satins, and then there's a bill at the dressmaker's as long as a winter's night, and quite as dismal. Show and style and smartness run away with a man's means, keep the family poor, and the father's nose

down on the grindstone. Frogs try to look as big as bulls, and burst themselves. A pound a week apes five hundred a year, and comes to the county court. Men burn the candle at both ends, and then say they are very unfortunate; why don't they put the saddle on the right horse, and say they are extravagant? Economy is half the battle in life; it is not so hard to earn money as to spend it well. Hundreds would never have known *want* if they had not first known *waste*. If all poor men's wives knew how to cook, how far a little might go! Our minister says the French and the Germans beat us hollow in nice cheap cookery. I wish they would send missionaries over to convert our gossiping women into good managers; this is a French fashion which would be a deal more useful than those fine pictures in Mrs. Frippery's window, with ladies rigged out in a new style every month. Dear me! some people are much too fine now-a-days to eat what their fathers were thankful to see on the table, and so they please their palates with costly feeding, come to the workhouse, and expect everybody to pity them. They turned up their noses at bread and butter, and came to eat raw turnips stolen out of the fields. They who live like fighting-cocks at other men's costs, will get their combs cut, or perhaps get roasted for it one of these days. If you have a great store of peas, you may put the more in the soup; but everybody should fare according to his earnings. He is both a fool and a knave who has a shilling coming in, and on the strength of it spends a pound which does not belong to him. Cut your coat according to your cloth is sound advice; but cutting other people's cloth by running into debt is as like thieving as fourpence is like a groat. If I meant to be a rogue I would deal in marine stores, or be a pettifogging lawyer, or a priest, or open a loan office, or go out picking pockets, but I would scorn the dirty art of getting into debt without a prospect of being able to pay.

Debtors can hardly help being liars, for they promise to pay when they know they cannot, and when they have made up a lot of false excuses they promise again, and so they lie as fast as a horse can trot.

“You have debts, and make debts still,
If you've not lied, lie you will.”

Now if owing leads to lying, who shall say that it is not a most evil thing? Of course there are exceptions, and I do not want to bear hard upon an honest man who is brought down by sickness or heavy losses; but take the rule as a rule, and you will find debt to be a great dismal swamp, a huge mud-hole, a dirty ditch. Happy is the man who gets out of it after once tumbling in, but happiest of all is he who has been by God's goodness kept out of the mire altogether. If you once ask the devil to dinner it will be hard to get him out of the house again: better to have nothing to do with him. Where a hen has laid one egg, she is very likely to lay another; when a man is once in debt, he is likely to get into it again; better keep clear of it from the first. He who gets in for a penny will soon be in for a pound, and when a man is over shoes, he is very liable to be over boots. Never owe a farthing, and you will never owe a guinea.

If you want to sleep soundly, buy a bed of a man who is in debt; surely it must be a very soft one, or he never could have rested so easy on it. I suppose people get hardened to it, as Smith's donkey did when its master broke so many sticks across its back. It seems to me that a real honest man would sooner get as lean as a greyhound than feast on borrowed money, and would choke up his throat with March dust before he would let the landlord make chinks against him behind the door for a beer-score. What pins and needles tradesmen's bills must stick in a fellow's soul! A pig on credit always grunts. Without debt, without care; out of debt, out of danger: but owing and borrowing are bramble-bushes full of thorns. If ever I borrow a spade of my next-door neighbor I never feel safe with it for fear I should break it; I never can dig in peace as I do with my own: but if I had a spade at the shop and knew I could not pay for it, I think I should set to dig my own grave out of shame. Scripture says, "Owe no man anything," which does not mean pay your debts, but never have any to pay; and my opinion is, that those who wilfully break this law ought to be turned out of the Christian Church, neck and crop, as we say. Our laws are shamefully full of encouragement to credit; nobody need be a thief now; he has only to open a shop and make a fail of it, and it will pay him much better; as the

proverb is, “He who never fails will never grow rich.” Why, I know tradesmen who have failed five or six times, and yet think they are on the road to heaven. The scoundrels, what would they do if they got there? They are a deal more likely to go where they shall never come out till they have paid the uttermost farthing. But people say, “How liberal they are!” Yes, with other people’s money. I hate to see a man steal a goose, and then give religion the giblets. Piety by all means, but pay your way as part of it. Honesty first, and then generosity. But how often religion is a cloak for deceiving! There’s Mrs. Scamp as fine as a peacock, all the girls out at boarding-school, learning French and the piano, the boys swelling about in kid gloves, and G. B. Scamp, Esq., driving a fast-trotting mare, and taking the chair at public meetings, while his poor creditors cannot get more than enough to live from hand to mouth. It is shameful and beyond endurance to see how genteel swindling is winked at by many in this country. I’d off with their white waistcoats and kid gloves and patent-leather boots, if I had my way, and give them the county crop and the prison livery for six months. Gentlemen or not, I’d let them see that big rogues could dance on the treadmill to the same tune as little ones; I’d make the land too hot to hold such scamping gentry if I were a member of Parliament or a prime minister. As I’ve no such power, I can at least write against the fellows, and let off the steam of my wrath in that way.

My motto is: Pay as you go, and keep from small scores. Short reckonings are soon cleared. Pay what you owe, and what you’re worth you’ll know. Let the clock tick, but no “*tick*” for me. Better go to bed without your supper than get up in debt. Sins and debt are always more than we think them to be. Little by little a man gets over his head and ears. It is the petty expenses that empty the purse. Money is round, and rolls away easily. Tom Thriftless buys what he does not want because it is a great bargain, and so is soon brought to sell what he does want, and finds it a very little bargain; he cannot say “No” to his friend who wants him to be security. He gives grand dinners, makes many holidays, keeps a fat table, lets his wife dress fine, never looks after his servants, and by and by he is quite surprised to

find the quarter-days come round so very fast, and that his creditors bark so loud. He has sowed his money in the field of thoughtlessness, and now he wonders that he has to reap the harvest of poverty. Still he hopes for something to turn up to help him out of difficulty, and so muddles himself into more trouble, forgetting that hope and expectations are fools' income. Being hard up, he goes to market with empty pockets, and buys at whatever prices tradesmen like to charge him, and so he pays them double, and gets deeper and deeper into the mire. This leads him to scheming, and trying little tricks and mean dodges, for it is hard for an empty sack to stand upright. This is sure not to answer, for schemes are like spiders' webs, which never catch anything better than flies, and are soon swept away. As well attempt to mend your shoes with brown paper, or stop a broken window with a sheet of ice, as try to patch up falling business with manœuvring and scheming. When the schemer is found out, he is like a dog in church, whom everybody kicks at, and like a barrel of powder, which nobody wants for a neighbor.

They say poverty is a sixth sense, and it had need be, for many debtors seem to have lost the other five, or were born without common sense, for they appear to fancy that you not only make debts, but pay them by borrowing. A man pays Peter with what he has borrowed of Paul, and thinks he is getting out of his difficulties, when he is putting one foot in the mud to pull his other foot out. It is hard to shave an egg, or pull hairs out of a bald pate; but they are both easier than paying debts out of an empty pocket. Samson was a strong man, but he could not pay debts without money, and he is a fool who thinks he can do it by scheming. As to borrowing money of loan societies, it's like a drowning man catching at razors; both Jews and Gentiles, when they lend money, generally pluck the geese as long as they have any feathers. A man must cut down his outgoings and save his incomings if he wants to clear himself; you can't spend your penny and pay debts with it too. Stint the kitchen if the purse is bare. Don't believe in any way of wiping out debts except by paying hard cash. Promises make debts, and debts make promises, but promises never pays debts; promising is one thing, and performing is

quite another. A good man’s word should be as binding as an oath, and he should never promise to pay unless he has clear prospect of doing so in due time; those who stave off payment by false promises deserve no mercy. It is all very well to say, “I’m very sorry,” but

“A hundred years of regret
Pay not a farthing of debt.”

Now I’m afraid all this sound advice might as well have been given to my master’s cocks and hens as to those who have got in the way of spending what is not their own, for advice to such people goes in at one ear and out at the other. Well, those who won’t listen will have to feel, and those who refuse cheap advice will have to buy dear repentance; but to young people beginning life, a word may be worth a world, and this shall be John Ploughman’s short sermon, with three heads to it,—always live a little below your means, never get into debt, and remember

“He who goes a borrowing
Goes a sorrowing.”

A MAN IN A PASSION RIDES A HORSE THAT RUNS AWAY
WITH HIM.

WHEN passion has run away with a man, who knows where it will carry him? Once let a rider lose power over his horse, and he may go over hedge and ditch, and end with a tumble into the stone-quarry and a broken neck. No one can tell in cold blood what he may do when he gets angry; therefore it is best to run no risks. Those who feel their temper rising will be wise if they rise themselves and walk off to the pump. Let them fill their mouths with cold water, hold it there ten minutes at the least, and then go indoors and keep there till they feel cool as a cucumber. If you carry loose gunpowder in your pocket, you had better not go where sparks are flying; and if you are bothered with an irritable nature, you should move off when folks begin

teasing you. Better keep out of a quarrel than fight your way through it.

Nothing is improved by anger, unless it be the arch of a cat's back. A man with his back up is spoiling his figure. People look none the handsomer for being red in the face. It takes a great deal out of a man to get into a towering rage; it is almost as unhealthy as having a fit, and time has been when men have actually choked themselves with passion, and died on the spot. Whatever wrong I suffer, it cannot do me half so much hurt as being angry about it; for passion shortens life and poisons peace.

When once we give way to temper, temper will claim a right of way, and come in easier every time. He that will be in a pet for



any little thing, will soon be out at elbows about nothing at all. A thunder-storm curdles the milk, and so does a passion sour the heart and spoil the character.

He who is in a tantrum shuts his eyes and opens his mouth, and very soon says what he will be sorry for. Better bite your lips now than smart for life. It is easier to keep a bull out of a china shop than it is to get him out again; and, besides, there's no end of a bill to pay for damages.

A man burning with anger carries a murderer inside his waist-coat; the sooner he can cool down, the better for himself and all around him. He will have to give an account for his feelings, as well as for his words and actions, and that account will cost him many tears. It is a cruel thing to tease quick-tempered people, for, though it may be sport to you, it is death to them; at least, it is death to their peace, and may be something worse. We know who said, “Woe to that man by whom the offence cometh.”

Shun a furious man as you would a mad dog; but do it kindly, or you may make him worse than he would be. Don’t put a man out when you know he is out with himself. When his monkey is up be very careful, for he means mischief. A surly soul is sure to quarrel; he says the cat will break his heart, and the coal-scuttle will be the death of him.

“A man in a rage
Needs a great iron cage;
He ’ll tear and he ’ll dash
Till he comes to a smash;
So let ’s out of his way
As quick as we may.”

As we quietly move off, let us pray for the angry person; for a man in a thorough passion is as sad a sight as to see a neighbor’s house on fire, and no water handy to put out the flames.

Let us wish the fellow on the runaway horse a soft ditch to tumble in, and sense enough never to get on the creature’s back again.

EVERY BIRD LIKES ITS OWN NEST.

It pleases me to see how fond the birds are of their little homes. No doubt each one thinks his own nest is the very best: and so it is for him, just as my home is the best palace for me, even for me, King John, the king of the Cottage of Content. I will ask no more if Providence only continues to give me

“A little field well tilled,
A little house well filled,
And a little wife well willed.”

An Englishman's house is his castle, and the true Briton is always fond of the old roof-tree. Green grows the houseleek on the thatch, and sweet is the honeysuckle at the porch, and dear are the gillyflowers in the front garden; but best of all is the good



wife within, who keeps all as neat as a new pin. Frenchmen may live in their coffee-houses, but an Englishman's best life is seen at home.

“My own house, though small,
Is the best house of all.”

When boys get tired of eating tarts, and maids have done with winning hearts, and lawyers cease to take their fees, and leaves leave off to grow on trees, then will John Ploughman cease to love his own dear home. John likes to hear some sweet voice sing,

“Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there 's no place like home;
A charm from the sky seems to hallow us there,
Which, wherever we rove, is not met with elsewhere.
Home! Home! sweet, sweet home!
There 's no place like home!”

People who take no pleasure in their own homes are queer folks, and no better than they should be. Every dog is a lion at his own door, and a man should make most of those who make most of him. Women should be housekeepers, and keep in the house. That man is to be pitied who has married one of the Miss Gadabouts. Mrs. Cackle and her friend Mrs. Dressement are enough to drive their husbands into the county jail for shelter; there can be no peace where such a piece of goods as either of them is to be found. Old Tusser said, —

“ Ill huswifery pricketh
 Herself up with pride ;
 Good huswifery tricketh
 Her house as a bride.

“ Ill huswifery moveth
 With gossip to spend ;
 Good huswifery loveth
 Her household to tend.”

The woman whose husband wastes his evenings with low fellows at the beershop is as badly off as a slave; and when the Act of Parliament shuts up most of these ruin-houses, it will be an Act of Emancipation for her. Good husbands cannot have too much of their homes, and if their wives make their homes comfortable they will soon grow proud of them. When good fathers get among their children they are as merry as mice in malt. Our Joe Scroggs says he’s tired of his house, and the house certainly looks tired of him, for it is all out of windows, and would get out of doors if it knew how. He will never be weary in well-doing, for he never began. What a different fellow he would be if he could believe that the best side of the world is a man’s own fireside. I know it is so, and so do many more.

“ Seek home for rest,
 For home is best.”

What can it be that so deludes lots of people who ought to know better? They have sweet wives and nice families and comfortable houses, and they are several cuts above us poor country bumpkins, and yet they must be out of an evening. What is it

for? Surely it can't be the company; for the society of the woman you love, who is the mother of your children, is worth all the companies that ever met together. I fear they are away soaking their clay, and washing all their wits away. If so, it is a great shame, and those who are guilty of it ought to be trounced. Oh, that drink, that drink!

Dear, dear, what stuff people will pour into their insides! Even if I had to be poisoned I should like to know what I was swallowing. A cup of tea at home does people a sight more good than all the mixtures you get abroad. There's nothing like the best home-brewed, and there's no better mashtub for making it in than the old-fashioned earthenware teapot. Our little children sing, "Please, father, come home," and John Ploughman joins with thousands of little children in that simple prayer, which every man who is a man should be glad to answer. I like to see husband and wife longing to see each other.

"An ear that waits to catch
A hand upon the latch;
A step that hastens its sweet rest to win.
A world of care without,
A world of strife shut out,
A world of love shut in."

Fellow workmen, try to let it be so with you and your wives. Come home and bring your wages with you, and make yourselves happy by making every one happy around you.

My printer jogs my elbow, and says, "That will do: I can't get any more in." Then, Mr. Passmore, I must pass over many things, but I cannot leave off without praising God for His goodness to me and mine, and all my brother ploughmen, for it is of His great mercy that He lets us live in this dear old country, and loads us with so many benefits.

This bit of poetry shall be my finish: I mean every word of it. Let us sing it together, —

"What pleasant groves, what goodly fields!
What fruitful hills and vales have we!
How sweet an air our climate yields!
How blest with flocks and herds we be!

How milk and honey doth o’erflow !
How clear and wholesome are our springs !
How safe from ravenous beasts we go !
And oh, how free from poisonous things !

“ For these and for our grass, our corn,
For all that springs from blade or bough,
For all those blessings that adorn
Both wood and field, this kingdom through, —
For all of these Thy praise we sing ;
And humbly, Lord, entreat Thee too,
That fruit to Thee we forth may bring,
As unto us Thy creatures do.”

JESU'S PRESENCE DELIGHTFUL.

AMIDST us our Belovèd stands,
And bids us view His piercèd hands ;
Points to His wounded feet and side, —
Blest emblems of the Crucified !

What food luxurious loads the board
When at His table sits the Lord !
The wine how rich, the bread how sweet,
When Jesus deigns the guests to meet !

If now, with eyes defiled and dim,
We see the signs, but see not Him,
Oh may His love the scales displace,
And bid us see Him face to face !

Our former transports we recount
When with Him in the holy mount ;
These cause our souls to thirst anew,
His marred but lovely face to view.

Thou glorious Bridegroom of our hearts,
Thy present smile a heaven imparts ;
Oh lift the veil, if veil there be,
Let every saint Thy beauties see.

C. H. SPURGEON.

XXVIII.

THE BIBLE AND THE NEWSPAPER.

“I READ the newspaper,” said John Newton, “that I may see how my Heavenly Father governs the world,” — a very excellent reason indeed. We have read the newspaper during the last three months that we might find illustrations of the teaching of our Heavenly Father’s Word ; and we think we have not read in vain, for we have gathered instances in proof and facts in explanation which we have jotted down in these pages. The worlds of nature and of providence are full of parallels to things moral and spiritual, and serve as pictures to make the written book of inspiration more clear to the children of God. The Bible itself abounds in metaphors, types, and symbols ; it is a great picture-book ; there is scarcely a poetical figure which may not be found in the law and the prophets, or in the words of Jesus and His apostles. The preacher is bidden to speak as the oracles of God, and consequently he should imitate their illustrative method, and abound in emblems and parables. A sermon which is full of “likes” is full of windows to enlighten the mind and hands to hold it captive. Discourses decked with similes will not only give pleasure to the children, but persons of riper years will be charmed and instructed thereby. — C. H. SPURGEON.

THE BIBLE AND THE NEWSPAPER.

LADIES' DRESS.

“I will . . . that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety.”—1 TIM. ii. 8, 9.

“Be clothed with humility.”—1 PETER v. 5.

ON the 11th of April, in the course of an action brought by the well-known *modiste*, “Madame Rosalie,” against a gentleman of property to compel him to pay a debt contracted by his wife, it was stated in evidence that from \$2,500 to \$10,000 a year might be considered a reasonable sum for a lady moving in good society to expend on dress. The gentleman’s wife, in the witness-box, repudiated with lofty scorn the idea that the former amount was sufficient. The lady is an invalid, has never been presented at court, and is not called into company, and yet was indebted for millinery to a very large amount.

Is it, then, a fact that so large a sum is considered needful for the clothing of one human form? Surely the luxury of the old Roman Empire is infecting our beloved country: may God grant that it may not, in our case also, be a sign of the decay of the nation. Women should be too considerate of the needs of the sick and suffering to spend their money so wastefully. A blanket placed on the bed of a poor old woman would be a better ornament to a lady’s character than all the lace a dukedom could purchase. Yet so it is; but—tell it not in Gath—a lady cannot be dressed under \$10,000 a year!

Are we wrong if we place side by side with this modern fact a description of the follies of women of the olden times? “More-

over the Lord saith, Because the daughters of Zion are haughty; and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet: therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and the Lord will discover their secret parts. In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet, and their cauls, and their round tires like the moon, the chains, and the bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments of the legs, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the earrings, the rings, and nose jewels, the changeable suits of apparel, and the mantles, and the wimples, and the crisping-pins, the glasses, and the fine linen, and the hoods and the veils." — *Isaiah* iii. 16–23.

What a contrast is the teaching of the Apostle Peter, in his first epistle, at the third chapter. "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands." Peter sends the ladies to a wardrobe better than any which the frivolous possess, and to a jewel-case richer than ever belonged to the vain and showy; but, alas, the mass of women do not care to adorn themselves in this right royal fashion! Pride of dress is so childish that one wonders to see it in grown-up people. The old proverb speaks of being twice children; but fops and dandies of either sex are always children. Archbishop Leighton has well said: "It is strange upon how poor things men and women will be vain, and think themselves somebody; not only upon some comeliness in their face or feature, which, though poor, is yet a part of themselves, but of things merely without them; that they are well lodged, or well mounted, or well apparelled, either richly or well in fashion. Light, empty minds are like bladders, blown up with anything."

The only excuse we can think of for some dressy women is that they think themselves very ugly. What deformity must exist if it

needs ten thousand a year to cover it! If these persons accurately gauge their lack of personal charms, they must be suffering under a fearful measure of uncomeliness. Why, ten or twenty families could be reared in comparative comfort upon the amount thus expended in wastefulness; and as matters go with the agricultural laborers in many of the shires, forty of the families owned by Hodge and his companions, including all the father Hodges and their wives, could be decently provided for upon ten thousand a year. It will not bear thinking of. Yet many women professing godliness are shockingly extravagant, and can never be happy till their heads are tricked out with strange gear and their bodies with fashionable millinery. They little think how much they degrade themselves and grieve the Spirit of God. A forgiven sinner decked out in the flaunting garments of a worldling, casts suspicion upon her own pardon; if she had ever been renewed in heart, would she, could she, adorn herself after the manner of a Jezebel? It is hard to think of a disciple of the Lord wasting her substance upon personal decoration. Does the lowly Jesus keep company with persons who spend hours at the glass, adorning, if not adoring, their own flesh? Can extravagance and fashionableness be pleasing to the Lord? No. Assuredly not.

We are not judging that "neat handsomeness" which George Herbert says "doth bear the sway," but we are sorrowful when we see those who set themselves up as examples, and move in a position where no outward show is required, going beyond ordinary worldly women in extravagance. It is the bane of society and the disgrace of religion.

We wonder how much of the extravagance of female dress could be traced to the man-millinery of Anglican priests. Church congresses have been edified by exhibitions of ecclesiastical finery, in which were seen robes and vestments of the costliest material and the gaudiest colors. We have read of altar frontals which have taken years to finish, and are valued at more than \$2,500. All this to deck out a table! No wonder that it costs so much to dress a woman. When men, and even ministers, take to resplendent trappings, who can wonder that the weaker sex exercise a larger liberty? For shame, ye so-called priests, put away your baby garments, and quit yourselves like men!

THE RACE AND ITS SPECTATORS.

“Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.” — *HEB. xii. 1.*

IN an article upon the University boat-race of April 13, the “Times” alludes to the dense throng upon the banks of the river, and to the interest which everybody seemed to feel in the struggle, and it then very truthfully adds: —

“Nor do the competitors themselves fail to gain much from the sight of the vast crowds which attest the strength of the popular interest. The rivalry would hardly be so keen if the race were to be rowed amid the comparative privacy of a provincial stream or lake. Some years ago this was kept out of sight in a high and mighty way, by the suggestion that, to prevent the contest from being vulgarized, or for some other reason, it ought to be held at some quieter place than the neighborhood of London. Loch Maree, in the wilds of Ross-shire, would afford charming tranquillity and a few scores of cool spectators. But the stimulus of a great public competition would be gone, and, if we may venture to assume that undergraduates are made of the same stuff as other human beings, that stimulus is essential to such muscular exertion as we see at Oxford and Cambridge.”

This excellently illustrates the meaning of the apostle when he represents believers as running for a prize, with saints, apostles, and martyrs looking on. The stimulus communicated by spectators is his prominent idea. No doubt the young oarsmen find a stimulus in every eye that gazes upon them, and if the crowd were thinned they would take less interest in their task. The crowds which line the Thames may well be compared to clouds, so completely do they darken the banks from end to end of the course; and much more may those who gaze upon the Christian’s life be thus spoken of. Myriads lean from heaven, or look from earth, or peer upward from the pit. Holy men of all ages, now with

God, join with a great host still abiding here below. Angels and principalities and powers unite as one vast army and observe us intently; and frowning demons of the pit in their dread array all gaze with interest upon the Christian's work and way. Should not every glance animate us to do our utmost?

And what eyes there are among those who observe us! Had the Queen been present, we could imagine the young athletes straining themselves even more than they had done, for the glance of royalty quickens energy to the utmost. In our case, the King of kings looks down upon us, and the Prince of Life with tender sympathy watches our progress. What manner of race should ours be under the Lord's own eye! Competitors of former years were at the boat-race to see whether the new-comers would maintain the honor of their University. Even so the worthies of ancient times, who counted not their lives dear unto them, take pleasure in the efforts of those who to-day are wrestling for victory, as they themselves did in ages past. The approving glances of prophets and apostles may well stir our souls. Dear ones who have gone before also mark our behavior in the race. A mother in heaven takes delight in the ardor of her son; brothers "gone over to the majority" are serenely glad as they see their brothers pushing forward in the noble cause. Our leaders in the faith, oarsmen who taught us how to fly over the waves, regard us with anxious interest, and joy in our successes. These things should quicken us, and lend us arguments for unabated energy.

Of course the apostle was not alluding to a boat-race, but to the Olympian games. Those games furnish a suggestive figure, which we leave the reader to work out at leisure when we have given him a glimpse at the race from the window of good Dr. John Brown.

"At Olympia, a town of Elis, games were celebrated in honor of Jupiter once every five years. An almost incredible multitude from all the states of Greece and from the surrounding countries attended these games as spectators. The noblest of the Grecian youths appeared as competitors. In this race, a course was marked out for the candidates for public fame, and a tribunal erected at the end of the course, on which sat the judges, — men

who had themselves in former years been successful competitors for Olympic honors. The victors in the morning contests did not receive their prizes till the evening; but after their exertions they joined the band of spectators, and looked on while others prosecuted the same arduous labors which they had brought to 'an honorable termination.'

It is a fine thought that those honorable men in the Church of God who have themselves behaved worthily, take the deepest interest in the young men who have newly set out upon the race. Let the youngsters so behave themselves that the veterans may never fear for the cause of God. We know that a great deal of anxiety is felt just now, for the rising race shows signs of being unstable and superficial; but we hope for better things, and even trust that the men of the coming age will outstrip their predecessors, and draw forth the approving shouts of the encompassing cloud of witnesses.

A FOX IN THE PULPIT.

"Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines."—CANT. ii. 15.

"O Israel, thy prophets are like the foxes in the deserts."—EZEK. xiii. 4.

A SHORT letter which appeared in "The Rock," April 18, is well worth preserving in connection with the above texts. It is to be feared that the writer might have pointed to not a few Nonconformist pulpits, and might have made the same remark concerning their occupants, "Duty requires that they should be taken out and kept out."

"A FOX IN THE PULPIT.—Sir: A singular circumstance took place at Hever, in Kent, on Saturday last. A fox, hard pressed by the huntsmen, leaped the churchyard wall and disappeared. The hounds and huntsmen were searching and wondering, when an old woman came out from a back door of the church, which happened to be open, with the exclamation, 'Here he is, in the pulpit;' and, sure enough, poor Reynard had slipped in at the

open door and sought sanctuary, curled up in a corner of the pulpit. Of course he was soon ejected. To my friend, who had witnessed the scene and described it very vividly, I observed that it reminded one of certain sly foxes in the Church of England, who get into our pulpits and think they are safe there. Duty requires that they should be taken out and kept out. — I am, etc., W. J. B.”

This is written by a Church-of-England man, and published in a sound Church paper, and so it is no violation of charity to repeat it, especially as we quite agree with every word of it. We wish that all the Popish foxes could be ejected from the national Establishments, for they do more mischief than tongue can tell.

“The fox that steals the lamb so tender,
Can never be the fold's defender,
He 's but a base and sly pretender.”

The difficulty seems to be to get these foxes out and keep them out. Once in the pulpit, they know how to hold their position; you may dig out a fox, but you cannot dislodge a Romanizing priest. Acts of Parliament altogether fail, because such things are meant for men, and foxes dexterously evade them. Reynard's imitators have many knavish tricks, and know how to twist and turn, and so they escape statutes and laws, and still pursue their evil business. In the reforming times a popular caricature represented a priest as a fox preaching to an assembly of geese from the text, “How earnestly I long for you all in my bowels.” The drawing would not be out of date if it were published to-day. How silly must the geese be who yield themselves heart and soul to such foxes! Yet there are flocks of them.

THE EVIL WROUGHT BY ONE MAN.

“One sinner destroyeth much good.”—ECCLES. ix. 18.

“That man perished not alone in his iniquity.”—JOSH. xxii. 20.

AN American paper contains the following paragraph: “An oil-train of forty oil-tanks ran into a heavy freight-train near Slatington, Pennsylvania. The engineer of the latter train had been compelled to stop to cool off a hot ‘journal,’ but the conductor had sent no one back to warn following trains of danger. Several persons were killed and about forty injured,—the result of one man’s carelessness.” Amid the blaze of the oil, the screams of burning men and women, and the charred remains of the unhappy victims, we see how great a calamity may arise out of a little neglect, and how much the destiny of others may hang upon the acts of one man. Have we a due sense of our own personal responsibility? Have we ever reflected that our own conduct may influence others for good or evil throughout eternity? We may have no wicked intent, and yet our carelessness and indifference may be as fatal to immortal souls as if we had been profane or profligate. Moral virtues, apart from religion, may suggest to our children that godliness is needless; was not their father an excellent man, and yet he was unconverted? Thus may generation after generation be kept in spiritual death by an argument fetched from the irreligion of one who was in other respects a model character. Who among us would desire this?

Even if we hope that we are ourselves saved, it should cause us grave question if we are not bringing others to Jesus.

A destroyer of souls will have an awful doom at the last, and he who failed to do his best to save his fellows will not be held guiltless before the Lord.

CONSCIENTIOUS SEPARATION.

"A conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men." — ACTS xxiv. 16.

"If the Lord be God, follow Him: but if Baal, then follow him." — 1 KINGS xviii. 21.

THE "Daily News" of May 8, in an article on Lord Carnarvon's resignation, says: "Mr. Carlyle, wearied with much eighteenth-century talk about virtue, somewhere requests the talker, with a strong adjuration, to 'be virtuous, and have done with it.' Too much praise of what is after all but the carrying into statesmanship of the laudable but not marvellous practice of common honesty might lead the hearer to express a similarly petulant prayer. It is not at all desirable that a politician should be perpetually interrogating his conscience to see what its opinion may be as to this tax on tobacco and that alteration in the bankruptcy laws. Such a practice could only lead to very considerable public inconvenience, and in the case of the individual practising it, to something not very different from hypocrisy. But occasions may and do arise when a policy or an individual measure commends itself to the majority of a ministry which seems morally wrong or politically unadvisable to some member thereof. When this is the case, ought he to put his convictions in his pocket, and salve his conscience with the theory of party allegiance, or ought he to go out from those respecting whom he feels that he is not of them? No one will in words profess the former doctrine, but many will act upon it. Lord Carnarvon has acted upon the latter doctrine, which everybody professes, but many set aside in practice. Of course it is important that the conscience appealed to should be a healthy conscience, not given to unnecessary questioning and quibbling."

Not only do we admire the consistency of Lord Carnarvon, but we wish we saw a little more of it among professing Christians. We know some ministers who do not believe the doctrines of the church to which they belong, and yet for reasons best known to

themselves they remain in that community, and undermine the very foundations of the faith which they profess to preach. How this can be made to be in accordance with morality we know not. Surely it would be more like common honesty if they would at once show their colors, and no longer pretend to be what they are not. Some Christians, too, who never enter a pulpit, are equally guilty, for they are recognized as members of churches against whose teaching they frequently protest. They support evil systems and know them to be evil. They dissent in their hearts, but yet consent by their actions; for fear of giving offence to men, they are constantly offending God and their own consciences. Whatever their excuses may be, are they not resolvable into doing evil that good may come? Of course it is not to be desired that men should be perpetually vexed with scruples upon minor points, and ready to quarrel about anything or nothing, because their conscience is morbidly sensitive; but surely it cannot be right for a truthful man to be a member of a church from whose confession he widely disagrees; his position is a protest against his own convictions, and his convictions make his profession a falsehood. We ought to be intensely anxious to be so clear in the whole of our religious standing that under the light of the Day of Judgment no glaring contradictions shall be discovered in our lives; otherwise, we may not only be guilty of "something not very different from hypocrisy," but we may fall into hypocrisy itself. A little tampering with conscience is a very dangerous thing; it is very like the dropping of a stitch, which may lead to the unravelling of all the work. We used to say in our childhood,—

"He who steals a pin
Will live to steal a bigger thing."

The rhyme was bad, but the doctrine was true. If we violate conscience, even upon the smallest matter, we may come at last to have no conscience at all.

Mr. Carlyle's advice is thoroughly sound, and his adjuration is none too strong: "Be virtuous, and have done with it;" speak the truth and stand to it; profess the faith which is revealed in the Scriptures, and neither by word of mouth nor by act, nor by

association, nor even in thought, contradict the eternal verities of God. We have had too much of concession in order to win a hollow peace from philosophic Rationalists on the one hand, and superstitious Romanizers on the other. The thing will not work, and if it would it is wrong, and ought not to be attempted. Who gave us the right to yield an atom of truth? Are the doctrines of God's Word yours or mine to do as we like with, to give up this and modify that? Nay, verily; we are put in trust with the Gospel, and it is at our peril that we dream of compromising the least of its teachings. A straightforward, decided line of testimony is the best, is most consistent with true charity, and in the end will most promote peace.

The trimming, hesitating policy of many reminds us of Luther's words to Erasmus: "You desire to walk upon eggs without crushing them, and among glasses without breaking them!" This is a difficult game to play at, and one which is more suitable for a clown at a theatre than a servant of Christ. When you are attempting a compromise, you have to look around you and move as cautiously as a tight-rope dancer, for fear of offending on one side or the other. A little too much this way or that, and over you go. A cat on hot cinders is not in an enviable position. No true-hearted man will ever bear such wretched constraint for any length of time, or indeed at all. Think of being able to go no further than the aforementioned timorous, time-serving Erasmus, who said, "I will not be unfaithful to the cause of Christ; *at least, so far as the age will permit me.*" Out upon such cowardice! life is too dear when bought at such a price.

"I cannot tell what you and other men
 Think of this life; but for my single self,
 I had as lief not be, as live to be
 In awe of such a thing as I myself."

TEMPTING TEMPTATION.

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.” — Ps. i. 1.

“Lead us not into temptation.” — MATT. vi. 13.

THE “Rock” of May 10 speaks of fox-hunting parsons, and remarks: “To come down to modern times, the late Rev. Joseph Berington, Roman Catholic chaplain at Buckland, Berks, and a writer on history, was fond of a run with the hounds. When visiting his patron’s family, the Throckmortons of Weston Underwood, Bucks, he was in the neighborhood of two packs, and did not neglect the opportunity. He did not actually go ‘to cover,’ but rode out in the direction the hounds might take, and thus fell in with the hunt, and got half a day’s sport without appearing to seek it. This was playing the politician to gratify his inclination. This anecdote was learned at a table where he has often dined, from personal friends of his own.”

Why could n’t the man have hunted openly or not at all? If he felt ashamed of it, why did he do it? Thoroughbred fox-hunters must have despised him. The policy of the Rev. Joseph is followed by a great many in daily life. They complain of being tempted, and yet they carefully put themselves in the way of temptation; they profess to have been grievously misled by evil company, and yet they continue to stand in the way of sinners, and to delight themselves with their evil conversation. They express the greatest grief if they fall into drunkenness, and say that they have been “overtaken”; but notwithstanding this they carefully ride along the road which drunkenness is known to pursue, and, under the name of moderation, drink themselves fully up to the boundary line. They do not actually go “to cover,” but they ride out in the direction which the hounds always take. They profess to be averse to frivolous amusements, to feasting, rioting, and the like, but they are pretty careful to call upon their friends when such things are going on, and so get half a day’s

sport without appearing to seek it. They are averse to infidelity, and yet peruse sceptical reviews; they dislike licentiousness, and yet spend hours over doubtful novels. They tempt the devil to tempt them, and go into dark lanes in order to be beset by their favorite sins.

Thus to excuse sin as many do is mere nonsense, or worse; such fooling may amuse conscience, and prevent its plainly speaking the truth, but it is altogether unworthy of an honest man. Excuses which hold no water are caught up under the notion that a bad excuse is better than none: the fact being that a bad excuse is worse than none; for it proves that the man has not the courage to defend what he has the audacity to do, nor the common honesty to take the responsibility of his own act and deed. Let us follow the advice of Solomon: "Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away." We pity a man who catches an infectious disease, but we should cease to do so if we heard that he purposely went down to the fever hospital, or wilfully rode in the small-pox carriage. If you go to live with a sweep, you ought not to blame him if your linen loses its whiteness, or, if you do so, every one will see through your inconsistency. If it be true that when you go to Rome you must do as Rome does, then do not go to Rome at all, and no such necessity will arise.

It is wonderful how circumstances appear to help a man when he wants to do wrong, and some there are who even dare to quote the fact as a reason why they ought not to be blamed. "They happened to be on the spot, or they would never have thought of it:" thus they are profane enough to hint that Providence itself misled them. This is only a repetition of Adam's plea, "The woman whom thou gavest me, she tempted me, and I did eat." Alas! the vile attempt to father sin upon the Lord Himself is often made, but it is none the less horrible. Let us abandon such blasphemous endeavors to shift the responsibility of our actions, and give our consciences a fair chance of being heard.

REVIEW AT ALDERSHOT.

“Thou hast given a banner to them that fear Thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth.”—Ps. lx. 4.

“Terrible as an army with banners.”—CANT. vi. 4.

THE “Daily News” of May 14, in its report of the review at Aldershot before the Queen, mentions “The Forty-ninth, whose color-party bore the tattered green flag that floated on the heights of Alma and over the trenches in front of Sebastopol, and served as a rallying-point amid the mists of Inkermann; and the gallant Fifty-second, whose history has been untarnished from the first campaign in Hindostan, through all the Peninsular wars, beginning at Vimiera and ending at Waterloo, down to the conquest of Delhi.”

Soldiers appear to have an almost religious attachment to the colors of the regiment, and the more tattered they become the more they value them. And well they may, for they are in fact the materialized history of the host. They tell of the cruel rain of shot and shell, the dust and smoke of the conflict and the battle, “with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood,”—terrible records truly, but as long as there are warriors, and courage in fight is valued, banners and standards must always be prized.

The sacramental host of God’s elect bears the standard of the truth, and has borne it these thousands of years, and the truth has become endeared to every soldier of the cross by all the conflicts through which we have borne it. Heresies and scepticisms have raged around the banner, but from the first campaign even until now it has gone on from victory to victory. The very thought of it stirs enthusiasm in the hearts of the warriors of Christ. Shall we ever desert it? Shall we suffer it to be trailed in the mire? God forbid! We will uplift it, and display it in the face of the enemy, until the last great battle shall be fought, and we shall hear the triumphant shout, “Hallelujah! hallelujah! the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.”

It has of late been proposed that the army of Christ should march without its banner, or that all the banners of philosophic sceptics should be stitched together and uplifted in its place. To this we solemnly demur. We will march under the old ensign; of the new ones we know nothing, except that they will lead us to defeat. Faith has won all her victories under the standard of revelation, and she expects to win all her future glory under the same unaltered and unalterable flag. Let others do as they will; as for us, the old, old gospel shall be our rallying-point amid the mists of modern thought, and we hope to bear it from land to land throughout the whole campaign of this dispensation, till we shall see it borne aloft at the coronation festival of our triumphant Lord.

“Stand up, stand up for Jesus,
Ye soldiers of the cross;
Lift high His royal banner,
It must not suffer loss.

“From victory to victory
His army shall He lead,
Till every foe is vanquished,
And Christ is Lord indeed.”

RELIGIOUS SLUGGARDS.

“Their nobles put not their necks to the work of their Lord.” — NEH. iii. 5.

“Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep.” — PROV. xix. 15.

“Let us not sleep, as do others.” — I THESS. v. 6.

AN American paper has the following in its corner of wit and anecdote: “A Sunday-school boy at Maysville, Kentucky, was asked by the superintendent the other day if his father was a Christian. ‘Yes, sir,’ he replied, ‘but he is not working at it much.’”

In too many cases the same statement might be made, for multitudes have a name to live and are dead, and the love of many has waxed cold. Religion is a profession with them, but it is not accompanied by practice. Now, of all pursuits in the world, the Christian profession requires the most energetic action, and it

utterly fails where diligence and zeal are absent. What can a man do as a farmer, a merchant, a carpenter, or even as a beggar, unless he follows up his calling with activity and perseverance? A sluggard desireth and hath nothing, whatever his trade may be. What, then, can he hope to win who calls himself a Christian, and neither learns of Christ as his Teacher, nor follows Him as his Master, nor serves Him as his Prince? Salvation is not by works, but it is salvation from idleness. We are not saved because we are earnest; but he who is not earnest has great reason to question whether he is saved.

Do you know a Christian who never attends week-day services, and only comes to public worship once on the Sunday? "He is not working at it much." Do you know a professor who is not engaged in the Sabbath-school, the Visiting Society, the Tract Association, or in any other form of usefulness? "He is not working at it much." Do you know a man who gives little or nothing to the work of the Lord, neglects family prayer, never says a word for Jesus, and never intercedes for perishing souls? "He is not working at it much." Perhaps he is the best judge of his religion, and does not think it worth being diligent about. We heard of one who said his religion did not cost him a shilling a year, and a friend observed that he thought it was more than it was worth; and in the present case we may conclude that a man's religion is a very poor affair when "he does not work at it much."

Our Lord does not set before us the Christian life as a dainty repose, but as a warfare and a struggle. He bids us "strive to enter in at the strait gate," and never suggests to us that we can enter into His rest if we are not willing to bear His yoke. Faith saves us, but it is the faith which worketh by love; all our salvation is wrought in us by the Lord both as to willing and doing, but yet we are to work it out with fear and trembling; which also by His grace we will henceforth do.

"Sure I must fight if I would reign:
Increase my courage, Lord!
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by Thy Word."

THE WITHERING OF UNBELIEF.

“Let them all be confounded and turned back that hate Zion. Let them be as the grass upon the housetops, which withereth afore it groweth up : wherewith the mower filleth not his hand, nor he that bindeth sheaves his bosom.”—Ps. cxxix. 5, 6, 7.

“NOTWITHSTANDING the humidity of the season, the grass crop on Wandsworth Bridge will not be submitted to tender this year.” This witty paragraph, taken from the “South London Press,” an interesting local paper, of May 25, refers to a bridge upon which there is little traffic. Of course the grass will not be mown, for it has no depth of earth to grow upon, and is of no value.

The text which we have quoted here finds an illustration. It is true, a bridge is not a house-top, but in scantiness of soil it is much the same. The opponents of the Gospel are very numerous, but they never come to anything; they are always confounded before they can well establish their theories. Various orders of infidels have sprung up suddenly, and have almost as suddenly disappeared, and even those which have endured for a longer season have ultimately passed away, leaving scarcely any memorial behind them. Unbelief is an unhealthy and unsatisfactory plant; there is nothing in it; it yields neither seed for the sower nor bread for the eater; it is not even good enough to fodder the cattle with; the very lowest of mankind find it unsatisfactory meat. Rationalists should never be too confident of their favorite scheme, for it is only one of a long series of short-lived weeds, and will be sure to wither before long, and to be denounced by some other order of advanced thinkers. Infidelity, like Canaan of old under the Hivites and the Jebusites, is a land which eateth up the inhabitants thereof. Scepticism derives most of its life from opposition; it has no natural stamina, and is rather a negative than a real existence. Little cause can there be for the citizens of Zion to be afraid of such adversaries; instead of dismay we may even breathe defiance. “The virgin daughter of Zion hath despised thee and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at

thee." It were well if this sacred confidence were more common among us; for it is to be deplored that, as each crop of the house-top grass of unbelief springs up, much unjustifiable alarm is manifested, and this does most of the mischief. There is really no cause to fear things so essentially feeble and self-destructive as systems of unbelief. The wooden guns of the Chinese are not more ridiculous than the philosophies of infidels.

"Ashamed they fly, they start aloof,
Each foe of Zion flies, —
They are as grass upon the roof,
That ere the uprooting dies;

"Where no glad store may reaper find
To fill his gathering hand,
Nor high their bosom heap who bind
The sheaves in wreathèd band;

"Where never traveller as he passed
Did prayer or greeting frame,
Or say 'God's blessing o'er thee last,
We bless you in God's name.'"

MOORE'S REMONSTRANCE.

"Should such a man as I flee?" — NEH. vi. 11.

"He that endureth to the end shall be saved." — MATT. x. 22.

ON Tuesday, May 28, Earl Russell died. In biographical notices given by most of the papers allusion is made to the proposition of Lord John Russell to retire from public life while yet a young man, in consequence of some serious discouragement which he had received. It is stated that he was deterred from so doing by the expostulations of Thomas Moore, and quotations are made from the "Remonstrance" which that sparkling poet addressed to him. On reading the poem it struck us at once that many of the remarks would apply in other and higher senses to any Christian who should be tempted to withdraw himself from the service of his Lord. The first three verses of the poem we will quote at length: —

“What *thou*, with thy genius, thy youth, and thy name —
 Thou, born of a Russell — whose instinct to run
 The accustomed career of thy sires, is the same
 As the eaglet's to soar with his eyes on the sun, —

“Whose nobility comes to thee stamped with a seal
 Far, far more ennobling than monarch e'er set,
 With the blood of thy race offered up for the weal
 Of a nation that swears by that martyrdom yet, —

“Shalt *thou* be faint-hearted and turn from the strife,
 From the mighty arena where all that is grand,
 And devoted, and pure, and adorning in life,
 'T is for high-thoughted spirits like thine to command?”

Born from above and bearing the name of Christian, shall the child of God cease to battle for that which is good? Conscious of a sacred instinct which impels him onward and upward, shall he sit down in despair or retire into inglorious ease? Serving a Lord who spared not His heart's blood for man's redemption, and following in the track of thousands of martyrs who counted not their lives dear unto them, shall we selfishly shun self-denial and avoid reproach? No; by God's grace let us never dream of timorous silence, nor think for an instant that our light can be spared from the darkening horizon of our times. We may have neither eloquence nor genius, but such as we have we will consecrate to the last moment of our lives to Him who hath bought us by His precious blood. We may address to every timorous heart the closing verse of Tom Moore, altered to suit the case: —

“Thus ransomed, thou never canst sleep in the shade;
 If the stirrings of impulse, the terror of fame,
 And the charms of thy cause have not power to persuade,
 Yet think how to Jesus thou 'rt pledged by thy name.”

He who wears the name of Christian is sworn to sustain the cause of God and truth with the last drop that warms his veins.

A PATH STREWN WITH BLESSINGS.

“I will save you, and ye shall be a blessing.”—ZECH. viii. 13.

“When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: Because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him.”—JOB xxix. 11, 12.

THE “Sussex Daily News,” of June 6, has the following quotation and remark: “‘The path of a Pope must be strewn with blessings.’ Such is the neat and appropriate sentiment attributed to Leo XIII.”

So far as the history of a Pope has come under our own observation it has rather been strewn with curses than with blessings. Pio Nono at any rate appeared to be exceedingly voluble when delivering a tirade, and could fulminate an anathema as neatly and appropriately as any other dealer in strong language. Happily we have reason to believe that his denunciations were not much more effectual than his benedictions. If either the one or the other had any effect at all it would appear to have operated by the rule of contrary: for those whom he cursed most prospered best, and those whom he blessed had cause to cry “save us from our friend.” We believe that as a matter of fact his fulminations were so barren of all results, that we may apply to them the lines of “Ingoldsby Legends,” which describe the cardinal in his great red hat when he had lost his costly turquoise ring:—

“The cardinal rose with a dignified look,
 He called for his candle, his bell, and his book;
 In holy anger and pious grief
 He solemnly cursed the rascally thief!
 He cursed him at board, he cursed him in bed;
 From the sole of his foot to the crown of his head;
 He cursed him in sleeping, that every night
 He should dream of the devil and wake in a fright;
 He cursed him in eating, he cursed him in drinking;
 He cursed him in coughing, in sneezing, in winking;
 He cursed him in sitting, in standing, in lying;
 He cursed him in walking, in riding, in flying;

He cursed him in living, he cursed him in dying!
 Never was heard such a terrible curse!

But what gave rise
 To no little surprise,

Nobody seemed one penny the worse!"

True, there was a certain thievish jackdaw which began to pine and lose its feathers, but we do not believe that Pio Nono ever managed to injure even a sparrow or a spider with his bulls and excommunications.

Let us hope that Leo XIII. intends to abound in benisons; but even if he does so, we suspect that nobody will seem one penny the better.

However, it will be all the better for Leo himself if he will learn to lie down with the lamb.

If from the quotation we take out the word "Pope," and write "Christian," the sentiment will be more neat and appropriate than ever: "The path of a Christian must be strewn with blessings." God has blessed him unspeakably in Christ Jesus, and he should therefore bless God with all his heart and soul. The promise is, "I will bless thee, and thou shalt be a blessing," and every child of believing Abraham should endeavor to be a blessing to all those that are round about him, according to that ancient covenant promise. Like David, the believer should bless his household; nay more, like the high priest of old he should bless all the people. His words should impart the blessing of instruction, and his life should confer the blessing of holy example. His private prayers should bring down innumerable blessings from heaven, and his public acts, abounding with pity and love, should bless the poor and needy of earth. The sick, the afflicted, and the desponding should hail his presence, and find in him a tender friend. He should go about doing good. As there is a promise that his path, like the shining light, shall increase in splendor, so also should he increase in the warmth and light of love and kindness, bearing life and joy and healing to the sons of men. May the blessed God reveal Himself in His blessed people, that in them and in their seed all the nations of the earth may be blessed!

PEARLS.

“No mention shall be made of coral or of pearls: for the price of wisdom is above rubies.” — JOB xxviii. 18.

“Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.” — MATT. xiii. 46.

THE Paris correspondent of the “Daily News,” of June 11, writes: “The French have grown so clever at imitating pearls that a jeweller in this Exhibition shows a necklace which purports to be a mixture of true pearls and false, and he challenges his customers to single out the real ones if they can. Nobody had yet succeeded, when I myself made an ineffectual attempt.”

The art of pearl-making is by no means a new discovery; by various methods imitation pearls have been manufactured in divers countries for many years. The French have, however, proved themselves superior to all competitors. Specimens of their artificial productions exhibited at the Exposition of 1867 could neither in their lustre nor color be distinguished from oriental pearls, even when the genuine and the sham were laid side by side. We are told that there is only one way by which they can be detected, and that is by their specific weight; they are much lighter than the real pearls.

There is “one Pearl of great price,” about whose genuineness there can never be a question; but all the goodly pearls which this world can yield need to be weighed before we may conclude them to be of any great value, — indeed, the choicest pearls of earth are insignificant in price compared with Him who is more precious than rubies, and of whom it is written, that “all the things thou canst desire are not to be compared unto Him.” Even real pearls, the best of them, fit to adorn an emperor’s crown, and to heighten the beauty of the fairest of maidens, have been known to sicken and die and vanish in a day. Every now and then we hear of magnificent ancestral pearls, the pride of noble families, turning of a sickly color and crumbling into dust. Not long ago the

crown-jeweller of France solemnly applied to the Academy of Science for the means of preventing the decay and corruption of the precious gems in the royal crown. No satisfactory answer was given, and many highly-prized jewels have since then passed away. "Behold, all is vanity and vexation of spirit."

In a work entitled "The Wonders of the Deep," M. Schele de Vere tells us the following story, of which we leave our readers to draw the moral for themselves: "A dusky fisherman in the far-off seas of India once found a pearl in an oyster. He had heard of such costly gems, and sold it to an Arab for a gold coin which maintained him for a whole year in luxury and idleness. The Arab exchanged it for powder and shot furnished him by a Russian merchant on board a trading vessel, who even yet did not recognize the dirty, dust-covered little ball as a precious jewel. He brought it home as a present for his children on the banks of the Neva, where a brother merchant saw it and bought it for a trifle. The pearl had at last found one who could appreciate its priceless value. The great man—for it was a merchant of the first class, the owner of a great fortune—rejoiced at the silent fraud by which he had obtained the one pearl of great price, without selling all and buying it fairly, and cherished it as the pride of his heart. Visitors came from all parts of the world to see the wonder. He received them in his merchant's costume in a palace plain without but resplendent inside with all that human art can do to embellish a dwelling, and led them silently through room after room, filled with rare collections and dazzling by the splendor of their ornaments. At last he opened with his own key the carved folding-doors of an inner room, which surprised the visitor by its apparent simplicity. The floor, to be sure, was inlaid with malachite and costly marble, the ceiling carved in rare woods, and the walls hung with silk tapestry; but there was no furniture, no gilding, nothing but a round table of dark Egyptian marble in the centre. Under it stood a strong box of apparently wonderful ingenuity, for even the cautious owner had to go through various readings of alphabets, and to unlock one door after another, before he reached an inner cavity, in which a plain square box of Russia leather was standing alone. With an air akin to reverence, the happy

merchant would take the box and press it for a moment to his bosom, then, devoutly crossing himself and murmuring an invocation to some saint, he would draw a tiny gold key, which he wore next his person, from his bosom, unlock the casket, and hold up his precious pet to the light that fell from a large grated window above.

“It was a glorious sight for the lover of such things: a pearl as large as a small egg, of unsurpassed beauty and marvellous lustre. The sphere was perfect, the play of colors, as he would let it reluctantly roll from his hands over his long white fingers down on the dark table, was only equalled by the flaming opal, and yet there was a soft, subdued light about the lifeless thing which endowed it with an almost irresistible charm. It was not only the pleasure its perfect form and matchless beauty gave to the eye, nor the overwhelming thought of the fact that the little ball was worth anything an emperor or a millionaire might choose to give for it,—there was a magic in its playful, ever-changing sheen as it rolled to and fro,—a contagion in the rapt fervor with which the grim old merchant watched its every flash and flare, which left few hearts cold as they saw the marvel of St. Petersburg. For such it was, and the emperor himself, who loved pearls dearly, had in vain offered rank and titles and honors for the priceless gem.

“A few years afterwards a conspiracy was discovered, and several great men were arrested. Among the suspected was the merchant. Taking his one great treasure with him, he fled to Paris. Jewellers and amateurs, Frenchmen and foreigners, flocked around him, for the fame of his jewel had long since reached France. He refused to show it for a time. At last he appointed a day when his great rival in pearls, the famous Dutch banker, the Duke of Brunswick, and other men well known for their love of precious stones and pearls, were to behold the wonder. He drew forth the golden key, he opened the casket; but his face turned deadly pale, his eyes started from their sockets, his whole frame began to tremble, and his palsied hand let the casket drop. The pearl was discolored! A sickly blue color had spread over it, and dimmed its matchless lustre. His gem was diseased. In a short

time it turned into a white powder, and the rich merchant of St. Petersburg, the owner of the finest pearl known to the world, was a pauper. The pearl had avenged the poor Indian of the East, the Arab, and the poor traveller, and administered silent justice to the purchaser who paid not its price."

THE FICKLENESS OF MANKIND.

"Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel." — GEN. xlix. 4.

"Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie." — Ps. lxxviii. 9.

THE "Times," June 10, has the following from its correspondent at St. Petersburg on public opinion in Russia: "A well-known Russian journalist, who has had abundant opportunities of observing and studying the consecutive changes of public opinion among the educated classes of his countrymen during the last two years, has just published the following results of his observations:—

"July, 1876.—Wild enthusiasm. Complete enchantment with the Servians. Desire for war.

"October, 1876.—Despondency. Disenchantment with regard to the Servians; hostility toward them, and regret for what has been done for them.

"November, 1876.—Enthusiasm for a war in the interest of the Bulgarians; pity for and sympathy with them.

"April, 1877.—Complete ecstasy. Brotherly love for the Bulgarians. Dissatisfaction with the Servians.

"August and September, 1877.—Despondency in consequence of failures (before Plevna and elsewhere). Silent irritation against the Bulgarians. Readiness to abandon the whole thing if only a way could be found out of it.

"December, 1877.—Intoxication from success. Desire to carry the thing out to the end. Bad feeling toward the Bulgarians.

"February, 1878.—Wild delight at the peace and the yielding disposition of Turkey. Sympathy with Turkey and corresponding

coolness toward the Bulgarians. Passionate determination to insist on the acquisition of Batoum. Consciousness of the necessity of this acquisition. Indifference to the question of England and Austria.

“ May, 1878. — Complete disenchantment on the score of the Bulgarians. Suspicions of insincerity on the part of the Turks. Talk about Batoum not being so necessary for us as it had formerly seemed. Something like disgust with the Eastern Question. Talk about getting the thing finished anyhow.’

“ This curious laconic register, though far from complete, is pretty correct so far as it goes.”

We insert this as a curious instance of the fickleness of the popular mind. He who lives to win the approbation of the public, even should he gain it, should set but small store by it, for it is as changeful as the wind, and altogether as unsubstantial. The multitude one day cried concerning our Saviour, “ Hosanna, hosanna ! ” and ere the week was ended, they as lustily shouted, “ Crucify Him, crucify Him ! ” The apostles at Lystra found themselves at one moment in danger of being worshipped as gods ; but the mistake did not last long, for the people stoned them before the sun had set. The many-headed cry first this thing, and then another : “ unstable as water,” they rush to extremes. The war upon which they enter with enthusiasm will either close with curses at the bloodshed it has entailed, or else it will end with illuminations intended to welcome the return of peace which they broke with so light a heart.

Let those who pride themselves upon the applause of the multitude see the worthlessness of the mere vapor for which they spend themselves. Blessed is he whose life is ruled by the will of God, and whose highest ambition is acceptance with the Most High through Jesus Christ His Son. His is an immortal and immutable inheritance, a crown of life which fadeth not away. Is the reader living wholly unto God ? Then he shall not know the disappointment of those who put their trust in the sons of men, in whom is no strength. But hunters after popularity and aspirants for fame will do well to consider whether the mirage is worth their notice, or the will-o'-the-wisp worthy of their pursuit.

BLAME THE SCALE-MAKER.

“The woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.”—GEN. iii. 13.

“Every man shall bear his own burden.”—GAL. vi. 5.

The “South London Press,” June 22, reports the following, among a number of other cases of unjust weights and measures: “A. B., cheesemonger. One machine. *Defendant said he paid a scale-maker 10s. 6d. to attend to it, and the neglect was his.* The chairman said one of the first things defendant should have attended to was the correctness of his scales and weights. Fined £1. Defendant thought the scale-maker ought to pay the fine. The clerk: ‘We look to you; we have nothing to do with the scale-maker.’”

National law is based upon the principle of personal responsibility, and it will not allow a transgressor to escape by pleading that he has shifted the burden of duty upon another. If in any cases responsibility could be transferred, it surely should be under the circumstances before us; but the law knows nothing of scale-makers, it deals with traders; and if anything be wrong with scales or weights it does not hold the shopkeeper guiltless, but visits the wrong upon him, even though he may have employed a person to keep his weights in order. This course appears to be severe, but it is both just and necessary; there would be no security for the purchaser, nor indeed for government itself, if the essential principle of personal responsibility could be departed from. Every man *must* bear his own burden.

Yet this truth is too often put into the background. In religion men have often acted as if they had altogether forgotten that it must of necessity be strictly personal. We hear of sponsors promising and vowing no end of things, and of priests performing service and doing the devotions of others. Proxies, however, in such matters are a sheer delusion; all true religion is a personal thing; men sin personally, and they must personally repent of

that sin, or personally bear the guilt of it. No man can receive the new birth on behalf of another, nor can another man's faith excuse us from believing in Jesus. Sanctification is not a boon to be vicariously received, any more than heaven can be vicariously enjoyed. A man may fancy that he pays a priest or a minister to do his religion for him, just as the tradesman paid the scale-maker; but the law does not recognize the transaction, it deals with principals only. We cannot leave our heavenly business in the hands of a clergyman as we place our secular affairs in the hands of a lawyer; we must believe in Jesus Christ on our own account, or judgment will go against us. It is true that in the matter of our justification before God we have been redeemed by the blood of our Substitute, and are accepted in His imputed righteousness; but in the practical application of the blessings thus procured everything must be direct and personal. Another may procure us food, but he cannot eat or digest it for us: Jesus has become our bread from heaven, but we must individually partake of Him if we would live for ever. Another may bring us a candle, but we cannot see the light except with our own vision, — nay more, even the Sun of Righteousness makes no man to see except by his own eyes.

Never, then, let us leave our doctrinal views to be settled for us by the Church, but let us search the Scriptures for ourselves; let us not derive our peace and confidence from the good opinion of our pastor and the deacons, but aim at attaining a full assurance of our calling and election by the seal of the Spirit upon our own hearts; neither let us leave the work of the Lord to be discharged by others, but honestly render our fair share of the service. We must ask for grace to see to our own scales, and cease to leave to the scale-maker a matter which is altogether our own concern.

DESERTERS.

“Will ye also go away?”—JOHN vi. 67.

“Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world.”—2 TIM. iv. 10.

THE “Daily News” of June 22, in an article upon the character of the men in the British army, says: “One great cause of misconduct is that few men enlist deliberately, but rather take the shilling as a means, of escaping temporary trouble of some sort. Either a man is temporarily out of work, or he has a quarrel with his sweetheart, or he wishes for a while to keep out of the way of the police. Comparatively rarely does he become a soldier from a conviction that it is an honorable mode of earning a living, and that there are some extremely good prizes to be won. Hence speedy repentance, and if he is unable to purchase his discharge he will frequently in desperation steal, so openly that he must be discovered, some, to him, useless article, such as a broom or one boot.”

It seems, then, that very much depends upon the manner of the enlistment of soldiers, and we are quite sure that with young converts everything depends upon the reason for their enrolment in the army of Christ. If they merely come to Christ because they are under some temporary alarm of soul, and not because they are heartily convinced of the error of their ways, they will probably desert from the standard of the cross as soon as the temporary pressure of natural conviction is removed. The awakening sermon is forgotten, the alarming providence is over, the eloquent revivalist has gone to another town, and the superficial converts regret that they ever made a profession of religion, and under one pretext or another they slide away. How well it is that our young friends should count the cost and understand what they are doing, and then should deliberately and heartily cast in their lot with the people of God. They must be convinced that to be a Christian is right and honorable, and for their own eternal good; they must also be assured that the cause is one of truth and righteousness, and

that in it lies all their hope of eternal salvation, — they must, in a word, be renewed in the spirit of their minds, or they will soon be the prey of temptation, and the Church will be filled with alarm at the large number of deserters.

Our Lord was always anxious that men should be saved, but He was never in a hurry to gather nominal disciples. When the scribe said to Him, "Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest," He did not reply, as many of us would have done, with a pressing invitation and an enthusiastic welcome; but He was far more wise in His procedure, for He replied, "The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but I, the Son of man, have not where to lay My head." He put before him the poverty of the Captain and the hard fare of the soldier. When the multitude thronged around Him, He did not commence taking their names, enrolling them as His converts, and counting heads in order to publish astounding statistics, but, on the contrary, He sifted them with words like these: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, ye seek Me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled." The recruiting-sergeants of her Majesty's army are so anxious to get hold of the men that they are not scrupulous as to the arguments they use. Drink is freely given, the soldier's condition is set forth in rosy colors, and the young man is cajoled and seduced into a way of life which he would not have thoughtfully chosen; but it must not be so among us. We may not repel any man who wishes to join our ranks, but we may not persuade men and women to make a hasty profession, and take the name of Christian upon them to please their friends. The door must not be closed with lock and key, but there must be a porter to open it, in order that the sheep, and not the goats, may go in and out and find pasture. Since the porter himself may be readily deceived, it is every man's personal responsibility to see that he enters with his heart and soul into the Church of God, if he does enter at all; and it is at his own peril that he dares to intrude unworthily or insincerely into the fold of Christ.

A profession carelessly made will soon be dishonorably abandoned. We know who it was that said: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would

no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." He who wrote these words was of a loving nature, and never formed a harsh judgment, and therefore from his verdict we conclude that the backslidings and apostasies which weaken the visible Church of Christ are caused by a want of reality at the commencement of the religious life. There was no root, and therefore the plant withered when the sun was risen with burning heat. There was no call to the soldier's life, or the reputed warrior of the Cross would not have so shamefully deserted the colors. Hence the stern necessity of our being careful in examining all candidates, and honest in warning them of their responsibilities.

“Have ye counted the cost,
 Have ye counted the cost,
 Ye warriors of the Cross?
 Are ye fixed in heart, for your Master's sake,
 To suffer all earthly loss?
 Can ye bear the scoff of the worldly-wise,
 As ye pass by Pleasure's bower
 To watch with your Lord on the mountain-top
 Through the weary midnight hour?

“Do ye answer, ‘We can,’
 Do ye answer, ‘We can,’
 Through His love's constraining power?
 But do ye remember the flesh is weak,
 And shrinks in the trial hour?
 Yet yield to His hand who around you now
 The cords of a man would cast,
 The bands of His love who was smitten for you,
 To the altar binding you fast.

“In the power of His might,
 In the power of His might,
 Who was made through weakness strong,
 Ye shall overcome in the fearful fight,
 And sing His victory song.
 But count ye the cost, yea, count ye the cost, —
 The forsaking all ye have.
 Then take up your cross and follow your Lord,
 Not thinking your life to save.”

THE BEST PREPARATION FOR THE SECOND ADVENT.

“Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord.”—LUKE xii. 35, 36.

THE “Daily Telegraph” has a leading article commencing as follows:—

“There is a well-known story in New England which relates that about a century ago a day of remarkable gloom and darkness overspread the States of Massachusetts and Connecticut,—a day still spoken of in local histories as ‘the dark day,’ when the light of the sun was slowly extinguished as if by an eclipse. The legislature of Connecticut happened at that moment to be in session, and, to quote an American writer, ‘As its members saw the unexpected and unaccountable darkness coming on, they shared in the general awe and terror. It was supposed by many that the Last Day—the Day of Judgment—had come, and in the consternation of the hour some member moved the adjournment of the House. Then straightway there arose an old Puritan legislator, Davenport of Stamford, and said that if the Last Day had come, he desired to be found in his place and doing his duty; for which reasons he moved that candles should be brought, so that the House might proceed with its debate.”

This Davenport of Stamford was a wise man. What could the other senators have suggested which would be equally suitable for the occasion? If it had been the Last Day, would they have been more ready for it if they had gone to their homes and waited there in idleness? Would it have been more seemly to have rushed into the street, and to have stood there with gaping mouths looking upward to the sky? What was better than being ready for whatever might happen, and waiting at the post of duty? We believe firmly in the second advent of Christ, and in the grand fact that He may come at such an hour as we think not; but what of that? What is the practical use of the revelation? Are we to forego matters of immediate concern in order to pry into the

impenetrable darkness of the future? Are we to make ourselves into mere star-gazers and prognosticators? Are we to spend our time in idle wonder, concluding that every time we hear of wars and rumors of wars, and read of earthquakes in divers places, it is an infallible token that the end of the world is near? Why, there have been wars and rumors of wars, and all the other signs, a score of times, and yet the world wags on at its usual rate. No; rather let us give ourselves up more entirely to the pressing demands of our Lord's household; let us bring out of His storehouse things new and old, continue to feed our fellow-servants, and welcome home the wanderers; and then, whether the Master come at cock-crow or at midnight, it will signify little enough to us. We shall welcome Him whenever He comes, and He will meet us with joy, for "blessed is that servant whom his Lord when He cometh shall find so doing."

Master Davenport of Stamford doubtless had a solid confidence in the Lord Jesus; his faith had fixed itself upon His first advent, and received the salvation which Jesus came to bring; and therefore, delivered from all trepidation and alarm, he did not share in the general terror, nor draw inferences of alarm from the unexpected and unaccountable darkness. The heavens might fall, but he dwelt above the heavens, and in quietness and assurance was his strength. Moreover, the good man possessed a faith which manifested itself by works; his business was his religion, and religion was his business. He believed he was called of God to sit in the legislature of Connecticut, and therefore there he sat; he only wanted candles, that he might see what he was at. He was doing what was right, he was there to vote for justice and truth, and if his Master had come, he would have risen from his seat and said, "Here I am, in the place Thou wouldst have me to occupy." We remember once calling upon one of our members, a sister who managed her household with discretion. She was in humble circumstances, and when we stopped opposite her house she was whitening the front steps. She rose from her pail, and apologized for being found with her sleeves up; but we begged her to make no excuse, for she was doing her duty, and we earnestly hoped that when our Lord should come He would find us in the same

condition. If she had known we were coming, it is just possible she would have put on her best gown, and have been waiting in the little parlor; but we should not have been one half as charmed with her prepared appearance as with the exhibition of her everyday industry. The most fitting condition for death and for judgment is to be diligent in the Master's business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. The times are very dark: bring in the candles, and let the House proceed with the present business.

Thus we close, wishing our readers to remember the words of Him who so shortly shall appear: "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city."



Lucie Spurgeon

XXIX.

MRS. SPURGEON'S WORK.

COME in, O strong and deep love of Jesus, like the sea at flood-tide ; cover all my powers, drown all my sins, sweep away all my cares, lift up my earth-bound soul, and float it right up to my Lord's feet, and there let me lie, a poor broken shell, washed up by His love, having no virtue or value, and only venturing to whisper to Him that, if He will put His ear to me, He will hear within faint echoes of the vast waves of His own love which have brought me where it is my delight to lie, even at His feet for ever. — C. H. SPURGEON.

MRS. SPURGEON'S WORK.

WE have always recoiled from pronouncing fulsome eulogies upon any worthy persons engaged in serving the Church of Jesus Christ; and every right-minded man and woman shrinks from that form of adulation which is akin to flattery. Mr. Spurgeon has had his share of praise and blame, but has been graciously kept independent of both. Happy is the man who takes no heed to the "flatterer," and is alike impervious to the shafts of venom shot by a jealous hand.

Mrs. Spurgeon, like her noble husband, would fain have the crown of praise placed on the brow of Jesus, and glory be given to Him for the work she has been permitted to do. Like the model virtuous woman sketched by the wise man, "she stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy. . . . She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her." The work which this amiable lady has so successfully originated and maintained is worthy of emulation on the part of Christian women, whose employment, alas, too often, is that of "killing time."

Mrs. Spurgeon has been a constant sufferer, unable to participate in the great schemes of benevolence connected with her husband's labors, yet from her quiet chamber she has personally procured and directed tens of thousands of books to needy pastors, whose libraries were in great need of her generous donations. Besides, she supervises a private and humble mission, which sends clothing to their poorly clad children and suffering wives. Dorcas-

like, she labors for the poor, and her work is wisely planned, managed with economy, and precious in its results. The life of this dear afflicted lady is fragrant with benevolence; many homes are made glad as the results of her toil.

Her peculiar ministry has the hearty commendation of her husband, and his most prayerful sympathy; in him she finds a wise counsellor, and a true friend to the poor pastors whose need and trials become the objects of her sympathy and solace. Through him she has received much material help, and every encouragement in the prosecution of her self-imposed task. Thus he writes:—

“How deep is our own interest in Mrs. Spurgeon’s most useful and needful work we need scarcely tell; we trust that our readers will feel a measure of the same sympathy, and exhibit it in tangible form. A famine of books to a teacher of others is almost as distressing as want of bread. Want of good books has, we doubt not, tended greatly to impoverish the ministries of many preachers. How could they fill the minds of others when they had no food for their own?”

From one of Mrs. Spurgeon’s yearly reports we cull the following:—

The Book Fund makes grants to poor pastors of every evangelical denomination who are in actual charge, wholly devoted to the ministry, and whose income from all sources does not exceed \$750 per annum.

These grants consist of seven or eight volumes, and usually comprise the “Treasury of David,” or some of Mr. Spurgeon’s sermons,—not to the exclusion of other books, but chiefly because they are the works most sought after by applicants to the fund; and I am not afraid or ashamed to say it, because I know I could not, with the slender means at my command, give any more precious or more helpful. There are several special books for ministers which I would at once add to my list if friends who wish for their circulation would supply me with the means.

Poor ministers are the rule, not the exception: they are not restricted to the Baptist denomination or to our own land, but

abound in every connection and in all climes; their needs are very urgent, their prospects seldom brighten, and their ranks never seem to thin. My work for them is as great a necessity now as it was at its commencement,—nay, I think its importance has increased with its extension, the latent thirst for knowledge has been developed by its gifts, and a keener appetite for mental food has been produced by the provision it has furnished. I need not enlarge on the absolute necessity which exists for a minister to possess books, if he would be an efficient teacher and preacher: the mind which is itself not fed cannot very long feed others: but I would point out the impossibility of procuring these essential helps and appliances when a man has to provide for himself and a wife and family on a pittance of \$300, \$400, or \$500 per annum.

To such weary “workers with a slender apparatus” my Book Fund stretches forth a helping hand: it fills the empty basket with tools, gives a key to a well-stocked storehouse, replenishes an exhausted brain, supplies ammunition for the combat with evil, makes sunshine in shady places, and by God’s own blessing does a vast amount of good wherever its gifts are scattered.

It is the joy of my life thus to serve the servants of my Master, and the daily blessings and tender providences which surround my work are more precious to me than words can express. Some of the subjects of my thankfulness may seem small and inconsiderable to others, but to me they are of constant interest and importance. My retired life shuts out the usual pleasures of social intercourse, but opens wide a world of glad delight in thus “ministering to the necessities of the saints.” I have scores of friends with whose circumstances I am intimately acquainted, yet whose faces I have never looked upon. I hope to know and greet them on the “other shore;” and meanwhile their love and prayers are a sweet reward for such pleasant service as the Lord enables me to render to them. In these pages will be found some of the expressive outpourings of grateful hearts, and though the letters here given form but a small portion of the great mass of affectionate correspondence connected with the fund, they will serve to reveal some of the daily comfort and encouragement I receive through this channel. Ah, if by His grace we can but win from

our Master the approving words, "Ye did it unto me," the joy of service is then only "a little lower" than the supreme felicity of heaven! . . .

The following tenderly kind little note contains such a testimony to the value of the Book Fund that I am tempted to give it, even though I have to include its unmerited commendation of my own small service:—

"MY DEAR MRS. SPURGEON, — Please accept the enclosed mite toward the Book Fund. If it please God, may you long be spared to carry on this great and blessed work, which has been sanctified to the good of so many of the Lord's servants, and through them to so many of His people. Surely this must redound to the praise and glory of the Lord Jesus, whose we are and whom we serve. I believe, dear Mrs. Spurgeon, that every day there is praise ascending to Almighty God for the blessings many have received through the books you have been enabled to send, and also through the encouraging little notes you write. I have to thank God for two or three of those little notes, and oh, how precious they are! I shall ever treasure them, for they have been made a means of great blessing to my soul. May God's richest blessing continue to rest upon you; may you be sustained by grace divine when called upon to suffer and endure; if it be in accordance with God's will, may you be relieved from pain altogether. Perhaps this may never be on this side Jordan. How precious you must have found those words, "My grace is sufficient for thee." Good Matthew Henry says that if God is pleased to lay a heavy burden upon us at any time, and yet fits the shoulder to the burden, we certainly can have no reason to complain, however heavy the cross may be. Is not this true? I pray that all the strength and grace you need may be given from on high, supplied by a loving Father out of His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

To ministers who are not quite so necessitous as those for whom the Book Fund was specially founded, yet who can ill spare the published price of the "Treasury of David," or the sermons, I offer these books at a somewhat reduced rate, and I have much satisfaction in knowing that the privilege is warmly appreciated.

The following letters are fair samples of the spirit in which the favor is sought, and the warm gratitude evoked by its accordance :

“MY DEAR MRS. SPURGEON, — In the libraries of my friends I have very frequently perused that most choice and savory work of your husband, ‘The Treasury of David;’ and if I have not actually incurred the guilt of breaking the tenth commandment, I fear I have come near to doing so, and from time to time I have been looking how I could contrive to purchase it, but have found as often that my income has been forestalled by family and other claims. I have long known that you have been doing a most valuable work for the Master by helping poor pastors to some good books, but hitherto I have not ventured to write, lest I should be standing in the way of some brother more necessitous even than myself. This week, however, I was in the library of one of my brethren, and again looking over some parts of the ‘Treasury,’ the desire to possess it for myself returned with such strength that I felt somewhat as I suppose a hungry ox would feel tethered outside, but just in sight of, a luxuriant field of clover. After ruminating over the matter again and again, I came to the conclusion that I could manage part of the price, so I have determined to say to you that I should esteem it a great favor indeed to receive a copy from your hands, if I shall not stand too much in the way of some other poor brother.”

It was, indeed, a great joy to open the gate of the clover field. May the good brother “go in and out and find pasture.”

On the same subject a pastor in one of our great Midland towns writes : —

“I note in your little report that when an applicant is able to purchase, books are sent on the most advantageous terms. Now I hope from time to time to be able to purchase a volume of the sermons, whose true gospel ring is indeed music to one’s soul. Will you kindly jot down on enclosed post-card the price at which I might get the sermons through your hands, so that I may know what to lay by from time to time, in order to add to my store? I am almost ashamed to trouble you so soon after receiving so much from you, but I am hungry for books, and cannot help it.”

There is also a goodly number of workers for the Lord, — evan-

gelists, local preachers, and others,— who, having no pastorate, are ineligible for the free gift of the “Treasury,” yet covet earnestly this precious aid in their work. Many of these save up a little money, and sending it to me by degrees, have in time the joy of receiving the longed-for treasure, which, doubtless, they value none the less for the self-denial which has procured it. I often regret that I cannot give books to all Christian workers; but a strict boundary line is absolutely necessary in a work carried on, not by a society, but by one pair of hands, and those not over strong or capable.

To-day \$1000 is mine from the great Testimonial Fund raised last Christmas; \$500 is allotted to the Book Fund, and \$500 to the Pastors’ Aid Society. My dear husband’s kindness secures this splendid help to my work, and I bless God both for him and his delightful gift. If John Ploughman’s wife might say here what she thinks of John in this and all other matters, it would be an easy task to fill these pages with his praises; but since such a wifely eulogy might be deemed out of place, Mrs. J. P. may at least record in her little book her hearty and appreciative thanks to the hundreds of true friends who have lately done honor to the “Prince of her life,”¹ and furnished him with the means of more abundantly blessing all the poor and needy ones who look to him as their best earthly friend and comforter. If I knew any one who doubted the truth of that Scripture, “There is that scattereth and yet increaseth,” I could bring no more unanswerable proof of its veracity than is found in the unselfish life and loving deeds of the God-honored man I reverence as my head and husband. I find a graceful appropriateness in the gift of part of this money to Baptist pastors, seeing that to one of themselves the whole magnificent sum is offered as a tribute of devoted admiration and love. What a joy it will be to use this consecrated gold in their service! What heavy burdens it will lift! What aching hearts will be consoled! What praise to God will be given by joyful lips! When I think of all it will do, I wish it were ten times as much! I get greedy for their sakes,— my poor, weary, toiling brethren,— but that only lasts a moment, for indeed I am most fully “satisfied with favor” on their behalf, both from the Lord and from man.

¹ Name for Mr. Spurgeon suggested by a Welshman.

I have been very pleased during this year to see my work extend among the poorly paid curates of the Church of England, and I trust a great blessing will follow the introduction into their libraries of such books as the "Treasury," the sermons, and "Lectures to my Students." These gifts are sought with avidity and welcomed with eager joy, and of all the pleasant letters which I receive none are more courteous in spirit or graceful in language than those penned by clergymen of the Established Church.

"Two years ago," writes one, "you presented me with the 'Treasury of David,' expressing a wish that it might prove a 'treasure' indeed. Your wish has been more than gratified, and now I have an acute appetite for the *whole* of your respected husband's works. I have the privilege of preaching the gospel five times every week, and if this is to continue to be a pleasure to me, I must keep my soul and mind well fed. Being still 'a poor curate,' I have to supply my wants on the lowest terms, so I write to ask whether, in gratifying my ardent desire, any assistance may be obtained from that source of benevolence which formerly supplied the 'Treasury of David.'"

My readers will be rejoiced to learn that, with some little help from the Book Fund, this clergyman has now on his shelves a complete set of the Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, in addition to the "Treasury of David" and some smaller works of Mr. Spurgeon's.

October 4. — Truly this has been a "red-letter day" in Book-Fund experience. "My mouth has been filled with laughter, and my tongue with singing." My heart praises and extols the goodness of the Lord, and my hand shall at once record the mercy which, like a blessed rain on a thirsty land, has so sweetly refreshed my spirit. This afternoon a constant and generous friend brought \$500 for the Book Fund. This was cause for devout thankfulness and great joy, for lately an unusually large number of books has been going out week by week, though funds have flowed in less freely. But it was not till a few hours after receiving this noble donation that I saw fully the Lord's tender care and pitying love in sending me this help just when He knew I should most sorely need it. By the late post that night came my quarterly account

for books, and so heavy was it, that in fear and haste I turned to my ledger to see the available balance, and with an emotion I shall not easily forget I found that but for the gift of \$500 a few hours previously I should have been \$300 in debt.

Did not the Father's care thus keep the sparrow from falling to the ground? A sleepless night and much distress of spirit would have resulted from my discovery of so serious a deficit in my funds, but the Lord's watchful love prevented this. "Before I called He answered," and though trouble was not very distant, He had said, "It shall not come nigh thee." O my soul, bless thou the Lord, and forget not this His loving "benefit"! A tumult of joy and delight arose within me as I saw in this incident, not a mere chance, or a happy combination of circumstances, but the guiding and sustaining hand of the loving Lord, who had most certainly arranged and ordered for me this pleasant way of comfort and relief. "I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me." A fresh revelation of His wonderful love seemed to be vouchsafed to my soul by this opportune blessing, and a cheque became "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace." I hastened to my dear husband, that he might share my joy, and I found in him a willing listener to the sweet "old story" of his Master's grace and power. Then, after a word or two of fervent praise to God on my behalf, he wrote the following letter to the friend by whose liberal hand our gracious God had sent this notable deliverance: —

"DEAR FRIEND, — I should like you to know why you were sent here this afternoon, and what an angel of mercy you were to my dear wife, and so to me. The Lord bless you. Soon after you were gone, my wife's quarter's bill for books came in for \$1,700, and she had only \$1,400 apart from your cheque. Poor soul, she has never spent more than her income before, and if you had not come, I fear it would have crushed her to be \$300 in debt. How good of the Lord to send you in the nick of time! We joined our praises together, and we do also very gratefully join our prayers for you. God bless you, and make up to you your generous gifts above all your own desires. I could not refrain

from telling you this: it is one of the sparkling facts which will make happy memories to help to stay our faith in future trials if they come. Again, God bless you. Yours heartily,

C. H. SPURGEON.

As part of the proceeds of his last lecture in London, I have the pleasure of receiving to-day \$125 as the generous and graceful gift of Mr. John B. Gough to the Book Fund. Such a gift from such a man is precious and noteworthy, but not unusual, as I believe it is the constant habit of Mr. Gough to bestow blessings as well as to recommend them. Long as his name has been honored in our household, and his special work admired and appreciated, it was not till his recent visit to England that we had the happiness of his personal acquaintance. Now he has been twice to see us (once accompanied by his excellent wife), and a friendship has been contracted between us which, though interrupted by absence from each other on earth, will find its true fruition and best enjoyment in heaven. The hours we spent in his company have left fragrant memories not only of pleasant mirth at the droll tales so inimitably told, but also of sacred joy in sweet and goodly words which "ministered grace unto the hearers." Cannot my friends imagine that it was a rare treat to listen to the converse of John Ploughman and John Gough?

No "pen of a ready writer" was there to record the good things they said, or to immortalize the brilliant "table talk" which graced each repast; but the sweet communion which knit our hearts together will never be forgotten by us, and so deep a flood of enjoyment came in upon my usually quiet life that day, that it will for ever ripple pleasantly upon the shores of memory. To our very dear friends, Mr. and Mrs. Gough, in their far-away home in the West, I send loving greeting; and for this \$125, which means so much joy and comfort for the Lord's poor servants, I give the warmest thanks of a grateful heart. . . .

Two dear ladies brought me \$250 to use in the Lord's work as I please. What bountiful kindness, its preciousness enhanced by my necessity! I divided it between the Book Fund and the Pastors' Aid, for in these times of universal pressure I can scarcely

confine my gifts to *books* in those cases where I know that, though the daily bread is sure, it is often unaccompanied by more substantial nourishment. It was only the other day I heard of a minister whose last Christmas dinner was to have consisted of a loaf and steak, because he could not afford better fare; and I know many whose most creditable fear of debt compels them not only to keep their bookshelves empty, but the cupboard very bare. One ceases to wonder at the oft-recurring sickness of many ministers' wives, and the extreme delicacy of their children, when one remembers their many privations, their lack of nourishing food, and their need of suitable clothing. "My income barely enables me to find plain food and scanty clothing for my wife and three children," writes a country Independent pastor. "Frequently I have saved a few shillings with the view of purchasing a volume of the 'Treasury,' but a pair of shoes or a little dress put the book aside." In this last matter of clothing for pastors' families there is very much now being done by kind friends for their relief. I have elsewhere mentioned the many presents I receive for them, and to-day (mercies never come singly) a large chest arrived from Scotland containing the wardrobes of two deceased gentlemen, sent by the desolate wife and mother. It has been a somewhat sad work to allot this valuable gift to seven needy pastors, but their joy in receiving the good warm clothes will not be damped by any sorrowful remembrances of departed friends, and I rejoice beforehand in their joy. . . .

Coming now to the conclusion of these sadly irregular chronicles, I should like to promise — if the Lord spare my life and prosper the Book Fund — to do better next year. The "happy thought," if it be a *happy* one, of reporting this little service in "diary-fashion," ought to be more satisfactorily carried out, and I hope to gather more discreetly and carefully the material to be used at the close of the year 1880. Experience has taught me that there is sure to be a fulness of goodness and mercy to supply the record; but the same teacher sadly proves to me that the "recorder" fails and is at fault in not keeping her "book of remembrance" well posted up. But what memory can keep pace with God's mercies? or what uninspired pen can tell the thou-

sandth part of His loving-kindnesses? "If I should count them they are more in number than the sand." Could I cull the choicest flowers of language, and bind them in one delightful bundle of thankfulness, it might be an acceptable offering of gratitude to the dear friends who have helped me; but how can I worthily praise and extol the bounty of my gracious, loving God? "Thou hast dealt well with Thy servant, O Lord, according to Thy Word." Blessed be Thy name, Thou hast daily loaded me with benefits, Thy hand has supplied all my need, Thy strength has been made perfect in my weakness. Thy loving care has watched over my work, and "there hath not failed one word of all Thy good promise" "upon which Thou hast caused me to hope." And what can I say more unto Thee? "Is this the manner of man, O Lord God?" Oh, poor dumb lips, that cannot speak His praise aright! Oh, faltering tongue, that as yet cannot "frame to pronounce" the syllables of heaven's own language!

"How shall I praise Him? Seraphs, when they bring
The homage of their lyre,
Veil their bright face beneath their wing,
And tremble and retire.

"Lost in thy love, yet full of humble trust,
I close the worthless lay,
Bow down my reverent forehead in the dust,
And in meek silence pray."

Truly there are times when silence is more eloquent than speech, and we are constrained to worship "afar off" from very awe of His goodness. Such a season comes to me now as I sit pondering over all the Lord's marvellous loving-kindness; and looking back on the great and manifold mercies of the fast-closing year, my spirit is overwhelmed within me, the weight of blessing seems almost too much for me, and I lay aside my poor useless pen to bow the knee before Him in silent adoration and thanksgiving. "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which Thou hast showed unto Thy servant."

The following pathetic lines from Mr. Spurgeon show how these devoted servants of Christ toil on even when compassed with many infirmities:—

Should there be errors in the notes, or in acknowledgment of goods, or in aught besides, it is hoped and believed that the editor's ill-health will be a sufficient apology. We have done our best; but with a pained and wearied brain, which is the root of our malady, we cannot but fail in many ways.

Mrs. Spurgeon has been passing through a very grievous time of pain and weakness, and therefore has felt quite unequal to writing a report. Gladly would we have undertaken it for her, but we have been laid aside also. The Book Fund is beginning to be four years old, and is entering, we hope, upon a still more useful existence. Its need, its urgent need, among poor ministers appears more sadly every day. It is true that pastors ought to be sufficiently paid to be able to buy books for themselves, but so long as they are not it is a good and needful work to find them brain food. A blessing has rested upon Mrs. Spurgeon's distribution of books, for the recipients have written again and again to acknowledge the invigoration and the reviving received through the volumes. The hearts of others have also been stirred up to think upon the great evil of ministerial poverty, and books have been spontaneously given which otherwise would not have filled the pastors' shelves. More money was received last year, and more given, and the poor suffering worker had yet strength sufficient, as she hopes to have for another year. It would grieve her much if friends supposed that the work might slacken on account of her illness. She asks for continued remembrance in their prayers. . . .

Mrs. Spurgeon has for some time been largely occupied with supplying books to clergymen of the Church of England whose stipends are too small to allow them to purchase them. The amount of kindly feeling which has been expressed is very pleasing, and we regard this opportunity of spreading evangelical truth as a peculiarly valuable one, which should be largely used. Keeping watch at home all alone, our beloved finds great solace in the kindly words of friends who send her help for her chosen life-work. Its present interesting phase should command the prayers and sympathies of all our friends. . . .

Our dear wife's Report has sold so well that it has been need-

ful to print a second edition. Many have written to say that its perusal has been a means of grace to them; they could not have said anything more cheering. The little book can still be had of our publishers for sixpence.

Her work in helping poor ministers is specially needful at this time, for the depression in the agricultural interest has rendered it very difficult for village churches to support their ministers. Small salaries have to be cut down, and many men of God are left with incomes below starvation point. Let all be doubly generous in this hour of need. . . .

The needful work of supplying ministers with books proceeds with great regularity, and considerable numbers of curates and poor ministers in the Church of England, together with pastors of all denominations, apply for "The Treasury of David," and other works. Could our readers see the letters of thanks, they would know how sharp is the book-hunger which gnaws the soul of many a preacher of the Word. We have said very little of late about this work which is carried on by our beloved. Only a few friends have thought of the Fund of late, and yet hitherto there has been no lack; the Fund personified might almost say, "I am poor and needy, yet the Lord thinketh upon me." Note the following fact, and let the Lord be glorified by the rehearsal of it. A friend of ours, who is always a princely giver, told us on the night of Mr. Gough's lecture that he should call at Nightingale Lane next day. Knowing his great business and our own, we half declined the offer, though we are always glad to see him; but he said he should come, and come he did. His errand was to give \$500 to the Book Fund. Now, reader, mark this. Mrs. Spurgeon's quarter's bill for books came in on that very Saturday evening, and had not that friend insisted on coming down and bringing his \$500, our dear one would have been \$300 in debt. She would have been almost heart-broken had this been the case, for she had prayed for help and expected it. The Lord would not let her have the trial, but sent His steward at the very hour, though he knew nothing of the need. We were both filled with adoring thankfulness for this memorable interposition. It was not the first time in which we have together

adored the Lord in an amazement of gratitude, nor will it be the last. Thus by one and another the Lord has filled up the reservoir which supplies so many of His poor ministers with refreshment; and He will fill it yet again. . . .

Mrs. Spurgeon wrote the following note to her subscribers. During the year she has distributed more than seven thousand valuable works to poor ministers: —

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—The past year has been crowned with the goodness of God to me and to my beloved work, and, therefore, I all the more deeply regret that through weakness and affliction I have not as yet been able to prepare a detailed account of the blessings the Book Fund has received and bestowed. This lack of service on my part will, I trust, be soon supplied by a kind friend, and a full report of my work shall then be laid before you. Meanwhile, I send forth this little messenger to testify to the unflinching faithfulness and goodness of the Lord in strengthening me for the service which His love has allotted me.

Sore need have I had for His tender, pitiful care, and He has never failed me; but, in spite of almost constant ill-health, He has enabled me to accomplish even an increased amount of work, and has extended the benefits of the Book Fund far and wide. To His name be the praises of my heart.

From all parts of the world I have abundant testimony to the reviving and refreshment of spirit God's ministers receive through the quiet agency of this book-giving, and the loving letters of grateful hearts are no slight comfort and reward for service often done in weariness and pain.

"Mr. Spurgeon's works are crammed full of the good old corn of Canaan:" so writes a pastor laboring in Queensland; and I count it a high honor that the "Lord of the harvest" has given me charge of so glorious a granary, from whose precious stores I can scatter so widely both "seed for the sower and bread for the eater." My accounts show that 18,693 volumes have been distributed during three years of the Fund's existence. This is a brief, bare statement of facts, and does not reveal the joy and blessing which lie beneath it; but, thanks be to God, I can truly say that

“the administration of this service not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God.”

My most heartfelt thanks are tendered to you, dear friends, for your constant remembrance of my work, the loving interest you have taken in its welfare, and the generous help you have given to its funds.

Your gifts are received as “from the Lord,” often coming as special answers to prayer, and always as tokens of His favor and approval of the work; and when they have thus enriched my soul, they carry to the weary, toiling servants of the Master substantial blessings, divine luxuries, the worth of which only a poor “bookless” pastor can rightly appreciate.

With a heart full of gratitude to the Lord and to you, believe me, dear friends,

Your deeply obliged servant,

SUSIE SPURGEON.

Though barely six years of age, Mrs. Spurgeon's Book Fund shows all the symptoms of vigorous, healthy life, and among the class whom it seeks to benefit, the little institution has naturally become one of the most popular in the country. The complete catholicity of the superintendent will also command our respect; for all evangelical ministers of the Word, whether in the Establishment or out of it, are eligible for grants, provided only that their average incomes are under \$750 a year. Upwards of seven thousand volumes have been sent out in the year, besides 6,262 single sermons; and while each of the Nonconformist bodies is well represented, no less than one hundred and thirty Church of England clergymen were among the recipients. The revelations of ministerial indigence are sufficiently saddening; but we are glad to find that Mrs. Spurgeon also sends money and clothes to relieve not a few urgent cases of a more pressing kind. The “Report,” to the Christian mind, will be found to be of absorbing interest; the style is terse, and every page is pervaded by that fine sympathy which is characteristic of the writer.

A clergyman of the Church of England, writing to Mrs. Spur-

geon for a grant of books, says: "Your husband has, by the publication of a most useful book, 'Commenting and Commentaries,' done more than a little in forming my taste and adding to my desire for books. This book was my consulting guide while at college, and has been of great service to me since in using the libraries of friends and in making purchases."

Mrs. Spurgeon's Report of her "Book Fund and its Work" for 1881 is a record of practical Christianity. The good service that she has rendered to the Christian Church, by providing poor pastors with good and helpful books, is in itself incalculable. During the six years of its existence the Fund has enabled her to distribute 41,630 volumes. The Pastors' Aid Fund is another admirable branch of this invalid lady's beneficence, and though for good reasons little is said about it, we can very well understand the good that it accomplishes in a quiet and delicate way. Not least among the many recommendations of this noble enterprise is the catholicity of its scope. In days when sectarian rancor often runs high, and there is much division in the Christian camp, we cannot be too thankful for any agency that obliterates these dividing lines by the overflowing tide of sympathy and help.

When we state that Mrs. Spurgeon is the president of the Missionary Working Society, our readers will readily understand how a great deal of information about poor pastors is obtained. Her Book Fund has made her name a household word wherever needy ministers are to be found, but that sweet ministry of love was only the natural supplement of this other equally necessary work which has been quietly carried on for the last twelve years. It was but meet that she who had been so long at the head of a movement for supplying the much-needed 'cloak' that should keep out the cold, or give the pastor that respectable appearance which his office demanded, should in due time seek to furnish the 'books' which are as indispensable to those who would 'give attendance to reading' as the desired addition to his little library in his prison at Rome was to the Apostle Paul. Her long and trying affliction has of course prevented the president from actively superintending the preparation and distribution of the different parcels, but many an applicant could tell that a well-directed hint from her

first revealed to him a channel through which the wants of himself and his family might be supplied. Here is an extract from one of the most recent letters before us: 'Mrs. Spurgeon wrote to me and said you would kindly and efficiently help me and the children.' It is scarcely necessary to say that the request for help received in such a form as this obtained a ready response. Others write as follows: 'We are very thankful to dear Mrs. Spurgeon for mentioning our names to you.' 'We are unfeignedly grateful to the utmost degree to our dear friend, Mrs. Spurgeon, for mentioning our names.' 'I feel truly grateful to Mrs. Spurgeon for the kind sympathy she has shown towards me and my family in recommending our case to your very valuable society.'

"Any one who goes to the ladies' room at the Tabernacle on the Wednesday following the third and fourth Sundays in each month can see how heartily our energetic sisters devote their time and energies to the holy enterprise of ministering to the wants of the Lord's poor servants. We have already stated that their main object is to help the families of needy ministers in England by sending them suitable parcels of clothing; but their Annual Report, issued in May last, informs us that they had also assisted a few of the agents of the Tabernacle Colportage Association who have been ill. The gratitude with which their gifts were received, and the facts that came to light about the straits in which these godly men are often placed, induced the committee to determine to let them continue to share in the bounty they had to dispense, always provided, as our legal friends would say, that the claims of poor pastors were satisfied first. This is what they say: 'Those who are best acquainted with the colporteurs and their work know that it is a work which involves much self-sacrifice, and which certainly is not overpaid. While we wish to help the colporteurs, we do not intend to forget poor ministers. Our labors for them we shall not in the least abate. What we ask is that our friends will help us in this new development of our society; for without this help is given it will be impossible for us to render assistance to those hard-working and useful servants of our Master, the colporteurs. We are ready for increased labor; our hands are willing, our hearts are willing. Let our friends come forward and help us,

and thus share with us the joy of pouring gladness into hearts which otherwise might have been downcast and sad.' ”

The accompanying extracts from letters received by the society reveal what a precious work it is quietly carrying on. A pastor writes: —

“My income is \$6 per week, with a wife and four children. Being placed in such an isolated spot, we find the necessaries of life very dear, clothing particularly so, although new garments do not come often in our way, for things have to be turned and altered, and it is often a puzzle to me how my dear wife contrives as she does. My best coat was purchased eight years since, so that you will think I am not wasteful.”

On receipt of the parcel which was sent to him, he wrote: “The great difficulty now is to know how to thank you and your helpers. The fact is you ought to have been here, for no words of mine can adequately express the joy and gladness that were expressed on my wife's face at the sight of the things you had so kindly sent us. We both join heartily to thank you and your co-workers for the new-year's gift just received; and if you have at all felt the force of the truth that it is more blessed to give than to receive, then I must say that you are blessed indeed.”

Another pastor writes: “I cannot tell you how thankful we both are to you and to the Ladies' Mission for the very valuable parcel you have sent us. Its contents both surprised and delighted us; it seemed as though you had overheard my dear wife as she had talked with me concerning the many things she absolutely needed, but saw no prospect of obtaining. We can scarcely realize that our needs have been supplied. Truly our Heavenly Father's hand is in the matter, for He knew our needs.”

Another: “On behalf of my dear wife and myself I write to say that we received your large and valuable parcel this evening. It would have done you and the kind friends good to have seen the joy of our children as, one after another, the articles were unfolded and displayed. Everything, to use my wife's words, was exactly what was wanted, and the things you sent for her have filled her with joy and thankfulness. The Master will record one more act done to His servants for His sake. We can only thank

you; He will commend and reward you for that which sprang from love to Him."

The following touching incident is from the pen of Mrs. Spurgeon. May "the afflicted, tost with tempest, and not comforted" reader find relief and rest while reading this sweet story of imprisoned music: —

A curious little incident happened lately during a time of prolonged sickness. At the close of a very dark and gloomy day, I lay resting on my couch as the deeper night drew on, and though all was bright within my cosy little room, some of the external darkness seemed to have entered into my soul and obscured its spiritual vision. Vainly I tried to see the Hand which I knew held mine, and guided my fog-enveloped feet along a steep and slippery path of suffering. In sorrow of heart I asked, "Why does my Lord thus deal with His child? Why does He so often send sharp and bitter pain to visit me? Why does He permit lingering weakness to hinder the sweet service I long to render to His poor servants?" These fretful questions were quickly answered, and though in a strange language, no interpreter was needed save the conscious whisper of my own heart. For a while silence reigned in the little room, broken only by the crackling of the oak-log burning on the hearth. Suddenly I heard a sweet, soft sound, a little clear, musical note, like the tender trill of a robin beneath my window. "What *can* that be?" I said to my companion, who was dozing in the firelight; "surely no bird can be singing out there at this time of the year and night." We listened, and again heard the faint, plaintive notes, so sweet, so melodious, yet mysterious enough to provoke for a moment our undisguised wonder. Presently my friend exclaimed, "It comes from the log on the fire!" and we soon ascertained that her surprised assertion was correct. *The fire was letting loose the imprisoned music from the old oak's inmost heart!* Perchance he had garnered up this song in the days when all went well with him, when birds twittered merrily on his branches, and the soft sunlight flecked his tender leaves with gold. But he had grown old since then, and hardened; ring after ring of knotty growth had sealed

up the long-forgotten melody, until the fierce tongues of the flames came to consume his callousness, and the vehement heat of the fire wrung from him at once, a song and a sacrifice. Ah, thought I, when the fire of affliction draws songs of praise from us, then indeed are we purified, and our God is glorified! Perhaps some of us are like this old oak log, cold, hard, and insensible; we should give forth no melodious sounds, were it not for the fire which kindles round us, and releases tender notes of trust in Him, and cheerful compliance with His will. "As I mused the fire burned," and my soul found sweet comfort in the parable so strangely set forth before me. Singing in the fire. Yes. God helping us, if that is the only way to get harmony out of these hard, apathetic hearts, let the furnace be heated seven times hotter than before.



CHARLES SPURGEON.

XXX.

CHARLES SPURGEON.

(ONE OF THE TWIN SONS OF PASTOR C. H. SPURGEON)

GOD, like a wise father, trains us prudently, and as we are able to bear it He makes our service and our suffering more and more arduous. As boys rejoice to be treated like men, so will we rejoice in our greater tribulations, for here is man's work for us, and by God's help we will not flinch from doing it. "Quit yourselves like men ; be strong." — C. H. SPURGEON.

CHARLES SPURGEON.

CHARLES SPURGEON, one of the twin sons of Pastor C. H. Spurgeon, was born in Nightingale Lane, Balham, near London, on Sept. 20, 1856.

He with his brother was educated at Camden House School, Brighton. Here he was noted as a cricketer, and one of the most active in every sport. He acquitted himself honorably in the scholastic department, and succeeded in obtaining some handsome prizes.

After a creditable course of study, school was quitted by the brothers in 1874. They returned to Balham, and prepared for the great business of life. Here their pathways, which had hitherto run from infancy in the same direction, began to diverge. Thomas adopted art as his profession, and attained some considerable proficiency in engraving; while Charles, whose perseverance was combined with a firm will, entered the office of a city shipping firm.

Charles Spurgeon's conversion took place under the following circumstances. He was out riding accompanied by a Christian friend, when their conversation turned into a religious channel. Rain came on, and they sought shelter under a tree. Dismounting, they both knelt down upon the grass, while his friend offered up a prayer. It was during this short season of communion that the glorious sunshine of truth broke in upon his young heart, and his warm affections and services were henceforth devoted to the Lord. This was the turning-point to which his religious and prayerful home-training had long been leading.

The cry raised from Macedonia, long ages past, "Come over and help us," was raised from a little mission in the densely populated neighborhood of Chatham Road, and reached Nightingale Lane, where it was readily responded to by the twin brothers.

They visited this place, and found that meetings were being held in the cottage of a gardener, who was somewhat at a loss to find speakers. Here they labored together, and soon the project of erecting a chapel was taken in hand by the two brothers. It was nearly completed, when ill-health compelled Mr. Thomas Spurgeon to sail for Australia.

Left to pursue this work alone, Mr. Charles Spurgeon felt the increase of labor it entailed. He was then in business, and besides the services on Sunday he held two, and often three, week-night meetings. At last the commodious and comfortable building now in use was finished, and duly opened by a sermon preached within its walls by his father. The labors of his son Charles were thus augmented. He had the sole care of this chapel; the only assistance he received being that rendered by a young friend in some minor affairs.

Although his father never sought to persuade him to become a preacher, doubtless it was an answer to many prayers breathed by the parents when Charles felt constrained to withdraw from commercial pursuits, to enter the Pastors' College, with a view to the ministry, in 1877.

Here, on account of his superior education, he speedily became one of the first scholars, adding to the Latin and Greek in which he was already proficient, Hebrew and general theological studies.

In the mean while it became evident that he was pre-eminently suited for a wider sphere of Gospel work than that of Chatham-road Chapel. The congregations could not be large in so small a chapel; and although he did not use long words or eloquent similes which were above the intellectual capacities of his hearers, yet his sermons were manifestly suited for a more educated class. Occasionally he had preached sermons in different parts of England, which were attended with great success, very many souls being converted. Among other places he visited were Cambridge, Oxford, Isle of Wight, and several of the large manufacturing towns.

In 1879 he received a call from the congregation at South Street, Greenwich. He had preached there once or twice, and at each service the commodious structure was crowded. The call was, after prayerful deliberation, accepted, and Mr. Charles Spurgeon entered upon his first pastorate there at the age of twenty-three.

The church to which he was called had relapsed into a lukewarm and indifferent state, the numbers being few and no pastor at its head. These difficulties Mr. Charles Spurgeon saw and grappled with. The battle against indifference was gained, and he has been greatly blessed by the Holy Spirit to the salvation of many souls in Greenwich. The building, which was almost empty, is now filled with nearly a thousand hearers. A debt of five thousand dollars which incumbered the chapel has been paid off, and the church rejoices in many tokens of spiritual prosperity. Pastor C. Spurgeon was married on April 11, 1881, to Miss S. A. Jacob, by his father. She is said to be a true co-worker with him in his service for the Master.

HOLY ARITHMETIC.

SERMON BY C. SPURGEON, PREACHED AT SOUTH STREET, GREENWICH.

(Abridged from shorthand notes.)

“Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.” — JUDE 2.

A TRINITY of blessings is often to be met with in God's Word. Here we have three choice gems, — mercy, peace, and love, — which seem to sparkle as we gaze upon them, and happy is the man who, while looking on them, can say, “They are mine.” It is God's happiness to crown all His people with goodness. For awhile, indeed, we may have to wear a crown of thorns, as our Master did; but even this shall be a glory to us. What is it you have on your brow now? Is it not a golden diadem wrought by a gracious Lord? It is as if God would weave a wreath for our heads out of

His mercy, and intertwine it with the lily of peace and adorn it with the rose of love. May this trio of blessings be given to each one of us, and be multiplied. God's gifts always come in company. He is God, and gives as a God. Man, indeed, has limited means, and so must be limited in his gifts; but God's blessings are unbounded, and they come in triplets to us. Mercy is accompanied with peace and love, and since God blesses His children thus, when we come to Him in prayer let us ask for a full supply of His favors. Jude would crave for a three-fold benediction to abide upon the saints of God. Do you say, "If we have mercy, that is enough?" No; there is more to be enjoyed, for peace and love are to follow. When we are speaking for others, let us be very bold. We may be somewhat backward when we seek blessings for ourselves, we are so sinful, and we know it; but when we ask for others, "large petitions let us bring" — for them let us seek mercy, peace, and love.

I want now to indulge in a little holy arithmetic. First there is a *sum in addition*, — "Mercy, and peace, and love." Add these together. Then there is a *sum in multiplication*, — "Mercy, and peace, and love, be multiplied; and then by way of application, a *sum in practice*.

I. In the first place we have a *sum in addition*. As Christians we must never be content with the measure of our grace. Do not be satisfied to remain dwarf trees, but seek to be growing higher and higher, and at the same time sending your roots deeper and deeper. Like giant palms, let our heads be lifted up to heaven, where the warm sunshine of divine love shall cherish growth, while our roots derive nourishment from the deep springs of secret grace. A sacred thirsting and hungering after celestial delicacies is what the Christian should at all times possess. We have sipped of the precious liquid only; let us take the cup salvation, which overflows, and drink it dry if we can. A crumb will not feed a famished soul; let us partake to the full of this heavenly bread. The first figure in this sum is "mercy," and it is a very high number indeed. It stands foremost, for it is the chief of God's dealings with us, whereby He pities us in our helplessness. We have already received much, but we are to add to it; for "He

hath not dealt with us after our sins," but favor has been shown to the undeserving, mercy to those who are full of sin. He has shown not only clemency in bestowing pardon, but His bountiful mercy, whereby He sufficiently supplies our wants, "even the sure mercies of David." So that whatever we need, let us seek the stream bearing on its tide blessings for our souls to-day. Pray for this to God, who is rich in mercy, and He will add mercy to mercy. The best way to complete this sum is by coming to the mercy-seat. Therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that you may obtain mercy. The Father of all mercies will hear and bless. We cry, "Have mercy upon us, according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies."

Then add to mercy "peace." What a glorious numeral is this! As soon as we gain pardon there must come peace. For what soul shall dwell ill at ease that feels its sins forgiven? It is iniquity that causes pain; when this is removed there is a holy health of soul. The peace of God rules in our hearts, and keeps them too. Now are we reconciled to God through the death of His dear Son; we are at peace with Him. The enmity of our hearts has been slain, and it is our delight to be in His company. We want to have more of this peace; how shall we gain it? Only by seeking to hold more communion with our God. If this fair flower is to grow within our hearts, the dew of heaven must fall upon it during the hours of calm fellowship with God. We must dwell in Him, and He in us. Then there will come also a peace with self. Having no longer the consciousness of guilt, but of satisfaction, being right with God, we are happy in ourselves, and peace pervades our spirits. The uprising of evil is quelled by the tranquillizing influence of a clear conscience, and so a holy peace abides within our hearts. Reign on, O powerful yet pacific Prince, and peace shall evermore crown us with prosperity! Have we got that peace with God? It is only by justification that we can obtain it. Through Jesus Christ, who is our peace, we enjoy this blessing. Shall we not add, then, to our heart's content? In Him are the springs of peace and love. Oh, that this peace may flow as a river within us!

Yet again, there is another figure to add, and it is "*love*."

Surely there is no more room. We are already full, now that we have the "mercy of God" and the "peace of God;" what more can we have? Add to all this the "love of God," a boon beyond all calculation, a prize of infinite value. Many have got a little of this treasure; would to God all had more. Love lies smouldering in our hearts. O Breath Divine, blow these sparks into burning fires! Grace changes all within us, for while we receive such mercy and enjoy such peace from the hands of our loving Lord, we feel we must love in return. "We love because we are loved," and this love is a habit wrought in us by God Himself, who is love. Do we hear the Master say, "Lovest thou Me?" We answer, "Lord, thou knowest that we love Thee;" and we might add more than Peter said, "We do not love Thee as we should, nor even as we would." The true mother would not have her child divided, neither would God have the hearts of His true children divided in their affections.

"Burn, burn, O Love, within my breast
 Burn fiercely night and day,
 Till all the dross of earthly loves
 Is burned and burned away."

Let the love of God be shed abroad in our hearts as the sunlight, gleaming through the painted window of a cathedral, sheds a beauty upon all, adorning yet not disarranging aught. So the love of God should shine in our hearts, making everything beautiful, our thoughts, our words, our actions all being lit up with His love. Now put these three together, — mercy, peace, love, — and what a grand total they make, — items in the grace of God for all to enjoy.

II. Now we come to our *sum in multiplication*. If I want to increase rapidly, let me have the multiplication table, and let it be by compound multiplication too. Multiply by that which has been itself multiplied. Mercy, and peace, and love, multiplied by mercy, and peace, and love, which have been multiplied. Is this a hard sum? God can help us to do it if we also help ourselves. The first thing that affords aid is *memory*. Think of the mercies of yesterday, put them down, then multiply them by the mercies of to-day, and so on and on, meditating upon the favors of years

past, and you will find by this mental exercise that the mercy you now enjoy will be multiplied. Let every mercy have a dot over it to show that it is a recurring one. And memory will refresh you concerning peace too. Remember when the heart was broken, and the spirit was tried with anguish, how Jesus spake to you in words of tender love and blessed comfort. After the thunder and the whirlwind there was the "still small voice" which whispered peace. The dashing billows bore upon their crested summits the all-powerful voice of a loving Saviour, who said, "It is I; be not afraid," and immediately there was a calm. Recollect the morning of bright joy which followed the nights of sadness. Love, too, must be remembered if it is to be multiplied. Review all the tokens received in the past, all the choice souvenirs. Take down that bundle of letters, and let Memory refresh herself by re-reading all the words of love written by a gracious God. Thus shall memory help us in our multiplication.

Another help we may have is *mutual intercourse*. As a boy at school runs to another older and wiser than himself when a sum is hard, and he needs help in doing it, so should Christians endeavor to find counsel and support from intercourse with their fellow-saints. A brother may tell you something you never knew before, for he has just received a mercy that you are wanting, and the way he obtained it may serve as a direction for you. Then get into the peaceful company of believers, and you will find your peace will be multiplied. Do not lie down with the lion, or you may learn to fight, but rest beside the lamb, and peace shall abound. Love also begets love, and in the fellowship of those who love the Lord you will derive much benefit and an increase to your love.

But the very best way is to go to the Master. If the sum is difficult, it may be well to take down the exercise-book and see the examples already worked out. Study God's Word, and see how mercy, and peace, and love have been multiplied to others: so shall you learn the way to have your own multiplied. If you cannot get on with this aid, go straight away to the Head-master. He is merciful, He is full of mercy, He is plenteous in mercy. Here, then, shall you find a way out of your difficulty. If you cannot multiply, He will do it for you. He is the Prince of Peace:

submit yourself to His gentle reign, and peace shall be yours. Dwell in the atmosphere of His love, and this grace shall be more and more in you. Thus, Teacher Divine, help Thy scholars to rise and make progress while here below, until it shall please Thee to call us home for the holidays, where our lessons shall be at an end; for then shall we enjoy the fulness of Thy mercy, the sweetness of Thy peace, and the bounties of Thy love.

III. Now a *sum in practice*, and a very short one too. Unto you who have been called, sanctified, and preserved, are these words of exhortation sent. *Be merciful*, for "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy;" *be peaceful*, for "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God;" *be loving*, for "Love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." Evermore may this trinity of blessings abide with us: the mercy of the Lord which is from everlasting to everlasting, the peace of God which passeth understanding, and the love of God which passeth knowledge, for His name's sake. Amen.

SACRED PENMANSHIP.

SERMON BY C. SPURGEON, PASTOR OF SOUTH-STREET CHAPEL, GREENWICH.

(Abridged from shorthand notes.)

"Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." — 2 COR. iii. 2, 3.

"SELF-PRAISE is no recommendation," and the "sounding of one's own trumpet" is not to be applauded. The apostle must show that he does not approve of such a method, and although he was in a position to boast of great attainments, yet he would not glory in himself. However, it fell to his lot to be charged with arrogance, and that which he most carefully avoided was brought against him as a crime. But are we not entitled as Christians to

somewhat of boasting? We have surely a glory of which we need not be ashamed. As "children of God" we possess an inheritance concerning which we may well be proud. To us are committed the "oracles of God," and we still hold to the "faith once delivered to the saints." Ours is not a vain glorying, for it is of God. I would that every Christian were preaching so as to be heard by all around, not in the pulpit, but in the home, a sermon in which he made the cross of Christ his glory, and the blood of Christ his boast. False teachers had entered into the Corinthian church, and they had found it necessary to have letters of recommendation, but Paul needed no such introduction. Truth and righteousness recommend themselves in the work they accomplish. "Good wine needs no bush," and those who are blessed beneath a faithful minister are his best letters of commendation. In sending forth the seventy our Lord did not give each a letter of introduction, but rather endowed each with power to do good, and their works and words were to stand them in stead thereof. Paul's converts were his epistles, as we call books the works of writers now, and these were put down as the apostle's seals to his ministry. Our translation admits of another rendering, namely, "Ye are our epistles written in *your* hearts," and this would imply that Paul had been enabled to pencil something in the hearts of others which could be read by all men; and it is with this idea I shall deal in speaking about sacred penmanship.

I. First, observe *the requisites for writing*. Figures are often used to set forth the Christian life, and none, I think, does so more clearly than that beneath our notice, "Ye are our *epistles*." We are likened to trees, for we need planting, nurturing, watering, and pruning before we can bear fruit; stones, for there has been the quarrying, setting, polishing, and building wrought upon us; lights, where trimming and sustaining is so much required to render us clear and bright; and now epistles, written so that all men may read us. The accessories must be provided, however, for a letter to be written, and let us briefly notice these, — pen, ink, and paper.

In the third verse we have the *pen*: "Forasmuch as ye are declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us." Here is

the instrument in the hand of God. The Church was divided, for one said, "I am of Paul;" another, "I am of Cephas." But these good men were only ministers by whom they had believed, — the pens whereby God, through His Spirit, had written upon the fleshy tables of their hearts. Among these instruments there must ever be a variety. The rough and rude can, however, be made to write well. Paul, though he was not eloquent of speech, but somewhat blunt, had power to get hold of men's hearts; and he wrote upon them with dark, indelible lines, great truths. But God has another pen. Apollos could speak with eloquence of diction, and finely pencil the Scripture, so that the Jews were mightily convinced that Jesus was the Christ. John was another such instrument. Soft in love, sketching in poetry the wonderful revelations he had of "the better land," he would win hearts for Jesus. Or yet again, see how Peter suits the bold, round-hand writing which God would have inscribed upon the hard tables of Jewish minds. He stands forth to declare the whole counsel of God before the Sanhedrim, the murderers of Christ, without fear. Luke, his friend, however, is the pen that the Spirit uses to write the small-hand of detail. Thus is it the Master uses varied tools to inscribe His own will upon men's hearts. O Lord, point us, if need be, with cutting, so that we may be pens in Thy hand to write upon others' hearts.

Then there must be the *ink*. The sacred fluid is the Spirit of God. "Written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God." The mysterious influence that flows through us is not of earthly manufacture. It is the pure Spirit of the living God; it never mars or discolors, but adds glory to the heart upon which it flows. Words penned by this agency shall not die, for the marks of grace are indelible, it being the Spirit of the *living* God. It is truly an invisible ink, but when held to the fire of divine love shall become apparent, and it can never fade; a non-corrosive fluid, and yet it eats its way into men's hearts. What we want is a greater measure of this sacred writing power. Pray that the Father may send the Spirit upon you more abundantly.

The next requisite is the *paper*. It is not written upon stone, but "in fleshy tables of the heart." The *law* may be pencilled

by God's finger upon stones, but His *love* must be written upon the tender heart. As Matthew Henry quaintly says: "Not upon the *fleshly*, but *fleshy* tables." That heart that God gives best receives God's writing. A soft heart best absorbs the ink; a living tablet best retains impressions. How is it with your heart, dear hearer? Has God ever written His name there? Lay bare the page, and let the Lord even now transcribe words of love and mercy upon it. Are you willing that it should be so? Then shall you know His willingness, for He says: "I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh." Lord, write first in us, and then make us as the "pen of the ready writer," to make our mark on others.

II. Now I want you to consider, secondly, *the readers of the writing*. "Known and read of all men." The writing is real, no fiction, for the author is Christ. We are the autograph letters of our Lord, and bear His signature. The writing is clear, for we are "*manifestly declared* to be the epistle of Christ." The handwriting is legible, not shaky with doubt; no forgery through unfaithfulness, but the whole plainly penned in all the up-and-down strokes. Now this document is a public one. Believers are the library for the world; they are a Christian literature. Each saint is a volume to expound the grace of God. "Known and read of all men." We may consider the readers of this writing to be of three classes, — the *intelligent*, *interested*, and *inquisitive*. Many are real students of Christian character, desirous of gaining knowledge for their own good in spiritual attainments. If you see a person take down a book in a library, you soon judge whether he has been accustomed to study by the way in which he handles the volume; and so there are those who carefully review every syllable of a Christian's life, and read each line for their own edification. How anxious should we be to help such students by our example, living near unto the great Exemplar.

Then there are the *interested* readers, — our friends who like to see if we make progress in divine things. The "first series" of Christian experiences are interesting, and are studied with deep anxiety by those who love young converts. The pastor reads to find out if such are increasing in the knowledge of God, growing

in grace, getting stronger in love, and taking a deeper and firmer hold of the doctrines of Christ. The parent reads the heart of the child, anxiously seeking to see how far Christ's character is spelled out in the child's life. The teacher reads the scholar's, the friend the acquaintance's, the master the servant's, and the servant the master's too. Let us seek to please such as take a loving interest in us, remembering that the Lord Himself is one of these readers; so may we strive to adorn His doctrine in all things.

The last class I have called the *inquisitive*. They only peruse to find fault. They look at the Christian character through smoky magnifying-glasses, and sometimes they turn the volume upside down, and then complain that it is all a big mistake, and they cannot make it out. They pick out that which the follower of Jesus knows full well to be a flaw himself, and then ask the question, "Is this like a Christian?" Beware, dear reader! Be careful, for men's eyes are always ready to detect a failing. Ours must be so correct an epistle that fault-finders shall find it difficult to gratify their morbid taste. The schoolmaster says to his boys, "Be sure you dot your i's and cross your t's;" and we, too, must be mindful of little things. If the Spirit of God has written upon our hearts, let us exhibit that epistle in our lives, so that we may be known and read of all men to the glory of our God. Amen.



THOMAS SPURGEON.

XXXI.

THOMAS SPURGEON.

(SON OF PASTOR C. H. SPURGEON.)

Two seeds lie before us: the one is warmed in the sun, the other falls from the sower's hand into the cold dark earth, and there it lies buried beneath the soil. That seed which suns itself in the noontide beam may rejoice in the light in which it basks, but it is liable to be devoured by the bird, and certainly nought can come of it, however long it may linger above ground. But the other seed, hidden beneath the clods in a damp, dark sepulchre, soon swells, germinates, bursts its sheath, upheaves the mould, springs up a green blade, buds, blossoms, becomes a flower, exhales perfume, and loads the wings of every wind. Better far for the seed to pass into the earth and die, than to lie in the sunshine and produce no fruit. And even thus for thee the future in its sorrow shall be as a sowing in a fertile land; tears shall moisten thee, grace shall increase within thee, and thou shalt grow up in the likeness of thy Lord unto perfection of holiness, to be such a flower of God's own planting as even angels shall delight to gaze upon in the day of thy transplanting to celestial soil. —
C. H. SPURGEON.

THOMAS SPURGEON.

THE name of Mr. Thomas Spurgeon has become widely known to readers of "The Sword and the Trowel." One of the twin sons of the famous preacher, he is developing an earnest manhood, enriched with study, experience, travel, and observation.

After serving some time to an engraver, he, like his brother Charles, decided to give his life to preaching the gospel. But his delicate health forbade his remaining in England. While yet quite young he sailed to Australia, and spent one year in evangelistic labors there. After his return to England it was decided that he must again turn his back on "home, sweet home," and sail once more from the damp climate of his native Isle for the Antipodes. During the past few years he has preached in many places in that wonderful country, as well as in New Zealand; and finally he decided to accept the pastorate of a Baptist church in Auckland, where his influence is already becoming widely felt.

Thomas Spurgeon has proved himself "a worthy son of a worthy sire," and the quaintness and humor of "John Ploughman" have found an echo in "Tom the Ploughboy." Although the following letter, giving vent to the gushing ardor of an affectionate son poured out unreservedly to an indulgent father, was private and personal, yet it was too choice a morsel to withhold from the public.

TO JOHN PLOUGHMAN,

MY DEAR FATHER,—I am so glad you have had your likeness taken with your smock on and the big whip in your hand. There are ever so many portraits of you in your Sunday go-to-meeting

suit; but this suits you best of all. I wish you could have got Dapper and Violet into the picture. All your friends in this part of the world are glad enough to hear the smack of your whip again. It cracks as many jokes as ever. We rejoice, too, that the sharp share is driven through the monster evil, drink, and its attendant vices. "God speed the plough," we pray, when it roots up such ill weeds.

There is any quantity of snakes in these colonies, and men either avoid or kill them; but this venomous viper they cherish and fondle till "at the last it biteth like a serpent, and stingeth like an adder." It puzzles me why those who know and admit the danger still risk it. "Once bit, twice shy," does n't hold good in such cases. They see the devil's hook, and yet grab at the bait, and drink like fish. Why, the very rooks in the trees might teach them a lesson. Let them but see a gun, and off they fly; indeed, conceal the weapon as you may, they spy it out somehow, and take to themselves wings, not waiting to hear the report, or give a chance; but these black birds "tarry long at the wine," and "go to seek mixed wine." They love to get within range of the Cannon Brewery or the Gunner's Arms, and are willing targets for a shower of *grape* shot any hour of the day or night. What wonder that their eyes become bloodshot, and that they themselves are "brought down" shattered and tattered and torn.

As to public-houses (hotels they call them here), they are as thick as gum-trees in the bush, and, though Australia is free from wild beasts, the Red Lion does a roaring trade. And the stuff the toppers swallow is, I hear, abominable, especially up in the bush, where folks are not expected to be over particular. If all the colonial beer and spirits were of the best quality, the harm would not be quite so great; but such mess as some of it evidently is must mean "death in the pot." The best of intoxicants to my mind is bad; what must the worst be? Would to God the cursed traffic could be checked; a host of crimes would then be stayed. Red rum spelled backward reads "murder;" gin, the dictionary says, is "a snare," and every-day facts prove it so to be. I feel sure that the "cold-water cure" is the only remedy. Moderation goes half-way, and therefore fails. Thank God, there are

thousands of abstainers amongst us, so we will do the best we can, God helping us, to stem the tide.

I hear readers of your second edition comparing your last furrows with your first. Of course the novelty of such Plain Talk is not so keen, but the pictures are deemed a great improvement. Old Humphrey likes pictures as well as little Harry, and these are first-raters too. You remember I did a little ploughing on box-wood once on a time, so I reckon myself a bit of a judge. Here's my opinion, if it's worth the having. Your illustrations seem just to fit the writing: they might have been drawn by your own horses, so handy are they to the plough, and the engravings might be *cuts* of your own whip.

Many a good laugh I've had over some of your quaint sayings and odd rhymes. They seem made to make one smile, and are more powerful than laughing-gas. This is the beauty of the book, to my mind. I like a mixture of pleasure and profit, and of wit with wisdom. Just a drop or two of sauce with the cold mutton is a grand improvement. The meat is good enough by itself, you know, but it slips down sweeter somehow with a dash of "relish." When will people learn the absurdity of fancying that, because we have faith, we must n't have any fun? I believe that holiness and humor can be yoked together, and pull finely too; and I can't bring myself to believe that it is impossible to love Jesus and have a laugh occasionally into the bargain. What would you have done, dear father, but for a natural merriment, sanctified by grace? It would be dreadful hard labor to be always ploughing without whistling a tune every now and then, and having a hearty laugh when we knock off, or even during work. The plough does n't go any better for being rusty, and the pilgrim is n't a whit fitter for heaven because he's crusty.

If I remember rightly, those two favored evangelists from America were both cheerful, happy men; but I often think it's a good plan if I feel Moody to sing Sankey, and let solemnity and song blend together. If I should feel a bit down at any time I mean to have another look at your pictures, and if the white egg of the black hen, or the fiddle without the stick, or the cart before the horse don't liven me up, — well, I must read some more. Here's

a receipt for melancholy which beats half the tonics and enliveners
"all to pieces."

If you 're down in the dumps or given to grumble,
If things go awry or all in a jumble,
If storms should grow thicker and thunder-clouds rumble,
And down the big drops like cats and dogs tumble,
It's surely no good to murmur and mumble,
Nor yet to commence to flurry and fumble.
Accept my advice, nor think it too humble
(I give it to all you good gloomy folks),
Invest in a volume of John Ploughman's jokes.

I am often asked if you are likely ever to come out here. Your horses say "neigh," and I feel obliged to return the same answer. How I wish you could, though! What rejoicing there would be, and how the people would flock to welcome you! I fancy I see even the kangaroos hopping down to town to hear some of your "plain talk." Will you ever plough the South Atlantic ocean, think you? We've got some good workers here, but we should all be the better for a look at your way of doing it, and a specimen of your straight furrow, just to guide us a bit.

You will be glad to hear we have got our new chapels up and opened. Our minister calls them tabernacles, after yours. Of course they're not quite so big. A good deal of rough ground has been broken up: now we can go in more readily for sowing and reaping a crop which is already appearing. I think of going to New Zealand shortly to turn up some ground that is new, at least to me.

I need not tell you that my thoughts often fly home. I have put my hand to a colonial plough, but, truth to tell, I constantly "look back," not from the work, but across the deep blue sea to "home, sweet home." "Every bird loves its own nest," and this "seagull" is no exception.

Give my love to dear mother. She has a work of her own, and a right good one too; I wish all were as well employed in the field. She does her plough share, and no mistake; the Master help her in it! Brother Charles still ploughs at Greenwich, I suppose. There's plenty of ground to work upon there. God bless

him. Remember me to Will Shepherd, and give Dapper and Violet an extra feed on my account.

I fear I've kept you too long reading this. It is something like stopping the plough to catch a mouse. I think it's time I gave over; so God be wi' ye, and fare thee well, dear father.

Your loving son,

TOM, THE PLOUGHBOY.

TASMANIA.

The ability, zeal, discrimination, and spirituality of Thomas Spurgeon are noticeable in the following series of articles from his pen. We also append a striking hymn, which is a sweet strain worthy of our best vocal powers.

“HE TOLD US NOTHING NEW.”

MANY a critic praises when he intends to censure. The man who uttered this complaint had not got what he expected, but the fault was with himself, in that he did not look for what it was the preacher's duty to supply. Blame from certain quarters is the highest commendation. The fly blamed the spider for spreading a web right in its way, and thus paid an unintentional compliment to the skilful fly-catcher. The nail chided the hammer for hitting it right on the head, and indirectly praised the stroke. The fish complained that the bait completely hid the hook, and this was one to the fisherman. Now if the fly and the nail and the fish had been able to congratulate one another on escape from web and stroke and hook, spider and carpenter and fisherman would not have shared the joy, but would have needed to look to their laurels and try again. This case is somewhat similar. From the son of a great preacher, this fault-finder expected to receive something not only startling in delivery, but novel as to matter.

A fellow-townsmen said to him the morning after the evangelistic service, “Were you hearing young Spurgeon last night, and what did you think of him?”

“Little enough,” he answered. “It was the same old stuff. He told us nothing new.” The reader must imagine the shrugged

shoulder and the disappointed look which accompanied this lamentation. Sorry as I may be for the poor man's disappointment, I cannot bring myself to murmur at his criticism. I gladly own the judgment just. There could be no credit to the preacher of the gospel if men who were by no means strangers to the truth exclaimed in rapturous delight, "It was all new to us; we never heard such things before!" Is it ours to be ever "telling some new thing," tickling the ears of Athenians, and finding food for speculation and superstition? I thought "the old, old story" was our theme, and none of your new-fangled notions and startling novelties.

What this malcontent expected, I am at a loss to know. The avowed object of the preacher was to proclaim the gospel, and the promise was fulfilled. He certainly had a gospel text: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners;" and if I remember rightly, the sermon stuck to the text, the tune was in the same key as the first note.

Had the platform been occupied by a conjurer whose programme promised a succession of "startling novelties" and "real surprises," the audience would have done right in grumbling if these were not forthcoming. An ordinary show of sleight of hand, simple card-tricks, and the like, would not satisfy a public whose appetite had been whetted by a magniloquent advertisement. Nothing short of decapitating an obliging attendant and afterwards restoring his headpiece, or the production of live turtle-doves from a magic frying-pan, could be reckoned a completion of the contract. If a lecturer or concert-company visited the township with songs or subjects said to be "entirely new," the folks might ask for their money back again (I do not say they would get it), if all they heard was on some local topic from the orator, "Nancy Lee," or "Home, sweet Home," from the songsters.

But in this particular case the speaker made no pretensions, charged no fee, made no promises. He could not be charged with "giving out that himself was some great one." He did not cause a trumpet to be sounded before him, nor did he blow his

own. Passing through the town, he consented to preach the gospel as best he could, and though weary with journeying, he spoke earnestly about the way "from death unto life." No bargain was broken, no promise forgotten.

I wonder what the grumbler looked for? Surely he could never have hoped I was a purveyor of such misty, mazy doctrines concerning the creation, Christ's atonement, and future punishment as some men teach. My very name might tell him differently; for though it does not always happen (would God it did!) that sons continue in their sire's holy faith, yet hope points that way, and disappointment generally arises in cases of departure rather than in instances of adherence. Did he expect me to introduce a new Saviour to the township, or to rear some ladder to the skies such as he had dreamed of or was wishing for? If so, I thank God that he was disappointed, for I have "determined not to know anything among men save Jesus Christ and Him crucified."

Gladly I leave others to preach such sermons as one I heard of lately, in which — so says a hearer — "the most comforting truth was the fact that traces of the human race have been discovered thousands of feet beneath the earth's surface." Possibly such a statement might be classed under the head of "some new thing;" but if the gospel is still to be had, we say "The old is better."

That "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," is the grandest news that earth can ever hear. It made even heaven rejoice, though our gain was its loss. Was it not to this glad tune that angels sang to shepherds on the Saviour's birth-night? Did not the eastern sages hail with joy the tidings that the God-sent star proclaimed? And this same news, older in point of time, but fresh and fragrant still, is what we preach; indeed, our news is better, for we can tell not only of our Redeemer's advent, but of His finished work, His complete sacrifice, and His ceaseless intercession. We speak not of the manger only, but of the cross, the grave, the throne.

Let them call this "the same old stuff," if they will. We take the liberty of wresting their words till the title, contemptuous though it seems to be, serves as a glorious motto. Let every pulpit provide "the same old stuff!" The loaves and fishes of

the gospel are better far than any of the dainty dishes the modern confectioners of the Church concoct. But let it not be thought that when we glory in the old gospel we admit it is not news. Paradoxical as it may seem, we hold that the charm of the old truth is its perennial freshness. It renews its youth "like the eagles." In some quarters, they tell us it is worn out and threadbare.

The correspondent of a New Zealand paper, when writing the other day from America, said that in that country the old-fashioned theology was "played out." This startling intelligence was followed by an insinuation, in language which I do not care to quote, that the departure of some from sound Scriptural views argues a general decay and failure of our holy faith. Because some remove the ancient landmarks, he would have it that all are on the eve of changing their minds, recanting their faith, and striking their colors. The wish, I presume, is father to the thought. Such writers — who, by the way, are far more at home when writing of some notable scandal or political sensation — would make us swallow their persuasion that our sires have been mistaken, and that we have shared their folly; that the faith for which martyrs blazed and heroes bled — the faith in which Christians lived trustingly and died triumphantly — is a delusion and a lie. They would have us fling overboard the treasure that has been to us both ballast and cargo so long; and what are they going to give us instead thereof? They would load us, like the silt boats, with mud and mire which they have dredged from their own imaginations, — "primordial slime," or some such stuff!

The fact is, that for those who are content to relinquish "the old, old story," there is every provision made in order to supply the vacuum. There is a charming variety of substitutes to select from. As saith the showman, "Whichever you please, my little dears; you pays your money and you takes your choice!" Here is a peep-hole, with a view of "final restoration." Another presents a scene in which certain learned divines, armed with hose, are playing jets of water on the flames of hell and putting them out (in the picture). Directions for looking through this hole are to the effect that you must keep one eye shut and not look out of

the other; for who but the blind can fail to see unquenchable fire even in Christ's teaching? Should you wish to change your views, you can be obliged with a glance through peep-holes labelled "Conditional Immortality," "Cleansing Fires," or "Annihilation." Dropping the figure, you can find some to assure you that you will die like a dog, *or an ass*, if such a doctrine pleases you; you can get a purgatory without going to Rome for it, and annihilation, or something very like it, from professing Christians.

Does some one remind me that these things are by no means new, — that these views have been held in some shape or form for years? I admit it; but are they not new, after all, in comparison with the gospel of the grace of God? Who knows when "the wondrous plan" was first contrived?

The Lamb, whose blood still cleanses us, was "slain from the foundation of the world." The first gospel sermon was preached as soon as Adam fell, when God the Father promised that the woman's seed should bruise the serpent's head. All else is new when we talk of God's love to rebel men: and yet, old as this gospel is, its power remains as fresh and forceful as ever. "Played out," indeed! What means the scribe? We may believe it when an angel tells us so, and God admits it. Is this penny-a-liner also among the prophets?

Just now God is telling us plainly, the world over, that His arm is not shortened that it cannot save; and what is His instrument but the tale of Calvary, the old-fashioned theology? Is the "faithful saying" no longer true and "worthy of all acceptance?" Has "the truth as it is in Jesus" had its day, like the crowd of short-lived dogmas which have barked against it? Has the fringe of Jesus' garment ceased to respond with "virtue" to the touch of faith?

When Christ uplifted fails to draw; when the fount, once opened for sin and all uncleanness, is "a spring shut up, a fountain sealed;" when Jesus gives up pleading and the Spirit ceases striving; when angels have no repenting sinners to sing about, we may look for a newer and a better gospel: then we may take up another sword and wear another badge; but

“Till then, — nor is our boasting vain, —
 Till then we ’ll preach a Saviour slain ;
 And oh, may this our glory be,
 The truth of Christ still makes men free.”

A word to those who read this paper, not having yet accepted for themselves the Christ we speak of. Dear friends, you have a reverence for the “old story” which my critic did not possess. Possibly you have got “so near to the kingdom” as to know that

“None but Jesus can do helpless sinners good.”

Still you have not made Jesus yours. Have you grown gospel-hardened? Have you built your nest so long in the belfry that the bells are scarcely heard? Are the terrible knells which speak of death and judgment, and the merry chime which calls to mercy, alike unheeded? Do not ask for a new gospel, — seek a new heart. God Himself cannot provide any other salvation than that which Christ has wrought. Is it too simple, too easy, too readily understood?

If these are the faults you find, be sure they cannot be altered, but you can and must be changed; for “except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.” God give you grace enough, and humility enough, to enable you to accept the simple truth, that you may not be “ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.”

“HE’S NOT A BIT LIKE A PARSON.”

SUCH was the remarkable encomium passed by a sick man on a Christian minister by whom he had been visited. Just as sparkling little nuggets of pure gold are found imbedded in the hard and rugged quartz, so in that rough-hewn sentence there nestles the sincerest praise, unmixed with the alloy of flattery which many a polished phrase contains.

Although as a matter of fact the author of this eulogium had

very little sympathy with religion and its professed promoters, I scarcely think he intended so wholesale a condemnation of "the cloth" as might be inferred from his curious criticism. It is just possible that the sick man had been visited by some ecclesiastic whose parsonic importance had irritated him. No lover of religion himself, he would not be too ready to cherish a liking for a professional religionist. Used to scoff and jeer at holy things when up and well, he did not relish parsonic visits during sickness. Perhaps it seemed like taking undue advantage of him. Anything of a priestly style would, of course, go against his grain. He would readily become suspicious, and, determined not to swallow any pious pills, he would not hesitate to make the visitor aware that his room was preferred to his company. The Christian minister who seeks to reach such a character as this needs wisdom that cometh from above. The door of such a heart seems closed to priests and parsons. Officialism may give as many impressive knocks as it pleases, with nothing but the echo of its own raps as response. The very sight of a white choker and a long black coat to such a man as this will, so to speak, make the snail pull in his horns and shrink into his shell, or, to use another metaphor, it lifts the drawbridge of the soul and makes it quite impregnable.

Sanctimoniousness, too, will work as much evil as starchiness. If the voice be twangy, or if the eyes roll after "dying-duck" and "thunder-storm" fashion, the sick scoffer is sure to notice it and to exaggerate it too. His eyes become magnifying-glasses, and his ears microphones. He sees rolling eyes without number, and hears cant phrases to any amount. He hates them all, and does not love the man who owns the rotating optics and speaks with what the scorner calls "the Bible twang." Should the parson begin to talk on some subject less grave and solemn, in the hope that he may find a back entrance or a side door by and by, he is no more successful. The visit is essentially parsonic. The patient is not strong enough to scoff or argue, and therefore wishes "his reverence" gone. And "his reverence" might as well go. Well meaning he may have been, but he went about a right action in a wrong way, and spoiled it all. Style and starch and stiffness are bad enough in the drawing-room and parlor; they are worse in the

pulpit; but worst of all beside a sick bed and with an unbeliever. If that scoffer is to be won for Jesus,—and during illness is a hopeful time,—the attempt must be made cautiously, considerately, and prayerfully.

Our non-parsonic brother visited him. Of course he was an entire stranger, for never had the invalid attended his services. The bar (not legal) was the sick man's particular shrine, and Bacchus his patron saint (?). It was a far better "spec" to his mind to spend his threepennies on beer than to put them into the collection-plate. He used to chaff his neighbors as they went to meeting, and asked if they were "going to give another threepenny." Being a good-humored fellow, he would seldom do more than banter Christians about their faith; but his enmity to religion was by no means concealed by his jokes and jeers. A life of evil proclaimed aloud the deep-seated hatred in his heart to holiness and God.

What will he say to our dissenting friend, who sports no snowy choker, and whose coat and hat are neither longer in the tail nor broader in the brim than those worn by ordinary folks? He will look in vain for a priestly or professional style with this visitor, who enters in a free and homely way, shakes hands heartily yet tenderly, and storms the castle by the very first cannonade of kindness and fraternity. We are not permitted to know all that was said and done, but we learn afterwards that the sick man remarked to a friend of his, "What a nice fellow Mr. —— is. He came to see me just now, and talked and prayed with me. I did n't want to let him go. I never knew any one speak so kindly to me; quite brotherly he was, and *not a bit like a parson!*"

Well done, thou man of God! The common people hear thee gladly, so thou hast somewhat of thy Master's manner with thee. What though no holy (?) hands have blessed thy head, and thou art not recognized a member of the line that comes direct from Paul and Peter, thy heart has been touched by a Saviour's pierced hand, and apostolic success is more to be desired than apostolic succession.

My readers will not be surprised to learn that this visit was not the last, and that each succeeding one was doubly welcome. They will rejoice to hear that the sick man was restored, and that, best of

all, "the plague of his heart" was cured. Of course he worshipped in the plain-built tabernacle, and heard the non-parsonic preacher; and never did I see a more attentive listener, nor ever catch a face amongst the auditors more helpful and inspiring to the preacher. Of course Bacchus did not profit by this change, and his priests were greatly angered. Of course the collection-plate was the richer by considerably more than a threepenny-piece, and the quondam scoffer counted it an honor to be ridiculed for Jesus' sake.

What was it brought this man round, and turned the current of his life? "The grace and power of God," says one. Truly; nothing else could accomplish it. But what was instrumental? "The sickness," say you. Yes, in part; but the directest influence was the kindly manner and Christ-like conversation of his visitor; and being "not a bit like a parson," had not a little to do with snatching the brand from the burning. Oh, for a heart to feel for other hearts, and beat in unison with them! The channel to the souls of men is intricate indeed; we need a heavenly pilot to teach us how to steer. Above all things, we must avoid a patronizing, condescending style when visiting the poor and sick. It is possible to descend without seeming to do so, and to rise again as imperceptibly. Christ-like humility is quite compatible with Christian dignity. We should do gracious actions with a good grace, or the acts are spoiled. The choicest viands should be nicely served. Some give their alms as they would throw buns to the bears at the Zoo, more for the pleasure of seeing them feed than anything else. Lady Superior leaves some food and money with the poor cottagers, who, needy as they are, sadly miss the kind words which should have accompanied the gift. How much sweeter the provisions would have tasted had the bread been buttered with a smile, and the basket lined with Christian love. Thank God, there are some parsons, and parsons' wives too, who are veritable angels of mercy. Like nightingales, they fly into the solitary shades, and 'midst the gloom of woe and poverty pour out the melody of gracious words and holy deeds. But wherein lies the secret of their success? Is it so much in what they say and do and give, as in how it is said and done and given? Apples

of gold are all the better for being in pictures of silver, and "a word spoken in due season, how good is it!" We should go to the poor and suffering, remembering that a kind providence alone has made us to differ, earnestly desiring their spiritual welfare, and acting and speaking as humbly and naturally as possible. And when we come to pray with such, we need especial grace, lest it should be a matter of mere routine or course.

I heard of a parson lately who visited a poor man supposed to be dying. While this spiritual adviser was with the invalid, his wife intimated her intention of slipping off to the neighboring township to buy some candles. The evening drew on apace,—indeed it was getting dark when the interview began. After a little very ordinary conversation, the "clerk in holy orders" proceeded to say "Farewell," and added, as he took the wasted hand of his parishioner, "I would have prayed with you, my friend, but your wife is such a time fetching the candles, and I cannot wait." Would you believe it? His precious book of prayers was absolutely necessary; it was too dark to read, and therefore devotion was impossible! Thanks be to the darkness then, and blest be the evening shade that put their veto on such absurd formality, and spared the dying man the mockery of being prayed for from a book.

Heartly prayer is the only sort that can be acceptable at such a time, either to the sufferer for whom it is offered, or to the Prayer-Hearer to whom it is presented. "Lord, teach us how to pray," especially when we kneel beside the couch of the dying, or in the houses of the poor! As a relieving contrast to so sad a case, I cannot refrain from telling of how another colonial parson went about doing good. The story runs that he was stopped by a gentleman in blue at dead of night while in the act of carrying a great roll of blankets down the street. When challenged by the officer, he simply said, "It's all right," and attempted to proceed. "No," said Robert, "you don't get over me so easy as all that." And not until the lantern light flashed on the supposed robber's face, and revealed the countenance of a well-known ecclesiastical dignitary, was the watchman of the night content to let the blanket-bearer "move on."

During the day this reverend gentleman had found out a necessitous case, and promised covering and clothing; but, what with other calls and business, he had forgotten his morning promise. But when he himself retired to rest, and gladly wrapped himself in thick, warm coverlets (for the night was cold), he bethought him of the needy ones, and, regardless of his own comfort, hurried out into the keen night air to perform his labor of love. No wonder such a man is honored and beloved, although, if we may judge from this incident, "he's not a bit like a parson." Cannot we "go and do likewise?" We are all priests and ministers if we are God's children; and since it appears that a professional style and clergy cut are not helpful in winning the ears and hearts of men, may not the humblest and lowliest look the more confidently for success in telling of the Saviour's love to the poor and needy?

As for those Christians who are supposed to occupy a higher position in society, the religion of Jesus has done but little for them if it does not make them remember that "the rich and poor meet together: the Lord is the maker of them all."

Christ's example and teaching both tell us that the art of reaching men is to be men. We can do angels' work without soaring aloft on angels' wings and looking down on everybody else. We must stoop to conquer,—indeed, no action done for Jesus involves a stoop. "He that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

"Lord, for ever at Thy side
 May my place, my portion be;
 Strip me of the robe of pride,
 Clothe me with humility."

"JESUS FOR ME!"

THE old man was very deaf, so he sat close to the edge of the platform. During service he appeared happy and interested, so I asked him, when all was over, how he heard this time. Said he, "I got on better to-day"; and he seemed so glad that I half hoped he had heard most of the sermon. "Well, how much of it

did you manage to catch?" I asked. He replied, "Only three words, but they were good ones, — 'Jesus for me!'" This incident has suggested the following lines: —

A floweret bloomed in valley land,
 It drank soft dews by night,
 The summer zephyr wafted it,
 But still it pined for light.
 It said (you could not hear, but see),
 With scent-cup drooping helplessly,
 "Sunshine for me! Sunshine for me!"

O Jesus! light of earth and heaven!
 Shine on my darkened soul;
 Rise on me, with Thy healing wings
 Restore and make me whole:
 The balm of Gilead is in *Thee*,
 Go — creature aid and sympathy.
 Jesus for me! Jesus for me!

A helpless, broken, bleating lamb
 Lay in the deep ravine,
 And blood-spots marked the dangerous way
 The wanderer had been:
 It said — with every wound a plea —
 "Have pity on my misery,
 The fold for me, the fold for me."

O Jesus! Bishop of my soul!
 I'm weary, wandering, cold;
 Come 'cross the hills to bear me back;
 Replace me in Thy fold:
 My soul restore, my Shepherd be.
 Who is a pardoning God like *Thee*?
 Jesus for me! Jesus for me!

A sea-bird circled round the ship,
 Then lighted on a spar;
 One tried to make it prisoner, —
 It swiftly flew afar,
 And screamed, in flying, "Wings are free,
 For sea-fowls must have liberty.
 Ocean for me! Ocean for me!"

O Jesus! Blest Deliverer!
 Since Thou hast burst my bands,
 My faith-winged heart cannot be held
 By any sinful hands:
 If free indeed, I 'll evil flee,
 Thy boundless love shall be my sea.
 Jesus for me! Jesus for me!

A spark flew upward from the fire,
 Seeking the sun's bright glow;
 The parent claimed its tiny child,
 And it rejoiced to go:
 And said in tones of sparkling glee,
 As up it sped obediently,
 "The sun for me! The sun for me!"

O Jesus! Sun of righteousness!
 May I not rise as well?
 May I not live and move in Thee?
 May I not with Thee dwell?
 I love, for Thou hast loved me:
 The spark of love flies back to Thee.
 Jesus for me! Jesus for me!

A matron hasteth back to home,
 The villagers all greet;
 They bring her tokens of their love,
 And waken music sweet;
 Yet satisfied she cannot be:
 "My lord," she says, "I long to see;
 My spouse for me, my spouse for me."

O Jesus! Husband! Once in heaven,
 Nor harps nor crowns afford
 One half the joy this hope can bring,—
 "For ever with the Lord."
 "Amen!" say I, "so let it be,
 In time and through eternity.
 Jesus for me! Jesus for me!"

THE HOLY GHOST IS HERE.

THE Holy Ghost is here,
Where saints in prayer agree ;
As Jesu's parting gift, He 's near
Each pleading company.

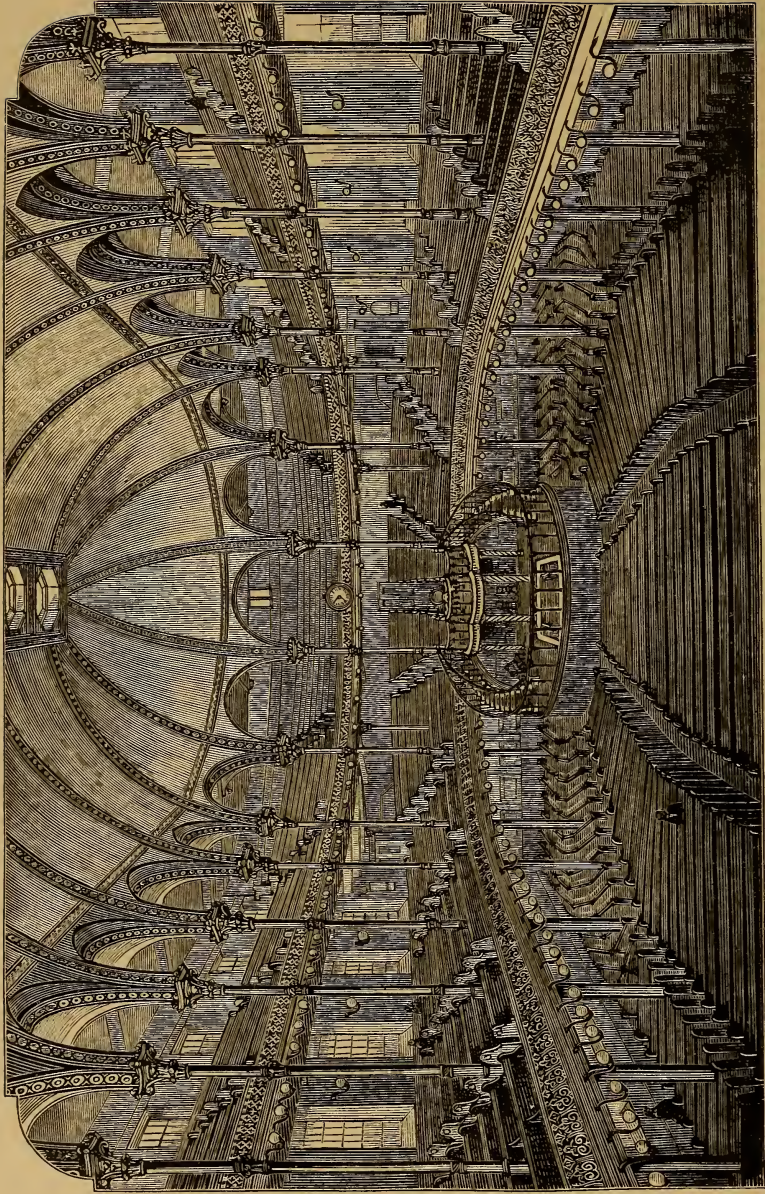
Not far away is He,
To be by prayer brought nigh,
But here in present majesty,
As in His courts on high.

He dwells within our soul,
An ever-welcome Guest ;
He reigns with absolute control
As Monarch in the breast.

Our bodies are His shrine,
And He th' indwelling Lord.
All hail, thou Comforter divine,
Be evermore adored !

Obedient to Thy will,
We wait to feel Thy power !
O Lord of life, our hopes fulfil,
And bless this hallowed hour !

C. H. SPURGEON.



INTERIOR VIEW OF THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE.

XXXII.

SERMONS.

As to serving the Lord with cold hearts and drowsy souls, there has been too much of it; and it causes religion to wither. Men ride stags when they hunt for gain, and snails when they are on the road to heaven. Preachers go on seesawing, droning, and prosing, and the people fall to yawning and folding their arms, and then say that God is withholding His blessing. Every sluggard, when he finds himself enlisted in the ragged regiment, blames his luck, and some churches have learned the same wicked trick. I believe that when Paul plants and Apollos waters, God gives the increase; and I have no patience with those who throw the blame on God, when it belongs to themselves.—
C. H. SPURGEON.

SERMONS.

OUR book would be incomplete without a selection from the sermons of Mr. Spurgeon. But here we confess to a difficulty; our heart would prompt their publication wholesale, but our limited pages can carry only little of this precious freight. The literary merit which Mr. Spurgeon's sermons possess is a minor consideration. Their strong and pure doctrine, scriptural teaching, earnest, loving persuasion, exaltation of Jesus as Lord, and clear gospel exposition render them priceless to the appreciative hearer and reader.

But though we cannot here reproduce their golden sound, we are consoled with the reflection that nearly two thousand published discourses, lectures, and addresses of this indefatigable preacher may be had through the publishing and importing houses of the country.

And here we would remark, that it augurs well for our faith that an enterprising house is now publishing, with Pastor Spurgeon's approval, his grand commentary on the Psalms, "The Treasury of David,"¹ the greatest literary effort of his life. In justice to this splendid and much-needed work, of several volumes, we would not mar its value by extracts, which would necessarily be brief and unsatisfactory.

The two following sermons were preached by Mr. Spurgeon in his twenty-first year to immense congregations in Exeter Hall. Since that date many have departed "from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils;" philosophizing teachers have arisen who in the name of charity cry smooth

¹ Funk & Wagnalls, New York. \$2.00 per volume.

things, and very *uncharitably* give away what is not their own, namely, the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures and the absolute Deity of Jesus Christ. But our sturdy preacher has not drifted with the age. To-day he preaches the Living Oracles with added strength and ripened experience. Style and language may have undergone modifications, but his charming voice still rings with no uncertain sound, and his sermons are ever saturated with Bible teaching. His testimony is a constant protest against the insipid rationalizing of apostate preachers. Thank God, many are with him who reverence the Bible and hold to "the faith once delivered to the saints." Such will win in the end; for when the flattery of fools shall melt away, and compromising ministers who bend to the times like a nose of wax shall receive the due rewards of their deeds, these true witnesses for God shall abide in the favor of their Lord. And who can number the many timid disciples whose hearts have been stirred and whose faith has been emboldened by the precious example of England's faithful preacher? To the matchless grace of God let it be ascribed that many arise and call him blessed.

THE BIBLE.

A SERMON, DELIVERED ON MARCH 18, 1855, BY PASTOR C. H. SPURGEON.

"I have written to him the great things of My law, but they were counted as a strange thing." — HOSEA viii. 12.

THIS is God's complaint against Ephraim. It is no mean proof of His goodness that He stoops to rebuke His erring creatures; it is a great argument of His gracious disposition that He bows His head to notice terrestrial affairs. He might, if He pleased, wrap Himself with night as with a garment; He might put the stars around His wrist for bracelets, and bind the suns around His brow for a coronet; He might dwell alone, far, far above this world, up in the seventh heaven, and look down with calm and silent indifference upon all the doings of His creatures; He might do as the heathens supposed their Jove did, sit in perpetual silence, sometimes nodding his awful head to make the Fates move as he

pleased, but never taking thought of the little things of earth, disposing of them as beneath his notice, engrossed within his own being, swallowed up within himself, living alone and retired; and I, as one of his creatures, might stand by night upon a mountain top, and look upon the silent stars, and say, "Ye are the eyes of God, but ye look not down on me; your light is the gift of His omnipotence, but your rays are not smiles of love to me. God, the mighty Creator, has forgotten me; I am a despicable drop in the ocean of creation, a sere leaf in the forest of beings, an atom in the mountain of existence. He knows me not; I am alone, alone, alone." But it is not so, beloved. Our God is of another order. He notices every one of us. There is not a sparrow or a worm but is found in His decrees. There is not a person upon whom His eye is not fixed. Our most secret acts are known to Him. Whatsoever we do or bear or suffer, the eye of God still rests upon us, and we are beneath His smile—for we are His people; or beneath His frown—for we have erred from Him.

Oh, how ten-thousand-fold merciful is God, that, looking down upon the race of man, He does not smite it out of existence. We see from our text that God looks upon man, for He says of Ephraim, "I have written to him the great things of My law, but they were counted as a strange thing." But see how when He observes the sin of man, He does not dash him away and spurn him with His foot; He does not shake him by the neck over the gulf of hell, until his brain doth reel, and then drop him for ever, but rather He comes down from heaven to plead with His creatures; He argues with them; He puts Himself, as it were, upon a level with the sinner, states His grievances, and pleads His claim. O Ephraim, I have written unto thee the great things of My law, but they have been unto thee as a strange thing! I come here to-night in God's stead, my friends, to plead with you as God's ambassador, to charge many of you with a sin; to lay it to your hearts by the power of the Spirit, so that you may be convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of a judgment to come. The crime I charge you with is the sin of the text. God has written to you the great things of His law, but they have been unto you as a strange thing. It is concerning this blessed book,

the Bible, that I mean to speak to-night. Here lies my text,—this Word of God. Here is the theme of my discourse,—a theme which demands more eloquence than I possess; a subject upon which a thousand orators might speak at once; a mighty, vast, incomprehensive theme, which might engross all eloquence throughout eternity, and still it would remain unexhausted.

Concerning the Bible I have three things to say to-night, and they are all in my text: first, its author, “*I have written* ;” secondly, its subjects,—the great things of God’s law; and thirdly, its common treatment,—it has been accounted by most men a strange thing.

I. First, then, concerning this book, who is the author? The text says that it is God. “*I have written to him the great things of My law.*” Here lies my Bible—who wrote it? I open it, and I find it consists of a series of tracts. The first five tracts were written by a man called Moses. I turn on and I find others. Sometimes I see David is the penman, at other times, Solomon. Here I read Micah, then Amos, then Hosea. As I turn further on, to the more luminous pages of the New Testament, I see Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, Paul, Peter, James, and others; but when I shut up the book, I ask myself who is the author of it? Do these men jointly claim the authorship? Are they the compositors of this massive volume? Do they between themselves divide the honor? Our holy religion answers, “No!” This volume is the writing of the living God; each letter was penned with an Almighty finger; each word in it dropped from the Everlasting lips, each sentence was dictated by the Holy Spirit. Albeit, that Moses was employed to write his histories with his fiery pen, God guided that pen. It may be that David touched his harp and let sweet psalms of melody drop from his fingers, but God moved his hands over the living strings of his golden harp. It may be that Solomon sang canticles of love, or gave forth words of consummate wisdom, but God directed his lips, and made the preacher eloquent. If I follow the thundering Nahum when his horses plough the waters, or Habbakuk when he sees the tents of Cushan in affliction; if I read Malachi, when the earth is burning like an oven; if I turn to the smooth page of

John, who tells of love, or the rugged, fiery chapters of Peter, who speaks of the fire devouring God's enemies; if I turn to Jude, who launches forth anathemas upon the foes of God,—everywhere I find God speaking: it is God's voice, not man's; the words are God's words, the words of the Eternal, the Invisible, the Almighty, the Jehovah of this earth. This Bible is God's Bible; and when I see it I seem to hear a voice springing up from it, saying, "I am the book of God: man, read me. I am God's writing: open my leaf, for I was penned by God; read it, for He is my author, and you will see Him visible and manifest everywhere." "I have written to him the great things of My law."

How do you know that God wrote the book? That is just what I shall not try to prove to you. I could, if I pleased, to a demonstration, for there are arguments enough, there are reasons enough, did I care to occupy your time to-night in bringing them before you; but I shall do no such thing. I might tell you, if I pleased, that the grandeur of the style is above that of any mortal writing, and that all the poets who have ever existed could not, with all their works united, give us such sublime poetry and such mighty language as is to be found in the Scriptures. I might insist upon it that the subjects of which it treats are beyond the human intellect; that man could never have invented the grand doctrines of a Trinity in the Godhead; man could not have told us anything of the creation of the universe; he could never have been the author of the majestic idea of Providence, that all things are ordered according to the will of one great Supreme Being, and work together for good. I might enlarge upon its honesty, since it tells the faults of its writers; its unity, since it never belies itself; its master simplicity, that he who runs may read it; and I might mention a hundred more things, which would all prove to a demonstration that the book is of God. But I come not here to prove it. I am a Christian minister, and you are Christians, or profess to be so; and there is never any necessity for Christian ministers to make a point of bringing forth infidel arguments in order to answer them. It is the greatest folly in the world. Infidels, poor creatures, do not know their own arguments till we tell them, and then they glean their blunted shafts to shoot

them at the shield of truth again. It is folly to bring forward these firebrands of hell, even if we are well prepared to quench them. Let men of the world learn error of themselves; do not let us be propagators of their falsehoods. True, there are some preachers who are short of stock, and want them to fill up! But God's own chosen men need not do that; they are taught of God, and God supplies them with matter, with language, and with power. There may be some one here to-night who has come without faith, a man of reason, a free-thinker. With him I have no argument at all. I profess not to stand here as a controversialist, but as a preacher of things that I know and feel. But I too have been like him. There was an evil hour when once I slipped the anchor of my faith; I cut the cable of my belief; I no longer moored myself hard by the coasts of revelation; I allowed my vessel to drift before the wind; I said to Reason, "Be thou my captain;" I said to my own brain, "Be thou my rudder;" and I started on my mad voyage. Thank God it is all over now; but I will tell you its brief history. It was one hurried sailing over the tempestuous ocean of free-thought. I went on, and as I went the skies began to darken; but to make up for that deficiency, the waters were brilliant with coruscations of brilliancy. I saw sparks flying upwards that pleased me, and I thought, "If this be free-thought, it is a happy thing." My thoughts seemed gems, and I scattered stars with both my hands. But anon, instead of these coruscations of glory, I saw grim fiends, fierce and horrible, start up from the waters, and as I dashed on they gnashed their teeth and grinned upon me; they seized the prow of my ship, and dragged me on, while I, in part, gloried at the rapidity of my motion, but yet shuddered at the terrific rate with which I passed the old landmarks of my faith. As I hurried forward with an awful speed, I began to doubt my very existence; I doubted if there were a world, I doubted if there were such a thing as myself. I went to the very verge of the dreary realms of unbelief. I went to the very bottom of the sea of infidelity. I doubted everything. But here the Devil foiled himself; for the very extravagance of the doubt proved its absurdity. Just when I saw the bottom of that sea, there came a voice which said, "And can this doubt be true?"

At this very thought I awoke. I started from that death-dream, which God knows might have damned my soul and ruined this my body, if I had not awoke. When I arose Faith took the helm; from that moment I doubted not. Faith steered me back; Faith cried, "Away, away!" I cast my anchor on Calvary; I lifted my eye to God; and here I am, alive and out of hell. Therefore I speak what I do know. I have sailed that perilous voyage; I have come safe to land. Ask me again to be an infidel! No; I have tried it; it was sweet at first, but bitter afterwards. Now, lashed to God's gospel more firmly than ever, standing as on a rock of adamant, I defy the arguments of Hell to move me, for "I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him." But I shall neither plead nor argue this night. You profess to be Christian men, or else you would not be here. Your profession may be lies; what you *say* you are, may be the very contrary to what you *really* are; but still I suppose you all admit that this is the Word of God. A thought or two then upon it. "I have written to him the great things of My law."

First, my friends, stand over this volume and *admire its authority*. This is no common book. It is not the sayings of the sages of Greece; here are not the utterances of philosophers of past ages. If these words were written by man, we might reject them; but oh, let me think the solemn thought—that this book is God's handwriting, that these words are God's. Let me look at its date: it is dated from the hills of heaven. Let me look at its letters: they flash glory on my eye. Let me read the chapters: they are big with meaning and mysteries unknown. Let me turn over the prophecies: they are pregnant with unthought-of wonders. Oh, Book of books! And wast thou written by my God? Then will I bow before thee. Thou Book of vast authority, thou art a proclamation from the Emperor of Heaven: far be it from me to exercise my reason in contradicting thee. Reason! thy place is to stand and find out what this volume means, not to tell what this book ought to say. Come thou, my reason, my intellect, sit thou down and listen, for these words are the words of God. I do not know how to enlarge on this thought. Oh, if you could ever

remember that this Bible was actually and really written by God! Oh, if ye had been let into the secret chambers of heaven, if ye had beheld God grasping His pen and writing down these letters, then surely ye would respect them. But they are just as much God's handwriting as if you had seen God write them. This Bible is a book of authority; it is an authorized book, for God has written it. Oh, tremble, tremble, lest any of you despise it! Mark its authority, for it is the Word of God.

Then, since God wrote it, mark *its truthfulness*. If I had written it, there would be worms of critics who would at once swarm on it, and would cover it with their evil spawn; had I written it, there would be men who would pull it to pieces at once, and perhaps quite right too. But this is the Word of God. Come, search, ye critics, and find a flaw; examine it from its Genesis to its Revelation, and find an error. This is a vein of pure gold, unalloyed by quartz or any earthy substance. This is a star without a speck; a sun without a blot; a light without darkness; a moon without its paleness; a glory without a dimness. O Bible! it cannot be said of any other book, that it is perfect and pure; but of thee we can declare all wisdom is gathered up in thee, without a particle of folly. This is the judge that ends the strife where wit and reason fail. This is the book untainted by any error, but is pure, unalloyed, perfect truth. Why? Because God wrote it. Ah! charge God with error if ye please; tell Him that His book is not what it ought to be. I have heard men, with prudish and mock modesty, who would like to alter the Bible; and (I almost blush to say it) I have heard ministers alter God's Bible, because they were afraid of it. Have you never heard a man say, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not," — What does the Bible say? — "shall be *damned*." But that does not happen to be polite enough, so they say, "shall be *condemned*." Gentlemen, pull the velvet out of your mouths; speak God's Word; we want none of your alterations. I have heard men in prayer, instead of saying, "Make your calling and *election* sure," say, "Make your calling and *salvation* sure." Pity they were not born when God lived, far, — far back, that they might have taught God how to write. Oh, impudence beyond all bounds! Oh, full-blown self-

conceit! To attempt to dictate to the All-wise, — to teach the Omniscient and instruct the Eternal! Strange that there should be men so vile as to use the penknife of Jehoiakim, to cut passages of the Word because they are unpalatable. Oh, ye who dislike certain portions of the Holy Writ, rest assured that your taste is corrupt, and that God will not stay for your little opinion. Your dislike is the very reason why God wrote it, because you ought not to be suited; you have no right to be pleased. God wrote what you do not like; He wrote the truth. Oh, let us bend in reverence before it, for God inspired it. It is pure truth. Here from this fountain gushes *aqua vitæ*, — “the water of life,” without a single particle of earth; here from this sun there cometh forth rays of radiance, without the mixture of darkness. Blessed Bible, thou art all truth!

Yet once more, before we leave this point let us stop and consider *the merciful nature of God* in having written us a Bible at all. Ah, He might have left us without it, to grope our dark way, as blind men seek the wall; He might have suffered us to wander on with the star of reason as our only guide. I recollect a story of Mr. Hume, who so constantly affirmed that the light of reason is abundantly sufficient. Being at a good minister's house one evening, he had been discussing the question, and declaring his firm belief in the sufficiency of the light of nature. On leaving, the minister offered to hold him a candle, to light him down the steps. He said, “No, the light of nature would be enough; the moon would do.” It so happened that the moon was covered with a cloud, and he fell down the steps. “Ah,” said the minister, “you had better have had a little light from above, after all, Mr. Hume.” So, supposing the light of nature to be sufficient, we had better have a little light from above too, and then we shall be sure to be right. Better have two lights than only one. The light of creation is a bright light. God may be seen in the stars; His name is written in gilt letters on the brow of night; you may discover His glory in the ocean waves, yea, in the trees of the field. But it is better to read it in two books than in one. You will find it here more clearly revealed, for He has written this book Himself, and He has given you the key to understand it, if you have the Holy

Spirit. Ah, beloved, let us thank God for this Bible; let us love it; let us count it more precious than much fine gold.

But let me say one thing before I pass on to the second point; If this be the Word of God, what will become of some of you who have not read it for the last month? "Month, sir! I have not read it for this year." Ay, there are some of you who have not read it at all. Most people treat the Bible very politely. They have a small pocket volume, neatly bound; they put a white pocket-handkerchief around it, and carry it to their places of worship; when they get home, they lay it up in a drawer till next Sunday morning; then it comes out again for a little bit of a treat and goes to chapel; that is all the poor Bible gets in the way of an airing. That is your style of entertaining this heavenly messenger. There is dust enough on some of your Bibles to write "damnation" with your fingers. There are some of you who have not turned over your Bibles for a long, long, long while, and what think you? I tell you blunt words, but true words. What will God say at last? When you shall come before Him, He shall say: "Did you read My Bible?" "No." "I wrote you a letter of mercy; did you read it?" "No." "Rebel! I have sent thee a letter inviting thee to Me; didst thou ever read it?" "Lord, I never broke the seal; I kept it shut up." "Wretch!" says God, "then thou deservest hell, if I sent thee a loving epistle and thou wouldst not even break the seal: what shall I do unto thee?" Oh, let it not be so with you! Be Bible readers; be Bible searchers.

II. Our second point is, *the subjects on which the Bible treats*. The words of the text are these: "I have written to him the great things of My law." The Bible treats of great things, and of great things only. There is nothing in this Bible which is unimportant. Every verse in it has a solemn meaning, and if we have not found it out yet, we hope yet to do it. You have seen mummies wrapped round and round with folds of linen. Well, God's Bible is like that; it is a vast roll of white linen, woven in the loom of truth. So you will have to continue unwinding it, roll after roll, before you get the real meaning of it from the very depth; and when you have found, as you think, a part of the meaning, you will still need to keep on unwinding, unwinding, and all eternity you will

be unwinding the words of this wondrous volume. Yet there is nothing in the Bible but great things. Let me divide, so as to be more brief. First, all things in this Bible are great; but, secondly, some things are the greatest of all.

All things in the Bible are great. Some people think it does not matter what doctrines you believe; that it is immaterial what church you attend; that all denominations are alike. Well, I dislike Mrs. Bigotry above almost all people in the world, and I never give her any compliment or praise. But there is another woman I hate equally as much, and that is Mrs. Latitudinarianism, a well-known character, who has made the discovery that all of us are alike. Now, I believe that a man may be saved in any church. Some have been saved in the Church of Rome,—a few blessed men, whose names I could mention here. I know, blessed be God! that multitudes are saved in the Church of England: she has a host of pious, praying men in her midst. I think that all sections of Protestant Christians have a remnant according to the election of grace, and they had need to have, some of them, a little salt, for otherwise they would go to corruption. But when I say that, do you imagine that I think them all on a level? Are they all alike truthful? One sect says infant baptism is right; another says it is wrong: yet you say they are both right. I cannot see that. One teaches we are saved by free grace; another says that we are not, but are saved by free will: and yet you believe they are both right. I do not understand that. One says that God loves His people, and never leaves off loving them; another says that He did not love His people before they loved Him; that He often loves them, and then ceases to love them, and turns them away. They may be both right in the main; but can they be both right when one says "Yes," and the other says "No." I must have a pair of spectacles to enable me to look backwards and forwards at the same time before I can see that. It cannot be, sirs, that they are both right. But some say they differ upon non-essentials. This text says: "I have written to him the great things of My law." There is nothing in God's Bible which is not great. Did ever any of you sit down to see which was the purest religion? "Oh," say you, "we never took the trouble. We went just where

our father and mother went." Ah, that is a profound reason indeed! You went where your father and mother did. I thought you were sensible people; I did n't think you went where other people pulled you, but went of your own selves. I love my parents above all that breathe, and the very thought that they believed a thing to be true helps me to think it is correct; but I have not followed them. I belong to a different denomination, and I thank God I do. I can receive them as Christian brethren and sisters; but I never thought that because they happened to be one thing I was to be the same. No such thing. God gave me brains, and I will use them; and if you have any intellect, use it too. Never say it does n't matter. It does matter. Whatever God has put here is of eminent importance: He would not have written a thing that was indifferent. Whatever is here is of some value; therefore, search all questions; try all by the Word of God. I am not afraid to have what I preach tried by this book. Only give me a fair field and no favor and this book; if I say anything contrary to it, I will withdraw it the next Sabbath-day. By this I stand, by this I fall. Search and see; but don't say, "It does not matter." If God says a thing, it must always be of importance.

But while all things in God's Word are important, *all are not equally important*. There are certain fundamental and vital truths which must be believed, or otherwise no man would be saved. If you want to know what you must believe if ye would be saved, you will find the great things of God's law between these two covers; they are all contained here. As a sort of digest or summary of the great things of the law, I remember an old friend of mine once saying: "Ah, you preach the three R's, and God will always bless you!" I said: "What are the three R's?" And he answered: "Ruin, redemption, and regeneration." They contain the sum and substance of divinity. R for ruin. We were all ruined in the fall; we were all lost when Adam sinned, and we are all ruined by our own transgressions; we are all ruined by our own evil hearts and our own wicked wills; and we all shall be ruined unless grace saves us. Then there is a second R for redemption. We are ransomed by the blood of Christ, — a Lamb without blemish and without spot; we are rescued by His power;

we are ransomed by His merits; we are redeemed by His strength. Then there is R for regeneration. If we would be pardoned, we must also be regenerated; for no man can partake of redemption unless he is regenerate. Let him be as good as he pleases, let him serve God, as he imagines, as much as he likes; unless he is regenerate, and has a new heart, a new birth, he will still be in the first R,—that is, ruin. These things contain an epitome of the gospel. I believe there is a better epitome in the five points of Calvinism: Election according to the foreknowledge of God; the natural depravity and sinfulness of man; particular redemption by the blood of Christ; effectual calling by the power of the Spirit; and ultimate perseverance by the efforts of God's might. I think all those need to be believed in order to salvation; but I should not like to write a creed like the Athanasian, beginning with "Whosoever shall be saved, before all things it is necessary that he should hold the Catholic faith, which faith is this,"—when I got so far I should stop, because I should not know what to write. I hold the Catholic faith of the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible. It is not for me to draw up creeds; but I ask you to search the Scriptures, for this is the word of life.

God says: "I have written to him the great things of My law." Do you doubt their greatness? Do ye think they are not worth your attention? Reflect a moment, man! Where art thou standing now?

"Lo, on a narrow neck of land,
'Twixt two unbounded seas I stand;
An inch of time, a moment's space,
May lodge me in yon heavenly place,
Or shut me up in hell."

I recollect standing on a sea-shore once, upon a narrow neck of land, thoughtless that the tide might come up. The tide kept continually washing up on either side, and, rapt in thought, I still stood there, until at last there was the greatest difficulty in getting on shore; the waves had washed between me and the shore. You and I stand each day on a narrow neck, and there is one wave coming up there. See, how near it is to your foot! And lo! another follows at every tick of the clock. "Our hearts, like muffled drums, are beating funeral marches to the grave." We

are always tending downwards to the grave each moment that we live. This book tells me that if I am converted, when I die there is a heaven of joy and love to receive me; it tells me that angels' pinions shall be stretched, and I, borne by strong cherubic wings, shall out-soar the lightning, and mount beyond the stars, up to the throne of God, to dwell for ever

“Far from a world of grief and sin,
With God eternally shut in.”

Oh, it makes the hot tear start from my eye! It makes my heart too big for this my body, and my brain whirls at the thought of

“Jerusalem, my happy home,
Name ever dear to me.”

Oh, that sweet scene beyond the clouds, — sweet fields arrayed in living green, and rivers of delight! Are not these great things? But then, poor unregenerate soul, the Bible says, if thou art lost, thou art lost for ever; it tells thee, that if thou diest without Christ, without God, there is no hope for thee, that there is a place without a gleam of hope, where thou shalt read in burning letters, “Ye knew your duty, but ye did it not;” it tells you that ye shall be driven from His presence with a “Depart, ye cursed.” Are not these great things? Yes, sirs, as heaven is desirable, as hell is terrible, as time is short, as eternity is infinite, as the soul is precious, as pain is to be shunned, as heaven is to be sought, as God is eternal, and as His words are sure, these are great things, things ye ought to listen to.

III. Our last point is *the treatment which the holy Bible receives in this world*. It is accounted a strange thing. What does that mean, — the Bible accounted a strange thing? In the first place, it means that it is very strange to some people, because *they never read it*. I remember reading on one occasion the sacred story of David and Goliath, and there was a person present, positively grown up to years of maturity, who said to me, “Dear me! what an interesting story; what book is that in?” And I recollect a person once coming to me in private. I spoke to her about her soul; she told me how deeply she felt, how she had a desire to serve God, but she found another law in her members. I turned to a

passage in Romans, and read to her, "The good that I would, I do not; and the evil which I would not, that I do!" She said, "Is that in the Bible? I did not know it." I did not blame her because she had no interest in the Bible till then; but I did wonder that there could be found persons who knew nothing about such a passage. Ah! you know more about your ledgers than your Bible; you know more about your day-books than what God has written. Many of you will read a novel from beginning to end, and what have you got? A mouthful of froth when you have done. But you cannot read the Bible: that solid, lasting, substantial, and satisfying food goes uneaten, locked up in the cupboard of neglect; while anything that man writes, a catch of the day, is greedily devoured. "I have written unto him the great things of My law, *but* they were counted as a strange thing." Ye have never read it. I bring the broad charge against you. Perhaps ye say I ought not to charge you with any such thing. I always think it better to have a worse opinion of you than too good an one. I charge you with this: you do not read your Bible. Some of you never have read it through. I know I speak what your heart must say is honest truth. You are not Bible-readers. You say you have the Bible in your houses: do I think you are such heathens as not to have a Bible? But when did you read it last? How do you know that your spectacles, which you have lost, have not been there for the last three years? Many people have not turned over its pages for a long time, and God might say unto them, "I have written unto you the great things of My law, but they have been accounted unto you a strange thing."

Others there be who read the Bible, but when they read it, *they say it is so horribly dry*. That young man over there says it is a "bore;" that is the word he uses. He says, "My mother said to me, 'When you go up to town, read a chapter every day.' Well, I thought I would please her, and I said I would. I am sure I wish I had not. I did not read a chapter yesterday or the day before. We were so busy. I could not help it." You do not love the Bible, do you? "No; there is nothing in it which is interesting." Ah! I thought so. But a little while ago *I* could not see anything in it. Do you know why? Blind men cannot see, can

they? But when the Spirit touches the scales of the eyes they fall off, and when He puts eye-salve on, then the Bible becomes precious. I remember a minister who went to see an old lady, and he thought he would give her some precious promises out of the Word of God. Turning to one, he saw written in the margin, "P," and he asked, "What does this mean?" "That means precious, sir." Further down he saw "T. and P.," and he asked what the letters meant. "That," she said, "means tried and proved, for I have tried and proved it." If you have tried God's Word and proved it; if it is precious to your souls, then you are Christians; but those persons who despise the Bible have "neither part nor lot in the matter." If it is dry to you, you will be dry at last in hell. If you do not esteem it as better than your necessary food, there is no hope for you, for you lack the greatest evidence of your Christianity.

Alas! alas! the worse case is to come. *There are some people who hate the Bible*, as well as despise it. Is there such an one stepped in here? Some of you said, "Let us go and hear what the young preacher has to say to us." This is what he hath to say to you: "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder and perish." This is what he hath to say to you: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all that forget God." And this, again, he has to say to you: "Behold there shall come in the last days mockers like yourselves, walking after your own lusts." But more: he tells you tonight that if you are saved, you must find salvation here. Therefore despise not the Bible, but search it, read it, and come unto it. Rest thee well assured, O scorner, that thy laughs cannot alter truth, thy jests cannot avert thine inevitable doom. Though in thy hardihood thou shouldst make a league with death, and sign a covenant with hell, yet swift justice shall o'ertake thee, and strong vengeance strike thee low. In vain dost thou jeer and mock, for eternal verities are mightier than thy sophistries; nor can thy smart saying alter the divine truth of a single word of this volume of revelation. Oh! why dost thou quarrel with thy best friend and ill treat thy only refuge? There yet remains hope even for the scorner, — hope in a Saviour's veins; hope in the Father's mercy; hope in the Holy Spirit's omnipotent agency.

I have done when I have said one word. My friend the philosopher says it may be very well for me to urge people to read the Bible; but he thinks there are a great many sciences far more interesting and useful than theology. *Extremely obliged to you for your opinion, sir.* What science do you mean? The science of dissecting beetles and arranging butterflies? "No," you say, "certainly not." The science, then, of arranging stones and telling us of the strata of the earth? "No, not exactly that." Which science, then? "Oh, all sciences," say you, "are better than the science of the Bible." Ah, sir, that is your opinion; and it is because you are far from God that you say so. But the science of Jesus Christ is the most excellent of sciences. Let no one turn away from the Bible because it is not a book of learning and wisdom. It is. Would ye know astronomy? It is here: it tells you of the Sun of Righteousness and the Star of Bethlehem. Would ye know botany? It is here: it tells you of the plant of renown, — the Lily of the Valley and the Rose of Sharon. Would ye know geology and mineralogy? You shall learn it here: for you may read of the Rock of Ages, and the White Stone with a name graven thereon, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it. Would ye study history? Here is the most ancient of all the records of the history of the human race. Whate'er your science is, come and bend o'er this book; your science is here. Come and drink out of this fair fount of knowledge and wisdom, and ye shall find yourselves made wise unto salvation. Wise and foolish, babes and men, gray-headed sires, youths and maidens, — I speak to you, I plead with you, I beg of you respect your Bibles and search them out, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and these are they which testify of Christ.

I have done. Let us go home and practise what we have heard. I have heard of a woman, who, when she was asked what she remembered of the minister's sermon, said, "I don't recollect anything of it. It was about short weights and bad measures, and I didn't recollect anything but to go home and burn the bushel." So if you will remember to go home and burn the bushel, if you will recollect to go home and read your Bibles, I shall have said enough. And may God, in His infinite mercy, when you read your

Bibles, pour into your soul the illuminating rays of the Sun of Righteousness, by the agency of the ever-adorable Spirit; then you will read to your profit and to your soul's salvation.

We may say of the Bible: —

“God's cabinet of revealed counsel 't is,
Where weal and woe are ordered so
That every man may know which shall be his,
Unless his own mistake false application make.

“It is the index to eternity.
He cannot miss of endless bliss,
That takes this chart to steer by;
Nor can he be mistook, that speaketh by this book.

“It is the book of God. What if I should
Say, God of books, let him that looks
Angry at that expression, as too bold,
His thoughts in silence smother till he find such another.”

THE ETERNAL NAME.

A SERMON, DELIVERED ON MAY 27, 1855, BY PASTOR C. H. SPURGEON.

“His name shall endure for ever.”—Ps. lxxii. 17.

NO one here requires to be told that this is the name of Jesus Christ, which “shall endure for ever.” Men have said of many of their works, “they shall endure for ever;” but how much have they been disappointed! In the age succeeding the flood, they made the brick, they gathered the slime, and when they had piled old Babel's tower, they said, “This shall last for ever.” But God confounded their language; they finished it not. By His lightnings He destroyed it, and left it a monument of their folly. Old Pharaoh and the Egyptian monarchs heaped up their pyramids, and they said, “They shall stand for ever,” and so indeed they do stand; but the time is approaching when age shall devour even these. So with all the proudest works of man, whether they have been his temples or his monarchies, he has written “everlasting”

on them; but God has ordained their end, and they have passed away. The most stable things have been evanescent as shadows and the bubbles of an hour, speedily destroyed at God's bidding. Where is Nineveh, and where is Babylon? Where the cities of Persia? Where are the high places of Edom? Where are Moab, and the princes of Ammon? Where are the temples of the heroes of Greece? Where the millions that passed from the gates of Thebes? Where are the hosts of Xerxes, or where the vast armies of the Roman emperors? Have they not passed away? And though in their pride they said, "This monarchy is an everlasting one, this queen of the seven hills shall be called the eternal city," its pride is dimmed; and she who sat alone, and said, "I shall be no widow, but a queen for ever," she hath fallen, hath fallen, and in a little while she shall sink like a millstone in the flood, her name being a curse and a by-word, and her site the habitation of dragons and of owls. Man calls his works eternal; God calls them fleeting. Man conceives that they are built of rock; God says, "Nay, sand, or, worse than that, they are air." Man says he erects them for eternity; God blows but for a moment, and where are they? Like baseless fabrics of a vision, they are past and gone for ever.

It is pleasant, then, to find that there is one thing which is to last for ever. Concerning that one thing we hope to speak to-night, if God will enable me to preach and you to hear. "His name shall endure for ever." First, *the religion* sanctified by His name shall endure for ever; secondly, *the honor* of His name shall endure for ever; and thirdly, *the saving, comforting power* of His name shall endure for ever.

1. First, *the religion of the name of Jesus is to endure for ever*. When impostors forged their delusions, they had hopes that peradventure they might in some distant age carry the world before them, and if they saw a few followers gather around their standard, who offered incense at their shrine, then they smiled, and said, "My religion shall outshine the stars and last through eternity." But how mistaken have they been! How many false systems have started up and passed away! Why, some of us have seen, even in our short lifetime, sects that rose like Jonah's

gourd in a single night, and passed away as swiftly. We too have beheld prophets rise, who have had their hour; yea, they have had their day, as dogs all have, but like the dogs, their day has passed away, and the impostor, where is he? And the arch-deceiver, where is he? Gone and ceased. Specially might I say this of the various systems of infidelity. Within a hundred and fifty years how has the boasted power of reason changed! It has piled up one thing, and then another day it has laughed at its own handiwork, demolished its own castle, and constructed another, and the next day a third. It hath a thousand dresses. Once it came forth like a fool with its bells, heralded by Voltaire; then it came out a braggart bully, like Tom Paine; then it changed its course and assumed another shape, till forsooth we have it in the base, bestial secularism of the present day, which looks for nought but the earth, keeps its nose upon the ground, and, like the beast, thinks this world is enough, or looks for another through seeking this. Why, before one hair on this head shall be gray, the last secularist shall have passed away; before many of us are fifty years of age a new infidelity shall come, and to those who say, "Where will saints be?" we can turn round and say, "Where are you?" And they will answer, "We have altered our names." They will have altered their names, assumed a fresh shape, put on a new form of evil; but still their nature will be the same, opposing Christ, and endeavoring to blaspheme His truths. On all their systems of religion, or non-religion, — for that is a system, too, — it may be written, "Evanescens: fading as the flower, fleeting as the meteor, frail and unreal as a vapor." But of Christ's religion it shall be said, "His name shall endure for ever." Let me now say a few things, — not to prove it, for that I do not wish to do, — but to give you some hints whereby possibly I may one day prove it to other people, that Jesus Christ's religion must inevitably endure for ever.

And first, we ask those who think it shall pass away, when was there a time when it did not exist? We ask them whether they can point their finger to a period when the religion of Jesus was an unheard-of thing. "Yes," they will reply, "before the days of Christ and His apostles." But we answer, "Nay, Bethlehem was

not the birthplace of the gospel; though Jesus was born there, there was a gospel long before the birth of Jesus, and a preached one too, although not preached in all its simplicity and plainness, as we hear it now. There was a gospel in the wilderness of Sinai; although it might be confused with the smoke of the incense, and only to be seen through slaughtered victims, yet there was a gospel there." Yea, more, we take them back to the fair trees of Eden, where the fruits perpetually ripened and summer always rested, and amid these groves we tell them there was a gospel, and we let them hear the voice of God as He spoke to recreant man, and said, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." And having taken them thus far back, we ask, "Where were false religions born? Where was their cradle?" They point us to Mecca, or they turn their fingers to Rome, or they speak of Confucius, or the dogmas of Buddha. But we say, you only go back to a distant obscurity: we take you to the primeval age; we direct you to the days of purity; we take you back to the time when Adam first trod the earth; and then we ask you whether it is not likely that as the first-born, it will not also be the last to die; and as it was born so early, and still exists, whilst a thousand ephemera have become extinct, whether it does not look most probable that when all others shall have perished like the bubble upon the wave, this only shall swim, like a good ship upon the ocean, and still shall bear its myriad souls, not to the land of shades, but across the river of death to the plains of heaven.

We ask next, supposing Christ's gospel to become extinct, what religion is to supplant it? We inquire of the wise man, who says Christianity is soon to die, "Pray, sir, what religion are we to have in its stead? Are we to have the delusions of the heathen, who bow before their gods and worship images of wood and stone? Will ye have the orgies of Bacchus or the obscenities of Venus? Would ye see your daughters once more bowing down before Thammuz, or performing obscene rites as of old?" Nay, ye would not endure such things; ye would say, "It must not be tolerated by civilized men." "Then what would ye have? Would ye have Romanism and its superstition?" Ye will say, "No, God help us,

never." They may do what they please with Britain, but she is too wise to take old Popery back again while Smithfield lasts, and there is one of the signs of martyrs there; ay, while there breathes a man who marks himself a freeman, and swears by the Constitution of Old England, we cannot take Popery back again. She may be rampant with her superstitions and her priestcraft, but with one consent my hearers reply, "We will not have Popery." Then what will ye choose? Shall it be Mohammedanism? Will ye choose that, with all its fables, its wickedness and libidinousness? I will not tell you of it. Nor will I mention the accursed imposture of the West that has lately arisen. We will not allow Polygamy while there are men to be found who love the social circle and cannot see it invaded. We would not wish, when God hath given to man one wife, that he should drag in twenty as the companions of that one. We cannot prefer Mormonism; we will not, and we shall not. Then what shall we have in the place of Christianity? "Infidelity!" you cry, do you, sirs? And would you have that? Then what would be the consequence? What do many of them promote? Communist views, and the real disruption of all society as at present established. Would you desire Reigns of Terror here as they had in France? Do you wish to see all society shattered, and men wandering like monster icebergs on the sea, dashing against each other, and being at last utterly destroyed? God save us from Infidelity! What can you have, then? Nought. There is nothing to supplant Christianity. What religion shall overcome it? There is not one to be compared with it. If we tread the globe round, and search from Britain to Japan, there shall be no religion found so just to God, so safe to man.

We ask the enemy once more, suppose a religion were to be found which would be preferable to the one we love, by what means would you crush ours? How would you get rid of the religion of Jesus? and how would you extinguish His name? Surely, sirs, ye would never think of the old practice of persecution, would you? Would ye once more try the efficacy of stakes and fires to burn out the name of Jesus? Would ye try racks and thumb-screws? Would ye give us the boots and instruments of torture? Try it, sirs, and ye shall not quench Christianity. Each martyr,

dipping his finger in his blood, would write its honors on the heavens as he died; and the very flame that mounted up to heaven would emblazon the skies with the name of Jesus. Persecution has been tried. Turn to the Alps; let the valleys of Piedmont speak; let Switzerland testify; let France, with its St. Bartholomew; let England, with all its massacres, speak. And if ye have not crushed it yet, shall ye hope to do it? Shall ye? Nay, a thousand are to be found, and ten thousand if it were necessary, who are willing to march to the stake to-morrow; and when they are burned, if ye could take up their hearts, ye would see engraven upon each of them the name of Jesus. "His name shall endure for ever;" for how can ye destroy our love to it? "Ah, but," ye say, "we would try gentler means than that!" Well, what would ye attempt? Would ye invent a better religion? We bid you do it, and let us hear it; we have not yet so much as believed you capable of such a discovery. What then? Would ye wake up one that should deceive us and lead us astray? We bid you do it; for it is not possible to deceive the elect. You may deceive the multitude, but God's elect shall not be led astray. They have tried us. Have they not given us Popery? Have they not assailed us with Puseyism? Are they not tempting us with Arminianism by the wholesale? And do we therefore renounce God's truth? No; we have taken this for our motto, and by it we will stand. "The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible," is still the religion of Protestants; and the self-same truth which moved the lips of Chrysostom, the old doctrine that ravished the heart of Augustine, the old faith which Athanasius declared, the good old doctrine that Calvin preached, is our gospel now; and, God helping us, we will stand by it till we die. How will ye quench it? If ye wish to do it, where can ye find the means? It is not in your power. Aha! aha! aha! we laugh you to scorn.

But you will quench it; will you? You will try it, do you say? And you hope you will accomplish your purpose? Yes; I know you will, when you have annihilated the sun; when you have quenched the moon with drops of your tears; when you have dried up the sea with your drinking. Then shall ye do it. And yet ye say ye will!

And next, I ask you, suppose you did, what would become of the world then? Ah! were I eloquent to-night, I might perhaps tell you. If I could borrow the language of a Robert Hall I might hang the world in mourning; I might make the sea the great chief mourner, with its dirge of howling winds and its wild death-march of disordered waves; I might clothe all nature, not in robes of green, but in garments of sombre blackness; I would bid hurricanes howl the solemn wailing, — that death-shriek of a world. For what would become of us if we should lose the gospel? As for me, I tell you fairly, I would cry, "Let me begone!" I would have no wish to be here without my Lord; and if the gospel be not true, I should bless God to annihilate me this instant, for I would not care to live if ye could destroy the name of Jesus Christ. But that would not be all, that one man should be miserable, for there are thousands and thousands who can speak as I do. Again, what would become of civilization if ye could take Christianity away? Where would be the hope of a perpetual peace? Where governments? Where your Sabbath-schools? Where all your societies? Where everything that ameliorates the condition of man, reforms his manners, and elevates his character? Where? Let Echo answer, "Where?" They would be gone, and not a scrap of them would be left. And where, O men, would be your hope of heaven? And where the knowledge of eternity? Where a help across the river death? Where a heaven? And where bliss everlasting? All were gone if His name did not endure for ever. But we are sure of it, we know it, we affirm it, we declare it; we believe, and ever will, that "His name shall endure for ever" — ay, for ever! let who will try to stop it.

This is my first point. I shall have to speak with rather bated breath upon the second, although I feel so warm within as well as without, that I would to God I could speak with all my strength as I might do.

II. But, secondly, as His religion, so *the honor of His name is to last for ever*. Voltaire said he lived in the twilight of Christianity. He meant a lie; he spoke the truth. He did live in its twilight; but it was the twilight before the morning, — not the twilight of the evening, as he meant to say; for the morning comes, when

the light of the sun shall break upon us in its truest glory. The scornors have said that we should soon forget to honor Christ, and that one day no man should acknowledge Him. Now, we assert again, in the words of my text, "His name shall endure for ever," as to the honor of it. Yes, I will tell you how long it will endure. As long as on this earth there is a sinner who has been reclaimed by Omnipotent grace, Christ's name shall endure; as long as there is a Mary ready to wash His feet with tears and wipe them with the hair of her head; as long as there breathes a chief of sinners who has washed himself in the Fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness; as long as there exists a Christian who has put his faith in Jesus and found Him his delight, his refuge, his stay, his shield, his song, and his joy, there will be no fear that Jesus' name will cease to be heard. We can never give up that name. We let the Unitarian take his gospel without a Godhead in it, we let him deny Jesus Christ; but as long as Christians — true Christians — live, as long as we taste that the Lord is gracious, have manifestations of His love, sights of His face, whispers of His mercy, assurances of His affection, promises of His grace, hopes of His blessing, we cannot cease to honor His name. But if all these were gone, — if *we* were to cease to sing His praise, would Jesus Christ's name be forgotten then? No; the stones would sing, the hills would be an orchestra, the mountains would skip like rams, and the little hills like lambs. For is He not their creator? And if these lips and the lips of all mortals were dumb at once, there are creatures enough in this wide world besides. Why, the sun would lead the chorus; the moon would play upon her silver harp, and sweetly sing to her music; stars would dance in their measured courses; the shoreless depths of ether would become the home of songs; and the void immensity would burst out into one great shout, "Thou art the glorious Son of God; great is Thy majesty and infinite Thy power." Can Christ's name be forgotten? No; it is painted on the skies; it is written on the floods; the winds whisper it; the tempests howl it; the seas chant it; the stars shine it; the beasts low it; the thunders proclaim it; earth shouts it; heaven echoes it. But if that were gone, — if this great universe should all subside in God, just as a moment's foam subsides into the wave that bears it and is lost

for ever, — would His name be forgotten then? No. Turn your eyes up yonder; see heaven's *terra firma*. "Who are these that are arrayed in white, and whence came they?" "These are they that came out of great tribulation; they have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; therefore they are before the throne of God, and praise Him day and night in His temple." And if these were gone; if the last harp of the glorified had been touched with the last fingers; if the last praise of the saints had ceased; if the last hallelujah had echoed through the then deserted vaults of heaven, for they would be gloomy then; if the last immortal had been buried in his grave, — if graves there might be for immortals, — would His praise cease then? No, by heaven, no; for yonder stand the angels; they too sing His glory; to Him the cherubim and seraphim do cry without ceasing, when they mention His name in that thrice holy chorus, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of armies." But if these were perished; if angels had been swept away; if the wing of seraph never flapped the ether; if the voice of the cherub never sang His flaming sonnet; if the living creatures ceased their everlasting chorus; if the measured symphonies of glory were extinct in silence, — would His name then be lost? Ah, no! for as God upon the throne He sits, the everlasting One, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. And if the universe were all annihilated, still would His name be heard, for the Father would hear it, and the Spirit would hear it, and, deeply graven on immortal marble in the rocks of ages, it would stand, — Jesus the Son of God; co-equal with His Father. "His name shall endure for ever."

III. And so shall the *power of His name*. Do you inquire what this is? Let me tell you. Seest thou yonder thief hanging upon the cross? Behold the fiends at the foot thereof, with open mouths, charming themselves with the sweet thought that another soul shall give them meat in hell. Behold the death-bird, fluttering his wings o'er the poor wretch's head; Vengeance passes by and stamps him for her own; deep on his breast is written "A condemned sinner;" on his brow is the clammy sweat expressed from him by agony and death. Look in his heart: it is filthy with the crust of years of sin; the smoke of lust is hanging within, in black

festoons of darkness; his whole heart is hell condensed. Now look at him. He is dying. One foot seems to be in hell; the other hangs tottering in life, — only kept by a nail. There is a power in Jesus' eye. That thief looks; he whispers, "Lord, remember me." Turn your eye again there. Do you see that thief? Where is the clammy sweat? It is there. Where is that horrid anguish? It is *not* there. Positively there is a smile upon his lips. The fiends of hell, where are they? There are none; but a bright seraph is present, with his wings outspread, and his hands ready to snatch that soul, now a precious jewel, and bear it aloft to the palace of the Great King. Look within his heart: it is white with purity. Look at his breast: it is not written "condemned," but "justified." Look in the book of life: his name is graven there. Look on Jesus' heart: there on one of the precious stones He bears that poor thief's name. Yea, once more, look! Seest thou that bright one amid the glorified, clearer than the sun and fair as the moon? That is the thief! That is the power of Jesus; and that power shall endure for ever. He who saved the thief can save the last man who shall ever live; for still

"There is a fountain filled with blood
 Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
 And sinners plunged beneath that flood
 Lose all their guilty stains.

"The dying thief rejoiced to see
 That fountain in his day;
 Oh, may I there, though vile as he,
 Wash all my sins away.

"Dear dying Lamb! that precious blood
 Shall never lose its power
 Till all the ransomed Church of God
 Be saved to sin no more."

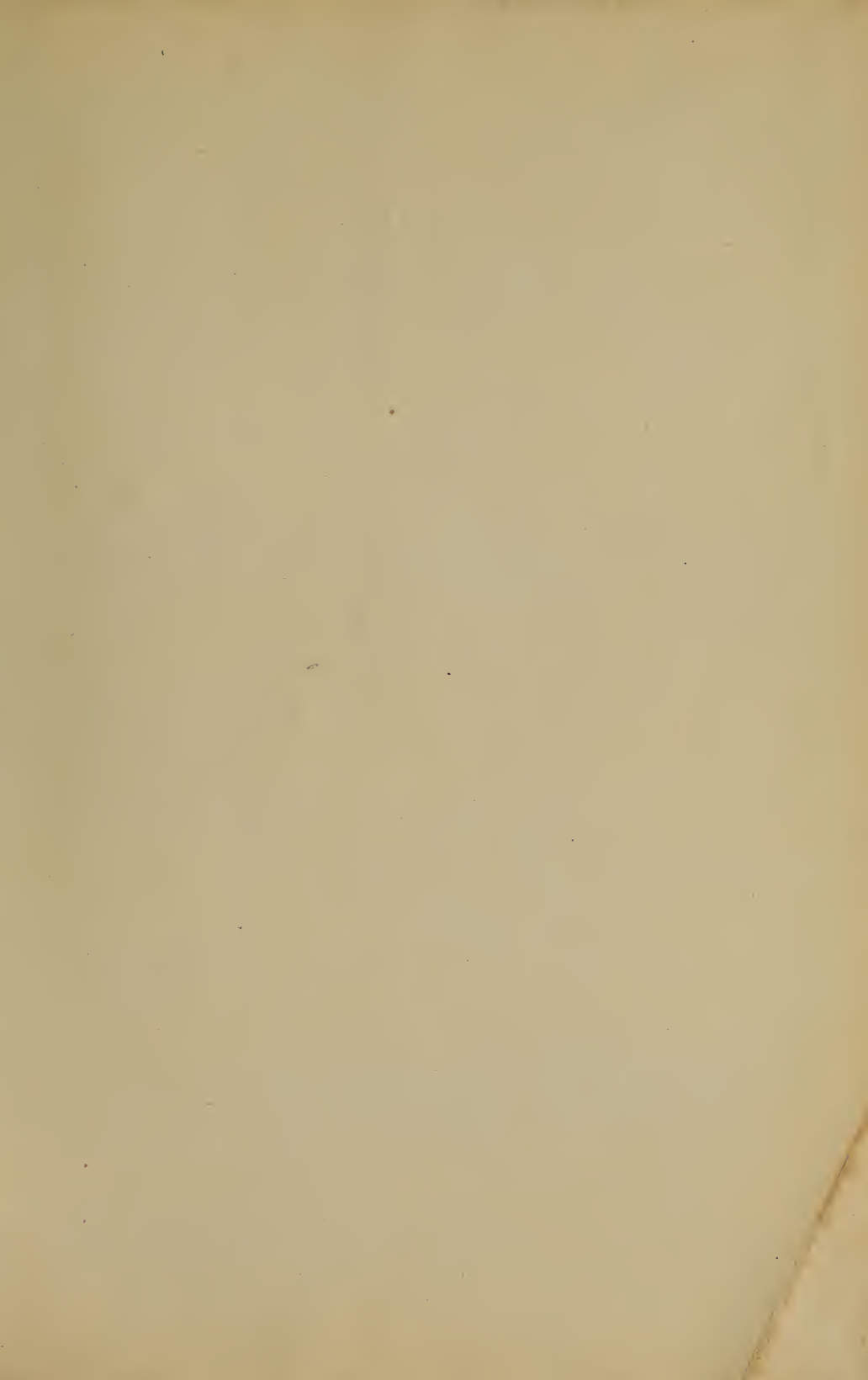
His powerful name shall endure for ever.

Nor is that all the power of His name. Let me take you to another scene, and ye shall witness somewhat else. There on that death-bed lies a saint. No gloom is on his brow, no terror on his face; weakly but placidly he smiles; he groans, perhaps, but yet he sings. He sighs now and then, but oftener he shouts. Stand

by him. "My brother, what makes thee look in Death's face with such joy?" "Jesus," he whispers. "What makes thee so placid and so calm?" "The name of Jesus." See, he forgets everything! Ask him a question; he cannot answer it,—he does not understand you. Still he smiles. His wife comes, inquiring, "Do you know my name?" He answers, "No." His dearest friend requests him to remember his intimacy. "I know you not," he says. Whisper in his ear, "Do you know the name of Jesus?" and his eyes flash glory, and his face beams heaven, and his lips speak sonnets, and his heart bursts with eternity, for he hears the name of Jesus, and that name shall endure for ever. He who landed one in heaven will land me there. Come on, death! I will mention Christ's name there. O grave! this shall be my glory, the name of Jesus! Hell dog! this shall be thy death,—for the sting of death is extracted,—Christ our Lord. "His name shall endure for ever."

I had a hundred particulars to give you; but my voice fails, so I had better stop. You will not require more of me to-night; you perceive the difficulty I feel in speaking each word. May God send it home to your souls! I am not particularly anxious about my own name, whether that shall endure for ever or not, provided it is recorded in my Master's book. George Whitfield, when asked whether he would found a denomination, said, "No; Brother John Wesley may do as he pleases, but let my name perish; let Christ's name last for ever." Amen to that! Let my name perish; but let Christ's name last for ever. I shall be quite contented for you to go away and forget me. I shall not see the faces of half of you again, I dare say; you may never be persuaded to step within the walls of a conventicle; you will think it perhaps not respectable enough to come to a Baptist meeting. Well, I do not say we are a very respectable people; we don't profess to be. But this one thing we do profess, we love our Bibles; and if that is not respectable to do so, we do not care to be had in esteem. But we do not know that we are so disreputable after all, for I believe, if I may state my own opinion, that if Protestant Christendom were counted out of that door,—not merely every real Christian, but every professor,—I believe the Pædobaptists

would have no very great majority to boast of. We are not, after all, such a very small, disreputable sect. Regard us in England, we may be; but take America, Jamaica, and the West Indies, and include those who are Baptists in principle, though not openly so, and we surrender to none, not even to the Established Church of this country, in numbers. That, however, we care very little about; for I say of the Baptist name, let it perish, but let Christ's name last for ever. I look forward with pleasure to the day when there will not be a Baptist living. I hope they will soon be gone. You will say, "Why?" Because when everybody else sees baptism by immersion, we shall be immersed into all sects, and our sect will be gone. Once give us the predominance, and we are not a sect any longer. A man may be a Churchman, a Wesleyan, or an Independent, and yet be a Baptist. So that I say I hope the Baptist name will soon perish; but let Christ's name last for ever. Yea, and yet again, much as I love dear Old England, I do not believe she will ever perish. No, Britain, thou shalt never perish! for the flag of Old England is nailed to the mast by the prayers of Christians, by the efforts of Sunday-schools and her pious men. But I say, let even England's name perish; let her be merged in one great brotherhood; let us have no England, and no France, and no Russia, and no Turkey; but let us have Christendom. And I say heartily, from my soul, let nations and national distinctions perish, but let Christ's name last for ever! Perhaps there is only one thing on earth that I love better than the last I have mentioned,—and that is, the pure doctrine of unadulterated Calvinism. But if that be wrong,—if there be anything in that which is false,—I for one say let that perish too, and let Christ's name last for ever. Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! "Crown Him Lord of all!" You will not hear me say anything else. These are my last words in Exeter Hall for this time. "Jesus! Jesus! Jesus! Crown Him Lord of all!"



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