AUTOBIOGRAPHY DIARY, LETTERS, AND RECORDS VOLUME 1

***by His Wife and His Private Secretary***

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CHAPTER 1.

INTRODUCTION.

Biographies are generally interesting if they *are*biographies; that is to say, if the events of the person’s life are truly told; but I think that the most interesting biography to any man is his own life…. It would have been impossible for me to quote the experiences of other men if they had not been bold enough to record them, and I make an honest attempt to acknowledge my debt to my greater predecessors by writing down my own. Whether this arises from egotism or not, each reader shall decide according to the sweetness or acidity of his own disposition. A father is excused when he tells his sons his own life-story, and finds it the readiest way to enforce his maxims; the old soldier is forgiven when he “shoulders his crutch, and shows how fields were won;” I beg that the license which tolerates these may, on this occasion, be extended to me. — C. H. S.

T HE publication of this work carries out a plan long ago formed by Mr. Spurgeon. In the occasional intervals of comparative leisure that he was able to snatch from his busy life’s labors, — and mainly in the bright sunshine at Mentone, — he recorded many of the principal incidents in his wonderful career. As each one was completed, he used joyfully to exclaim, “There’s another chapter for my Autobiography;” and had he been spared long enough, he would doubtless have given to the church and the world a full account of his life as it appeared from his own standpoint. This he has virtually done from the commencement of his public ministry, though not in the connected form in which it is now issued. His preaching was always so largely illustrated from his personal experience that his true biography is delightfully enshrined in the whole series of his Sermons, while “his own Magazine” — *The Sword and the Trowel —*was confessedly autobiographical during the entire period of his unique editorship. His many other published works abound in allusions to the Lord’s gracious dealings with him, and these are now for the first time gathered together into a continuous narrative. The record is given entirely in Mr. Spurgeon’s own words, except here and there where an explanatory sentence or two had to be inserted, or where letters written to him, and references made by others to the incidents he described, seem to be necessary to the completeness of the history.

Mr. Spurgeon’s writings are enriched with many references to other biographies beside his own. In the year 1870, after reading Mr. Arnot’s Life of Dr. James Hamilton, he wrote: — “The value of a biography depends far less upon its subject than upon its author. Milton mutilated by Ivimey, and Carey smothered by his nephew Eustace, are mournful instances of literary murder. James Hamilton has the singular good fortune to be embalmed by William Arnot, his own familiar friend and acquaintance, a spirit cast in the same fair mould, a genial genius wealthy in grace and wisdom. It were worthwhile to pray for an earlier end to one’s career, if we could be sure of an Arnot to produce its record. Apples of gold in baskets of silver are precious things in an appropriate setting, the golden apple being neither dishonored by contact with a basket too homely, nor shamed by comparison with costlier metal than its own; the memorial of a good man’s life should not be marred by poor writing, neither should it be overshadowed by excessive authorship.” In *this* Autobiography, the subject is also the author, so the apples of gold are perfectly matched by the golden basket in which they are displayed.

In his early volume, *The Saint and his Savior,*published in 1857, Mr. Spurgeon wrote: — “Few men would dare to read their own autobiography, if all their deeds were recorded in it; few can look back upon their entire career without a blush. ‘All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.’ None of us can lay claim to perfection. True, at times, a forgetful self-complacency bids us exult in the virtue of our lives; but when faithful memory awakes, how instantly she dispels the illusion! She waves her magic wand, and in the king’s palaces frogs arise in multitudes; the pure rivers at her glance become blood; the whole land is creeping with loathsomeness. Where we imagined purity, lo, imperfection ariseth! The snow-wreath of satisfaction melts before the sun of truth, the nectared bowl of gratulation is embittered by sad remembrances; while, under the glass of honesty, the deformities and irregularities of a life, apparently correct, are rendered, alas! too visible.

“Let the Christian, whose hair is whitened by the sunlight of Heaven, tell his life-long story. He may have been one of the most upright and moral; but there will be one dark spot in his history, upon which he will shed the tear of penitence, because then he knew not the fear of the Lord. Let you heroic warrior of Jesus recount his deeds; but he, too, points to deep scars, the offspring of wounds received in the service of the evil one.”

Speaking in the Tabernacle, many years ago, Mr. Spurgeon said: — “I used to marvel at William Huntington’s *Bank of Faith, —*a strange enough book, by the way, — but I am sure I could, from my own history, write a far more remarkable *Bank of Faith*than William Huntington has penned. I have often told you, dear friends, that, if I possessed the powers of a novelist, I might write a three-volume novel concerning the events of any one day in my life, so singularly striking has my experience been. I should never need to describe things from the outside, as I should have plenty of material from within. My life seems to me like a fairy dream. I am often both amazed and dazed with its mercies and its love. How good God has been to me! I used to think that I should sing among the saints above as loudly as any, for I owe so much to the grace of God; and I said so once in a sermon, long ago, quoting those lines, —

**“ *‘Then loudest of the crowd I’ll sing,  
While Heaven’s resounding mansions ring  
With shouts of sovereign grace.’***

“I thought that I was the greatest debtor to Divine grace, and would sing the loudest to its praise; but when I came down out of the pulpit, there was a venerable woman who said to me, ‘You made a blunder in your sermon this evening.’ I said, ‘I daresay I made a dozen, good soul, but what was that particular one?’ ‘Why, you said that you would sing the loudest because you owed most to Divine grace; you are but a lad, you do not owe half as much to grace as I do at eighty years of age! I owe more to grace than you, and I will not let you sing the loudest.’ I found that there was a general conspiracy among the friends that night to put me in the background, and that is where I meant to be, and wished to me; that is where those who sing the loudest, long to be, to take the lowest place, and praise most the grace of God in so doing.”

In *The Sword and the Trowel*for 1869, Mr. Spurgeon turned to good account a popular superstition. He was too humble to apply to himself the closing sentences in the following paragraph; but all who read it must see how exactly it describes the abiding influence of his long and gracious ministry. He wrote: —  
“Hone, in his *Year Book,*gives a letter from a correspondent in Raleigh, Nottinghamshire, which states that, many centuries since, the church and a whole village were swallowed up by an earthquake. Many villages and towns have certainly shared a similar fate, and we have never heard of them more.

**“*‘The times have been  
When the brains were out, the man would die;’***

“but at Raleigh, they say, the old church bells still ring at Christmas time, deep, deep, in earth; and that it was a Christmas morning custom for the people to go out into the valley, and put their ears to the ground to listen to the mysterious chimes of the subterranean temple. This is sheer superstition; but how it illustrates the truth that those preachers, whose voices were clear and mighty for truth during life, continue to preach in their graves! Being dead, they yet speak; and whether men put their ears to their tombs or not, they cannot but hear them.”

In the last sermon but one that Mr. Spurgeon ever revised, that remarkable discourse upon the text, “I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord;” he uttered these words, which have already been to a large extent fulfilled with regard to himself: — “Often, the death of a man is a kind of new birth to him; when he himself is gone physically, he spiritually survives, and from his grave there shoots up a tree of life whose leaves heal nations. O worker for God, death cannot touch thy sacred mission! Be thou content to die if the truth shall live the better because thou diest. Be thou content to die, because death may be to thee the enlargement of thine influence. Good men die as dies the seed-corn which thereby abideth not alone. When saints are apparently laid in the earth; they quit the earth, and rise and mount to Heaven-gate, and enter into immortality. No, when the sepulcher receives this mortal frame, we shall not die, but live.”

The portrait, which forms the frontispiece to this volume, has never before, so far as I know, been published. It was a lover’s gift to the one who was very soon to become his bride, and I recall how, in the glamour of “love’s young dream,” I used to gaze on the sweet boyish face, and think no angel could look half so lovely! Afterwards, the picture was enshrined in a massive oaken frame, and it occupied the place of honor on the walls of the house in the New Kent Road, where we began our life’s journey together, and founded our first home. Many a time, during my husband’s long absences, when fulfilling his almost ceaseless preaching engagements, has this portrait comforted me; its expression of calm confident faith strengthened my heart, and I used to think the up-raised finger pointed to the source whence I must draw consolation in my loneliness.

Something of the same soothing and sacred influence steals over me as I look at it now with tear-filled eyes; it speaks to me, even as it did in those days of long ago, and it says, “Do not fear, my beloved, God is *taking care of us both;*and though we are still separated for a little while, we shall meet again *at home*by-and-by!”

There have been many representations of my dear husband during the intervening years; — the young face changed into that of a strong, energetic man, then it grew into the semblance of one who knew sorrow and suffering, and again it changed into the grave and noble features which we remember best, because his departure has stamped them forever on the tablet of our loving heart. Throughout them all can be traced the sweet humility, the gentle kindness, the mighty faith in God which characterized his glorious and blameless life; but I think it is reserved to this early portrait to depict the intense love and unfailing devotion to his Master which was the secret of his power both with God and man.

In the early portion of the present volume, Mr. Spurgeon’s reminiscences of his life at Stambourne are given at considerable length, partly because they present such a charming picture of his happy childhood at his grandfather’s, but also because they are of special value to his many friends from the fact that this was the literary work upon which he was engaged just before his long and terrible illness in 1891. They also contain his inimitable description of the interest taken in him in his boyhood by Mr. Knill when at Stambourne, the remarkable prophecy uttered by that godly man over the head of the little ten-years-old lad, its literal fulfillment, and the influence of the incident itself, and the circumstances that followed it, upon the whole of his after history.

Most of the letters, written by Mr. Spurgeon, which are here published for the first time, were copied by his direction specially with a view to his Autobiography. Some of the others have been placed at my disposal by various friends; a few had been printed before. There are, doubtless, many thousands of my dear husband’s letters still extant; but no useful purpose could be served by the publication of even a tithe of them. There must, however, be a very large number of the products of his pen that ought to have an enlarged ministry through the press. I shall be glad, therefore, to receive copies of special epistles of public and permanent interest; or, if the originals are lent to me, I will have them copied, and returned at once. All communications for me should be addressed, — Mrs. C. H. Spurgeon, “Westwood,” Beulah Hill, Upper Norwood, London.

CHAPTER 2.

ANCESTRY AND GENEALOGY.

***I sing of the noble Refugee,  
Who strove in a holy faith,  
At the altar of his God to bow,  
When the road was marked with death.  
When the despot’s sword and the bigot’s torch  
Had driven him forth to roam,  
From village, and farm, and city, and town,  
He sought our Island Home.  
And store of wealth and a rich reward  
He brought in his open hand,  
For many a peaceful art he taught,  
Instead of the fireman’s brand.  
Dr. Byles.***

M R. SMILES, one of the ablest authors of our time, has produced a work upon the Huguenots, f1 which is not only intensely interesting in its style, but of the utmost importance in its subject. It should be read carefully by every statesman in Europe, especially by those who entertain a lingering love to persecution for righteousness’ sake, for beyond anything else in print it illustrates the great fact that the oppression of the conscience is an injury to the State, — an injury not only to its mental and moral health, but to its material prosperity. We were not aware that our little isle, the asylum of the banished, had received so great a reward for the entertainment of the Lord’s exiles. We knew that they had brought with them many of our most lucrative trades, but we had no idea of the great extent of the boon. England must have been a poor land until, in entertaining strangers, she entertained angels unawares. We are certainly a very singular race; the Huguenot blood has had more to do with us than many suppose; let us hope that, by God’s grace, enough of the characteristics of these good men may be found among us to keep us from drifting utterly to Rome and perdition. If England’s opening her gates to receive the hunted Protestants of the Continent may be rewarded, in our day, by a revival of the brave spirit which they brought with them, it would be a blessing from the Lord’s own right hand.

Many of the Flemish, Dutch, and French Protestants, driven by persecution out of their native country, found a haven of refuge in England; and, naturally, great numbers of them settled down in the Southern and Eastern Counties, though others journeyed to the Midlands, and the North and West of England, and some went as far as Scotland and Ireland. Mr. Smiles says that “Colchester became exceedingly prosperous in consequence of the settlement of the Flemish artisans there. In I609, it contained as many as 1,300 Walloons and other persons of foreign parentage.” He also mentions that, in many towns, where the refugees fixed their abode, “the artisans set up their looms, and began to work at the manufacture of sayes, bayes, and other kinds of cloth, which met with a ready sale.” This information is very interesting to me, for in my early days in Essex I used to hear a great deal about “the bay and say industry.” I daresay our fathers were poor weavers, but I had far rather be descended from one who suffered for the faith than bear the blood of all the emperors within my veins. I remember speaking with a Christian brother, who seemed right happy to tell me that he sprang of a family which came from Holland during the persecution of the Duke of Alva, and I felt a brotherhood with him in claiming a like descent from Protestant forefathers.

One namesake, and perhaps an ancestor, Job Spurgeon, of Dedham, had to suffer both in purse and in person, “for the testimony of a good conscience,” as the Quaker record puts it. In 1677, a distress was levied upon him, and some of his goods were seized, because he had committed the atrocious *crime*of attending a Nonconformist meeting at Dedham! Six years later, for a similar *offense,*he and three other godly men “were required to give sureties for their good behavior, which refusing to do, they were re-committed to prison, where three of them lay upon straw about fifteen weeks in the midst of a winter remarkable for extremity of cold; but the fourth, Job Spurgeon, being so weak that he was unable to lie down, sat up in a chair the most part of that time.” In my seasons of suffering, I have often pictured to myself this modern Job in Chelmsford gaol, and thanked God that I bore the same name as this persecuted Spurgeon of two hundred years ago. So far as I can make out the genealogy, it appears to me that this Essex Quaker was my great-grandfather’s grandfather, and I sometimes feel the shadow of his broad brim come over my spirit. Grace is not tied to families, but yet the Lord delights to bless to a thousand generations. There is a sweet fitness in the passing on of holy loyalty from grandsire to father, and from father to son. I like to feel that I serve God “from my fathers.” I can cast my eye back through four generations, and see that God has been pleased to hear the prayers of our grandfather’s father, who used to supplicate with God that his children might live before Him to the last generation; and God has never deserted the house, and has been pleased to bring first one and then another to fear and love His name. I was amused when I read that a friend in China wrote concerning my name: — “The Chinese cannot pronounce ‘Spurgeon’ correctly, so we call him in this quarter, ‘Sze-Pah-ng,’ *i.e.,*‘the successor or continuator of a hundred virtues.’ The word ‘hundred’ in Chinese stands for an indefinite number.” My godly ancestors possessed many more than a hundred virtues; and I am very grateful to God for the grace which has enabled me to be the continuator of any of them.

I notice how very particular the Holy Ghost is that a good man should not be confounded with a bad one. He says, when mentioning one of the twelve, — “Judas… not Iscariot” (John 14:22). There were two apostles of the name of Judas; the one who betrayed our Lord, and the other who wrote the Epistle of Jude, who should properly have been called Judas. Some of us, in reading the name Judas, might have said, “Ah! it was that traitor Judas Iscariot who asked the question.” But the Holy Spirit would not allow this mistake to be made. This should teach us that it is not an idle wish for us to desire that our name should be handed down to posterity untarnished. We ought all to seek to have an unblemished character; we ought to desire to have that promise fulfilled, “The memory of the just is blessed.” I would not like my name to be mistaken for that of some criminal who was hanged. I would not wish to have my name written even by mistake in the calendar of infamy. However much I may now be misrepresented, it will one day be known that I have honestly striven for the glory of my Master.

My second Christian name — Haddon — has often reminded me of my godly ancestry. When I have had to endorse a great heap of checks for the College and Orphanage, I have wished that my father had not given me so many initials, and I took care that my own sons should not have the same cause for complaint, for they are simply “Charles” and “Thomas.” Yet there is such a pleasing story associated with the name of “Haddon” that I am very glad it was given to me. It appears that, before my grandfather became a minister, he had several years of business life as a country shopkeeper. Amongst other things, he sold cheese, which he used to buy of a wholesale dealer in that useful article of commerce. One day, a friend, named Haddon, said to him, “Mr. Spurgeon, you should go down to the cheese fairs at Derby and Leicester, and buy what you want at first hand; you would get a much larger profit if you did so.” “Oh!” replied grandfather, “I could not do that, for I have not sufficient money to spare for such a purpose.” “You need not have any difficulty on that score,” said the generous man; “if you tell me when the next fair is to be held, I will let you have the money, and you can pay me back when you have sold the cheese. I have such confidence in your Christian integrity, that I shall be glad to aid you in this way.”

Accordingly, grandfather bought the cheese, sold them at a good profit, and went to his friend who had lent him the money. This is one of the most remarkable parts of the story. When the amount was repaid, grandfather asked how much interest was due from him; but the lender replied, “Oh, Mr. Spurgeon, that is not my way of transacting business! I had that money lying idle, and you have done me great service in putting it to such good use, so I mean to *give you five percent, for your trouble in laying it out for me;*and when the season comes round again, I want you to buy another lot of cheese on the same terms.” That very singular arrangement was continued until there was no further need of the good man’s help; and, afterwards, when grandfather had a son born to him, he gave him the name of “Haddon” in remembrance of his generous friend. That son was my Uncle Haddon, who, in my childhood days, used to give out the hymns at Stambourne Meeting-house; and when my father also had a son, he gave him the name of Charles HADDON Spurgeon; and now, without any wish on my part, Mr. William Olney and his friends in Bermondsey have perpetuated the name by calling their splendid mission premises “Haddon Hall.” It always seems to me that this chain of circumstances is a fresh illustration of the inspired promise, “The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.”

**GENEALOGICAL TABLE,  
COMPILED FROM AN ANCIENT FAMILY REGISTER.**

Clement.  
(1797)  
John.  
(1768)

William.  
(1771)  
Thomas.  
(1774)  
JAMES.  
(*Born, Sept*. 29,1776)  
Hannah.  
(1778)  
(Also 6 who died in infancy) Sarah.  
(1807.)

H ADDON Rudkin.  
(1808.)  
“Uncle Haddon”

JOHN.  
(*Born, July* 15, 1810.)  
Samuel.  
(1811.)  
Obadiah.  
(1813.)  
Eliza.  
(1815.)

Ann.  
(1818.)  
“Aunt Ann”

James.  
(1820.)

Susannah.  
(1823.)  
Charles HADDON.  
(*Born, June* 19, 1834)

Eliza.  
James Archer.  
Emily.  
Louisa.  
Charlotte.  
Eva  
Flora.  
Charles.  
Thomas.  
(*Born, September* 20, 1856.)

CHAPTER 3.

HAPPY CHILDHOOD AT STAMBOURNE.

Oh, the old house at home! who does not love it, the place of our childhood, the old roof-tree, the old cottage? There is no other village in all the world half so good as that particular village! True, the gates, and styles, and posts have been altered; but, still, there is an attachment to those old houses, the old tree in the park, and the old ivy-mantled tower. It is not very picturesque, perhaps, but we love to go to see it. We like to see the haunts of our boyhood. There is something pleasant in those old stairs where the clock used to stand; and in the room where grandmother was wont to bend her knee, and where we had family prayer. There is no place like that house after all. — C. H. S.

T HIS drawing of the old Manse at Stambourne has far more charms for me than for any of my readers; but I hope that their generous kindness to the writer will cause them to be interested in it. Here my venerable grandfather lived for more than fifty years, and reared his rather numerous family. In its earlier days it must have been a very remarkable abode for a dissenting teacher; a clear evidence that either he had an estate of his own, or that those about him had large hearts and pockets. It was in all respects a gentleman’s mansion of the olden times. The house has been supplanted by one which, I doubt not, is most acceptable to the excellent minister who occupies it; but to me it can never be one-half so dear as the revered old home in which I spent some of my earliest years. It is true the old parsonage had developed devotional tendencies, and seemed inclined to prostrate its venerable form, and therefore it might have fallen down of itself if it had not been removed by the builder; but, somehow, I wish it had kept up forever and ever. I could have cried, “Builders, spare that home. Touch not a single tile, or bit of plaster;” but its hour was come, and so the earthly house was happily dissolved, to be succeeded by a more enduring fabric. The new house, as Smith told me, was “built on the same destruction.” It stood near the chapel, so that the pastor was close to his work.  
It looks a very noble parsonage, with its eight windows in front; but at least three, and I think four, of these were plastered up, and painted black, and then marked out in lines to imitate glass. They were not such very bad counterfeits, or the photograph would betray this. Some of us can remember the window tax, which seemed to regard light as a Latin commodity — *lux,*and therefore a luxury, and as such to be taxed. So much was paid on each aperture for the admission of light; but the minister’s small income forced economy upon him, and so room after room of the manse was left in darkness, to be regarded by my childish mind with reverent awe. Over other windows were put up boards marked DAIRY, or CHEESE-ROOM, because by being labeled with these names they would escape the tribute. What a queer mind must his have been who first invented taxing the light of the sun! It was, no doubt, meant to be a fair way of estimating the size of a house, and thus getting at the wealth of the inhabitant; but, incidentally, it led occupiers of large houses to shut out the light for which they were too poor to pay.

Let us enter by the front door. We step into a spacious hall, innocent of carpet. There is a great fireplace, and over it a painting of David, and the Philistines, and Giant Goliath. The hall-floor was of brick, and carefully sprinkled with fresh sand. We see this in the country still, but not often in the minister’s house. In the hall stood “the child’s” rocking-horse. It was a gray horse, and could be ridden astride or side-saddle. When I visited Stambourne, in the year 1889, a man claimed to have rocked me upon it. I remembered the horse, but not the man, — so sadly do we forget the better, and remember the baser. This was the only horse that I ever enjoyed riding. Living animals are too eccentric in their movements, and the law of gravitation usually draws me from my seat upon them to a lower level; therefore I am not an inveterate lover of horseback. I can, however, testify of my Stambourne steed, that it was a horse on which even a member of Parliament might have retained his seat.

How I used to delight to stand in the hall, with the door open, and watch the rain run off the top of the door into a wash-tub! How much better to catch the overflow of the rain in a tub than to have a gutter to carry it off! So I thought; but do not now think. What bliss to float cotton-reels in the miniature sea! How fresh and sweet that rain seemed to be! The fragrance of the water which poured down in a thunder-shower comes over me now. Where the window is open on the right, was the best parlor. Roses generally grew about it, and bloomed *in the room*if they could find means to insert their buds between the wall and the window-frame. They generally found ample space, for nothing was quite on the square. There had evidently been a cleaning up just before my photograph was taken, for there are no roses creeping up from below. What Vandals people are when they set about clearing up either the outsides or the insides of houses! On the sacred walls of this “best parlor” hung portraits of my grandparents and uncles, and on a piece of furniture stood the fine large basin which grandfather used for what he called “baptisms.” In my heart of hearts, I believe it was originally intended for a punch-bowl; but, in any case, it was a work of art, worthy of the use to which it was dedicated. This is the room which contained the marvel to which I have often referred, —

**AN APPLE IN A BOTTLE.**

I remember well, in my early days, seeing upon my grandmother’s mantelshelf an apple contained in a phial. This was a great wonder to me, and I tried to investigate it. My question was, “How came the apple to get inside so small a bottle?” The apple was quite as big round as the phial; by what means was it placed within it? Though it was treason to touch the treasures on the mantel-piece, I took down the bottle, and convinced my youthful mind that the apple never passed through its neck; and by means of an attempt to unscrew the bottom, I became equally certain that the apple did not enter from below. I held to the notion that by some occult means the bottle had been made in two pieces, and afterwards united in so careful a manner that no trace of the join remained. I was hardly satisfied with the theory, but as no philosopher was at hand to suggest any other hypothesis, I let the matter rest. One day, the next summer, I chanced to see upon a bough another phial, the first cousin of my old friend, within which was growing a little apple which had been passed through the neck of the bottle while it was extremely small. “Nature well known, no prodigies remain.” The grand secret was out. I did not cry, “*Eureka! Eureka!*” but I might have done so if I had then been versed in the Greek tongue.

This discovery of my juvenile days shall serve for an illustration at the present moment. Let us get the apples into the bottle while they are little: which, being translated, signifies, let us bring the young ones into the house of God, by means of the Sabbath-school, in the hope that, in after days, they will love the place where His honor dwelleth, and there seek and find eternal life. By our making the Sabbath dreary, many young minds may be prejudiced against religion: we would do the reverse. Sermons should not be so long and dull as to weary the young folk, or mischief will come of them; but with interesting preaching to secure attention, and loving teachers to press home the truth upon the youthful heart, we shall not have to complain of the next generation, that they have “forgotten their restingplaces.”

In this best parlor grandfather would usually sit on Sunday mornings, and prepare himself for preaching. I was put into the room with him that I might be quiet, and, as a rule, *The Evangelical Magazine*was given me. This contained a portrait of a reverend divine, and one picture of a missionstation. Grandfather often requested me to be quiet, and always gave as a reason that I “had the magazine.” I did not at the time perceive the full force of the argument to be derived from that fact; but no doubt my venerable relative knew more about the sedative effect of the magazine than I did. I cannot support his opinion from personal experience. Another means of stilling “the child” was much more effectual. I was warned that perhaps grandpa would not be able to preach if I distracted him, and then, — ah! then, what would happen, if poor people did not learn the way to Heaven? This made me look at the portrait and the missionary-station once more. Little did I dream that some other child would one day see my face in that wonderful Evangelical portrait-gallery.

When I was a very small boy, I was allowed to read the Scriptures at family prayer. Once upon a time, when reading the passage in 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, however, intended to have an explanation, and therefore selected the same chapter morning after morning, and always halted at the same verse to repeat the inquiry, hoping that by repetition he would importune the good old gentleman into a reply. The process was successful, for it is by no means the most edifying thing in the world to hear the history of the Mother of Harlots, and the beast with seven heads, every morning in the week, Sunday included, with no sort of alternation either of Psalm or Gospel; the venerable patriarch of the household therefore capitulated at discretion, with, “Well, dear, what is it that puzzles you?” Now “the child” had often seen baskets with but very frail bottoms, which in course of wear became bottomless, and allowed the fruit placed therein to drop upon the ground; here, then, was the puzzle, — if the pit aforesaid had no bottom, where would all those people fall to 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 some more convenient season. Queries of the like simple but rather unusual stamp would frequently break up into paragraphs of a miscellaneous length the Bible-reading of the assembled family, and had there not been a world of love and license allowed to the inquisitive reader, he would very 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.

I can remember the horror of my mind when my dear grandfather told me what his idea of “the bottomless pit” was. There is a deep pit, and the soul is falling down, — oh, how fast it is falling! There! the last ray of light at the top has disappeared, and it falls on-on-on, and so it goes on falling — on-on-on for a thousand years! “Is it not getting near the bottom yet? Won’t it stop?” No, no, the cry is, “On-on-on.” “I have been falling a million years; am I not near the bottom yet?” No, you are no nearer the bottom yet; it is “the *bottomless*pit.” It is on-on-on, and so the soul goes on falling perpetually into a deeper depth still, falling forever into “the bottomless pit” — on-on-on — into the pit that has no bottom! Woe, without termination, without hope of its coming to a conclusion!

In my grandfather’s garden there was a fine old hedge of yew, of considerable length, which was clipped and trimmed till it made quite a wall of verdure. Behind it was a wide grass walk, which looked upon the fields; the grass was kept mown, so as to make pleasant walking. Here, ever since the old Puritanic chapel was built, godly divines had walked, and prayed, and meditated. My grandfather was wont to use it as his study. Up and down it he would walk when preparing his sermons, and always on Sabbath-days when it was fair, he had half-an-hour there before preaching. To me, it seemed to be a perfect paradise; and being forbidden to stay there when grandfather was meditating, I viewed it with no small degree of awe. I love to think of the green and quiet walk at this moment; but I was once shocked and even horrified by hearing a farming man remark concerning this *sanctum sanctorum,*“It ‘ud grow a many ‘taturs if it wor ploughed up.” What cared he for holy memories? What were meditation and contemplation to him? Is it not the chief end of man to grow potatoes, and eat them? Such, on a larger scale, would be an unconverted man’s estimate of joys so elevated and refined as those of Heaven. Alphonse Karr tells a story of a servant-man who asked his master to be allowed to leave his cottage, and sleep over the stable. What was the matter with his cottage? “Why, sir, the nightingales all around the cottage make such a ‘jug, jug, jug,’ at night that I cannot bear them.” A man with a musical ear would be charmed with the nightingales’ song, but here was a man without a musical soul who found the sweetest notes a nuisance. This is a feeble image of the incapacity of unregenerate man for the enjoyments of the world to come, and as he is incapable of enjoying them, so is he incapable of longing for them.

While my grandfather was preacher at the meeting-house, Mr. Hopkins was Rector at the church. They preached the same gospel, and without surrendering their principles, were great friends. The Bible Society held its meetings alternately in connection with the church and the meeting-house. At times, the leading resident went to church in the morning, and to chapel in the afternoon; and, when I was a boy, I have, on Monday, gone to the Squire’s to tea, with Mr. Hopkins and my grandfather. The glory of that tea-party was that we four, the three old gentlemen, and the little boy, *all ate sugared bread and butter together for a treat.*The sugar was very brown, but the young boy was very pleased, and the old boys were merry also. Yes, Stambourne had its choice pleasures!

It is pleasant to read of the harmony between these two men of God: they increased in mutual esteem as they increased in years. As Mr. Hopkins had more of the meat, and Mr. Spurgeon more of the mouths, the Rector did not forget to help his friend in divers quiet ways; such as a five-pound note for a sick daughter to go to the sea-side, and presents of comforts in illness. On one occasion, it is said that, having a joint of beef on the Rectory table, the clergyman cut it in halves, and sent his man on horseback with one half of it to the Independent Parsonage, while it was yet hot, — a kind of joke not often practiced between established and dissenting ministers.

In the front of the house, towards the left, nearly hidden by a shrub, is a very important window, for it let light into the room wherein were the oven, the mangle, and, best of all, the kneading-trough. How often have I gone to that kneading-trough; for it had a little shelf in it, and there would be placed “*something for the child!*” A bit of pastry, which was called by me, according to its size, a pig or a rabbit, which had little ears, and two currants for eyes, was carefully placed in that sacred shrine, like the manna in the ark. Dear grandmother, how much you labored to spoil that “child”! Yet your memory is more dear to him than that of wiser folks, who did not spoil “the child.” Do you now look down from your mansion above upon your petted grandson? Do you feel as if he would have been better if you had been sour and hard? Not a bit of it. Aunt Ann, who had a finger in it all, would spoil “the child” again if she had a chance. I have put in such an approach to a portrait of my grandmother as I could find: it was taken by some traveling artist who visited the district, and took off several of the family.

The dairy at the back of the house was by no means a bad place for a cheesecake, or for a drink of cool milk. It makes one think of the hymn, — **“*I have been there; and still would go.*”**

The cupboard under the stairs, where they kept the sand for the floors, would be a real Old Curiosity Shop nowadays; but there it was, and great was the use of it to the cottagers around.

There was a sitting-room at the back of the house, where the family met for meals. In that which looks like a blank side in our picture there certainly was a window looking out upon the garden; perhaps it was a little further back than the picture goes. A very pleasant outlook there was from that window down the green garden paths, and over the hedge into the road. When I last saw the “keeping-room”, a bit of ivy had forced its way through the lath and plaster, and had been trained along the inside of the room; but in my childish days we were not so verdant. I remember a mark on the paper which had been made by the finger of one of my uncles, so they told me, when one year the flour was so bad that it turned into a paste, or pudding, inside the loaf, and could not be properly made into bread. History has before this been learned from handwritings on the wall. The times of the old Napoleon wars, and of the Corn Laws, must often have brought straitness of bread into the household; and a failure in the yield of the little farm made itself felt in the family.

There was a mysterious jack over the fire-place, and with that fire-place itself I was very familiar; for candles were never used extravagantly in grandfather’s house, and if anyone went out of the room, and took the candle with him, it was just a little darker, not very much; and if one wished to read, the fire-light was the only resort. There were mould candles now and then in the best room, but that was only on very high days and holidays. My opinion, derived from personal observation, was that all everyday candles were made of rushes and tallow.

Our young readers in London and other large towns have probably never seen a pair of snuffers, much less the flint and steel with which a light had to be painfully obtained by the help of a tinder-box and a brimstone match. What a job on a cold raw morning to strike, and strike, and see the sparks die out because the tinder was damp! We are indeed living in an age of light when we compare our incandescent gas-burners and electric lights with the rushlights of our childhood. And yet the change is not all one way; for if we have more light, we have also more fog and smoke, at least in London. Our “keeping-room” was a very nice, large, comfortable diningroom, and it had a large store-closet at one end. You should have seen the best china! It only came out on state occasions, but it was very marvelous in “the child’s” eyes.

A quaint old winding stair led to the upper chambers. The last time I occupied the best bedroom, the floor appeared anxious to go out of the window, at least, it inclined that way. There seemed to be a chirping of birds very near my pillow in the morning, and I discovered that swallows had built outside the plaster, and sparrows had found a hole which admitted them inside of it, that there they might lay their young. It is not always that one can lie in bed and study ornithology. I confess that I liked all this rural life, and the old chintz bed-furniture, and the paper round the looking-glass cut in the form of horse-chestnut leaves and dahlias, and the tottery old mansion altogether.

**THE BOY AMONG THE BOOKS.**

I am afraid I am amusing myself rather than my reader, and so I will not weary him with more than this one bit more of rigmarole just now. But there was one place upstairs which I cannot omit, even at the risk of being wearisome. Opening out of one of the bedrooms, there was a little chamber of which the window had been blocked up through that wretched windowduty. When the original founder of Stambourne Meeting quitted the Church of England, to form a separate congregation, he would seem to have been in possession of a fair estate, and the house was quite a noble one for those times. Before the light-excluding tax had come into operation, that little room was the minister’s study and closet for prayer; and a very nice cozy room, too. In my time, it was a dark den; — but *it contained books,*and this made it a gold mine to me. Therein was fulfilled the promise, “I will give thee the treasures of darkness.” Some of these were enormous folios, such as a boy could hardly lift. Here I first struck up acquaintance with the martyrs, and specially with “Old Bonner”, who burned them; next, with Bunyan and his “Pilgrim”; and further on, with the great masters of Scriptural theology, with whom no moderns are worthy to be named in the same day. Even the old editions of their works, with their margins and old-fashioned notes, are precious to me. It is easy to tell a real Puritan book even by its shape and by the appearance of the type. I confess that I harbor a prejudice against nearly all new editions, and cultivate a preference for the originals, even though they wander about in sheepskins and goatskins, or are shut up in the hardest of boards. It made my eyes water, a short time ago, to see a number of these old books in the new Manse: I wonder whether some other boy will love them, and live to revive that grand old divinity which will yet be to England her balm and benison.

Out of that darkened room I fetched those old authors when I was yet a youth, and never was I happier than when in their company. Out of the present contempt, into which Puritanism has fallen, many brave hearts and true will fetch it, by the help of God, ere many years have passed. Those who have daubed up the windows will yet be surprised to see Heaven’s light beaming on the old truth, and then breaking forth from it to their own confusion.

(The following incident in Mr. Spurgeon’s childhood’s days is here given as it was related by his “Aunt Ann” on the occasion when he visited Stambourne in the summer of 1887.

One of the members of the church at Stambourne, named Roads, was in the habit of frequenting the public-house to have his “drop of beer”, and smoke his pipe, greatly to the grief of his godly pastor, who often heaved a sigh at the thought of his unhappy member’s inconsistent conduct. Little Charles had doubtless noticed his grandfather’s grief on this account, and laid it to heart. One day he suddenly exclaimed, in the hearing of the good old gentleman, “I’ll kill old Roads, that I will!” “Hush, hush! my dear,” said the good pastor, “you mustn’t talk so; it’s very wrong, you know, and you’ll get taken up by the police, if you do anything wrong.” “I shall not do anything bad; but I’ll kill him though, that I will.” Well, the good grandfather was puzzled, but yet perfectly sure that the child would not do anything which he knew to be wrong, so he let it pass with some halfmental remark about “that strange child.” Shortly after, however, the above conversation was brought to his mind by the child coming in and saying, “I’ve killed old Roads; he’ll never grieve my dear grandpa any more.” “My dear child,” said the good man, “what have you done? Where have you been?” “I haven’t been doing any harm, grandpa,” said the child; “I’ve been about the Lord’s work, that’s all.”

Nothing more could be elicited from little Charles; but, before long, the mystery was cleared up. “Old Roads” called to see his pastor, and, with downcast looks and evident sorrow of heart, narrated the story of how he had been killed, somewhat in this fashion: — “I’m very sorry indeed, my dear pastor, to have caused you such grief and trouble. It was very wrong, I know; but I always loved you, and wouldn’t have done it if I’d only thought.” Encouraged by the good pastor’s kindly Christian words, he went on with his story. “I was a-sitting in the public just having my pipe and mug of beer, when that child comes in, — to think an old man like me should be took to task, and reproved by a bit of a child like that! Well, he points at me with his finger, just so, and says, ‘What doest thou here, Elijah? sitting with the ungodly; and you a member of a church, and breaking your pastor’s heart. I’m ashamed of you! I wouldn’t break my pastor’s heart, I’m sure.’ And then he walks away. Well, I did feel angry; but I knew it was all true, and I was guilty; so I put down my pipe, and did not touch my beer, but hurried away to a lonely spot, and cast myself down before the Lord, confessing my sin and begging for forgiveness. And I do know and believe the Lord in mercy pardoned me; and now I’ve come to ask you to forgive me; and I’ll never grieve you any more, my dear pastor.” It need not be said that the penitent was freely forgiven, and owned a brother in the Lord, and the Lord was praised for the wonderful way in which it had all come about.)

(The genuineness of the backslider’s restoration is evident from the testimony of Mr. Houchin, the minister at Stambourne who succeeded Mr. Spurgeon’s grandfather, and who has also ascertained from official records the correct way of spelling “Old Roads’ “ name. Mr. Houchin writes: —

“Thomas Roads was one of the old men of the table-pew, — an active, lively, little man, but quite illiterate, — not much above a laborer, but he kept a pony and cart, and did a little buying and selling on his own account…. I found him an earnest and zealous Christian, striving to be useful in every way possible to him; especially in the prayer-meetings and among the young people, opening his house for Christian conversation and prayer. He only lived about four years of my time, and was sustained with a cheerful confidence to the end. When near death, on my taking up the Bible to read and pray with him, he said, ‘I have counted the leaves, sir.’ I said, ‘Why! what did you do that for?’ and he replied, ‘I never could read a word of it, and thought I would know how many leaves there were.’ This was very pathetic, and revealed much. We had a good hope of him, and missed him greatly.”)

CHAPTER 4.

STAMBOURNE MEETING-HOUSE.

I T was a rare old chapel. I wish it could have remained forever as I used to know it: let me see if I can sketch it with my pen. When I was a boy of twelve, I made this drawing of the back of the old meeting-house. I have been welcomed at a farmer’s table on the promise of making a picture of his house. I am rather glad that this pencil memorial was preserved by my dear Aunt Ann; but I must now, forty-five years after, use the pen on the same subject.

The pulpit was glorious as “the tower of the flock.” Over it hung a huge sounding-board: I used to speculate as to what would become of grandfather if it ever dropped down upon him. I thought of my Jack-in-thebox, and hoped that my dear grandpapa would never be shut down and shut up in such a fashion. At the back of the pulpit was a peg to hold the minister’s hat: inside, there was room for two, for I have sat there with grandfather when quite a little boy; but I guess that two grown-up people would have found it “quite too small enough,” as my Dutch friend puts it.

Just below, and in front of the pulpit, was the table-pew, wherein sat the elders of the congregation, the men of gracious “light and leading.” There Uncle Haddon generally stood, and gave out the hymns and the notices; and from that semi-sacred region was raised the block of wood by which to the singers upstairs the meter of the hymn was made known, — Common, Long, or Short. There were big tomb-stones forming the bottom of this large pew, which took its name from containing *the table,*on which were spread the bread and wine on days *when they had the ordinance:*I think that was the correct phrase when our good folks intended “the communion.” I don’t remember hearing them style infant baptism “the ordinance”; but I suppose they thought it to be one. A few had qualms upon the question, and were baptized quietly at some Baptist Chapel.

The pews in the middle were mostly square in form, and roomy. Those on either side were aristocratic, and lined with green baize, for the most part very faded. In some cases, brass rods carried up little curtains, which made the family pew quite private, and shut out all sights but that of the grave and reverend senior who dispensed to us the Word of Life. There were flaps inside the pew so as not to lose the space where the door opened, and flaps for the poor to sit upon in the aisle outside of these pews; and when the time came to go home, there was such a lifting up and letting down of flaps, and flap-seats, within the pew, and without the pew, as one never does see in these degenerate days. A little boy on a hassock on the floor of one of these holy loose-boxes ought to have been good; and no doubt was as good there as anywhere, especially if he had a peppermint to suck, and nobody to play with.

I cannot forget the big clock which had a face outside the chapel as well as one inside. When his long body had been newly grained, he seemed a very suitable piece of furniture for a nice, clean, old-fashioned Puritan meetinghouse. If I am rightly informed, the veteran time-keeper was bought by the miller, and is now upon one of his sheds. To what strange uses we may come at last!

The people were mainly real Essex: they talked of places down in “the Shires” as if they were quite foreign parts; and young fellows who went down into “the Hundreds” were explorers of a respectable order of hardihood. They loved a good sermon, and would say, “Mr. Spurgeon, I *heard*you well this morning.” I thought the good man had *preached*well, but their idea was not so much to his credit; they judged that they had *heard*him well, and there’s something in the different way of putting it; at any rate, it takes from the preacher all ground of glorying in what he has done. They were a people who could and would hear the gospel, but I don’t think they would have put up with anything else. They were as apt at criticism as here and there one: some of them were very wise in their remarks, and some were otherwise. Well do I remember an occasion upon which the preacher had treated “the tares” after the manner of the East, and was altogether right in so doing; but they said, “He wouldn’t know a tare if he saw one. It was painful to hear a man talk so ignorant. To say that you couldn’t tell wheat from tares when they were a-growing was ridiculous.” The rustic critics were wrong for once; but on matters of doctrine or experience, you would have found them quite a match for you.

I do not think our folks were anything like so superstitious and weak as the peasants I came to know ten years after in Cambridgeshire. Tales of white wizards and witches were unknown to my juvenile mind; though I heard enough of them when my age was between sixteen and twenty. Then one of my best workers told me that a witch had dragged a cat down his naked back by its tail: he did not show me the marks, but he fully believed in the feline operation. We cannot forget that in the village of Hedingham, which is not more than five miles from Stambourne, a murder was committed so late as 1865, which grew out of popular belief in witchcraft. The old men I talked with, as a little child, were, I am sure, far above all such nonsense; and upon many a Biblical, or political, or ecclesiastical, or moral subject, they would have uttered great and weighty thoughts in their own savory Essex dialect.

There were, no doubt, in Stambourne a few rough fellows who did not go to any place of worship; but those who came to the meeting-house were the great majority, and the plain, practical, common-sense sermons which they heard had lifted them out of that dense superstition which still benumbs the brains of too many of the East Anglian peasantry.

**THE SINGING AT STAMBOURNE MEETING-HOUSE.**

The prayer-meetings during the week were always kept up; but at certain seasons of the year grandfather and a few old women were all that could be relied upon. It occurred to me, in riper years, to ask my venerated relative how the singing was maintained. “Why, grandfather,” said I, “we always sang, and yet you don’t know any tunes, and certainly the old ladies didn’t.” “Why, child,” said he, “there’s one Common meter tune which is all, ‘Hum Ha, Hum Ha,’ and I could manage that very well.” “But how if it happened to be a Long or Short meter hymn?” “Why, then, I either put in more Hum Ha’s, or else I left some out; but we managed to praise the Lord.” Ah, shade of my dear old grandsire! your grandson is by no means more gifted as to crotchets and quavers than you were, and to this day the only solo he has ever ventured to sing is that same universally useful tune! f2 Even that he has abandoned; for audiences are growing either more intelligent or less tolerant than they used to be.

My grandfather once ventured upon publishing a volume of hymns. I never heard anyone speak in their favor, or argue that they ought to have been sung in the congregation. In that volume he promised a second, if the first should prove acceptable. We forgive him the first collection because he did not inflict another. The meaning was good, but the dear old man paid no attention to the mere triviality of rhyme. We dare not quote even a verse. It may be among the joys of Heaven for my venerated grandsire, that he can now compose and sing new songs unto the Lord. When we say we dare not quote, we do not refer to the meaning or the doctrine: in that respect, we could quote every line before the Westminster Assembly, and never fear that a solitary objection would or could be raised.

The Stambourne style of singing led me into trouble when I returned to my home. The notion had somehow entered my little head that the last line of the hymn must always be repeated, and grandfather had instilled into me as a safe rule that I must never be afraid to do what I believed to be right; so, when I went to the chapel where my parents attended, I repeated the last line whether the congregation did so or not. It required a great deal of punishment to convince me that a little boy must do what his parents think to be right; and though my grandfather made a mistake in that particular instance, I have always been grateful to him for teaching me to act according to my belief whatever the consequences might be.

I recollect, when first I left my grandfather, how grieved I was to part from him; it was the great sorrow of my little life. Grandfather seemed very sorry, too, and we had a cry together; he did not quite know what to say to me, but he said, “Now child, to-night, when the moon shines at Colchester, and you look at it, don’t forget that it is the same moon your grandfather will be looking at from Stambourne;” and for years, as a child, I used to love the moon because I thought that my grandfather’s eyes and my own somehow met there on the moon.

Outside the Meeting, near that long side, which was really the front, there stood a horsing-block. Ladies went up the steps, and found themselves on a platform of the same height as their horse’s back. It was a commendable invention: how often have I wished for something of the sort when I have had to climb my Rosinante! To me, this horsing-block was dear for quite another reason. The grand old lime trees shed their leaves in profusion, and when these were swept up, the old chapel-keeper would ram a large quantity of them under the horsing-block. When I had pulled out about as many as fitted my size, I could creep in; and there lie hidden beyond fear of discovery. My friend, Mr. Manton Smith, has written a book called *Stray Leaves,*and another which he has entitled *More Stray Leaves;*I entered into his work before he was born. So good was the hiding-place, that it remained a marvel where “the child” could be. The child would get alone; but where he went to, his guardian angels knew, but none on earth could tell. Only a little while ago, my dear old Aunt Ann said, “But, Charles, where did you get to when you were such a little child? We used to look everywhere for you, but we never found you till you came walking in all by yourself.” The horsing-block was the usual haunt when there were leaves, and an old tomb would serve at other times. No, I did not get into the grave; but it had a sort of altar tomb above it, and one of the side stones would move easily, so that I could get inside, and then by setting the slab of stone back again I was enclosed in a sort of large box where nobody would dream of looking for me. I went to the aforesaid tomb to show my aunt my hiding-place; but the raised altar was gone, and the top of it, with the name of the deceased thereon, was laid flat on the ground. Some of the side-stones, which formerly held up the memorial, were used to make door-steps when the buildings were put into their present state of repair, and the top stone was made to occupy the same space, only it lay flat upon the ground, instead of being raised some two feet above it.

Still, I remembered well the place, and what the tomb had formerly been. How often have I listened to the good people calling me by my name! I heard their feet close to my den, but I was wicked enough still to be “lost”, though the time for meals was gone. Dreaming of days to come befell me every now and then as a child, and to be quite alone was my boyish heaven. Yet, there was a seventh heaven above that: let me but hear the foxhounds, and see the red coats of their pursuers, and I had seen the climax of delight. When the huntsmen did come down by Stambourne woods, it was a season of delirious excitement to others besides “the child.” At other times, all the women and children were solemnly working at straw-plait; but what they did when the fox went by I will not venture upon guessing, for I don’t remember what I did myself. The woods at the back of the chapel had a charming mystery about them to my little soul, for who could tell but a fox was there? As a child, when asked what I would be, I usually said I was going to be a huntsman. A fine profession, truly! Many young men have the same idea of being parsons as I had of being a huntsman, — a mere childish notion that they would like the coat and the horn-blowing; the honor, the respect, the ease, — and they are probably even fools enough to think the riches of the ministry. (Ignorant beings they must be if they look for wealth in connection with the Baptist ministry.) The fascination of the preacher’s office is very great to weak minds, and hence I earnestly caution all young men not to mistake whim for inspiration, and a childish preference for a call of the Holy Spirit.  
I once learnt a lesson, while thus fox-hunting, which has been very useful to me as a preacher of the gospel. Ever since the day I was sent to shop with a basket, and purchased a pound of tea, a quarter-of-a-pound of mustard, and three pounds of rice, and on my way home saw a pack of hounds, and felt it necessary to follow them over hedge and ditch (as I always did when I was a boy), and found, when I reached home, that all the goods were amalgamated, — tea, mustard, and rice, — into one awful mess, I have understood the necessity of packing up my subjects in good stout parcels, bound round with the thread of my discourse; and this makes me keep to firstly, secondly, and thirdly, however unfashionable that method may now be. People will not drink mustardy tea, nor will they enjoy muddled-up sermons, in which they cannot tell head from tail, because they have neither, but are like Mr. Bright’s Skye terrier, whose head and tail were both alike.

Somehow, I don’t think our Sunday-school came to so very, very much. It was a great day when every child brought his own mug, and there was real cake, and tea, or milk and water, and an address; but that high festival came but once a year. Having been on one occasion pressed into the service when I was still a boy, but was in Stambourne on a visit, I felt myself a failure, and I fancied that some around me were not brilliant successes. Still, in those early times, teaching children to read, and to repeat verses of hymns, and to say the Catechism by heart, were a good beginning. Dr. Watts’s Catechism, which I learned myself, is so simple, so interesting, so suggestive, that a better condensation of Scriptural knowledge will never be written; and the marvel is that such a little miracle of instruction should have been laid aside by teachers. While I am writing, one question and answer come to me with special freshness: —

“Who was Isaiah?”  
“He was that prophet who spake more of Jesus Christ than all the rest.”

At the distance of fifty-three years, I remember a little book which was read to me about a pious child at Colchester; I recollect Janeway’s *Token for Children,*and I recall the bad conduct of some juveniles of my own age, who not only kicked up a dust, but literally kicked the teachers. Memory makes a selection as she goes along; and in my case, the choice of things retained is so miscellaneous, that I cannot discover my own character by their guidance.  
The weekday school for the very juveniles was kept by old Mrs. Burleigh, and to that fane of useful knowledge I was sent. The only thing that I remember was that I heard a good deal of her son Gabriel, and therefore asked, as a great favor, that when he came home from the town where he lived, he might come and see me. I had my desire; but after all these years, I have not got over my disappointment. To see Gabriel! I don’t think I had absolutely reckoned upon the largest kind of wings; but wings certainly, or something otherwise angelic. To see only a young man, a youth in trousers, with no trace of cherubim or seraphim about him, was too much of a come-down. “What’s in a name?” was a question not yet known to me; but no one will ever need to ask me now. Names are mere labels, and by no means proofs that the things are there.

To come back to the old chapel, the best point about it was the blessing which rested on the ministry carried on within. The dew of the Spirit from on high never left the ministry. Wherever my grandfather went, souls were saved under his sermons. My own beloved father, Rev. John Spurgeon, constantly reports to me fresh instances of the old gentleman’s usefulness. ‘When I first of all became a preacher, there were persons who said, “I heard your grandfather, and I would run my shoes off my feet any day to hear a Spurgeon.” This was encouraging. Another told me that, to hear my grandfather once, made his wing-feathers grow a foot. He could mount as eagles, after being fed with such Heavenly food. “He was always so experimental,” was the summing-up of one of the most devout of workingmen. “You felt as if he had been inside of a man.” Buildings may perish, and new shrines may succeed them; but no earthly house will accommodate a sounder or more useful ministry than that of my grandfather.

CHAPTER 5.

A MEMORABLE VISIT TO STAMBOURNE. — MR. KNILL’S PROPHECY.

T HE story of Mr. Knill’s prophesying that I should preach the gospel in Rowland Hill’s Chapel, and to the largest congregations in the world, has been regarded by many as a legend, but it was strictly true. Mr. Knill took the county of Essex in the year 1844, and traversed the region from town to town, as a deputation for the London Missionary Society. In the course of that journey, he spent a little time at Stambourne Parsonage. In his heart burned the true missionary spirit, for he sought the souls of young and old, whenever they came in his way. He was a great soul-winner, and he soon spied out the boy. He said to me, “Where do you sleep? for I want to call you up in the morning.” I showed him my little room, and he took good note of it. At six o’clock he called me up. There stood in my grandfather’s garden two arbors made of yew trees, cut into sugar-loaf fashion. Though the old manse has given way to a new one, and the old chapel has gone also, yet the yew trees flourish as aforetime. We went into the right-hand arbor, and there, in the sweetest way, he told me of the love of Jesus, and of the blessedness of trusting in Him and loving Him in our childhood. With many a story he preached Christ to me, and told me how good God had been to him, and then he prayed that I might know the Lord and serve Him. He knelt down in that arbor, and prayed for me with his arms about my neck. He did not seem content unless I kept with him in the interval between the services. He heard my childish talk with patient love, and repaid it with gracious instruction. On three successive days he taught me, and prayed with me; and before he had to leave, my grandfather had come back from the place where he had gone to preach, and all the family were gathered to morning prayer. Then, in the presence of them all, Mr. Knill took me on his knee, and said, “This child will one day preach the gospel, and he will preach it to great multitudes. I am persuaded that he will preach in the chapel of Rowland Hill, where (I think he said) I am now the minister.” He spoke very solemnly, and called upon all present to witness what he said. Then he gave me sixpence as a reward if I would learn the hymn, —

**“*God moves in a mysterious way  
His wonders to perform.*”**

I was made to promise that, when I preached in Rowland Hill’s Chapel, that hymn should be sung. Think of that as a promise from a child! Would it ever be other than an idle dream? Years flew by. After I had begun for some little time to preach in London, Dr. Alexander Fletcher was engaged to deliver the annual sermon to children in Surrey Chapel; but as he was taken ill, I was asked in a hurry to preach to the children in his stead. “Yes,” I replied, “I will, if you will allow the children to sing, ‘God moves in a mysterious way.’ I have made a promise, long ago, that so that hymn should be sung.” And so it was: I preached in Rowland Hill’s Chapel, and the hymn was sung. My emotions on that occasion I cannot describe, for the word of the Lord’s servant was fulfilled. Still, I fancy that Surrey was not the chapel which Mr. Knill intended. How was I to go to the country chapel? All unsought by me, the minister at Wotton-under-Edge, which was Mr. Hill’s summer residence, invited me to preach there. I went on the condition that the congregation should sing, “God moves in a mysterious way,” — which was also done. To me it was a very wonderful thing, and I no more understood at that time how it came to pass than I understand today why the Lord should be so gracious to me. Did the words of Mr. Knill help to bring about their own fulfillment? 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, I doubt not, all the more intent upon seeking salvation, and more hopeful of it, and when by grace enabled to cast myself upon the Savior’s love, it was not long before my mouth began to speak of His redemption. How came that sober-minded minister to speak thus of one into whose future God alone could see? How came it that he lived to rejoice with his young brother in the truth of all that he had spoken? We think *we*know the answer; but each reader has a right to his own: so let it rest, but not till we have marked one practical lesson. Would to God that we were all as wise as Richard Knill, and habitually sowed beside all waters! On the day of his death, in his eightieth year, David Brainerd, “the apostle of the Indians,” was occupied in teaching the alphabet to an Indian child at his bedside. A friend said, “Why not rest from your labors now?” “Because,” replied the man of God, “I have prayed God to render me useful in my sphere, and He has heard my prayers; for now that I am unable to preach, He leaves me strength enough to teach this poor child his letters.” To despise no opportunity of usefulness, is a leading rule with those who are wise to win souls. 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 act of humble ministry as by dozens of sermons addressed to crowded audiences? At any rate, *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. May we do good everywhere as we have opportunity, and results will not be wanting!

Those who are curious as to further evidence of this story will find it in Mr. Birrell’s biography of Richard Knill, though scarcely so fully told. No biographer was likely to know so much about it as myself; but yet the main facts are the same.

The following letter from Mr. Knill to my grandfather is very interesting, as showing how the good man thought of the matter: —

“Chester, 17th April, 1855.  
“Revd. Mr. Spurgeon,  
“Dear Sir,

“Perhaps you have forgotten me: but I have not forgotten my visit to you and your ancient chapel, and the fine trees which surround it, and your garden with the box and yew trees, and your dear grandson with whom I conversed, and on whose head I placed my hand, when I prayed with him in the arbor.

“Two years ago, he wrote to me, reminding me of these things, and of his warm feelings on the occasion.

“Last week I was at Leamington, and dined with a young artist, who had come from London to see his parents. His conversation was much about a popular young minister from the country, whom he had heard preach at Exeter Hall, whose name was Spurgeon. I said I knew him. ‘How is it possible?’ said the gentleman. I told him of my visit, and of your grandson’s letter to me, and of his preaching to John Berridge’s people at Waterbeach, near Cambridge. Oh, it was a fine season of interest and rejoicing! I hardly slept the following night for joy.

“A day or two afterwards I dined near Warwick with a party of friends. Their conversation was also about your grandson, not knowing that I had heard of him. Two of the party had been his hearers in London, and were very full of the subject. One of them said, ‘He mentioned your praying with him at his relative’s in the garden.’ I have prayed much *for* him and *about*him, that God may keep him at the foot of the cross, that popularity may not puff him up.

“Will you please give me his address, as I should like to write to him? Forgive me for this intrusion. I feel much about this dear youth, very much. I have four or five of our ministers in London, and my heart goes out much after them. I have been settled in this city upwards of seven years, and have received more than four hundred members into the church. Matthew Henry’s Chapel is still standing, but is in the possession of the Unitarians. Ours is an offshoot from some of Matthew’s old members, who would have orthodox preaching.

“The Lord bless you and all your family! I have a distant  
recollection of seeing some of them at your house.  
“Yours very truly,  
“RICHARD KNILL.”

After that, I went to preach for Mr. Knill himself, who was then at Chester. What a meeting we had! He was preaching in the theater, and consequently I had to take his place at the footlights. His preaching in a theater took away from me all fear about preaching in buildings of doubtful use, and set me free for the campaigns in Exeter Hall and the Surrey Music Hall. How much this had to do with other theater services many know.

**“*God moves in a mysterious way,  
His wonders to perform.*”**

After more than forty years of the Lord’s lovingkindness, I sat again in that arbor in the year 1887. No doubt it is a mere trifle for outsiders to hear about, but to me it was an overwhelming moment. In July of the year 1887, I went down to Stambourne, and walked about the place like one in a dream. The present minister of Stambourne Meeting-house, and the members of his family, including his son and his grandchildren, were in the garden, and I could not help calling them together around that arbor, while I praised the Lord for His goodness to me. One irresistible impulse was upon me: it was to pray God to bless those lads that stood around me. Memory begat prayer. He who had blessed me, would bless others also. I wanted the lads to remember, when they grew up, my testimony of God’s goodness to me. God has blessed me all my life long, and redeemed me from all evil, and I pray that He may be the God of all the young people who read this story.

The following is the letter mentioned by Mr. Knill on page 35: — “No. 9, Union Road,  
“Cambridge,  
“Feb. 7/53.  
“Rev. R. Knill,  
“My Dear Sir,

“I feel confident that you will pardon the liberty I take when you read the occasion of it. I have for some time wished to write to you, but could not find you out, until in the *Banner*I observed a notice of your preaching in the theater of Chester.

“Eight or nine years ago, you were traveling, as a deputation from the London Missionary Society, in the county of Essex. Among other places, you preached at the village of Stambourne. I was then a little boy staying at my grandfather’s (Rev. Jas. Spurgeon). You kindly noticed me; I read at family prayer; you took me by your side, and talked to me in a very affectionate manner. You told me a tale of a little boy in Colchester; we went into an arbor in the garden, there you asked me to sing, and I joined in as well as I could. I shall never forget the way in which you tried to lead me to the Savior. Your conversation and spirit were all a father’s could have been, and that one interview has made my heart yours. My eyes rejoice to see your name, and the mention of it brings up emotions of gratitude. In fact, unknown to you, a few words you then spoke have been a sort of star to my existence, and my friends look on them with half the reverence of prophecy. You meant them not perhaps to last so long, but now they are imperishable; they were to this effect, and were heard by more than one: — ‘*I think this little man will one day be a preacher of the gospel, and I hope a successful one. I think you will preach in Rowland Hill’s Chapel; and when you do, tell the people this verse,*“God moves in a mysterious way,” etc.’ You told me to learn the hymn, and said *it seemed perhaps unlikely, but Providence had wrought wonders, and you thought it would be so.*This is often mentioned by my grandfather; and somehow, though I am far enough from being superstitious, it holds me fast, and I do confidently, and yet, somehow (and paradoxically), distrustfully, look forward to the time when the whole shall come to pass.

“When sixteen and a half years old, I was persuaded to preach in the villages, having for some time been often called to address children in Sabbath Schools, and always gaining attention, perhaps from my youth as much as anything. Once started in lay-preaching around Cambridge, — where I was and am still assistant in a school, — I put my soul into the work. Having been invited to supply, for one Sabbath, the Baptist Church at Waterbeach, I did so; I was invited to continue, and have now been the minister of the congregation for one year and four months. The chapel is always full, many profess to have felt the power of Divine grace, and residents in the neighborhood say that there is a visible reform manifest; God has used things that are not, to bring to naught things that are. I preach thrice on the Sabbath; and often, indeed, almost constantly, five times in the weeknights. My salary being insufficient, I still remain in the school. Though the congregation is large, they being poor, or men of small property, are unable to do much, — though their kindness may be judged of from the fact that I have been to sixty-two different houses to dine on the Lord’s-day. Thus are your words in part realized.

“Though I do not say that your conversation did then lead to my conversion, yet the thought of what I conceived might be my position one day ever worked in me a desire to gain true religion, which even then I knew was the great essential in a minister. I long for nothing more earnestly than to serve God with all my might. My education is amply sufficient for my present station, and I have means and desires for further improvement.

“The particulars I have given are perhaps too lengthy, but you will excuse it. I could not refrain from letting you know what is no doubt more interesting to me than to you. I pray that, while standing on the polluted ground (in Chester theater), you may consecrate it in many a heart by being the means of their conversion. Your words spoken in season have been good to me; and if I am of any use in the army of the living God, I owe it in great part to you that I ever enlisted in it. I am not nineteen yet; and need, and trust I shall have, a mention in your prayers.

“With the greatest respect,  
“I am,  
“Yours truly,

“CHARLES SPURGEON.”  
“P.S. — Since you are much engaged, I shall scarcely expect a line from you; but if I should be happy enough to receive one, I shall be rejoiced.”

CHAPTER 6.

INCIDENTS OF HOME AND SCHOOL LIFE.

No man can write the whole of his own biography. I suppose, if the history of a man’s thoughts and words could be written, scarce the world itself would contain the books, so wonderful is the tale that might be told. Of my life at home and at school, I can only give a few incidents as I am able to recall them after the lapse of forty or fifty years. One of the earliest, and one that impressed itself very deeply upon my childish mind, relates to —

**MY FIRST AND LAST 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 I to do? There was a little shop in the place, where nuts, and tops, and cakes, and balls were sold by old Mrs. Pearson, f3 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 villainy, for what with companies, and schemes, and paper-money, the nation is getting to be as rotten as touchwood! Ever since that early sickening, I have hated debt as Luther hated the Pope.

Another occurrence of those early days is rather more to my credit. Long after my own sons had grown to manhood, I recalled to my father’s recollection an experience of which, until then, he had never had an explanation. My brother, as a child, suffered from weak ankles, and in consequence frequently fell down, and so got into trouble at home. At last, hoping to cure him of what father thought was only carelessness, he was threatened that he should be whipped every time he came back showing any signs of having fallen down. When I reminded my father of this regulation, he said quite triumphantly, “Yes, it was so, and he was completely cured from that time.” “Ah!” I answered, “so you thought, yet it was not so, for he had many a tumble afterwards; but I always managed to wash his knees, and to brush his clothes, so as to remove all traces of his falls.”

**ILLUSTRATIONS FROM CHILDHOOD’S DAYS.**

I recollect, when a child, seeing on the mantel-piece a stone apple, — wonderfully like an apple, too, and very well colored. I saw that apple years after, but it was no riper. It had been in favorable circumstances for softening and sweetening, if it ever would have become mellow; but I do not think, if the sun of the Equator had shone on it, or if the dews of Hermon had fallen on it, it would ever have been fit to be brought to table. Its hard marble substance would have broken a giant’s teeth. It was a hypocritical professor, a hard-hearted mocker of little children, a mere mimic of God’s fruits. There are church-members who used to be unkind, covetous, censorious, bad-tempered, egotistical, everything that was hard and stony; are they so now? Have they not mellowed with the lapse of years? No; they are worse, if anything, very dogs in the house for snapping and snarling, rending and devouring; great men at hewing down the carved work of the sanctuary with their axes, or at filling up wells, and marring good pieces of land with stones. When the devil wants a stone to fling at a minister, he is sure to use one of them.

When we were small children, we had a little plot of garden-ground, and we put our seeds into it. I well recollect how, the day after I had put in my seed, I went and scraped the soil away to see if it was not growing, as I expected it would have been after a day or so at the very longest, and I thought the time amazingly long before the seed would be able to make its appearance above the ground. “That was childish,” you say. I know it was, but I wish you were as childish with regard to your prayers, that you would, when you have put them in the ground, go and see if they have sprung up; and if not at once, — be not childish in refusing to wait till the appointed time comes, — always go back and see if they have begun to sprout. If you believe in prayer at all, expect God to hear you. If you do not expect, you will not have. God will not hear you unless you believe He will hear you; but if you believe He will, He will be as good as your faith. He will never allow you to think better of Him than He is; He will come up to the mark of your thoughts, and according to your faith so shall it be done unto you.

When we used to go to school, we would draw houses, and horses, and trees on our slates, and I remember how we used to write “house” under the house, and “horse” under the horse, for some persons might have thought the horse was a house. So there are some people who need to wear a label round their necks to show that they are Christians at all, or else we might mistake them for sinners, their actions are so like those of the ungodly.

I remember once, when a lad, having a dog, which I very much prized, and some man in the street asked me to give him the dog; I thought it was pretty impudent, and I said as much. A gentleman, however, to whom I told it, said, “Now suppose the Duke of So-and-so” — who was a great man in the neighborhood, — “asked you for the dog, would you give it to him?” I answered, “I think I would.” So the gentleman said, “Then you are just like all the world; you would give to those who do not need.”

I have seen, when I was a boy, a juggler in the street throw up half-a-dozen balls, or knives and plates, and continue throwing and catching them, and to me it seemed marvelous; but the religious juggler beats all others hollow. He has to keep up Christianity and worldliness at the same time, and to catch two sets of balls at once. To be a freeman of Christ and a slave of the world at the same time, must need fine acting. One of these days you, Sir Juggler, will make a slip with one of the balls, and your game will be over. A man cannot always keep it up, and play so cleverly at all hours; sooner or later he fails, and then he is made a hissing and a by-word, and becomes ashamed, if any shame be left in him.

I can never forget the rushlight, which dimly illuminated the sitting-room of the old house; nor the dips, which were pretty fair when there were not too many of them to the pound; nor the mould candles, which came out only when there was a party, or some special personage was expected. Short sixes were very respectable specimens of household lights. Composites have never seemed to me to be so good as the old sort, made of pure tallow; but I daresay I may be wrong. Nevertheless, I have no liking for composites in theology, but prefer the genuine article without compromise.

A night-light is a delightful invention for the sick. It has supplanted the rushlight, which would frequently be set in a huge sort of tower, which, to me, as a sick child at night, used to suggest dreadful things. With its light shining through the round holes at the side, like so many ghostly eyes, it looked at me staringly; and with its round ring on the ceiling, it made me think of Nebuchadnezzar’s burning fiery furnace.

Once, I thoughtlessly hung a pound of tallow candles on a clothes-horse. This construction was moved near the fire, and the result was a mass of fat on the floor, and the cottons of the candles almost divested of tallow; — a lesson to us all not to expose certain things to a great heat, lest we dissolve them. I fear that many a man’s good resolutions only need the ordinary fire of daily life to make them melt away. So, too, with fine professions, and the boastings of perfection which abound in this age of shams.

I have a distinct remembrance of a mission-room, where my father frequently preached, which was illuminated by candles in tin sconces which hung on the wall. These luminaries frequently went very dim for want of snuffing, and on one occasion an old man, who wanted to see his hymnbook, took the candle from its original place: out of his hand he made a candlestick; his finger and thumb he used as a pair of snuffers; and, finding it needful to cough, he accidentally made use of his mouth as an extinguisher. Thus the furniture of a candle was all contained in his own proper person.

We had practical fun with candles, too; for we would scoop out a turnip, cut eyes and a nose in the rind, and then put a candle inside. This could be judiciously used to amuse, but it might also be injudiciously turned to purposes of alarming youngsters and greenhorns, who ran away, under the apprehension that a ghost was visible. Other things besides turnips can be used to frighten foolish people; but it is a shame to use the light of truth with such a design.

During one of my many holidays at Stambourne, I had a varied experience which I am not likely to forget. My dear grandfather was very fond of Dr. Watts’s hymns, and my grandmother, wishing to get me to learn them, promised me a penny for each one that I should say to her perfectly. I found it an easy and pleasant method of earning money, and learned them so fast that grandmother said she must reduce the price to a halfpenny each, and afterwards to a farthing, if she did not mean to be quite ruined by her extravagance. There is no telling how low the amount per hymn might have sunk, but grandfather said that he was getting overrun with rats, and offered me a shilling a dozen for all I could kill. I found, at the time, that the occupation of rat-catching paid me better than learning hymns, but I know which employment has been the more permanently profitable to me. No matter on what topic I am preaching, I can even now, in the middle of any sermon, quote some verse of a hymn in harmony with the subject; the hymns have remained with me, while those old rats for years have passed away, and the shillings I earned by killing them have been spent long ago.

Many memories were awakened, one day, when I opened my copy of White’s *Natural History of Selborne,*and read the following inscription: —

S TOCKWELL SCHOOL, COLCHESTER.  
Adjudged to  
MASTER C. SPURGEON,  
as the First Class English Prize,  
at the Half-yearly Examination,  
December 11th, 1844.  
T. W. DAVIDS, *Examiner.*

After I had once succeeded in gaining my position at the top of the class, I was careful to retain it, except at one particular period, when I made up my mind to get right down to the bottom. My teacher could not understand my unusual stupidity, until it suddenly occurred to him that I had purposely worked my way from the head of the class, which was opposite a draughty door, down to the foot, which was next to the stove. He therefore reversed the position of the scholars, and it was not long before I had again climbed to the place of honor, where I had also the enjoyment of the heat from the fire.

(Writing to *The Christian World,*in February, 1892, Mr. R. D. Cheveley, of Harrogate, who had been a fellow-scholar with C. H. Spurgeon at Colchester, said: —

“Stockwell House, Colchester, where Charles Haddon Spurgeon was being educated from the age of eleven to fifteen [ten to fourteen], was a thoroughly good middle-class classical and commercial school. Mr. Henry Lewis, the principal, was a man whose literary attainments were of a superior order, and for years he was assisted by a very scholarly man in the person of Mr. Leeding, whose death occurred only very recently. Mr. Leeding was the classical and mathematical tutor; his teaching was very thorough, and in Charles Spurgeon he possessed a pupil of a very receptive mind, especially with Latin and Euclid. I remember well that in both of these subjects he was very advanced, so that he left Stockwell House a thoroughly well-educated youth; in fact, quite as much so as it was possible for him to attain outside the Universities.”)

(In *The Sword and the Trowel,*October, 1890, Mr. Spurgeon made the following kind reference to the home-going of his old tutor: — )

The Norwood papers contain the following death: — L EEDING, — September 11, at the Academy, West Norwood, Edwin Sennit Leeding, aged 77 years.  
This Mr. Leeding was usher at the school of Mr. Henry Lewis, of Colchester, in 1845, and I (C. H. Spurgeon) was one of the boys under his care. He was a teacher who really taught his pupils; and by his diligent skill I gained the foundation upon which I built in after years. He left Colchester to open a school of his own in Cambridge, and I to go, first to Maidstone, and then to Newmarket for some two years. Then we came together again; for I joined him at Cambridge to assist in his school, and in return to be helped in my studies. He has left on record that he did not think that there was need for me to go to any of the Dissenting Colleges, since I had mastered most of the subjects studied therein; and his impression that I might, while with him, have readily passed through the University if the pulpit had not come in the way. His school did not succeed, for he was not well enough to attend to it; and in after years I found my old tutor struggling at West Norwood against the difficult circumstances which Board Schools have created for private ventures. He was a good man and true, — a man of prayer, faith, and firm principle. His life was full of trials, and I have seen him greatly depressed, but he has honorably finished his course, and has gone to his reward. I have always looked to him, among the many of whom I have gathered help, as my tutor. Thus the tutor has gone home, and the scholar must not forget that in due course he will follow.

CHAPTER 7.

MEMORIES OF MAIDSTONE AND NEWMARKET.

I R ECOLLECT that, when I first came to London as a boy, to go to school at Maidstone, while I was sitting in the coach, ready to start, a man came along selling knives with a great number of blades. He put one in at the window, and stuck it right before my face. Why did he want to intrude on me like that? He had no business to poke a knife into my eye; but he had never studied that kind of modesty which some of us have. If he had kept that many-bladed knife in his pocket, and quietly said, “If there should be a person in the coach who would like to look at a knife with ever so many blades, I have one in my pocket,” he would not have sold one in a century; but he picked me out as a likely customer, and opened the blades as if he knew that such a knife would be wonderfully fascinating to a boy going to school. That man’s energy taught me a lesson which I have often turned to good account when I have been trying to induce people to “buy the truth.”

I was about the age of fourteen when I was sent to a Church of England school, — now called St. Augustine’s College, Maidstone. We had three clergymen who came by turns to teach us their doctrines; but, somehow or other, the pupils did not seem to get on much, for when one of them was asked by a clergyman how many sacraments there were, he said, “Seven,” and when that was denied, he said, “Oh, sir, there is one that they take at the haltar!” upon which I could not help saying, “That’s hanging, I should think,” which suggestion made even the reverend gentleman smile, although, of course, I was bidden not to be so rude as to interrupt again. I am sure many of the sons of the gentry in that establishment were more ignorant of Scripture than the boys in some of our Ragged Schools.

One of the clergy was, I believe, a good man; and it is to him I owe that ray of light which sufficed to show me believers’ baptism. I was usually at the head of the class, and on one occasion, when the Church of England Catechism was to be repeated, something like the following conversation took place: —

*Clergyman*. — What is your name? *Spurgeon*. — Spurgeon, sir. *Clergyman*. — No, no; what is your name? *Spurgeon*. — Charles Spurgeon, sir. *Clergyman*. — No, you should not behave so, for you know I only want

your Christian name.

*Spurgeon*. — If you please, sir, I am afraid I haven’t got one. *Clergyman*. — Why, how is that? *Spurgeon*. — Because I do not think I am a Christian. *Clergyman*. — What are you, then, — a heathen? *Spurgeon*. — No, sir; but we may not be heathens, and yet be without

the grace of God, and so not be truly Christians.

*Clergyman*. — Well, well, never mind; what is your first name? *Spurgeon*. — Charles. *Clergyman*. — Who gave you that name? *Spurgeon*. — I am sure I don’t know, sir; I know no godfathers ever did

anything for me, for I never had any. Likely enough, my mother and father did.

*Clergyman*. — Now, you should not set these boys a-laughing. Of

course, I do not wish you to say the usual answer.

He seemed always to have a respect for me, and gave me The *Christian Year,*in calf, as a reward for my great proficiency in religious knowledge. Proceeding with the Catechism, he suddenly turned to me, and said, — Spurgeon, you were never properly baptized.

*Spurgeon*. — Oh, yes, sir, I was; my grandfather baptized me in the little

parlor, and he is a minister, so I know he did it right!

*Clergyman*. — Ah, but you had neither faith nor repentance, and

therefore ought not to have received baptism!

*Spurgeon*. — Why, sir, that has nothing to do with it! All infants ought

to be baptized.

*Clergyman*. — How do you know that? Does not the Prayer Book say

that faith and repentance are necessary before baptism? And this is so Scriptural a doctrine, that no one ought to deny it. (Here he went on to show that all the persons spoken of in the Bible as being baptized were believers; which, of course, was an easy task, and then said to me, — ) Now, Charles, I shall give you till next week to find out whether the Bible does not declare faith and repentance to be necessary qualifications before baptism.

I felt sure enough of victory; for I thought that a ceremony my grandfather and father both practiced in their ministry must be right; but I could not find it, — I was beaten, — and made up my mind as to the course I would take.

*Clergyman*. — Well, Charles, what do you think now? *Spurgeon*. — Why, sir, I think you are right; but then it applies to you as

well as to me!

*Clergyman*. — I wanted to show you this; for this is the reason why we

appoint sponsors. It is that, without faith, I had no more right than you to holy baptism; but the promise of my sponsors was accepted by the Church as an equivalent. You have no doubt seen your father, when he has no money, give a note-of-hand for it; and this is regarded as an earnest of payment, because, as an honest man, we have reason to expect he will honor the note he has given. Now, sponsors are generally good people, and in charity we accept their promise on behalf of the child. As the child cannot at the time have faith, we accept the bond that he will; which promise he fulfills at confirmation, when he takes the bond into his own hands.

*Spurgeon*. — Well, sir, I think it is a very bad note-of-hand. *Clergyman*. — I have no time to argue that, but I believe it to be good. I

will only ask you this, — Which seems to have the greater regard to Scripture, — I, as a Churchman, or your grandfather as a Dissenter? He baptizes in the very teeth of Scripture; and I do not, in my opinion, do so, for I require a promise, which I look upon as an equivalent of repentance and faith, to be rendered in future years.

*Spurgeon*. — Really, sir, I think you are more like right; but since it

seems to be the truth that only believers should be baptized, I think you are both wrong, though you seem to treat the Bible with the greater politeness.

*Clergyman*. — Well, then, you confess that you were not properly

baptized; and you would think it your duty, if in your power, to join with us, and have sponsors to promise on your behalf?

*Spurgeon*. — Oh, no! I have been baptized once, before I ought; I will

wait next time till I am fit for it.

*Clergyman*. — (Smiling.) Ah, you are wrong; but I like to see you keep

to the Word of God! Seek from Him a new heart and Divine direction, and you will see one truth after another, and very probably there will be a great change in those opinions which now seem so deeply rooted in you.

I resolved, from that moment, that if ever Divine grace should work a change in me, I would be baptized, since, as I afterwards told my friend the clergyman, “I never ought to be blamed for improper baptism, as I had nothing to do with it; the error, if any, rested with my parents and grandparents.”

When at Mentone, on one occasion, I was greatly pleased to receive the following note from a lady I met there, as it enabled me to identify the esteemed clergyman who had shown himself so interested in my welfare while at Maidstone: —

“Mrs. S\_\_\_ wrote me, the other day, that she had been dining out, and sat next to Canon Jeffreys, of Hawkhurst. The conversation turned upon Mr. Spurgeon and his valuable Commentary on the Psalms. The Canon said that he once examined at some Grammar School where the boy Spurgeon was, and that he was the only boy out of, I forget how many, who could answer most of the questions. Some boys could not do *any,*while young Spurgeon did all excepting those on the Church Catechism.”

It was while I was at Maidstone that I had the opportunity of attending the services of the Established Church, and therefore was able, long afterwards, to say to the students of the Pastors’ College: — “There is an ecclesiastical twang which is much admired in the Establishment, a sort of steeple-in-the-throat grandeur, an aristocratic, theologic, parsonic, supernatural, infra-human mouthing of language and rolling over of words. It maybe illustrated by the following specimen, — ‘He that hath yaws to yaw, let him yaw,’ which is a remarkable, if not impressive, rendering of a Scripture text. Who does not know the hallowed way of pronouncing — ‘Dearly-beloved brethren, the Scripture moveth us in divers places’? It rolls in my ears now like Big Ben, coupled with boyish memories of monotonous peals of ‘The Prince Albert, Albert Prince of Wales, and all the Royal Family… Amen.’ Now, if a man who talks so unnaturally does *not*get bronchitis, or some other disease, I can only say that throat diseases must be very sovereignly dispensed. At the Nonconformist hobbies of utterance I have already struck a blow, and I believe it is by them that larynx and lungs become delicate, and good men succumb to silence and the grave.”

I had a variety of experiences while at that Church school. One piece of mischief I remember to this day. There was a large jar of ammonia in a certain cupboard, and I used to lead the new boys to it, and tell them to take a good sniff, the usual result being that they would be quite overpowered. Once, when a boy fell down in a dead faint, I was really frightened, and I did not want to play the same trick on anyone else. Perhaps I took the more liberty as the master (Mr. David Walker) was my uncle; at any rate, I was a great favorite with my aunt, and that fact helped me out of many a difficulty.

Mr. Walker’s usual plan of punishing his pupils was to make the sentence bear as much resemblance as possible to the offense they had committed. For instance, the boys had gone one night, and borrowed a boat from the river; so, the next night, they were roused from their slumbers, and made to go at once to return it to its proper place. They would probably be all the more careful not to repeat their wrong-doing when they found how much discomfort it brought to themselves.

It often happened that, when corporal punishment was to be administered, my uncle would send me out to find a cane for him. It was not a very pleasant task, and I noticed that I never once succeeded in selecting a stick which was liked by the boy who had to feel it. Either it was too thin, or too thick; and, in consequence, I was threatened by the sufferers with condign punishment if I did not do better next time. I learned from that experience never to expect God’s children to like the particular rod with which they are chastened.

I greatly offended my uncle, on one occasion, by pointing out an error in an arithmetical problem he was working on the blackboard. He said that it was derogatory to his dignity to be corrected before his pupils, but I maintained that it was not right for me to let the mistake pass without mentioning it after I had detected the blunder. I think, after that incident, he judged that I could employ my time to the greatest advantage by taking my books, and studying by myself beneath an old oak-tree by the river Medway; at all events, he showed his appreciation of my mathematical progress by allowing me to make the calculations which are, I believe, still used by a certain Life Insurance Society in London.

(In the month of July, 1889, Mr. Spurgeon paid a short visit to the town of Maidstone. On the Sabbath evening after his drive into Kent, he preached at the Metropolitan Tabernacle a sermon upon Psalm 71:17, in which he said: — )

I went down, last week, to Maidstone, in Kent. It is as near as possible to the day, forty years ago, when I left the school called a “College” there. I thought that I must go down and look at the spot, and specially at a tree which stands by the river Medway. Under that tree I spent many hours, and many days, and even many weeks, reading all day long. “In school-time?” say you. Yes, my master thought that I should do better under that tree than in the class; and he was a wise man. He gave me my book, and left me to myself; and as I stood last week under that tree, with the smoothlyflowing river at my feet, I could thank God for His mercy to me for all these forty years, and I could say, “O God, Thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared Thy wondrous works.” There may be some young people here tonight, just come back from school, boys and girls who are just finishing their school days. I would to God that they would spend some time in holy, quiet thought about their future, about whom they will serve, who shall be their Teacher, for whom they will become teachers, and how the life which has now become more public than before shall be spent.

As I stood there, last week, I could not help praising God that, not long after I left that school, He led me to faith in Christ, and to rest in Him, and find eternal life; and I could not but thank God that I went to that school for twelve months. It was a Church of England school. I had never seen anything of Church of Englandism till that time; but there was a turning in my life, through being there, to which I owe my being here. The Church of England Catechism has in it, as some of you may remember, this question, “What is required of persons to be baptized?” and the answer I was taught to give, and did give, was, “Repentance, whereby they forsake sin; and faith, whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that sacrament.” I looked that answer up in the Bible, and I found it to be strictly correct as far as repentance and faith are concerned; and of course, when I afterwards became a Christian, I also became a Baptist; and here I am, and it is due to the Church of England Catechism that I am a Baptist. Having been brought up amongst Congregationalists, I had never looked at the matter in my life. I had thought myself to have been baptized as an infant; and so, when I was confronted with the question, “What is required of persons to be baptized?” and I found that repentance and faith were required, I said to myself, “Then I have not been baptized; that infant sprinkling of mine was a mistake; and please God that I ever have repentance and faith, I will be properly baptized.” I did not know that there was one other person in the world who held the same opinion; for so little do Baptists make any show, or so little did they do so then, that I did not know of their existence. So I feel grateful to the Church school, and grateful to the Church Catechism, for what I learnt at Maidstone. I do not know that I have any vivid gratitude for any other question in the Catechism; but I am very thankful for that particular one, for it led me where it was never intended to lead me by those who wrote it. It led me, however, as I believe, to follow the Scriptural teaching that repentance and faith are required before there can be any true baptism.

**THE YOUNG USHER’S TEACHER IN THEOLOGY.**

The first lessons I ever had in theology were from an old cook in the school at Newmarket where I was an usher. She was a good old soul, and used to read *The Gospel Standard.*She liked something very sweet indeed, good strong Calvinistic doctrine; but she lived strongly as well as fed strongly. Many a time we have gone over the covenant of grace together, and talked of the personal election of the saints, their union to Christ, their final perseverance, and what vital godliness meant; and I do believe that I learnt more from her than I should have learned from any six doctors of divinity of the sort we have nowadays. There are some Christian people who taste, and see, and enjoy religion in their own souls, and who get at a deeper knowledge of it than books can ever give them, though they should search all their days. The cook at Newmarket was a godly experienced woman, from whom I learned far more than I did from the minister of the chapel we attended. I asked her once, “Why do you go to such a place?” She replied, “Well, there is no other place of worship to which I can go.” I said, “But it must be better to stay at home than to hear such stuff.” “Perhaps so,” she answered; “but I like to go out to worship even if I get nothing by going. You see a hen sometimes scratching all over a heap of rubbish to try to find some corn; she does not get any, but it shows that she is looking for it, and using the means to get it, and then, too, the exercise warms her.” So the old lady said that scratching over the poor sermons she heard was a blessing to her because it exercised her spiritual faculties and warmed her spirit. On another occasion I told her that I had not found a crumb in the whole sermon, and asked how she had fared. “Oh!” she answered, “I got on better to-night, for to all the preacher said, I just put in a *not,*and that turned his talk into real gospel.”

(After Mr. Spurgeon was “called home,” Professor J. D. Everett, F.R.S., of Queen’s College, Belfast, wrote to *The Christian World: —*“In the summer of 1849, when I was not quite eighteen, I went to Newmarket to assist in a school kept by a Mr. Swindell, f4 who had been an old friend of my father’s, and who had my brothers, Percy and John, as pupils. There were two other assistants, but not long after my arrival they went off, and I was left for a week or so as the sole assistant. I was then relieved of part of my duty by a lad of fifteen, who came as an articled pupil. This was Charles H. Spurgeon, and for the next three months we shared the work between us. We boarded in the house, occupied the same bedroom, took our walks together, discussed our common grievances, and were the best of friends. He was a keen observer of men and manners, and very shrewd in his judgments. He enjoyed a joke, but was earnest, hard-working, and strictly conscientious. He had a wonderful memory for passages of oratory which he admired, and used to pour forth to me with great gusto, in our walks, long screeds from open-air addresses of a very rousing description, which he had heard delivered at Colchester Fair, by the Congregational minister, Mr. Davids. His imagination had evidently been greatly impressed by these services, at which, by-the-by, his father was selected to give out the hymns on account of the loudness of his voice, — a quality which would appear to have run in the family, but which had not at that time shown itself in my young friend. I have also heard him recite long passages from Bunyan’s *Grace Abounding.*He was a delightful companion, cheerful and sympathetic; a good listener as well as a good talker. And he was not cast in a common conventional mould, but had a strong character of his own.

“As to the early history of his theological views, I can add something to what has been already published. In Mr. Swindell’s household there was a faithful old servant, — a big, sturdy woman, who was well known to me and all the inmates as ‘cook.’ She was a woman of strong religious feelings, and a devout Calvinist. Spurgeon, when under deep religious conviction, had conversed with her, and been deeply impressed with her views of Divine truth. He explained this to me, and told me, in his own terse fashion, that it was ‘cook’ who had taught him his theology. I hope I am not violating his confidence in mentioning this fact. It is no discredit to the memory of a great man that he was willing to learn from the humblest sources.”)

(When the above article appeared in print, Mr. Robert Mattingly, of Great Cornard, Sudbury, wrote to the same paper: —

“About twenty-five years ago, I became acquainted with the person referred to, Mary King by name. She was then living in cottage lodgings, facing St. Margaret’s Church, Ipswich, and was a member of the Bethesda Strict Baptist Church, close by. She was a staunch Calvinist, logical, clearheaded, and had a wonderful knowledge of the Bible. I have often heard from her lips the account of her intercourse with the youthful Spurgeon, of which she was naturally not a little proud, as he had then attained the height of his marvelous popularity. Professor Everett says she was known as ‘cook.’ She always spoke of herself as ‘housekeeper’, and as the intercourse between Mr. Spurgeon and herself seemed to be quite within the order of the household, she probably occupied something more than a menial position. During my acquaintance with her, I learned that she had outlived all, or nearly all, of a small income (I do not remember from what source). I wrote to Mr. Spurgeon, acquainting him with the facts, and received from him a prompt reply, thanking me for my letter, sending a hearty greeting to his old friend, and with characteristic generosity he enclosed a check for £5, with a request that I would minister to her immediate necessities, pay her 5s. a week, and generally use my discretion in dispensing the amount in his behalf. This I did, and reported to Mr. Spurgeon from time to time, always receiving a fresh check when the fund in hand became exhausted, and this was continued until her death about three years later.”)

(Professor Everett has kindly transcribed from his journal all the entries relating to Mr. Spurgeon while at Newmarket. Most of the matters mentioned are not of general public interest, but the two following items are worthy of preservation in this volume: —

“ *Monday, Sept.*10 (1849). — In the afternoon, the missionary meeting began. Mr. Spurgeon was made chairman. [This was a meeting of the boys, in the schoolroom. I believe it was the first time Mr. Spurgeon ever made a speech. He spoke fluently.]

“ *Tuesday, October* 9. — After dinner, I took Percy and four other boys to see the races. We saw the Cesarewitch, the most celebrated race at Newmarket; thirty-one horses ran. We also saw four other races. I saw quite enough to gratify my curiosity, and did not wish to stop to see any more races. Mr. Spurgeon did not go, as he thought he should be doing wrong if he went.”)

CHAPTER 8.

A HOLIDAY PASTIME. — ESSAY ON POPERY.

I knew a lad in Christ, who adopted the principle of giving a tenth to God. When he won a money prize for an essay on a religious subject, he felt that he could not give less than one-fifth of it. He had never after that been able to deny himself the pleasure of having a fifth to give. God had wonderfully blessed that lad, and increased his means, and his enjoyment of the luxury of luxuries, — the luxury of doing good. — C. H. S.

IN the library at “Westwood,” very carefully preserved, is a bound volume containing 295 manuscript pages, lettered on the back, —  
**SPURGEON’S  
POPERY UNMASKED.**  
On the front outside cover is a red leather label, with the following words printed upon it in gold letters thus, —

***~~ANTICHRIST AND HER BROOD; OR,  
POPERY UNMASKED.~~***

***~~BY  
C. H. SPURGEON, AETAT. 15.~~***

***~~Written in the November and December of 1849, as a kind of holiday amusement, and sent to Misters Ward and Co’s on occasion of a competition for a prize offered by Mr. Morley of Nottingham. Although the writer had scarcely a distant prospect of success, he received, two years after, the following note: —~~***

***~~Poplar London,  
Dec. 23, 1851~~***

***~~Dear Sir,  
You were one of the competitors for a prize to be awarded for an approved essay on Popery. Your paper is not deemed entitled to the premium, — but the gentleman who offered it, and who is a relative of mine, in approval of your zeal, and in the hope that you may yet employ your talents for the public good, had requested me to offer you £ 0 0 as a gratuity. If you will tell me how you wish the money to be sent, it shall be conveyed to you, and your MS. shall be returned in any way you direct,~~***

***~~I remain Yours truly  
G. Smith~~***

On the opposite page is a *fac-simile*of Mr. Spurgeon’s own account of the origin of the volume, and of its appreciation by Mr. Morley, whose Christian name is made known in the second letter from Mr. Smith, who was at that time Congregational minister at Poplar, and who, on August 16th, 1859, met the young essayist, and took part with him in the services held in connection with the laying of the first stone of the Metropolitan Tabernacle: —

“Poplar,  
“Dec. 30, 1851.  
“My dear Sir,

“Enclosed is an order for \_\_\_\_\_, which my brother-in-law, Mr. Arthur Morley, of Nottingham, presents to you. I shall be obliged by your acknowledgment of the same.

“It gives me pleasure to hear of your success in preaching the gospel of Christ. God will, I trust, continue to bless you. Depend on Him, and use all the means within your reach for the cultivation and improvement of your mind.

“I remain,  
“Yours truly,  
“G. SMITH.

“Mr. C. Spurgeon,  
“No. 9, Union Road,  
“Cambridge.”  
A letter of the same period, written by C. H. Spurgeon to his father, gives further particulars concerning the Essay, and also explains how the writer proposed to use most of the money that had thus unexpectedly reached him. It furnishes besides an interesting glimpse of the young preacher’s early services at Waterbeach, of which more will appear in a later chapter, and also of the way in which he was preparing for his great life-work: —

“Cambridge,  
“Dec. 31ST, 1851.  
“My Dear Father,

“Your Christmas letter was quite as welcome to me as [mine was] to you — no good action is ever forgotten. I was at Waterbeach staying among my people, and so did not receive your letter till my return. I preached twice on Christmas [day] to crammed congregations, and again on Sunday quite as full. The Lord gives me favor in the eyes of the people; they come for miles, and are wondrously attentive. I am invited [to preach at Waterbeach] for six months. My reputation in Cambridge is rather great.

“This letter from Mr. Smith is an honor. I have now more money for books. When I wrote my essay on my knees in the little room upstairs, I solemnly vowed to give two tithes of anything I might gain by it to the Lord’s cause. I have written, the money is come… My MS. will arrive here shortly. Now, if you wish, I will send you… [five-sixths of the amount received] as a little present to you and dear Mother — that shall be exactly as you please — I do not know yet how much I am to pay Mr. Leeding. I have enough. Mr. L. has given me a five-pound note, which I shall not touch except for clothes. I mean to keep that money only for clothes; what I earn on Sundays is my own for books, expenses, etc. I hope I am sparing, but I have bought several books, which I could not do without. This week I have purchased a good Septuagint, which is a Greek translation of the Old Testament; you will see it mentioned by commentators. This I did for two reasons — **1.** To improve my Greek. **2.** To assist me in studying the Bible. I got it in two volumes, unbound, for 12s. 6d. — at that price it is reckoned exceedingly cheap.  
“Now and then you must give me leave to preach three times, not often. I have done so about four times, I was not at all tired. I shall never do so if I have had a hard day. When I feel myself in tune and not at all tired, I may do so; but only now and then. I must say, however, I always get the best congregation in the evening, or at least just as good, for sometimes it is best *all*day: and you would not have me give up so good a place. I have prayed earnestly that prosperity and fame may not injure me, and I believe strength will be equal to my day. More than one in Waterbeach have declared themselves on the Lord’s side — the church is praying hard, and they seem very united.

“I take every opportunity of improving myself, and seize every means of improvement. I have lately attended three lectures in the Town Hall to get information; I trust I do.”

[The conclusion of the letter is missing.]

In order that readers may be able to form some idea of the Essay written by C. H. Spurgeon when fifteen years of age, the headings of the seventeen chapters are here given, with one chapter as a specimen of the other sixteen. That particular portion of the work was selected to show how the writer, even before his conversion, had very clear ideas as to spiritual matters. It is remarkable that he should have quoted in this part of the Essay the very passage which, a few weeks afterwards, the Lord used as the means of his salvation: “*Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.*”

**ANTICHRIST AND HER BROOD; OR, POPERY UNMASKED.**

**H EADS OF CHAPTERS.** Chapter 1. Popery, the Apostate Spirit.  
Chapter 2. Popery Established by Cunning. Chapter 3. Popery, a Spiritual Darkness. Chapter 4. Popery, a Mass of Superstition. Chapter 5. Popery, a Ravenous Wolf.  
Chapter 6. Examination of the Claims of Popery.

Chapter 7. Popery, a Complicated Idolatry. The Worship of the Virgin Mary.

Chapter 8. Popery, a Polytheism. Worship of Saints.  
Chapter 9. Popery, the Worship of Cast Clouts and Rotten Rags. Chapter 10. Popery, a Violation of the Second Commandment. Chapter 11. Popery Teaches the Adoration of a Breaden God.

Chapter 12. Popery Perverts and Destroys the Sacred Ordinances of Christianity.

Chapter 13. Popery Surrounds Itself with Rites and Ceremonies. Chapter 14. Popery, the Inventor of a False Purgation.  
Chapter 15. Popery, a Gigantic Horseleech.  
Chapter 16. Popery, the Religion of Fools, who make a Mock at Sin.

Chapter 17. Popery, the Enemy of Science, and the Bane of the Human Race.  
**CHAPTER 3.  
POPERY, A SPIRITUAL DARKNESS.**

The Bible withheld. — False statement of a priest. — The Scriptures unintelligible because in an unknown tongue. — Bible burnt round the necks of heretics. — Council of Trent. — Blasphemy of its decrees. — Case in point. — Testimony of Du Moulin. — Bible Societies. — Bull of Pius VII. — Bible mystified by notes. — Bible the Word of God. — Popery unchanged. — Bishop of Nice burns Bibles in 1841. — Declaration of Popish Bishops. — Duty to read the Bible. — Sermons omitted. — Ignorance of the Priests. — Sermons nothing but ribaldry. — Immense service of Ignorance.

The three most powerful and most apparent means used by Rome to retain her power over the minds of her votaries are Ignorance, Superstition, and Persecution.

First, then, let us look at Ignorance which, though not “the mother of devotion,” is certainly the favorer of superstition. This has been one of the grand agents of Popery ever since her establishment; by it, the eyes of men have been so blinded that they can scarcely discern between good and evil, and follow implicitly any guide even until they fall into the ditch of perdition.

The grossest ignorance is spiritual ignorance; and the greatest spiritual darkness is to be ignorant of the only way of salvation as it is revealed alone in the Scriptures.

The Church which withholds the Bible from its members, or takes away from them the genuine Word of God, is guilty of bringing the most dreadful famine upon the minds of men, and will be in a great measure guilty of their blood. This charge is one of the most weighty ever brought against the Church of Rome, and one which can be very easily substantiated.

The Rev. A. Scott, of Glasgow, in a letter against *The Protestant,*a controversial work published about 30 years since, says: — “I can publicly declare — without danger of being contradicted by my brethren, or censured by my superiors, — that it never was a principle of the Roman Catholic Church that the Scriptures should be withheld from the laity, and there never was any law enacted by the supreme legislative authority in the Catholic Church by which the reading of the Scriptures was prohibited. If it was indeed a principle of the Roman Catholic Church to deprive her members of the use of the Divine Word by forbidding them to read and search the Scriptures, she would indeed be cruel and unjust.”

Here, then, is a distinguished Roman Catholic priest publicly disowning this great bulwark of Romanism.

We cordially agree with the rev. gentleman, that it is cruel and unjust to withhold the Bible; but we hope to be able to disprove his barefaced falsehood, and convince the world to the contrary.

The Scriptures were translated into the Latin tongue by Jerome; but that language becoming dead, and the Church neglecting to supply translations, it was only intelligible to the learned; it was not forbidden to the people, but it was of no more use to them than a scroll of hieroglyphics. This state of things continued from the eighth to the thirteenth centuries when, at the Council of Toulouse, the Scriptures were forbidden to the laity both in the Latin and vulgar tongues. We all know how violently the Pope was enraged against Wycliffe for his undertaking to translate the Scriptures into English. Had the Pope had his will, the translator and his version of the Bible would have been burnt in the same fire; indeed, it was no uncommon thing, previous to Luther’s Reformation, to burn heretics with the Bible about their necks.

The reading of the Bible was understood invariably to produce heresy; and there were many who suffered death for no other crime.

In the decisions of the Council of Trent, 1564, this clause occurs: — “Seeing it is manifest, by experience, that if the Holy Bible be permitted to be read everywhere, without difference, in the vulgar tongue, more harm than good results thence, through the rashness of men, let it therefore be at the pleasure of the bishop or inquisitor, with the advice of the parish clerk or confessor, to grant the reading of the Bible, translated by Catholic authors, to those who, in their opinion, will thereby receive an increase of faith and piety. This license let them have in writing, and whoever shall presume, without permission, to read or possess such Bibles, may not receive the absolution of sins till he has returned them to the ordinary.”

Abominable blasphemy! So, then, the Church of Rome permits the Almighty, under certain circumstances, to speak to His own creatures!! It *permits*fallen and miserable men sometimes to hear the Word of their Creator!

In the Bible, the Almighty addresses us as by a voice from Heaven: “Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.” The Church of Rome stands by, and presumes to decide who shall and who shall not hear these words of the Almighty Savior; and if any person shall at all hear them, it is by her permission. Surely, then, this Church of Rome is that Antichrist, — that opposing power that exalts itself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped.

To assume the power of permitting creatures to hear what God shall speak, is assuming an authority at least equal to that of God, and a right to control or regulate the manner of His communicating His will to His creatures.

We will suggest a case somewhat similar. Suppose that, in the City of London, there were a number of traitors who had openly rebelled against the Queen; and that she, out of her gracious disposition, and aversion to destroy those traitors, should issue a proclamation promising a free pardon to those who would submit themselves to the authority of the laws. Now suppose that the Lord Mayor and Aldermen were to sit in Council, and consider whether or not they would permit this proclamation to be published in London; and suppose that they should even come to a resolution to *permit*this proclamation to be published, would not this lead you strongly to suspect their loyalty for presuming to put their authority on a footing with that of the Sovereign, and presuming to “*permit*” her proclamation to be published?

God addresses His gospel to sinners as such, in order that, hearing and believing it, sinners may be saved; but the Church of Rome exercises her authority to prevent, as far as she is able, the Word of God from reaching the ears of sinners. She allows it to be addressed only to such as will “thereby receive an increase of faith and piety;” that is, to persons who are already faithful and pious in some degree. Thus, she proves herself to be in league with Satan, for the purpose of keeping men under the bondage of sin to the everlasting ruin of their souls.

But, to return to history, the learned and excellent Du Moulin, a French Protestant divine of the seventeenth century, says, “That the people may be blinded and deceived without understanding so much, the Pope hath wrested the Scriptures out of their hands, and taken order that they should not be translated into a known tongue. Within these few years, the Scriptures were no more known to the people than the Alcoran; there were only some Latin Bibles in monasteries and clergymen’s houses.”

In 1824, Pope Leo XII styles the Scriptures in the vulgar tongue, “Poisonous Pastures,” and exhorts the clergy to turn the flock away from them. In a Bull of Pope Pius VII, against Bible Societies, in 1816, he says: — “We have been truly shocked by this most crafty device by which the very foundations of religion are undermined. The Bible printed by heretics is to be numbered among other prohibited books, conformably to the rules of the Index; for it is evident, from experience, that the Holy Scriptures, when circulated in the vulgar tongue, have through the temerity of men produced more harm than benefit. It is therefore necessary that no versions of the Bible in the vulgar tongue be permitted except such as are approved by the Apostolic see, or published with annotations extracted from the writings of the fathers of the Church.”

Here, then, it is declared that the circulation and reading of the Scriptures undermine the foundations of religion, which is certainly true if Popery be the only true religion. There is another Church, however, which has its foundations laid more firmly than the Church of Rome; this is the Church of Christ, which embraces the Scriptures as its best ally, and finds in them nothing but what is in harmony with itself.

The Church of Rome is afraid to trust the Bible alone, because it destroys the foundations of its religion. If the Scriptures were given to the people simply as they are, Romanism would never be able to stand against them; it would soon be known that Rome is the very Antichrist. She therefore mystifies the Word of God by means of the words of men; she puts her own perversions side by side with Scripture; and declares that, as she alone can interpret them, whatever is said to be the meaning of them must really be so.

Is it not now proved that Popery withholds the Bible from the people? It may serve as an illustration of the character of Popery if we bear in mind the statement of the priest who declared that it never was a principle of Romanism to deny the Scriptures to the people. Popery is a system of lies; she will deny or assert, just as it suits her purpose. However, we will readily believe his assertion that, in denying the Scriptures to the people, Popery is “cruel and unjust.”

But many Papists will endeavor to justify this prohibition of the Scriptures, and say that it is not the will of God that His Book should be read by common people. Such men, when they hear it said that the Bible contains a complete revelation of the Divine will for the salvation of our fallen race, and is a proclamation of grace and pardon to the very chief of sinners, will exclaim, “What nonsense!” Such was actually the case in a celebrated discussion at Glasgow. But we will leave them to laugh and jeer; we know that it is the only Book which can cheer the penitent; it is God’s Word, and that alone upon which a trembling sinner dares to rely. But what argument can be of avail with those who reject truth, who despise the very essence of truth? Some among them have said, “How do you know that the Bible is the Word of God?”

Among other reasons which will readily suggest themselves, one alone will suffice. Every Christian knows, experimentally, that the Bible is the Word of God. When a sinner becomes seriously concerned about his character, state, and prospects, if he reads the Bible, he finds at first that it is all against him. By the holy law of God he is convicted and condemned; and he is conscious of a power and dignity in the Word of condemnation that makes him feel that it is the Word of God. There is a power in the Word that proves it Divine; and he who has once experienced its influence will never doubt its truth.

All the Popish arguments do but prove that they love darkness rather than light. The Bible is a light unto our feet, and a lamp unto our path. Man by nature is blind, he runs the downward road with alacrity, he sees not the end; he would still continue to follow the road which leadeth to destruction had not God, in His infinite mercy, given him a sure guide to bring him from this treacherous way to the straight and narrow path, which leads to His right hand.

Popery could never have been what it is if men had been allowed to read the Bible; the light of truth would have been too strong for her; she would have perished prematurely. What an awful account will her great men have to give in, of the blood of thousands perishing for lack of knowledge!

But you will say, “Popery is changed now; surely, she is much improved.”

She has not yielded a point more than she could help! The true spirit of Popery is not allowed to develop itself in Protestant countries. Here, in England, it would seem that the Catholic is under little restraint. The Bible is printed for his use in England, though always with explanatory notes as if it could not be trusted alone. But on the Continent of Europe, and in other parts of the world, the system has full scope. In Rome, very few of the people know what you mean by a Bible.

In 1841, the Bishop of Nice burnt all the French Bibles he could collect. Can any more flagitious wickedness be conceived than for a creature of the dust, invested with the holy character of a bishop of the living God, and a minister of Jesus, to dare, with sacrilegious hands, to cast into the flames the blessed Book of God, inspired by the Holy Ghost? In the great dread day of judgment, what excuse will this apostate Church and her Bibleburning priesthood have to prefer before the heart-searching God in justification of these things?

Dr. Doyle, an Irish Roman Catholic bishop, when asked whether he had ever seen a translation of the Scriptures in the language of Portugal, where he was brought up, answered, “No, I have not.” Dr. Murray, another bishop, did not know for a fact whether there was a Spanish version of the Bible. They both stated that they would refuse the Sacrament to any person who should persist in reading the Bible.  
The reading of the Scriptures, then, is still condemned by the Romish Church, in opposition to the Word of God, which says, “Seek ye out of the Book of the Lord, and read” (Isaiah 34:16); “Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me” (John 5:39); “and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God” (Ephesians 6:17); and numerous other exhortations.

But this prohibition of the Bible might not have been so great an evil, if the churchmen had preached the Word of Life to the people. The first triumphs of Christianity were accomplished by the preaching of the gospel, by the mouth of the apostles, and not by the written Word; and, therefore, some amount of religious knowledge might have been communicated to the people by preaching, even in the absence of the Scriptures. But the prohibition of the Bible, together with the ignorance of the priests, soon brought the sermon into disuse, or only on special occasions were any discourses delivered.

About the beginning of the sixteenth century, “the ignorance of the priests was extreme.” Numbers could not read, most only muttered mass in an unknown tongue, and read a legend on festival days; the very best seldom saw the Bible. It was held by many that the doctrines of religion were so properly expressed by the schoolmen, that there was no need to read Scripture. One of eminence was asked what were the ten commandments; he replied, “There is no such book in the library.” Many doctors of the Sorbonne declared, and confirmed it by an oath, that, though they were about fifty years of age, yet they had never known what a New Testament was. Luther never saw a Bible till after he was twenty years old, and had taken a degree of arts. Carolstadt had been a doctor of divinity eight years before he read the Scriptures; and yet, when he stood for a degree in the University of Wittemberg, he obtained an honor, and it was entered in the University records that he was “*sufficientissimus.*” Pelican could not procure one Greek Testament in all Germany; the first he got was from Italy.

Who can wonder at the superstitions and errors of the Church of Rome? When sermons were delivered, they were a collection of forced interpretations, legends fabricated on the spot, and base ribaldry. The people would have been better without them, many of these mock sermons were only calculated to excite the audience to laughter, and to furnish them with amusement for the week. Ignorance held its dark reign, with scarcely a spark of light, and must have been of immense service in the establishment of the kingdom of darkness, and the support of the dominion of Antichrist.

CHAPTER 9.

EARLY RELIGIOUS IMPRESSIONS.

It would not be easy for some of us to recall the hour when we first heard the name of Jesus. In very infancy that sweet sound was as familiar to our ear as the hush of lullaby. Our earliest recollections are associated with the house of God, the family altar, the Holy Bible, the sacred song, and the fervent prayer. Like young Samuels, we were lighted to our rest by the lamps of the sanctuary, and were awakened by the sound of the morning hymn. Many a time has the man of God, whom a parent’s hospitality has entertained, implored a blessing on our head, desiring in all sincerity that we might early call the Redeemer blessed; and to his petition a mother’s earnest “Amen” has solemnly responded. Perhaps the first song we learned to sing was concerning the children’s best Friend. The first book that we began to read contained His sweet name, and many were the times when we were pressed by godly ones to think of Jesus, and to give our young hearts to Him. — C. H. S.

I W AS privileged with godly parents, watched with jealous eyes, scarcely ever permitted to mingle with questionable associates, warned not to listen to anything profane or licentious, and taught the way of God from my youth up. There came a time when the solemnities of eternity pressed upon me for a decision, and when a mother’s tears and a father’s supplications were offered to Heaven on my behalf. At such a time, had I not been helped by the grace of God, but had I been left alone to do violence to conscience, and to struggle against conviction, I might perhaps have been at this moment dead, buried, and doomed, having through a course of vice brought myself to my grave, or I might have been as earnest a ringleader amongst the ungodly as I now desire to be an eager champion for Christ and His truth.

I do speak of myself with many deep regrets of heart. I hid as it were my face from Him, and I let the years run round, — not without twinges of conscience, not without rebukes, when I knew how much I needed a Savior; not without the warnings which came from others whom I saw happy and rejoicing in Christ, while I had no share in His salvation. Still, I put it off, as others are doing, from day to day, and month to month, and thought that Christ might come in some odd hour, and when I had nothing else to do, I might think of Him whose blood could cleanse me. O my soul, I could fain smite thee now! Truly, I could lay this rod about my own heart to think that weeks and months should have rolled over my head, and I should have hid as it were my face from Christ in willful neglect of my dear Lord whose heart had bled for me.

Children are often very reticent to their parents. Often and often have I spoken with young lads about their souls, and they have told me they could not talk to their fathers upon such matters. I know it was so with me. When I was under concern of soul, the last persons I should have elected to speak to upon religion would have been my parents, — not through want of love to them, nor absence of love on their part; but so it was. A strange feeling of diffidence pervades a seeking soul, and drives it from its friends. Yet I cannot tell how much I owe to the solemn words of my good mother. It was the custom, on Sunday evenings, while we were yet little children, for her to stay at home with us, and then we sat round the table, and read verse by verse, and she explained the Scripture to us. After that was done, then came the time of pleading; there was a little piece of Alleine’s *Alarm,*or of Baxter’s *Call to the Unconverted,*and this was read with pointed observations made to each of us as we sat round the table; and the question was asked, how long it would be before we would think about our state, how long before we would seek the Lord. Then came a mother’s prayer, and some of the words of that prayer we shall never forget, even when our hair is gray. I remember, on one occasion, her praying thus: “Now, Lord, if my children go on in their sins, it will not be from ignorance that they perish, and my soul must bear a swift witness against them at the day of judgment if they lay not hold of Christ.” That thought of a mother’s bearing swift witness against me, pierced my conscience, and stirred my heart. When I was a child, if I had done anything wrong, I did not need anybody to tell me of it; I told myself of it, and I have cried myself to sleep many a time with the consciousness that I had done wrong; and when I came to know the Lord, I felt very grateful to Him because He had given me a tender conscience.

Fathers and mothers are the most natural agents for God to use in the salvation of their children. I am sure that, in my early youth, no teaching ever made such an impression upon my mind as the instruction of my mother; neither can I conceive that, to any child, there can be one who will have such influence over the young heart as the mother who has so tenderly cared for her offspring. A man with a soul so dead as not to be moved by the sacred name of “mother” is creation’s blot. Never could it be possible for any man to estimate what he owes to a godly mother. Certainly I have not the powers of speech with which to set forth my valuation of the choice blessing which the Lord bestowed on me in making me the son of one who prayed *for*me, and prayed *with*me. How can I ever forget her tearful eye when she warned me to escape from the wrath to come? I thought her lips right eloquent; others might not think so, but they certainly were eloquent to me. How can I ever forget when she bowed her knee, and with her arms about my neck, prayed, “Oh, that my son might live before Thee!” Nor can her frown be effaced from my memory, — that solemn, loving frown, when she rebuked my budding iniquities; and her smiles have never faded from my recollection, — the beaming of her countenance when she rejoiced to see some good thing in me towards the Lord God of Israel.

Well do I remember hearing my father speak of an incident that greatly impressed him. He used to be frequently away from home preaching, and at one time, as he was on his way to a service, he feared that he was neglecting his own family while caring for the souls of others. He therefore turned back, and went to his home. On arriving there, he was surprised to find no one in the lower rooms of the house; but, on ascending the stairs, he heard a sound as of someone engaged in prayer. On listening at the bedroom door, he discovered that it was my mother, pleading most earnestly for the salvation of all her children, and specially praying for Charles, her first-born and strong-willed son. My father felt that he might safely go about his Master’s business while his dear wife was caring so well for the spiritual interests of the boys and girls at home, so he did not disturb her, but proceeded at once to fulfill his preaching engagement.

My mother said to me, one day, “Ah, Charles! I often prayed the Lord to make you a Christian, but I never asked that you might become a Baptist.” I could not resist the temptation to reply, “Ah, mother! the Lord has answered your prayer with His usual bounty, and given you exceeding abundantly above what you asked or thought.”

Up to the age of fourteen, I had not even heard of people called Baptists; and when I did hear of them, it was not at all a favorable report that was given to me concerning them. I do not suppose my parents meant me to believe that Baptists were bad people; but I certainly did think so; and I cannot help feeling that, somewhere or other, I must have heard some calumnies against them, or else how should I have had that opinion?

I remember seeing a baby sprinkled within less than an hour of its death; and I seem to hear even now the comfort which a certain good man gave to the bereaved parents, — “What a mercy the child was baptized! What a consolation it must be!” This was in an Independent family, and the words were spoken by an Independent minister.

I knew an instance of an aged minister, of the same persuasion, who sprinkled a little boy, although the father was averse to it. The child was running about in the hall of the minister’s house, and his mother was looking on. He was caught up, and the pious man exclaimed, “Come along, Mrs. S — , the poor child shall not live like a heathen any longer.” So the conjuration was performed, and the little boy was put into the PaedoBaptist covenant. He was not only suffered to come, but forced to come; and, doubtless, went on his way rejoicing to think it was over.

It is said by some that children cannot understand the great mysteries of religion. We even know some Sunday-school teachers who cautiously avoid mentioning the great doctrines of the gospel, because they think the children are not prepared to receive them. Alas! the same mistake has crept into the pulpit; for it is currently believed, among a certain class of preachers, that many of the doctrines of the Word of God, although true, are not fit to be taught to the people, since they would pervert them to their own destruction. Away with such priestcraft! Whatever God has revealed ought to be preached. Whatever He has revealed, if I am not capable of understanding it, I will still believe and preach it. I do hold that there is no doctrine of the Word of God which a child, if he be capable of salvation, is not capable of receiving. I would have children taught all the great doctrines of truth without a solitary exception, that they may in their after days hold fast by them.

I can bear witness that children *can* understand the Scriptures; for I am sure that, when but a child, I could have discussed many a knotty point of controversial theology, having heard both sides of the question freely stated among my father’s circle of friends. In fact, children are capable of understanding some things in early life, which we hardly understand afterwards. Children have eminently a simplicity of faith, and simplicity of faith is akin to the highest knowledge; indeed, I know not that there is much distinction between the simplicity of a child and the genius of the profoundest mind. He who receives things simply, as a child, will often have ideas which the man who is prone to make a syllogism of everything will never attain unto. If you wish to know whether children can be taught, I point you to many in our churches, and in pious families, — not prodigies, but such as we frequently see, — Timothys and Samuels, and little girls, too, who have early come to know a Savior’s love. As soon as a child is capable of being lost, it is capable of being saved. As soon as a child can sin, that child can, if God’s grace assist it, believe and receive the Word of God. As soon as children can learn evil, be assured that they are competent, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, to learn good.

In the household in which I was trained, no cooking was ever done on the Sabbath; and if in the winter time something hot was brought on the table, it was a pudding prepared on the Saturday, or a few potatoes, which took but little trouble to warm. Is not this far better, far more Christian-like, than preparing a great Sunday feast, and compelling servants to slave in the kitchen? If the horse was taken out because the distance to the meetinghouse was too great, or the weather too rough for walking, Christians of the good old school always gave the animal its Sabbath on the Saturday or the Monday; and as to the coachman, when they employed one, they always took care to give him time to put up the horse, that he might come in and worship with the family, and they were content to wait till he could come round for them after service, for they did not want him to lose even the Benediction.

Ought it not to be so everywhere? Our servants should be regarded as a part of the family, and we should study their comfort as well as our own, if for no other reason, certainly, because they will then study ours; but, above all, we should remember their souls, and give them every opportunity to enjoy the means of grace. How can they do this if we make the Lord’s-day as much a work-day as any in the week? We are not of those who think it wicked to boil a kettle for tea on a Sunday, nor can we yield to the demands of some, that everybody, however feeble, or however distant his abode, should walk to the place of worship. To some, such a walk would be working with a vengeance, and to many an absolute deprivation of the means of grace; but, still, we must not allow unnecessary labor in or about our habitations on the Lord’s-day, and must devise means to make the necessary work as light as possible. Is a hot joint preferable to a servant’s soul? Is it fair to keep a girl at home merely for our own needless gratification? Especially, is this justifiable in the case of those who fare sumptuously everyday?

I recollect, when I was a boy, hearing a minister preach from this text, “Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies.” The opening of that memorable discourse was somewhat in this fashion: — “‘Who can find a virtuous woman?’ Why, anyone who chooses to look for her; and the only reason why Solomon could not find her was because he looked in the wrong place. Virtuous women kept clear of a king who had such a multitude of wives. But,” said the preacher, “if Solomon were here now, and were made truly wise, he would not long ask, — ‘Who can find a virtuous woman?’ He would join the church, and find himself at once among a band of holy women, whose adornment is a meek and quiet spirit. If he were permitted to look in upon the Dorcas meeting, he would see many of the sort of whom he once said, ‘She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy.’ If he would adjourn to the Sunday-school, he would there meet with others of whom he would say, ‘She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness.’ We, who serve the Lord Jesus, meet many a time with virtuous women, of each of whom we could say with the wise king, ‘Her price is far above rubies.’”

The preacher of whom I have spoken, interested me by the remark, “Why above *rubies?*Why not above *diamonds?*My brethren, the diamond is but a pale and sickly stone, which needs the glare of candle-light or gas to set it off; but the ruby is a ruddy, healthy gem, which is beautiful by daylight. Lovely is the woman whose face is full of the glow of activity in domestic life. That is the kind of woman who makes the housewife in whom the heart of her husband safely trusteth.”

Whatever one may think of the correctness of the exposition, the sentiment of the preacher was sound and practical.

I have not all pleasant reminiscences of the preachers of my boyhood. I used to hear a divine who had a habit, after he had uttered about a dozen sentences, of saying, “As I have already observed,” or, “I repeat what I before remarked.” Well, good soul, as there was nothing particular in what he had said, the repetition only revealed the more clearly the nakedness of the land. If it was very good, and you said it forcibly, why go over it again? And if it was a feeble affair, why exhibit it a second time? Occasionally, of course, the repetition of a few sentences may be very telling; anything may be good occasionally, and yet be very vicious as a habit. Who wonders that people do not listen the first time when they know it is all to come over again? I once heard a most esteemed minister, who mumbled sadly, compared to “a humble bee in a pitcher,” — a vulgar metaphor, no doubt, but so exactly descriptive, that it brings to my mind the droning sound at this instant most distinctly, and reminds me of the parody upon Gray’s *Elegy*: —

**“ *Now fades the glimmering subject from the sight, And all the air a sleepy stillness holds,  
Save where the parson hums his droning flight, And drowsy tinklings lull the slumb’ring folds.*”**

What a pity that a man who from his heart delivered doctrines of undoubted value, in language the most appropriate, should commit ministerial suicide by harping on one string, when the Lord had given him an instrument of many strings to play upon! Alas! alas! for that dreary voice, it hummed and hummed, like a mill-wheel, to the same unmusical tune, whether its owner spake of Heaven or hell, eternal life or everlasting wrath. It might be, by accident, a little louder or softer, according to the length of the sentence; but its tone was still the same, a dreary waste of sound, a howling wilderness of speech in which there was no possible relief, no variety, no music, nothing but horrible sameness. When the wind blows through the AEolian harp, it swells through all the chords; but the Heavenly wind, passing through some men, spends itself upon one string, and that, for the most part, the most out of tune of the whole. Grace alone could enable hearers to edify under the drum-drum-drum of some divines. I think an impartial jury would bring in a verdict of justifiable slumbering in many cases where the sound emanating from the preacher lulls to sleep by its reiterated note.

I have a very lively, or rather a deadly, recollection of a certain series of discourses on the Hebrews, which made a deep impression on my mind of the most undesirable kind. I wished frequently that the Hebrews had kept the Epistle to themselves, for it sadly bored one poor Gentile lad. By the time the seventh or eighth discourse had been delivered, only the very good people could stand it: these, of course, declared that they never heard more valuable expositions, but to those of a more carnal judgment it appeared that each sermon increased in dullness. Paul, in that Epistle, exhorts us to *suffer*the word of exhortation, and we did so. I also recollect hearing in my younger days long passages out of Daniel, which might have been exceedingly instructive to me if I had obtained the remotest conception of what they meant. I remember hearing a sermon from these words, “Who passing through the valley of Baca make it a well.” Certainly, the preacher did not make his sermon a well, for it was as dry as a stick, and not worth hearing. There was nothing like cheerfulness in it; but all the way through a flood of declamation against hopeful Christians, against people going to Heaven who are not always grumbling, and murmuring, and doubting; fumbling for their evidences amidst the exercises of their own hearts, ever reading and striving to rival Job and Jeremiah in grief, taking the Lamentations as the fit expression of their own lips, troubling their poor brains, and vexing their poor hearts, and smarting, and crying, and wearying themselves with the perpetual habit of complaining against God, saying, “My stroke is heavier than my groaning.”

I used to hear a minister whose preaching was, as far as I could make it out, “Do this, and do that, and do the other, and you will be saved.” According to his theory, to pray was a very easy thing; to make yourself a new heart, was a thing of a few instants, and could be done at almost any time; and I really thought that I could turn to Christ when I pleased, and that therefore I could put it off to the last part of my life, when it might be conveniently done upon a sick bed. But when the Lord gave my soul its first shakings in conviction, I soon knew better. I went to pray; I did pray, God knoweth, but it seemed to me that I did not. What, *I* approach the throne? Such a wretch as *I* lay hold on the promise? *I* venture to hope that God could look on me? It seemed impossible. A tear, a groan, and sometimes not so much as that, an “Ah!” a “Would that!” a “But,” — the lip could not utter more. It was prayer, but it did not seem so then. Oh, how hard is prevailing prayer to a poor God-provoking sinner! Where was the power to lay hold on God’s strength, or wrestle with the angel? Certainly not in me, for I was weak as water, and sometimes hard as the nether millstone.

Once, under a powerful sermon, my heart shook within me, and was dissolved in the midst of my bowels; I thought I would seek the Lord, and I bowed my knee, and wrestled, and poured out my heart before Him. Again I ventured within His sanctuary to hear His Word, hoping that in some favored hour He would send a precious promise to my consolation; but, ah! that wretched afternoon, I heard a sermon wherein Christ was not; I had no longer any hope. I would have sipped at that fountain, but I was driven away; I felt that I would have believed in Christ, and I longed and sighed for Him. But, ah! that dreadful sermon, and those terrible things that were uttered; my poor soul knew not what was truth, or what was error; but I thought the man was surely preaching the truth, and I was driven back. I dared not go, I could not believe, I could not lay hold on Christ; I was shut out, if no one else was.

CHAPTER 10.

“THROUGH MUCH TRIBULATION.”

My heart was fallow, and covered with weeds; but, on a certain day, the great Husbandman came, and began to plough my soul. Ten black horses were His team, and it was a sharp plowshare that He used, and the plowers made deep furrows. The ten  
commandments were those black horses, and the justice of God, like a plowshare, tore my spirit. I was condemned, undone, destroyed, — lost, helpless, hopeless, — I thought hell was before me. Then there came a cross-plowing, for when I went to hear the gospel, it did not comfort me; it made me wish I had a part in it, but I feared that such a boon was out of the question. The choicest promises of God frowned upon me, and His threatenings thundered at me. I prayed, but found no answer of peace. It was long with me thus. — C. H. S.

T HE abundant benefit which we now reap from the deep plowing of our heart is enough of itself to reconcile us to the severity of the process. Precious is that wine which is pressed in the winefat of conviction; pure is that gold which is dug from the mines of repentance; and bright are those pearls which are found in the caverns of deep distress. We might never have known such deep humility if the Lord had not humbled us. We had never been so separated from fleshly trusting had He not, by His rod, revealed the corruption and disease of our heart. We had never learned to comfort the feeble-minded, and confirm the weak, had He not made us ready to halt, and caused our sinew to shrink. If we have any power to console the weary, it is the result of our remembrance of what we once suffered, — for here lies our power to sympathize. If we can now look down with scorn upon the boastings of vain, self-conceited man, it is because our own vaunted strength has utterly failed us, and made us contemptible in our own eyes. If we can now plead with ardent desire for the souls of our fellow-men, and especially if we feel a more than common passion for the salvation of sinners, we must attribute it in no small degree to the fact that we have been smitten for sin, and therefore, knowing the terror of the Lord, are constrained to persuade men. The laborious pastor, the fervent minister, the ardent evangelist, the faithful teacher, the powerful intercessor, can all trace the birth of their zeal to the sufferings they endured through sin, and the knowledge they thereby attained of its evil nature. We have ever drawn the sharpest arrows from the quiver of our own experience. We find no sword-blades so true in metal as those which have been forged in the furnace of soul-trouble.

A spiritual experience which is thoroughly flavored with a deep and bitter sense of sin is of great value to him that hath had it. It is terrible in the drinking, but it is most wholesome in the bowels, and in the whole of the after-life. Possibly, much of the flimsy piety of the present day arises from the ease with which men attain to peace and joy in these evangelistic days. We would not judge modern converts, but we certainly prefer that form of spiritual exercise which leads the soul by the way of Weeping-cross, and makes it see its blackness before assuring it that it is “clean every whit.” Too many think lightly of sin, and therefore think lightly of the Savior. He who has stood before his God, convicted and condemned, with the rope about his neck, is the man to weep for joy when he is pardoned, to hate the evil which has been forgiven him, and to live to the honor of the Redeemer by whose blood he has been cleansed.

Our own experience recalls us to the period when we panted for the Lord, even for Him, our only want. Vain to us were the mere ordinances, — vain as bottles scorched by the Simoom, and drained of their waters. Vain were ceremonies, — vain as empty wells to the thirsty Arab. Vain were the delights of the flesh, — bitter as the waters of Marah, which even the parched lips of Israel refused to drink. Vain were the directions of the legal preacher, — useless as the howling of the wind to the benighted wanderer. Vain, worse than vain, were our refuges of lies, which fell about our ears like Dagon’s temple on the heads of the worshippers. One only hope we had, one sole refuge for our misery. Save where that ark floated, — North, South, East, and West was one broad expanse of troubled waters. Save where that star burned, the sky was one vast field of unmitigated darkness. Jesus, Jesus, JESUS! He alone, He without another, had become the solitary hiding-place against the storm. As the wounded soldier, lying on the battlefield, with wounds which, like fires, consume his moisture, utters only one monotonous cry of thrilling importunity, “Water, water, water!” so did we perpetually send our prayer to Heaven, “Jesus, Thou Son of David, have mercy on me! O Jesus, come to me!”  
We have, we hope, many a time enjoyed nearness to the throne of grace in prayer; but, perhaps, never did such a prayer escape our lips as that which we offered in the bitterness of our spirit when seeking the Savior. We have often poured out our hearts with greater freedom, with more delight, with stronger faith, in more eloquent language; but never, never have we cried with more vehemence of unquenchable desire, or more burning heat of insatiable longing. There was then no sleepiness or sluggishness in our devotion; we did not then need the whip of command to drive us to labors of prayer; but our soul could not be content unless with sighs and lamentations, with strong crying and tears, it gave vent to our bursting heart. Then we had no need to be dragged to our closets like oxen to the slaughter, but we flew to them like doves to their windows; and when there, we needed no pumping up of desires, but they gushed forth like a fountain of waters, although at times we felt we could scarcely find them a channel.

I remember the first time I ever sincerely prayed; but I do not recollect the words I used; surely, there were few enough words in that petition. I had often repeated a form; I had been in the habit of continually repeating it. At last, I came really to pray; and then I saw myself standing before God, in the immediate presence of the heart-searching Jehovah, and I said within myself, “I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.” I felt like Esther when she stood before the king, faint and overcome with dread. I was full of penitence of heart, because of His majesty and my sinfulness. I think the only words I could utter were something like these, “Oh!-Ah!” And the only complete sentence was, “God be merciful to me, a sinner!” The overwhelming splendor of His majesty, the greatness of His power, the severity of His justice, the immaculate character of His holiness, and all His dreadful grandeur, — these things overpowered my soul, and I fell down in utter prostration of spirit; but there was in that prayer a true and real drawing near to God.

I have not many relations in Heaven, but I have one whom I dearly love, who, I doubt not, often prayed for me, for she nursed me when I was a child, and brought me up during part of my infancy, and now she sits before the throne in glory, — suddenly called home. I fancy she looked upon her darling grandson, and as she saw him in the ways of sin, waywardness, and folly, she could not look with sorrow, for there are no tears in the eyes of glorified ones; she could not look with regret, because they cannot know such a feeling before the throne of God; but, ah! that moment when, by sovereign grace, I was constrained to pray, when all alone I bent my knee and wrestled, methinks I see her as she said, “Behold, he prayeth; behold, he prayeth.” Oh! I can picture her countenance. She seemed to have two Heavens for a moment — a double bliss, a Heaven in me as well as in herself, — when she could say, “Behold, he prayeth.”

I have known some who have suspended prayer through the idea that the petitions of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord, and that therefore it was but committing sin to attempt to offer their supplications. Well can I remember, when coming to Jesus myself, that for years I sought pardon, and found it not. Often, in the deep anguish of my spirit, did I stay my petitions, because I thought them hopeless; and when again the Holy Spirit drew me to the mercy-seat, a deep horror rested on me at the recollection of my repeated, but unanswered cries. I knew myself to be unworthy, and therefore I conceived that Divine justice would not allow an answer to come to me. I thought that the heavens were brass above me, and that if I cried never so earnestly, the Lord would shut out my prayer. I durst not pray, I was too guilty; and when I did dare to pray, ‘twas hardly prayer, for I had no hope of being heard. “No,” I said, “it is presumption; I must not plead with Him;” and when, at times, I would have prayed, I could not; something choked all utterance, and the spirit could only lament, and long, and pant, and sigh to be able to pray.

Yet I recollect, even as a child, God hearing my prayer. I cannot tell what it was about, it may have been concerning a mere trifle; but to me, as a child, it was as important as the greatest prayer that Solomon ever offered for himself, and God heard that prayer, and it was thus early established in my mind that the Lord was God. And afterwards, when I came really to know Him, — for, like the child Samuel, I did not then know the Lord, I only felt after Him in prayer, — afterwards, when I came to cry to Him intelligently, I had this prayer answered, and that petition granted, and many a time since then — I am only telling what any who know the Lord could also say, — many a time since then He has answered our requests. I cannot tell all about this matter; for there is many a secret between us and our dear Lord. It would not be prudent, proper, or even possible, to mention all the answers to prayer which we have received, for there are love-passages between Christ and the soul, which never must be told, unless it be in choice company, and on rare occasions. Some of our communings with the Lord Jesus are too sacred, too spiritual, too heavenly, ever to be spoken of this side the gates of pearl; but the bulk of the Lord’s replies to our petitions are such as might be written athwart the skies, that every eye might read them. It is beginning to be questioned, in many quarters, whether there is any real effect produced by prayer, except that “it excites certain pious emotions in the breasts of those who pray.” This is a pretty statement! We ought to be extremely obliged to those superior persons who allow that even so much may result from our visits to the throne of grace! I wonder they did not assert that prayer was ridiculous, or hypocritical, or immoral! Their moderation puts us under obligations! And yet I do not know: when I look again at their admission, I thank them for nothing, for they as good as call us fools. Do they think that we perform a useless exercise merely for the sake of exciting pious emotions? We must be grievous idiots if we can receive benefit from a senseless function. We are not willing to whistle to the wind for the sake of the exercise. We should not be content to go on praying to a god who could be proved to be both deaf and dumb. We have still some little common sense left, despite what our judicious friends consider to be fanaticism. We are sure that we obtain answers to prayer. Of this fact I am as certain as that I am a living man, and that I preach in the Tabernacle. I solemnly declare that I have received of the Lord that which I have asked at His hands, and I am not alone in such testimony, for I am associated with multitudes of men and women who bear witness to the same fact, and declare that they also sought the Lord by prayer and supplication, and He heard them, and delivered them out of their distresses.

Neither in the Church militant nor in the host triumphant is there one who received a new heart, and was reclaimed from sin without a wound from Jesus. The pain may have been but slight, and the healing may have been speedy; but in each case there has been a real bruise, which required a Heavenly Physician to heal. With some of us, this wounding commenced in early life; for, as soon as infancy gave place to childhood, the rod was exercised upon us. We can remember early convictions of sin, and apprehensions of the wrath of God on its account. An awakened conscience in our most tender years drove us to the throne of mercy. Though we knew not the hand which chastened our spirit, yet did we “bear the yoke in our youth.” How many were “the tender buds of hope” which we then put forth, alas! too soon to be withered by youthful lusts; how often were we scared with visions and terrified with dreams, while the reproof of a parent, the death of a playfellow, or a solemn sermon made our hearts melt within us! Truly, our goodness was but “as the morning cloud and the early dew;” but who can tell how much each of these separate woundings contributed toward that killing by the law, which proved to be the effectual work of God? In each of these arousings we discover a gracious purpose; we trace every one of these awakenings to His hand who watched over our path, determined to deliver us from our sins. The small end of that wedge, which has since been driven home, was inserted during these youthful hours of inward strife.

Let none despise the strivings of the Spirit in the hearts of the young; let not boyish anxieties and juvenile repentances be lightly regarded. He incurs a fearful amount of guilt who in the least promotes the aim of the evil one by trampling upon a tender conscience in a child. No one can guess at what age children become capable of conversion. I, at least, can bear my personal testimony to the fact that grace operates on some minds at a period almost too early for recollection. When but young in years, I felt with much sorrow the evil of sin. My bones waxed old with my roaring all the day long. Day and night God’s hand was heavy upon me. I hungered for deliverance, for my soul fainted within me. I feared lest the very skies should fall upon me, and crush my guilty soul. God’s law had laid hold upon me, and was showing me my sins. If I slept at night, I dreamed of the bottomless pit; and when I awoke, I seemed to feel the misery I had dreamed. Up to God’s house I went; my song was but a sigh. To my chamber I retired, and there, with tears and groans, I offered up my prayer, without a hope and without a refuge, for God’s law was flogging me with its ten-thonged whip, and then rubbing me with brine afterwards, so that I did shake and quiver with pain and anguish, and my soul chose strangling rather than life, for I was exceeding sorrowful.

That misery was sent for this reason, that I might then be made to cry to Jesus. Our Heavenly Father does not usually cause us to seek the Savior till He has whipped us clean out of all our confidence; He cannot make us in earnest after Heaven till He has made us feel something of the intolerable tortures of an aching conscience, which is a foretaste of hell. I remember, when I used to awake in the morning, first thing I took up was Alleine’s *Alarm,*or Baxter’s *Call to the Unconverted.*Oh, those books, those books! I read and devoured them when under a sense of guilt, but it was like sitting at the foot of Sinai. For five years, as a child, there was nothing before my eyes but my guilt; and though I do not hesitate to say that those who observed my life would not have seen any extraordinary sin, yet as I looked upon myself, there was not a day in which I did not commit such gross, such outrageous sins against God, that often and often have I wished I had never been born. Sickness is a terrible thing, more especially when it is accompanied with pain, when the poor body is racked to an extreme, so that the spirit fails within us, and we are dried up like a potsherd; but I bear witness that sickness, however agonizing, is nothing like the discovery of the evil of sin. I had rather pass through seven years of the most wearisome pain, and the most languishing sickness, than I would ever again pass through the terrible discovery of the evil of sin. It was my sad lot, at that time, to feel the greatness of my sin, without a discovery of the greatness of God’s mercy. I had to walk through this world with more than a world upon my shoulders, and sustain a grief that as far exceeds all other griefs as a mountain exceeds a mole-hill; and I often wonder, to this day, how it was that my hand was kept from rending my own body in pieces through the awful agony which I felt when I discovered the greatness of my transgression. Yet, I had not been, openly and publicly, a greater sinner than others; but heart sins were laid bare, sins of lip and tongue were discovered, and then I knew — oh, that I may never have to learn over again in such a dreadful school this terrible lesson! — “the iniquity of Judah and of Israel is exceeding great.” Before I thought upon my soul’s salvation, I dreamed that my sins were very few. All my sins were dead, as I imagined, and buried in the graveyard of forgetfulness. But that trumpet of conviction, which aroused my soul to think of eternal things, sounded a resurrection-note to all my sins; and, oh, how they rose up in multitudes more countless than the sands of the sea! Now, I saw that my very thoughts were enough to damn me, that my words would sink me lower than the lowest hell; and as for my acts of sin, they now began to be a stench in my nostrils, so that I could not bear them. 1 thought I had rather have been a frog or a toad than have been made a man; I reckoned that the most defiled creature, the most loathsome and contemptible, was a better thing than myself, for I had so grossly and grievously sinned against Almighty God.

Through the Lord’s restraining grace, and the holy influence of my early home-life, both at my father’s and my grandfather’s, I was kept from certain outward forms of sin in which others indulged; and, sometimes, when I began to take stock of myself, I really thought I was quite a respectable lad, and might have been half inclined to boast that I was not like other boys, — untruthful, dishonest, disobedient, swearing, Sabbathbreaking, and so on. But, all of a sudden, I met Moses, carrying in his hand the law of God; and as he looked at me, he seemed to search me through and through with his eyes of fire. He bade me read “God’s Ten Words” — the ten commandments, — and as I read them, they all seemed to join in accusing and condemning me in the sight of the thrice-holy Jehovah. Then, like Daniel, “my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength;” and I understood what Paul meant when he wrote, “Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.” When I saw myself in this condition, I could say nothing in self-defense, or by way of excuse or extenuation. I confessed my transgression in solemn silence unto the Lord, but I could speak no word of self-justification, or apology, for I felt that I was verily guilty of grievous sins against the Holy One of Israel. At that time, a dreadful silence reigned within my spirit; even if I had tried to say a word in my own favor, I should have been self-condemned as a liar. I felt that Job’s words might be applied to me, “If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands never so clean; yet shalt Thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me. For He is not a man, as I am, that I should answer Him.”

Then there came into my startled conscience the remembrance of the universality of law. I thought of what was said of the old Roman empire that, under the rule of Caesar, if a man once broke the law of Rome, the whole world was one vast prison to him, for he could not get out of the reach of the imperial power. So did it come to be in my aroused conscience. Wherever I went, the law had a demand upon my thoughts, upon my words, upon my rising, upon my resting. What I did, and what I did not do, all came under the cognizance of the law; and then I found that this law so surrounded me that I was always running against it, I was always breaking it. I seemed as if I was a sinner, and nothing else but a sinner. If I opened my mouth, I spoke amiss. If I sat still, there was sin in my silence. I remember that, when the Spirit of God was thus dealing with me, I used to feel myself to be a sinner even when I was in the house of God. I thought that, when I sang, I was mocking the Lord with a solemn sound upon a false tongue; and if I prayed, I feared that I was sinning in my prayers, insulting Him by uttering confessions which I did not feel, and asking for mercies with a faith that was not true at all, but only another form of unbelief. At the very mention of that word conviction, I seem to hear my chains rattling anew. Was there ever a bond-slave who had more bitterness of soul than I, five years a captive in the dungeons of the law, till my youth seemed as if it would turn into premature old age, and all the buoyancy of my spirit had vanished? O God of the spirits of all men, most of all ought I to hate sin, for surely most of all have I smarted beneath the lash of Thy law!

While I was in the custody of the law, I did not take any pleasure in evil. Alas! I did sin; but my sense of the law of God kept me back from many forms of iniquity. I have thanked God a thousand times in my life that, before my conversion, when I had ill desires, I had no opportunities of sinning; and, on the other hand, when I had the opportunities, I had no desires towards evil. When desires and opportunities come together, like the flint and the steel, they make the spark that kindles the fire; but neither the one nor the other, though they may both be dangerous, can bring about any very great amount of evil so long as they are kept apart. I could not, as others did, plunge into profligacy, or indulge in any of the grosser vices, for that law had me well in hand. I sinned enough without acting like that. Oh, I used to tremble to put one foot before another, for fear I should do wrong! I felt that my old sins seemed to be so many, that it were well to die rather than commit anymore. I could not rest while in the grip of the law. If I wanted to sleep awhile, or to be a little indifferent and careless, some one or other of those ten commandments roughly aroused me, and looking on me with a frowning face, said, “You have broken me.” I thought that I would do some good works; but, somehow, the law always broke my good works in the making. I fancied that, if my tears flowed freely, I might make some recompense for my wrong-doing; but the law held up the looking-glass, and I soon saw my face all smeared and made more unhandsome by my tears.

The law seemed also to blight all my hopes with its stern sentence, “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” Only too well did I know that I had not continued in all those things, so I saw myself accursed, turn which way I might. If I had not committed one sin, that made no difference if I had committed another; I was under the curse. What if I had never blasphemed God with my tongue? Yet, if I had coveted, I had broken the law. He who breaks a chain might say, “I did not break that link, and the other link.” No, but if you break one link, you have broken the chain. Ah, me; how I seemed shut up then! I had offended against the justice of God; I was impure and polluted; and I used to say, “If God does not send me to hell, He ought to do it.” I sat in judgment upon myself, and pronounced the sentence that I felt would be just. I could not have gone to Heaven with my sin unpardoned, even if I had had the offer to do it, for I knew that it would not be right that I should do so, and I justified God in my own conscience while I condemned myself. The law would not even let me despair. If I thought I would give up all desire to do right, and just go and drown my conscience in sin, the law said, “No, you cannot do that; there is no rest for you in sinning. You know the law too well to be able to sin in the blindness of a seared conscience.” So the law worried and troubled me at all points; it shut me up as in an iron cage, and every way of escape was effectually blocked up.

One of the things that shut me up dreadfully was, when I knew the spirituality of the law. If the law said, “Thou shalt not commit adultery,” I said to myself, “Well, I have never committed adultery.” Then the law, as interpreted by Christ, said, “Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.” The law said, “Thou shalt not steal,” and I said, “Well, I never stole anything;” but then I found that even the desire to possess what was not my own, was guilt. The spirituality of the law astounded me; what hope could I have of eluding such a law as this which every way surrounded me with an atmosphere from which I could not possibly escape?

Then I remembered that, even if I kept the law perfectly, and kept it for ten, twenty, or thirty years, without a fault, yet if, at the end of that time, I should break it, I must suffer its dread penalty. Those words spoken by the Lord to the prophet Ezekiel came to my mind: “If he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousnesses shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it.” So I saw that I was, indeed, “kept under the law, shut up.” I had hoped to escape this way, or that way, or some other way. Was I not “christened” When I was a child? Had I not been taken to a place of worship? Had I not been brought up to say my prayers regularly? Had I not been an honest, upright, moral youth? Was all this nothing? “Nothing,” said the law, as it drew its sword of fire: “Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” So there was no rest for my spirit, nay, not even for a moment. What was I to do? I was in the hands of one who showed no mercy whatever, for Moses never said, “Mercy.” The law has nothing to do with mercy. That comes from another mouth, and under another dispensation. But before faith came, I was “kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.”

I am bold to say that, if a man be destitute of the grace of God, his works are only works of slavery; he feels forced to do them. I know, before I came into the liberty of the children of God, if I went to God’s house, I went because I thought I must do it; if I prayed, it was because I feared some misfortune would happen in the day if I did not; if I ever thanked God for a mercy, it was because I thought I should not get another if I were not thankful; if I performed a righteous deed, it was with the hope that very likely God would reward me at last, and I should be winning a crown in Heaven. I was a poor slave, a mere Gibeonite, hewing wood and drawing water! If I could have left off doing it, I should have loved to do so. If I could have had my will, there would have been no chapel-going for me, no religion for me, — I would have lived in the world, and followed the ways of Satan, if I could have done as I pleased. As for righteousness, it was slavery; sin would have been my liberty. Yet, truth to tell, of all bondage and slavery in this world, there is none more horrible than the bondage of sin. Tell me of Israel in Egypt, unsupplied with straw, yet preparing the full tale of bricks; tell me of the negro beneath the lash of his cruel task-master, and I confess it is a bondage fearful to be borne; but there is one far worse, — the bondage of a convinced sinner when he is brought to feel the burden of his guilt; the bondage of a man when once his sins are baying him, like hounds about a weary stag; the bondage of a man when the burden of sin is on his shoulder, — a burden too heavy for his soul to bear, — a burden which will sink him in the depths of everlasting torment, unless he doth escape from it. Methinks I see such a person. He hath ne’er a smile upon his face; dark clouds have gathered on his brow; solemn and serious he stands; his very words are sighs; his songs are groans; his smiles are tears; and when he seems most happy, hot drops of grief roll in burning showers, scalding furrows on his cheek. Ask him *what he is,*and he tells you he is “a wretch undone.” Ask him *how he is,*and he confesses that he is “misery incarnate.” Ask him *what he shall be,*and he says, “I shall be lost in hell for ever; there is no hope for me.” Such is the poor convinced sinner under bondage. Such have I been in my days, and I declare that, of all bondage, this is the most painful, — the bondage of the law, the bondage of corruption.

My impression is, that this is the history of all the people of God, more or less. We are not all alike in every respect. We differ greatly in certain particulars; yet the main features of all the children of God will be found to be the same, and their Christian experience will resemble that of the other members of the Lord’s family. I do not say that all have felt the apprehension of coming judgment as I did; but this is how it came to me. I knew that I was guilty, I knew that I had offended God, I knew that I had transgressed against light and knowledge, and I did not know when God might call me to account: but I did know this, when I awoke in the morning, the first thought I had was that I had to deal with a justly-angry God, who might suddenly require my soul of me. Often, during the day, when I had a little time for quiet meditation, a great depression of spirit would come upon me because I felt that sin, — *sin, —*SIN had outlawed me from my God. I wondered that the earth bore up such a sinner as I was, and that the heavens did not fall and crush me, and the stars in their courses did not fight against such a wretch as I felt myself to be. Then, indeed, did I seem as if I should go down to the pit, and I had perpetually to endure the tortures of the never-dying worm of conscience that was gnawing at my heart. I went to the house of God, and heard what I supposed was the gospel, but it was no gospel to me. My soul abhorred all manner of meat; I could not lay hold upon a promise, or indulge a wellgrounded hope of salvation. If anyone had asked me what would become of me, I must have answered, “I am going down to the pit.” If anyone had entreated me to hope that mercy might come to me, I should have refused to entertain such a hope. I used to feel that I was in the condemned cell. In that dungeon, the man writes bitter things against himself; he feels absolutely sure that the wrath of God abideth on him; he wonders the stones beneath his feet do not open a grave to swallow him up; he is astonished that the walls of the prison do not compress and crush him into nothingness; he marvels that he has his breath, or that the blood in his veins does not turn into rivers of flame. His spirit is in a dreadful state; he not only feels that he shall be lost, but he thinks it is going to happen now. The condemned cell in Newgate, I am told, is just in such a corner that the criminal can hear the putting-up of the scaffold. Well do I remember hearing my scaffold built, and the sound of the hammer of the law as piece after piece was put together! It appeared as if I heard the noise of the crowd of men and devils who would witness my eternal execution, all of them howling and yelling out their accursed things against my spirit. Then there was a big bell that tolled out the hours, and I thought that very soon the last moment would arrive, and I must mount the fatal scaffold to be cast away forever. Oh, that condemned cell! Next to Tophet, there can be no state more wretched than that of a man who is brought there!

When I was for many a month in this state, I used to read the Bible through, and the threatenings were all printed in capitals, but the promises were in such small type I could not for a long time make them out; and when I did read them, I did not believe they were mine; but the threatenings were all my own. “There,” said I, “when it says, ‘He that believeth not shall be damned,’ that means me!” But when it said, “He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him,” then I thought I was shut out. When I read, “He found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears;” I thought, “Ah! that is myself again.” And when I read, “That which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing; whose end is to be burned;” “Ah!” I said, “that describes me to the very letter.” And when I heard the Master say, “Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?” “Ah!” thought I, “that is my text; He will have me down before long, and not let me cumber the ground any more.” But when I read, “Ho! every one that thirsteth; come ye to the waters;” I said, “That does not belong to me, I am sure.” And when I read, “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;” I said, “That belongs to my brother, to my sister,” or those I knew round about me; for they were all “heavy laden,” I thought, but I was not; and though, God knoweth, I would weep, and cry, and lament till my heart was breaking within me, if any man had asked me whether I sorrowed for sin, I should have told him, “No, I never had any true sorrow for sin.” “Well, do you not feel the burden of sin?” “No!” “But you really are a convinced sinner?” “No,” I should have said, “I am not.” Is it not strange that poor sinners, when they are coming to Christ, are so much in the dark that they cannot see their own hands? They are so blind that they cannot see themselves; and though the Holy Spirit has been pleased to work in them, and give them godly fear and a tender conscience, they will stand up, and declare that they have not those blessings, and that in them there is not any good thing, and that God has not looked on them nor loved them.

I speak what I do know, and not what I have learned by report, when I say that there is a chamber in the experience of some men where the temptations of the devil exceed all belief. Read John Bunyan’s *Grace Abounding,*if you would understand what I mean. The devil tempted him, he says, to doubt the existence of God, the truth of Scripture, the manhood of Christ, then His Deity; and once, he says, he tempted him to say things which he will never write, lest he should pollute others. Ah! I recollect a dark hour with myself when I, who do not remember to have even heard a blasphemy in my youth, much less to have uttered one, found rushing through my mind an almost infinite number of curses and blasphemies against the Most High God. I specially recall a certain narrow and crooked lane, in a country town, along which I was walking, one day, while I was seeking the Savior. On a sudden, it seemed as if the floodgates of hell had been opened; my head became a very pandemonium; ten thousand evil spirits seemed to be holding carnival within my brain; and I held my mouth lest I should give utterance to the words of blasphemy that were poured into my ears. Things I had never heard or thought of before came rushing impetuously into my mind, and I could scarcely withstand their influence. It was the devil throwing me down and tearing me. These things sorely beset: me; for half-an-hour together, the most fearful imprecations would dash through my brain. Oh, how I groaned and cried before God! That temptation passed away; but ere many days, it was renewed again; and when I was in prayer, or when I was reading the Bible, these blasphemous thoughts would pour in upon me more than at any other time. I consulted with an aged godly man about it. He said to me, “Oh, all this many of the people of God have proved before you! But,” he asked, “do you hate these thoughts?” “I do,” I truly answered. “Then,” said he, “they are not yours; serve them as the old parish officers used to do with vagrants, whip them, and send them on to their own parish. So,” said he, “do with those evil thoughts. Groan over them, repent of them, and send them on to the devil, the father of them, to whom they belong, for they are not yours.”

I have never been thoroughly an unbeliever but once, and that was not before I knew the need of a Savior, but after it. It was just when I wanted Christ, and panted after Him, that, on a sudden, the thought crossed my mind — which I abhorred but could not conquer, — that there was no God, no Christ, no Heaven, no hell; that all my prayers were but a farce, and that I might as well have whistled to the winds or spoken to the howling waves. Ah! I remember how my ship drifted along through that sea of fire, loosened from the anchor of my faith which I had received from my fathers. I no longer moored myself hard by the coasts of Revelation; 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 gleaming with coruscations of brilliancy. I saw sparks flying upwards that pleased me, and I felt, “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. I went to the very verge of the dreary realms of unbelief. I went to the very bottom of the sea of infidelity. As I hurried forward at an awful speed, I began to doubt if there were a world. I doubted everything, until at last the devil defeated himself by making me doubt my own existence. I thought I was an idea floating in the nothingness of vacuity; then, startled with that thought, and feeling that I was substantial flesh and blood after all, I saw that God was, and Christ was, and Heaven was, and hell was, and that all these things were absolute truths. The very extravagance of the doubt proved its absurdity, and there came a voice which said, “And can this doubt be true?” Then I awoke from that death-dream which, God knows, might have damned my soul, and ruined 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 whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him.” I should not be astonished if many others, who now believe, have also been upon the very borders of atheism, and have doubted almost everything. It is when Satan finds the heart tender that he tries to stamp his own impress of infidelity upon the soul; but, blessed be God, he never accomplishes it in the sinner who is truly coming to Christ! Now, whenever I hear the skeptic’s stale attacks upon the Word of God, I smile within myself, and think, “Why, you simpleton! how can you urge such trifling objections? I have felt, in the contentions of my own unbelief, ten times greater difficulties.’ We who have contended with horses are not to be wearied by footmen. Gordon Cumming and other lion-killers are not to be scared by wild cats, nor will those who have stood foot to foot with Satan resign the field to pretentious skeptics, or any other of the evil one’s inferior servants.

I do think it often proves a great blessing to a man that he had a terrible conflict, a desperate encounter, a hard-fought engagement in passing from the empire of Satan into the kingdom of God’s dear Son. Sooner or later, each saved man will have his hand-to-hand fight with the prince of darkness; and, as a general rule, it is a great mercy to have it over at the outset of one’s career, and to be able afterwards to feel, “Whatever comes upon me, I never can suffer as I suffered when I was seeking Christ. Whatever staggering doubt, or hideous blasphemy, or ghastly insinuations, even of suicide itself, may assail my feeble heart, they cannot outdo the horror of great darkness through which my spirit passed when I was struggling after a Savior.” I do not say that it is desirable that we should have this painful ordeal, much less that we should seek it as an evidence of regeneration; but when we have passed through it victoriously, we may so use it that it may be a perpetual armory to us. If we can now defy all doubts and fears that come, because they cannot be so potent as those which already, in the name of Jesus Christ our Savior, we have overthrown, shall we not use that fact for ourselves, and can we not equally well use it for others? Full often have I found it good, when I have talked with a young convert in deep distress about his sin, to tell him something more of his anxious plight than he knew how to express; and he has wondered where I found it, though he would not have wondered if he had known where I had been, and how much deeper in the mire than he. When he has talked about some horrible thought that he has had, with regard to the impossibility of his own salvation, I have said, “Why, I have thought that a thousand times, and yet have overcome it through the help of God’s Spirit!” I know that a man’s own experience is one of the very best weapons he can use in fighting with evil in other men’s hearts. Often, their misery and despondency, aggravated, as it commonly is, by a feeling of solitariness, will be greatly relieved before it is effectually driven out when they find that a brother has suffered the same, and yet has been able to overcome. Do I show him how precious the Savior is to my soul? He glorifies God in me. Right soon will he look into the same dear face and be lightened; and then he will magnify the Lord with me, and we shall exalt His name together.

Multitudes of persons are sailing in what they think to be the good ship of self-righteousness: they are expecting that they shall get to Heaven in her. But she never did carry a soul safely into the fair Haven yet, and she never will. Self-righteousness is as rapid a road to ruin as outward sin itself. We may as certainly destroy ourselves by opposing the righteousness of Christ as by transgressing the law of God. Self-righteousness is as much an insult to God as blasphemy is, and God will never accept it, neither shall any soul enter Heaven by it. Yet this vessel manages to keep on her way against all the opposition of Scripture; for, often, men have a soft South wind blowing, and things go easily with them, and they believe that through their own doings they shall assuredly find the Port of Peace. I am glad, therefore, when some terrible tempest overtakes this vessel; and when men’s hopes through their own doings and their own feelings are utterly wrecked. I rejoice when the old ship parts timber from timber, when she goes aground and breaks to pieces, and men find safety in some other way; for whatever seeming safety they may have today will only delude them. It must end in destruction, and it is therefore a thousand mercies when they find it out soon enough to get a better hope of being saved than this, which will certainly deceive them. I recollect very well when that terrific Euroclydon blew on my vessel. It was as good a ship as any others have, although I have no doubt they would vindicate their own. Her sails needed mending, and here and there she wanted a little touch of paint; but, for all that, she was sea-worthy, and fit to be registered “Al at Lloyd’s,” and entered in the first class, — at least, so I thought. The storm blew over her, and she went to pieces, and I bless God that she did, for I should have been kept on board to this very minute if I had not been washed off. I tried to cling to the old hulk to the last plank, but I was obliged to give it up, and look somewhere else for help and safety.

Before I came to Christ, I said to myself, “It surely cannot be that, if I believe in Jesus, just as I am, I shall be saved? I must feel something; I must do something.” I could pour scorn upon myself to think of some of the good resolutions I made! I blew them up, like children with their pipes and their soap, and fine bubbles they were, reflecting all the colors of the rainbow! But a touch, and they dissolved. They were good for nothing, — poor stuff to build eternal hopes upon. Oh, that working for salvation! What slavery it was, but what small results it produced! I was a spinner and weaver of the poorest sort, yet I dreamed that I should be able by my own spinning to make a garment to cover myself withal. This was the trade of father Adam and mother Eve when they first lost their innocence; “they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.” It is a very laborious business, and has worn out the lives of many with bitter bondage, but its worst feature is that the Lord has declared concerning all who follow this self-righteous craft, “Their webs shall not become garments, neither shall they cover themselves with their works.”

Oh, the many times that I have wished the preacher would tell me something to *do*that I might be saved! Gladly would I have done it, if it had been possible. If he had said, “Take off your shoes and stockings, and run to John o’ Groat’s,” I would not even have gone home first, but would have started off that very night, that I might win salvation. How often have I thought that, if he had said, “Bare your back to the scourge, and take fifty lashes;” I would have said, “Here I am! Come along with your whip, and beat as hard as you please, so long as I can obtain peace and rest, and get rid of my sin.” Yet that simplest of all matters — believing in Christ crucified, accepting His finished salvation, being nothing, and letting Him be everything, doing nothing but trusting to what He has done, — I could not get a hold of it. Once I thought there was salvation in good works, and I labored hard, and strove diligently to preserve a character for integrity and uprightness; but when the Spirit of God came into my heart, “sin revived, and I died.” That which I thought had been good, proved to be evil; wherein I fancied I had been holy, I found myself to be unholy. I discovered that my very best actions were sinful, that my tears :needed to be wept over, and that my very prayers needed God’s forgiveness. I discovered that I was seeking after salvation by the works of the law, that I was doing all my good works from a selfish motive, namely, to save myself, and therefore they could not be acceptable to God. I found out that I could not be saved by good works for two very good reasons; first, I had not got any, and secondly, if I had any, they could not save me. After that, I thought, surely salvation might be obtained, partly by reformation, and partly by trusting in Christ; so I labored hard again, and thought, if I added a few prayers here and there, a few tears of penitence, and a few vows of improvement, all would be well. But after fagging on for many a weary day, like a poor blind horse toiling round the mill, I found I had gone no farther, for there was still the curse of God hanging over me, and there was still an aching void in my heart, which the world could never fill, — a void of distress and care, for I was sorely troubled because I could not attain unto the rest which my soul desired.

What a struggle that was which my young heart waged against sin! When God the Holy Ghost first quickened me, little did I know of the precious blood which has put my sins away, and drowned them in the depths forever. But I did know this, that I could not remain as I was; that I could not rest happy unless I became something better, something purer than I was; and, oh, how my spirit cried to God with groanings, — I say it without any exaggeration, — groanings that could not be uttered! and, oh, how I sought, in my poor dark way, to overcome first one sin and then another, and so to do battle, in God’s strength, against the enemies that assailed me, and not, thank God, altogether without success, though still the battle had been lost unless He had come who is the Overcomer of sin and the Deliverer of His people, and had put the hosts to flight. I tried a long time to improve myself, but I never did make much of it; I found I had a devil within me when I began, and I had ten devils when I left off. Instead of becoming better, I became worse; I had now got the devil of selfrighteousness, of self-trust, and self-conceit, and many others that had come and taken up their lodging within my heart. While I was busy sweeping my house, and garnishing it, behold, the one I sought to get rid of, who had only gone for a little season, returned, and brought with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they entered in and dwelt there. Then I labored to believe. It is a strange way of putting it, yet so it was. When I wished to believe, I found I could not. It seemed to me that the way to Heaven by Christ’s righteousness was as difficult as by my own, and that I could as soon get to Heaven by Sinai as by Calvary. I could do nothing, I could neither repent nor believe. I fainted with despair, feeling as if I must be lost despite the gospel, and be forever driven from Jehovah’s presence, even though Christ had died.

I must confess that I never would have been saved if I could have helped it. As long as ever I could, I rebelled, and revolted, and struggled against God. When He would have me pray, I would not pray: when He would have me listen to the sound of the ministry, I would not. And when I heard, and the tear rolled down my cheek, I wiped it away, and defied Him to melt my heart. There came an election sermon; but that did not please me. There came a law sermon, showing me my powerlessness; but I did not believe it, I thought it was the whim of some old experimental Christian, some dogma of ancient times that would not suit men now. Then there came another sermon, concerning death and sin; but I did not believe I was dead, for I thought I was alive enough, and could repent and make myself right by-and-by. Then there came a strong exhortation sermon; but I felt I could set my house in order when I liked, as well as I could do it at once. So did I continually trust in my self-sufficiency. When my heart was a little touched, I tried to divert it with sinful pleasures; and would not then have been saved, until God gave me the effectual blow, and I was obliged to submit to that irresistible effort of His grace. It conquered my depraved will, and made me bow myself before His gracious scepter. When the Lord really brought me to myself, He sent one great shot which shivered me to pieces; and, lo, I found myself utterly defenseless. I thought I was more mighty than the angels, and could accomplish all things; but I found myself less than nothing.

Jesus said to Zaccheus, “Make haste, and *come down.*” Can I not remember when He also told me to come down? One of the first steps I had to take was to go right down from my good works; and, oh, what a fall was that! Then I stood upon my own self-sufficiency, and Christ said, “Come down! I have pulled you down from your good works, and now I will pull you down from your self-sufficiency.” So I had another fall, and I felt sure I had gained the bottom, but again Christ said, “Come down!” and He made me come down till I fell on some point at which I felt I was yet salvable. But still the command was, “Down, sir! come down further yet.” And down I came until, in despair, I had to let go every bough of the tree of my hopes, and then I said, “I can do nothing; I am ruined.” The waters were wrapped round my head, and I was shut out from the light of day, and thought myself a stranger from the commonwealth of Israel. But Christ said, “Come down lower yet, sir! thou hast too much pride to be saved.” Then I was brought down to see my corruption, my wickedness, my filthiness, for God always humbles the sinner whom He means to save. While I was in this state, trying to make myself believe, a voice whispered, “Vain man, vain man, if thou wouldst believe, come and see!” Then the Holy Spirit led me by the hand to a solitary place, and while I stood there, suddenly there appeared before me One upon His cross. I looked up; I had then no faith. I saw His eyes suffused with tears, and the blood still flowing; I saw His enemies about Him, hunting Him to His grave; I marked His miseries unutterable; I heard the groaning which cannot be described; and as I looked up, He opened His eyes, and said to me, “The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.” Yet I needed more than that gracious word. The general call of the gospel is like the sheet lightning we sometimes see on a summer’s evening, — beautiful, grand, — but who ever heard of anything being struck by it? But the special call is the forked flash from heaven; it strikes somewhere. It is the arrow shot in between the joints of the harness. The call which saves is like that of Jesus, when He said, “Mary,” and she said unto Him, “Rabboni.” Can I not recollect the hour when He whispered my name, when He said in mine ear, “Come unto Me”! That was an effectual call; there was no resisting it. I know I laughed at religion; I despised, I abhorred it; but oh, that call! I would not come. But Christ said, “Thou shalt come. ‘All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me.’ “ “Lord, I will not.” “But thou shalt,” said Jesus. I have gone up to God’s house, sometimes, almost with a resolution that I would not listen, but listen I must. Oh, how the Word came into my soul! Was there any power of resistance remaining in me? No; I was thrown down; each bone seemed to be broken. I began to think there never would be a trace of anything built up in my heart. What a trench was dug in my soul! Out went my supposed merits! What a heap of rubbish! Out went my knowledge, my good resolves, and my self-sufficiency! By-and-by, out went all my strength. When this digging-out was completed, the ditch was so deep that, as I went down into it, it seemed like my grave. Such a grief it was for me to know my own sinfulness, that it did not seem possible that this could help my upbuilding in comfort and salvation. Yet, so it is, that if the Lord means to build high, He always digs deep; and if He means to give great grace, He gives deep consciousness of need of it. Long before I began with Christ, He had begun with me; but when I began with Him, it was, as the law-writers say, “*In forma pauperis,*” after the style of a wretched mendicant, — a pauper who had nothing of his own, and looked to Christ for everything. I know, when I first cast my eye to His dear cross, and rested in Him, I had not any merit of my own, it was all demerit. I was not deserving, except that I felt I was hell-deserving: I had not even a shade of virtue that I could confide in. It was all over with me. I had come to an extremity. I could not have found a farthing’s worth of goodness in myself if I had been melted down. I seemed to be all rottenness, a dunghill of corruption, nothing better, but something a great deal worse. I could truly join with Paul at that time, and say that my own righteousnesses were dung; he used a strong expression, but I do not suppose he felt it to be strong enough: “I count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him.”

I do not know what may be the peculiarity of my constitution, but I have always loved safe things. I have not, that I know of, one grain of speculation in my nature. Safe things — things that I can see to be made of rock, and that will bear the test of time, — I lay hold of with avidity. I was reasoning thus in my boyish spirit: — Scripture tells me that he that believeth in Christ shall never perish. Then, if I believe in Jesus, I shall be safe for time and for eternity, too. There will be no fear of my ever being in hell; I shall run no risk as to my eternal state, that will be secure forever. I shall have the certainty that, when my eyes are closed in death, I shall see the face of Christ, and behold Him in glory. Whenever I heard the doctrine of the final preservation of the saints preached, my mouth used to water to be a child of God. When I used to hear the old saints sing that hymn of Toplady’s, which begins, —

**“ *A debtor to mercy alone,  
Of covenant mercy I sing;  
Nor fear, with Thy righteousness on,  
My person and offering to bring;*”*—***

I thought I should never be able to sing it myself, it was too high doctrine, too sweet, too consoling; but when they came to the climax, in the last verse, —

***~~“ My name from the palms of His hands  
Eternity will not erase;  
Impressed on His heart it remains  
In marks of indelible grace:~~***

***~~Yes, I to the end shall endure,  
As sure as the earnest is given;  
More happy, but not more secure,  
The glorified spirits in Heaven;” —~~***

my heart was as if it would leap out of my body, and I would cry to God, “Oh, that I had a part and lot in such a salvation as that!” I distinctly remember having a meditation something like this: — “Now I should not like to be a thief, or a murderer, or an unclean person.” I had such a training that I had an abhorrence of sin of every sort. “And yet,” I thought to myself, “I may even be hanged; there is no reason why I should not turn out a thief;” because I recollected there were some of my schoolfellows, older than I was, who had already become proficient in dishonesty; and I thought, “Why may not I?” No one can tell the rapture of my spirit, when I thought I saw in my Bible the doctrine that, if I gave my heart to Christ, He would keep me from sin, and preserve me as long as I lived. I was not quite certain whether that truth was revealed in the Bible, though I thought so; but I remember, when I heard the minister of some small “Hyper” chapel utter the same doctrine, my heart was full of rapture; I panted after that kind of gospel. “Oh!” I thought, “if God would but love me, if I might but know myself to be His!” For the enchanting part of it was that, if I were so loved, He would keep me to the end. That made me so in love with the gospel that, boy as I was, knowing nothing savingly about the truth, I was all the more earnest in desiring to be saved, because, if saved, God would never turn me out of doors. That made the gospel very precious to me; so that, when the Holy Spirit showed me my guilt, and led me to seek the Savior, that doctrine was like a bright star to my spirit. The Bible seemed to me to be full of this truth, “If you trust Christ, He will save you from all evil; He will keep you in a life of integrity and holiness while here, and He will bring you safe to Heaven at the last.” I felt that I could not trust man, for I had seen some of the very best wandering far from the truth; if I trusted Christ, it was not a chance as to whether I should get to Heaven, but a certainty; and I learned that, if I rested all my weight upon Him, He would keep me, for I found it written, “The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger.” I found the apostle saying, “He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it,” and such-like expressions. “Why,” I reasoned, “I have found an Insurance Office, and a good one, too; I will insure my soul in it; I will go to Jesus as I am, for He bids me do so; I will trust myself with Him.” If I had listened to the Arminian theory, I should never have been converted, for it never had any charms for me. A Savior who casts away His people, a God who leaves His children to perish, is not worthy of my worship; and a salvation which does not save outright is neither worth preaching nor worth listening to.

I recollect the time when I was afraid that Jesus would never save me, but I used to feel in my heart that, even if He did not, I must love Him for what He had done for other poor sinners. It seemed to me, as I read the wondrous story of His life and death, that if He refused me, I would still lie at His feet, and say, “Thou mayest spurn me, but Thou art a blessed Christ for all that; and if Thou dost curse me, yet I can only say to Thee that I well deserve it at Thy hands. Do what Thou wilt with me; but Thou didst save the dying thief, and Thou didst save her out of whom Thou didst cast seven devils, and if Thou dost not deign to save me, yet Thou art a blessed Christ, and I cannot rail at Thee, or find fault with Thee, but I lie down at Thy feet, and worship Thee.” I could not help saying, once, that, even if He damned me, I would love God because He was so gracious to others. One text of Scripture especially cheered me; I lived upon it for months. I felt the weight of sin, and I did not know the Savior; I feared God would blast me with His wrath, and smite me with His hot displeasure! From chapel to chapel I went to hear the Word preached, but never a gospel sentence did I hear; but this one text preserved me from what I believe I should have been driven to, — the commission of suicide through grief and sorrow. It was this sweet word, “Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.” Well, I thought, I cannot believe on Christ as I could wish, I cannot find pardon; but I know I call upon His name, I know I pray, ay, and pray with groans, and tears, and sighs, day and night; and if I am ever lost, I will plead that promise, “O God, Thou saidst, Whosoever shall call upon My name shall be saved! I did call; wilt Thou cast me away? I did plead Thy promise; I did lift up my heart in prayer; canst Thou be just, and yet condemn the sinner who did really call upon Thy name?”

My heart was greatly impressed by something which I heard my mother say. I had been some years seeking Christ, and I could not believe that He would save me. She said she had heard many people swear and blaspheme God, but one thing she had never known, — she had never heard a man say he had sought Christ, and Christ had rejected him. “And,” she added, “I do not believe that God would permit any man to live to say that.” I thought that I could say it; I thought I had sought Him, and He had cast me away, and I determined that I would say it; even if it destroyed my soul, I would speak what I thought was the truth. But I said to myself, “I will try once more;” and I went to the Master, with nothing of my own, casting myself simply on His mercy; and I believed that He died for me, and now, blessed be His holy name, I never shall be able to say that He has cast me away! As the result of personal experience, I can add my own testimony to that of my mother. I have heard many wicked things in my life, — I also have heard men swear and blaspheme God, till I have trembled; but there is one thing I never did hear a man say yet, and I think God would scarcely permit any man to utter such a lie; I never knew even a drunken man say, “I sincerely sought God with full purpose of heart, yet He has not heard me, and will not answer me, but has cast me away.” I scarcely think it possible, although I know that men can be almost infinitely wicked, that any man could utter such an abominable falsehood as that. At any rate, I can say I have never heard it.

CHAPTER 11.

THE GREAT CHANGE. — CONVERSION.

I have heard men tell the story of their conversion, and of their spiritual life, in such a way that my heart hath loathed *them* and their story, too, for they have told of their sins as if they did boast in the greatness of their crime, and they have mentioned the love of God, not with a tear of gratitude, not with the simple thanksgiving of the really humble heart, but as if they as much exalted themselves as they exalted God. Oh! when we tell the story of our own conversion, I would have it done with great sorrow, remembering what we used to be, and with great joy and gratitude, remembering how little we deserve these things. I was once preaching upon conversion and salvation, and I felt within myself, as preachers often do, that it was but dry work to tell this story, and a dull, dull tale it was to me; but, on a sudden, the thought crossed my mind, “Why, you are a poor, lost, ruined sinner yourself; tell it, tell it as you received it; begin to tell of the grace of God as you trust you feel it yourself.” Why, then, my eyes began to be fountains of tears; those hearers who had nodded their heads began to brighten up, and they listened, because they were hearing something which the speaker himself felt, and which they recognized as being true to him if it was not true to them.

Can you not remember, dearly-beloved, that day of days, that best and brightest of hours, when first you saw the Lord, lost your burden, received the roll of promise, rejoiced in full salvation, and went on your way in peace? My soul can never forget that day. Dying, all but dead, diseased, pained, chained, scourged, bound in fetters of iron, in darkness and the shadow of death, Jesus appeared unto me. My eyes looked to Him; the disease was healed, the pains removed, chains were snapped, prison doors were opened, darkness gave place to light. What delight filled my soul! — what mirth, what ecstasy, what sound of music and dancing, what soarings towards Heaven, what heights and depths of ineffable delight! Scarcely ever since then have I known joys which surpassed the rapture of that first hour. — C. H. S.

L ET our lips crowd sonnets within the compass of a word; let our voice distill hours of melody into a single syllable; let our tongue utter in one letter the essence of the harmony of ages; for we write of an hour which as far excelleth all other days of our life as gold exceedeth dross. As the night of Israel’s passover was a night to be remembered, a theme for bards, and an incessant fountain of grateful song, even so is the time of which we now tell, the never-to-be-forgotten hour of our emancipation from guilt, and our justification in Jesus. Other days have mingled with their fellows till, like coins worn in circulation, their image and superscription are entirely obliterated; but this day remaineth new, fresh, bright, as distinct in all its parts as if it were but yesterday struck from the mint of time. Memory shall drop from the palsied hand full many a memento which now she cherishes, but she shall never, even when she tottereth to the grave, unbind from her heart the token of the thrice-happy hour of the redemption of our spirit. The emancipated galley-slave may forget the day which heard his broken fetters rattle on the ground; the pardoned traitor may fail to remember the moment when the ax of the headsman was averted by a pardon; and the long-despairing mariner may not recollect the moment when a friendly hand snatched him from the hungry deep; but O hour of forgiven sin, moment of perfect pardon, our soul shall never forget thee while within her life and being find an immortality! Each day of our life hath had its attendant angel; but on this day, like Jacob at Mahanaim, hosts of angels met us. The sun hath risen every morning, but on that eventful morn he had the light of seven days. As the days of Heaven upon earth, as the years of immortality, as the ages of glory, as the bliss of Heaven, so were the hours of that thrice-happy day. Rapture divine, and ecstasy inexpressible, filled our soul. Fear, distress, and grief, with all their train of woes, fled hastily away; and in their place joys came without number.

When I was in the hand of the Holy Spirit, under conviction of sin, I had a clear and sharp sense of the justice of God. Sin, whatever it might be to other people, became to me an intolerable burden. It was not so much that I feared hell, as that I feared sin; and all the while, I had upon my mind a deep concern for the honor of God’s name, and the integrity of His moral government. I felt that it would not satisfy my conscience if I could be forgiven unjustly. But then there came the question, — “How could God be just, and yet justify me who had been so guilty?” I was worried and wearied with this question; neither could I see any answer to it. Certainly, I could never have invented an answer which would have satisfied my conscience. The doctrine of the atonement is to my mind one of the surest proofs of the Divine inspiration of Holy Scripture. Who would or could have thought of the just Ruler dying for the unjust rebel? This is no teaching of human mythology, or dream of poetical imagination. This method of expiation is only known among men because it is a fact: fiction could not have devised it. God Himself ordained it; it is not a matter which could have been imagined.

I had heard of the plan of salvation by the sacrifice of Jesus from my youth up; but I did not know anymore about it in my innermost soul than if I had been born and bred a Hottentot. The light was there, but I was blind: it was of necessity that the Lord Himself should make the matter plain to me. It came to me as a new revelation, as fresh as if I had never read in Scripture that Jesus was declared to be the propitiation for sins that God might be just. I believe it will have to come as a revelation to every newborn child of God whenever he sees it; I mean that glorious doctrine of the substitution of the Lord Jesus. I came to understand that salvation was possible through vicarious sacrifice; and that provision had been made in the first constitution and arrangement of things for such a substitution. I was made to see that He who is the Son of God, co-equal, and co-eternal with the Father, had of old been made the covenant Head of a chosen people, that He might in that capacity suffer for them and save them. Inasmuch as our fall was not at the first a personal one, for we fell in our federal representative, the first Adam, it became possible for us to be recovered by a second Representative, even by Him who has undertaken to be the covenant Head of His people, so as to be their second Adam. I saw that, ere I actually sinned, I had fallen by my first father’s sin; and I rejoiced that, therefore, it became possible in point of law for me to rise by a second Head and Representative. The fall by Adam left a loophole of escape; another Adam could undo the ruin wrought by the first.

When I was anxious about the possibility of a just God pardoning me, I understood and saw by faith that He who is the Son of God became man, and in His own blessed person bore my sin in His own body on the tree. I saw that the chastisement of my peace was laid on Him, and that with His stripes I was healed. It was because the Son of God, supremely glorious in His matchless person, undertook to vindicate the law by bearing the sentence due to me, that therefore God was able to pass by my sin. My sole hope for Heaven lies in the full atonement made upon Calvary’s cross for the ungodly. On that I firmly rely. I have not the shadow of a hope anywhere else. Personally, I could never have overcome my own sinfulness. I tried and failed. My evil propensities were too many for me, till, in the belief that Christ died for me, I cast my guilty soul on Him, and then I received a conquering principle by which I overcame my sinful self. The doctrine of the cross can be used to slay sin, even as the old warriors used their huge two-handed swords, and mowed down their foes at every stroke. There is nothing like faith in the sinners’ Friend: it overcomes all evil. If Christ has died for me, ungodly as I am, without strength as I am, then I cannot live in sin any longer, but must arouse myself to love and serve Him who hath redeemed me. I cannot trifle with the evil which slew my best Friend. I must be holy for His sake. How can I live in sin when He has died to save me from it?

There was a day, as I took my walks abroad, when I came hard by a spot forever engraven upon my memory, for there I saw this Friend, my best, my only Friend, murdered. I stooped down in sad affright, and looked at Him. I saw that His hands had been pierced with rough iron nails, and His feet had been rent in the same way. There was misery in His dead countenance so terrible that I scarcely dared to look upon it. His body was emaciated with hunger, His back was red with bloody scourges, and His brow had a circle of wounds about it: clearly could one see that these had been pierced by thorns. I shuddered, for I had known this Friend full well. He never had a fault; He was the purest of the pure, the holiest of the holy. Who could have injured Him? For He never injured any man: all His life long He “went about doing good;” He had healed the sick, He had fed the hungry, He had raised the dead: for which of these works did they kill Him? He had never breathed out anything else but love; and as I looked into the poor sorrowful face, so full of agony, and yet so full of love, I wondered who could have been a wretch so vile as to pierce hands like His. I said within myself, “Where can these traitors live? Who are these that could have smitten such an One as this?” Had they murdered an Oppressor, we might have forgiven them; had they slain one who had indulged in vice or villainy, it might have been his desert; had it been a murderer and a rebel, or one who had committed sedition, we would have said, “Bury his corpse: justice has at last given him his due.” But when Thou wast slain, my best, my only-beloved, where lodged the traitors? Let me seize them, and they shall be put to death. If there be torments that I can devise, surely they shall endure them all. Oh! what jealousy; what revenge I felt! If I might but find these murderers, what would I not do with them! And as I looked upon that corpse, I heard a footstep, and wondered where it was. I listened, and I clearly perceived that the murderer was close at hand. It was dark, and I groped about to find him. I found that, somehow or other, wherever I put out my hand, I could not meet with him, for he was nearer to me than my hand would go. At last I put my hand upon my breast. “I have thee now,” said I; for lo! he was in my own heart; the murderer was hiding within my own bosom, dwelling in the recesses of my inmost soul. Ah! then I wept indeed, that I, in the very presence of my murdered Master, should be harboring the murderer; and I felt myself most guilty while I bowed over His corpse, and sang that plaintive hymn, —

**“ *‘Twas you, my sins, my cruel sins,  
His chief tormentors were;  
Each of my crimes became a nail,  
And unbelief the spear.*”**

Amid the rabble rout which hounded the Redeemer to His doom, there were some gracious souls whose bitter anguish sought vent in wailing and lamentations, — fit music to accompany that march of woe. When my soul can, in imagination, see the Savior bearing His cross to Calvary, she joins the godly women, and weeps with them; for, indeed, there is true cause for grief, — cause lying deeper than those mourning women thought. They bewailed innocence maltreated, goodness persecuted, love bleeding, meekness about to die; but my heart has a deeper and more bitter cause to mourn. My sins were the scourges which lacerated those blessed shoulders, and crowned with thorns those bleeding brows: my sins cried, “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!” and laid the cross upon His gracious shoulders. His being led forth to die is sorrow enough for one eternity; but my having been His murderer, is more, infinitely more grief than one poor fountain of tears can express.

Why those women loved and wept, it were not hard to guess; but they could not have had greater reasons for love and grief than my heart has. Nain’s widow saw her son restored; but I myself have been raised to newness of life. Peter’s wife’s mother was cured of the fever; but I of the greater plague of sin. Out of Magdalene seven devils were cast; but a whole legion out of me. Mary and Martha were favored with visits from Him; but He dwells with me. His mother bare His body; but He is formed in me, “the hope of glory.” In nothing behind the holy women in debt, let me not be behind them in gratitude or sorrow.

***~~“ Love and grief my heart dividing,  
With my tears His feet I’ll lave;  
Constant still in heart abiding,~~***

***~~Weep for Him who died to save.”~~***

William Huntingdon says, in his autobiography, that one of the sharpest sensations of pain that he felt, after he had been quickened by Divine grace, was this, “He felt such pity for God.” I do not know that I ever met with the expression elsewhere, but it is a very striking one; although I might prefer to say that I have sympathy with God, and grief that He should be treated so ill. Ah, there are many men that are forgotten, that are despised, and that are trampled on by their fellows; but there never was a man who was so despised as the everlasting God has been! Many a man has been slandered and abused, but never was man abused as God has been. Many have been treated cruelly and ungratefully, but never was one treated as our God has been. I, too, once despised Him. He knocked at the door of my heart, and I refused to open it. He came to me, times without number, morning by morning, and night by night; He checked me in my conscience, and spoke to me by His Spirit, and when, at last, the thunders of the law prevailed in my conscience, I thought that Christ was cruel and unkind. Oh, I can never forgive myself that I should have thought so ill of Him! But what a loving reception did I have when I went to Him! I thought He would smite me, but His hand was not clenched in anger, but opened wide in mercy. I thought full sure that His eyes would dart lightning-flashes of wrath upon me; but, instead thereof, they were full of tears. He fell upon my neck, and kissed me; He took off my rags, and did clothe me with His righteousness, and caused my soul to sing aloud for joy; while in the house of my heart, and in the house of His Church, there was music and dancing, because His son that He had lost was found, and he that had been dead was made alive again.

There is a power in God’s gospel beyond all description. Once I, like Mazeppa, lashed to the wild horse of my lust, bound hand and foot, incapable of resistance, was galloping on with hell’s wolves behind me, howling for my body and my soul as their just and lawful prey. There came a mighty hand which stopped that wild horse, cut my bands, set me down, and brought me into liberty. Is there power in the gospel? Ay, there is, and he who has felt it must acknowledge it. There was a time when I lived in the strong old castle of my sins, and rested in my own works. There came a trumpeter to the door, and bade me open it. I with anger chid him from the porch, and said he ne’er should enter. Then there came a goodly Personage, with loving countenance; His hands were marked with scars where nails had been driven, and His feet had nail-prints, too. He lifted up His cross, using it as a hammer; at the first blow, the gate of my prejudice shook; at the second, it trembled more; at the third, down it fell, and in He came; and He said, “Arise, and stand upon thy feet, for I have loved thee with an everlasting love.” The gospel a thing of power! Ah! that it is. It always wears the dew of its youth; it glitters with morning’s freshness, its strength and its glory abide forever. I have felt its power in my own heart; I have the witness of the Spirit within my spirit, and I know it is a thing of might, because it has conquered me, and bowed me down.

**“*His free grace alone, from the first to the last,  
Hath won my affections, and bound my soul fast.*”**

In my conversion, the very point lay in making the discovery that I had nothing to do but to look to Christ, and I should be saved. I believe that I had been a very good, attentive hearer; my own impression about myself was that nobody ever listened much better than I did. For years, as a child, I tried to learn the way of salvation; and either I did not hear it set forth, which I think cannot quite have been the case, or else I was spiritually blind and deaf, and could not see it and could not hear it; but the good news that I was, as a sinner, to look away from myself to Christ, as much startled me, and came as fresh to me, as any news I ever heard in my life. Had I never read my Bible? Yes, and read it earnestly. Had I never been taught by Christian people? Yes, I had, by mother, and father, and others. Had I not heard the gospel? Yes, I think I had; and yet, somehow, it was like a new revelation to me that I was to “believe and live.” I confess to have been tutored in piety, put into my cradle by prayerful hands, and lulled to sleep by songs concerning Jesus; but after having heard the gospel continually, with line upon line, precept upon precept, here much and there much, yet, when the Word of the Lord came to me with power, it was as new as if I had lived among the unvisited tribes of Central Africa, and had never heard the tidings of the cleansing fountain filled with blood, drawn from the Savior’s veins.

When, for the first time, I received the gospel to my soul’s salvation, I thought that I had never really heard it before, and I began to think that the preachers to whom I had listened had not truly preached it. But, on looking back, I am inclined to believe that I had heard the gospel fully preached many hundreds of times before, and that this was the difference, — that I then heard it as though I heard it not; and when I did hear it, the message may not have been anymore clear in itself than it had been at former times, but the power of the Holy Spirit was present to open my ear, and to guide the message to my heart. I have no doubt that I heard, scores of times, such texts as these, — “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved;” “Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth;” “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life;” yet I had no intelligent idea of what faith meant. When I first discovered what faith really was, and exercised it, — for with me these two things came together, I believed as soon as ever I knew what believing meant, — then I thought I had never before heard that truth preached. But, now, I am persuaded that the light often shone on my eyes, but I was blind, and therefore I thought that the light had never come there. The light was shining all the while, but there was no power to receive it; the eyeball of the soul was not sensitive to the Divine beams.

I could not believe that it was possible that *my*sins could be forgiven. I do not know why, but I seemed to be the odd person in the world. When the catalogue was made out, it appeared to me that, for some reason, I must have been left out. If God had saved me, and not the world, I should have wondered indeed; but if He had saved all the world except me, that would have seemed to me to be but right. And now, being saved by grace, I cannot help saying, “I am indeed a brand plucked out of the fire!” I believe that some of us who were kept by God a long while before we found Him, love Him better perhaps than we should have done if we had received Him directly; and we can preach better to others, we can speak more of His lovingkindness and tender mercy. John Bunyan could not have written as he did if he had not been dragged about by the devil for many years. I love that picture of dear old Christian. I know, when I first read *The Pilgrim’s Progress,*and saw in it the woodcut of Christian carrying the burden on his back, I felt so interested in the poor fellow, that I thought I should jump with joy when, after he had carried his heavy load so long, he at last got rid of it; and that was how I felt when the burden of guilt, which I had borne so long, was forever rolled away from my shoulders and my heart. I can recollect when, like the poor dove sent out by Noah from his hand, I flew over the wide expanse of waters, and hoped to find some place where I might rest my wearied wing. Up towards the North I flew; and my eye looked keenly through the mist and darkness, if perhaps it might find some floating substance on which my soul might rest its foot, but it found nothing. Again it turned its wing, and flapped it, but not so rapidly as before, across that deep water that knew no shore; but still there was no rest. The raven had found its resting-place upon a floating body, and was feeding itself upon the carrion of some drowned man’s carcass; but my poor soul found no rest. I flew on; I fancied I saw a ship sailing out at sea; it was the ship of the law; and I thought I would put my feet on its canvas, or rest myself on its cordage for a time, and find some refuge. But, ah! it was an airy phantom, on which I could not rest; for my foot had no right to rest on the law; I had not kept it, and the soul that keepeth it not, must die. At last I saw the bark *Christ Jesus, —*that happy ark; and I thought I would fly thither; but my poor wing was weary, I could fly no further, and down I sank; but, as providence would have it, when my wings were flagging, and I was falling into the flood to be drowned, just below me was the roof of the ark, and I saw a hand put out from it, and One took hold of me, and said, “I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore I have not delivered the soul of My turtle-dove unto the multitude of the wicked; come in, come in!” Then I found that I had in my mouth an olive leaf of peace with God, and peace with man, plucked off by Jesus’ mighty power.

Once, God preached to me by a similitude in the depth of winter. The earth had been black, and there was scarcely a green thing or a flower to be seen. As I looked across the fields, there was nothing but barrenness, — bare hedges and leafless trees, and black, black earth, wherever I gazed. On a sudden, God spake, and unlocked the treasures of the snow, and white flakes descended until there was no blackness to be seen, and all was one sheet of dazzling whiteness. It was at the time that I was seeking the Savior, and not long before I found Him; and I remember well that sermon which I saw before me in the snow: “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”

Personally, I have to bless God for many good books; I thank Him for Dr. Doddridge’s *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul;*for Baxter’s *Call to the Unconverted;*for Alleine’s *Alarm to Sinners;*and for James’s *Anxious Enquirer;*but my gratitude most of all is due to God, not for books, but for the preached Word, — and that too addressed to me by a poor, uneducated man, a man who had never received any training for the ministry, and probably will never be heard of in this life, a man engaged in business, no doubt of a humble kind, during the week, but who had just enough of grace to say on the Sabbath, “Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth.” The books were good, but the man was better. The revealed Word awakened me; but it was the preached Word that saved me; and I must ever attach peculiar value to the *hearing of the truth,*for by it I received the joy and peace in which my soul delights. While under concern of soul, I resolved that I would attend all the places of worship in the town where I lived, in order that I might find out the way of salvation. I was willing to do anything, and be anything, if God would only forgive my sin. I set off, determined to go round to all the chapels, and I did go to every place of worship; but for a long time I went in vain. I do not, however, blame the ministers. One man preached Divine Sovereignty; I could hear him with pleasure, but what was that sublime truth to a poor sinner who wished to know what he must do to be saved? There was another admirable man who always preached about the law; but what was the use of plowing up ground that needed to be sown? Another was a practical preacher. I heard him, but it was very much like a commanding officer teaching the maneuvers of war to a set of men without feet. What could I do? All his exhortations were lost on me. I knew it was said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved;” but I did not know what it was to believe on Christ. These good men all preached truths suited to many in their congregations who were spiritually-minded people; but what I wanted to know was, — “How can I get my sins forgiven?” — and they never told me that. I desired 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 still worse; but did not bring me into rest. I went again, another day, and the text was something about the glories of the righteous; nothing for poor me! I was 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 that I do not know that I ever went without prayer to God, and I am sure there was not a more attentive hearer than myself in all the place, for I panted and longed to understand how I might be saved.

I sometimes think I might have been in darkness and despair until now had it not been for the goodness of God in sending a snowstorm, one Sunday morning, while I was going to a certain place of worship. When I could go no further, I turned down a side street, and came to a little Primitive Methodist Chapel. In that chapel there may have been a dozen or fifteen people. I had heard of the Primitive Methodists, how they sang so loudly that they made people’s heads ache; but that did not matter to me. I wanted to know how I might be saved, and if they could tell me that, I did not care how much they made my head ache. The minister did not come that morning; he was snowed up, I suppose. At last, a very thin-looking man, f5 a shoemaker, or tailor, or something of that sort, went up into the pulpit to preach. Now, it is well that preachers should be instructed; but this man was really stupid. He was obliged to stick to his text, for the simple reason that he had little else to say. The text was, —

**“LOOK UNTO ME, AND BE YE SAVED, ALL THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.”**

He did not even pronounce the words rightly, but that did not matter. There was, I thought, a glimpse of hope for me in that text. The preacher began thus: — “My dear friends, this is a very simple text indeed. It says, ‘Look.’ Now lookin’ don’t take a deal of pains. It ain’t liftin’ your foot or your finger; it is just, ‘Look.’ Well, a man needn’t go to College to learn to look. You may be the biggest fool, and yet you can look. A man needn’t be worth a thousand a year to be able to look. Anyone can look; even a child can look. But then the text says, ‘Look unto *Me.*’ Ay!” said he, in broad Essex, “many on ye are lookin’ to yourselves, but it’s no use lookin’ there. You’ll never find any comfort in yourselves. Some look to God the Father. No, look to Him by-and-by. Jesus Christ says, ‘Look unto *Me.*’ Some on ye say, ‘We must wait for the Spirit’s workin’.’ You have no business with that just now. Look to *Christ.*The text says, ‘Look unto *Me.*’ “

Then the good man followed up his text in this way: — “Look unto Me; I am sweatin’ great drops of blood. Look unto Me; I am hangin’ on the cross. Look unto Me; I am dead and buried. Look unto Me; I rise again. Look unto Me; I ascend to Heaven. Look unto Me; I am sittin’ at the Father’s right hand. O poor sinner, look unto Me! look unto Me!”

When he had gone to about that length, and managed to spin out ten minutes or so, he was at the end of his tether. Then he looked at me under the gallery, and I daresay, with so few present, he knew me to be a stranger. Just fixing his eyes on me, as if he knew all my heart, he said, “Young man, you look very miserable.” Well, I did; but I had not been accustomed to have remarks made from the pulpit on my personal appearance before. However, it was a good blow, struck right home. He continued, “and you always will be miserable — miserable in life, and miserable in death, — if you don’t obey my text; but if you obey now, this moment, you will be saved.” Then, lifting up his hands, he shouted, as only a Primitive Methodist could do, “Young man, look to Jesus Christ. Look! Look! Look! You have nothin’ to do but to look and live.” I saw at once the way of salvation. 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, the people only looked and were healed, so it was with me. I had been waiting to do fifty things, but when I heard that word, “Look!” what a charming word it seemed to me! Oh! I looked until I could almost have looked my eyes away. There and then the cloud was gone, the darkness had rolled away, and that moment I saw the sun; and I could have risen that instant, and sung with the most enthusiastic of them, of the precious blood of Christ, and the simple faith which looks alone to Him. Oh, that somebody had told me this before, “Trust Christ, and you shall be saved.” Yet it was, no doubt, all wisely ordered, and now I can say, —

**“ *E’er since by faith I saw the stream  
Thy flowing wounds supply,  
Redeeming love has been my theme,  
And shall be till I die.*”**

I do from my soul confess that I never was satisfied till I came to Christ; when I was yet a child, I had far more wretchedness than ever I have now; I will even add, more weariness, more care, more heartache than I know at this day. I may be singular in this confession, but I make it, and know it to be the truth. Since that dear hour when my soul cast itself on Jesus, I have found solid joy and peace; but before that, all those supposed gaieties of early youth, all the imagined ease and joy of boyhood, were but vanity and vexation of spirit to me. That happy day, when I found the Savior, and learned to cling to His dear feet, was a day never to be forgotten by me. An obscure child, unknown, unheard of, I listened to the Word of God; and that precious text led me to the cross of Christ. I can testify that the joy of that day was utterly indescribable. I could have leaped, I could have danced; there was no expression, however fanatical, which would have been out of keeping with the joy of my spirit at that hour. Many days of Christian experience have passed since then, but there has never been one which has had the full exhilaration, the sparkling delight which that first day had. I thought I could have sprung from the seat on which I sat, and have called out with the wildest of those Methodist brethren who were present, “I am forgiven! I am forgiven! A monument of grace! A sinner saved by blood!” My spirit saw its chains broken to pieces, I felt that I was an emancipated soul, an heir of Heaven, a forgiven one, accepted in Christ Jesus, plucked out of the miry clay and out of the horrible pit, with my feet set upon a rock, and my goings established. I thought I could dance all the way home. I could understand what John Bunyan meant, when he declared he wanted to tell the crows on the plowed land all about his conversion. He was too full to hold, he felt he must tell somebody.

It is not everyone who can remember the very day and hour of his deliverance; but, as Richard Knill said, “At such a time of the day, clang went every harp in Heaven, for Richard Knill was born again,” it was e’en so with me. f6 The clock of mercy struck in Heaven the hour and moment of my emancipation, for the time had come. Between half-past ten o’clock, when I entered that chapel, and half-past twelve o’clock, when I was back again at home, what a change had taken place in me! I had passed from darkness into marvelous light, from death to life. Simply by looking to Jesus, I had been delivered from despair, and I was brought into such a joyous state of mind that, when they saw me at home, they said to me, “Something wonderful has happened to you;” and I was eager to tell them all about it. Oh! there was joy in the household that day, when all heard that the eldest son had found the Savior, and knew himself to be forgiven, — bliss compared with which all earth’s joys are less than nothing and vanity. Yes, I had looked to Jesus as I was, and found in Him my Savior. Thus had the eternal purpose of Jehovah decreed it; and as, the moment before, there was none more wretched than I was, so, within that second, there was none more joyous. It took no longer time than does the lightning-flash; it was done, and never has it been undone. I looked, and lived, and leaped in joyful liberty as I beheld my sin punished upon the great Substitute, and put away forever. I looked unto Him, as He bled upon that tree; His eyes darted a glance of love unutterable into my spirit, and in a moment, I was saved. f7 Looking unto Him, the bruises that my soul had suffered were healed, the gaping wounds were cured, the broken bones rejoiced, the rags that had covered me were all removed, my spirit was white as the spotless snows of the far-off North; I had melody within my spirit, for I was saved, washed, cleansed, forgiven, through Him that did hang upon the tree. My Master, I cannot understand how Thou couldst stoop Thine awful head to such a death as the death of the cross, — how Thou couldst take from Thy brow the coronet of stars which from old eternity had shone resplendent there; but how Thou shouldst permit the thorn-crown to gird Thy temples, astonishes me far more. That Thou shouldst cast away the mantle of Thy glory, the azure of Thine everlasting empire, I cannot comprehend; but how Thou shouldst have become veiled in the ignominious purple for awhile, and then be mocked by impious men, who bowed to Thee as a pretended king; and how Thou shouldst be stripped naked to Thy shame, without a single covering, and die a felon’s death; — this is still more incomprehensible. But the marvel is that Thou shouldst have suffered all this for *me*! Truly, Thy love to me is wonderful, passing the love of women! Was ever grief like Thine? Was ever love like Thine, that could open the flood-gates of such grief? Was ever love so mighty as to become the fount from which such an ocean of grief could come rolling down?

There was never anything so true to me as those bleeding hands, and that thorn-crowned head. Home, friends, health, wealth, comforts — all lost their luster that day when He appeared, just as stars are hidden by the light of the sun. He was the only Lord and Giver of life’s best bliss, the one well of living water springing up unto everlasting life. As I saw Jesus on His cross before me, and as I mused upon His sufferings and death, methought I saw Him cast a look of love upon me; and then I looked at Him, and cried, —

**“*Jesu, lover of my soul,  
Let me to Thy bosom fly.*”**

He said, “Come,” and I flew to Him, and clasped Him; and when He let me go again, I wondered where my burden was. It was gone! There, in the sepulcher, it lay, and I felt light as air; like a winged sylph, I could fly over mountains of trouble and despair; and oh! what liberty and joy I had! I could leap with ecstasy, for I had much forgiven, and I was freed from sin. With the spouse in the Canticles, I could say, “*I found Him;*” I, a lad, found the Lord of glory; I, a slave to sin, found the great Deliverer; I, the child of darkness, found the Light of life; I, the uttermost of the lost, found my Savior and my God; I, widowed and desolate, found my Friend, my Beloved, my Husband. Oh, how I wondered that *I*should be pardoned! It was not the pardon that I wondered at so much; the wonder was that it should come to *me.*I marveled that He should be able to pardon such sins as mine, such crimes, so numerous and so black; and that, after such an accusing conscience, He should have power to still every wave within my spirit, and make my soul like the surface of a river, undisturbed, quiet, and at ease. It mattered not to me whether the day itself was gloomy or bright, I had found Christ; that was enough for me. He was my Savior, He was my all; and I can heartily say, that one day of pardoned sin was a sufficient recompense for the whole five years of conviction. I have to bless God for every terror that ever scared me by night, and for every foreboding that alarmed me by day. It has made me happier ever since; for now, if there be a trouble weighing upon my soul, I thank God it is not such a burden as that which bowed me to the very earth, and made me creep upon the ground, like a beast, by reason of heavy distress and affliction. I know I never can again suffer what I have suffered; I never can, except I be sent to hell, know more of agony than I have known; and now, that ease, that joy and peace in believing, that “no condemnation” which belongs to me as a child of God, is made doubly sweet and inexpressibly precious, by the recollection of my past days of sorrow and grief. Blessed be Thou, O God, forever, who by those black days, like a dreary winter, hast made these summer days all the fairer and the sweeter! I need not walk through the earth fearful of every shadow, and afraid of every man I meet, for sin is washed away; my spirit is no more guilty; it is pure, it is holy. The frown of God no longer resteth upon me; but my Father smiles, I see His eyes, — they are glancing love; I hear His voice, — it is full of sweetness. I am forgiven, I am forgiven, I am forgiven!

When I look back upon it, I can see one reason why the Word was blessed to me as I heard it preached in that Primitive Methodist Chapel at Colchester; I had been up betimes crying to God for the blessing. As a lad, when I was seeking the Savior, I used to rise with the sun, that I might get time to read gracious books, and to seek the Lord. I can recall the kind of pleas I used when I took my arguments, and came before the throne of grace: “Lord, save me; it will glorify Thy grace to save such a sinner as I am! Lord, save me, else I am lost to all eternity; do not let me perish, Lord! Save me, O Lord, for Jesus died! By His agony and bloody sweat, by His cross and passion, save me!” I often proved that the early morning was the best part of the day; I liked those prayers of which the psalmist said, “In the morning shall my prayer prevent Thee.”  
The Holy Spirit, who enabled me to believe, gave me peace through believing. I felt as sure that I was forgiven as before I felt sure of condemnation. I had been certain of my condemnation because the Word of God declared it, and my conscience bore witness to it; but when the Lord justified me, I was made equally certain by the same witnesses. The Word of the Lord in the Scripture saith, “He that believeth on Him is not condemned,” and my conscience bore witness that I believed, and that God in pardoning me was just. Thus I had the witness of the Holy Spirit and also of my own conscience, and these two agreed in one. That great and excellent man, Dr. Johnson, used to hold the opinion that no man ever could know that he was pardoned, — that there was no such thing as assurance of faith. Perhaps, if Dr. Johnson had studied his Bible a little more, and had had a little more of the enlightenment of the Spirit, he, too, might have come to know his own pardon. Certainly, he was no very reliable judge of theology, anymore than he was of porcelain, which he once attempted to make, and never succeeded. I think both in theology and porcelain his opinion is of very little value.

How can a man know that he is pardoned? There is a text which says, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; is it irrational to believe that I am saved? “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life,” saith Christ, in John’s Gospel. I believe on Christ; am I absurd in believing that I have eternal life? I find the apostle Paul speaking by the Holy Ghost, and saying, “There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God.” If I know that my trust is fixed on Jesus only, and that I have faith in Him, were it not ten thousand times more absurd for me not to be at peace, than for me to be filled with joy unspeakable? It is but taking God at His Word, when the soul knows, as a necessary consequence of its faith, that it is saved. I took Jesus as my Savior, and I was saved; and I can tell the reason why I took Him for my Savior. To my own humiliation, I must confess that I did it because I could not help it; I was shut up to it. That stern law-work had hammered me into such a condition that, if there had been fifty other saviors, I could not have thought of them, — I was driven to this One. I wanted a Divine Savior, I wanted One who was made a curse for me, to expiate my guilt. I wanted One who had died, for I deserved to die. I wanted One who had risen again, who was able by His life to make me live. I wanted the exact Savior that stood before me in the Word, revealed to my heart; and I could not help having Him. I could realize then the language of Rutherford when, being full of love to Christ, once upon a time, in the dungeon of Aberdeen, he said, “O my Lord, if there were a broad hell betwixt me and Thee, if I could not get at Thee except by wading through it, I would not think twice, but I would go through it all, if I might but embrace Thee, and call Thee mine!” Oh, how I loved Him! Passing all loves except His own, was that love which I felt for Him then. If, beside the door of the place in which I met with Him, there had been a stake of blazing faggots, I would have stood upon them without chains, glad to give my flesh, and blood, and bones, to be ashes that should testify my love to Him. Had He asked me then to give all my substance to the poor, I would have given all, and thought myself to be amazingly rich in having beggared myself for His name’s sake. Had He commanded me then to preach in the midst of all His foes, I could have said, —

**“ *There’s not a lamb in all Thy flock  
I would disdain to feed,  
There’s not a foe, before whose face  
I’d fear Thy cause to plead.*”**

Has Jesus saved *me?* I dare not speak with any hesitation here; I *know*He has. His Word is true, therefore I *am*saved. My evidence that I am saved does not lie in the fact that I preach, or that I do this or that. All my hope lies in this, that Jesus Christ came to save sinners. I am a sinner, I trust Him, then He came to save me, and I am saved; I live habitually in the enjoyment of this blessed fact, and it is long since I have doubted the truth of it, for I have His own Word to sustain my faith. It is a very surprising thing, — a thing to be marveled at most of all by those who enjoy it. I know that it is to me even to this day the greatest wonder that I ever heard of, that God should ever justify *me.*I feel myself to be a lump of unworthiness, a mass of corruption, and a heap of sin, apart from His almighty love; yet I know, by a full assurance, that I am justified by faith which is in Christ Jesus, and treated as if I had been perfectly just, and made an heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ; though by nature I must take my place among the most sinful. I, who am altogether undeserving, am treated as if I had been deserving. I am loved with as much love as if I had always been godly, whereas aforetime I was ungodly.

I have always considered, with Luther and Calvin, that the sum and substance of the gospel lies in that word *Substitution, —*Christ standing in the stead of man. If I understand the gospel, it is this: I deserve to be lost forever; the only reason why I should not be damned is, that Christ was punished in my stead, and there is no need to execute a sentence twice for sin. On the other hand, I know I cannot enter Heaven unless I have a perfect righteousness; I am absolutely certain I shall never have one of my own, for I find I sin everyday; but then Christ had a perfect righteousness, and He said, “There, poor sinner, take My garment, and put it on; you shall stand before God as if you were Christ, and I will stand before God as if I had been the sinner; I will suffer in the sinner’s stead, and you shall be rewarded for works which you did not do, but which I did for you.” I find it very convenient everyday to come to Christ as a sinner, as I came at the first. “You are no saint,” says the devil. Well, if I am not, I am a sinner, and Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. Sink or swim, I go to Him; other hope I have none. By looking to Him, I received all the faith which inspired me with confidence in His grace; and the word that first drew my soul — “Look unto Me,” — still rings its clarion note in my ears. There I once found conversion, and there I shall ever find refreshing and renewal.

Let me bear my personal testimony of what I have seen, what my own ears have heard, and my own heart has tasted. First, Christ is the only-begotten of the Father. He is Divine to me, if He be human to all the world besides. He has done that for me which none but a God could do. He has subdued my stubborn will, melted a heart of adamant, broken a chain of steel, opened the gates of brass, and snapped the bars of iron. He hath turned for me my mourning into laughter, and my desolation into joy; He hath led my captivity captive, and made my heart rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Let others think as they will of Him, to me He must ever be the only-begotten of the Father: blessed be His holy name!

***~~“ Oh, that I could now adore Him,  
Like the Heavenly host above,  
Who for ever bow before Him,  
And unceasing sing His love!~~***

***~~Happy songsters!  
When shall I your chorus join?”~~***

Again, I bear my testimony that He is full of grace. Ah, had He not been, I should never have beheld His glory. I was full of sin to overflowing. I was condemned already, because I believed not upon Him. He drew me when I wanted not to come, and though I struggled hard, He continued still to draw; and when at last I came to His mercy-seat, all trembling like a condemned culprit, He said, “Thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee: be of good cheer.” Let others despise Him; but I bear witness that He is full of grace.

Finally, I bear my witness that He is full of truth. True have His promises been; not one has failed. I have often doubted Him, for that I blush; He has never failed me, in this I must rejoice. His promises have been yea and amen. I do but speak the testimony of every believer in Christ, though I put it thus personally to make it the more forcible. I bear witness that never servant had such a Master as I have; never brother had such a Kinsman as He has been to me; never spouse had such a Husband as Christ has been to my soul; never sinner a better Savior; never soldier a better Captain; never mourner a better Comforter than Christ hath been to my spirit. I want none beside Him. In life, He is my life; and in death, He shall be the death of death; in poverty, Christ is my riches; in sickness, He makes my bed; in darkness, He is my Star; and in brightness, He is my Sun. By faith I understand that the blessed Son of God redeemed my soul with His own heart’s blood; and by sweet experience I know that He raised me up from the pit of dark despair, and set my feet on the rock. He died for me. This is the root of every satisfaction I have. He put all my transgressions away. He cleansed me with His precious blood; He covered me with His perfect righteousness; He wrapped me up in His own virtues. He has promised to keep me, while I abide in this world, from its temptations and snares; and when I depart from this world, He has already prepared for me a mansion in the Heaven of unfading bliss, and a crown of everlasting joy that shall never, never fade away. To me, then, the days or years of my mortal sojourn on this earth are of little moment. Nor is the manner of my decease of much consequence. Should foemen sentence me to martyrdom, or physicians declare that I must soon depart this life, it is all alike, —

**“*A few more rolling suns at most  
Shall land me on fair Canaan’s coast.*”**

What more can I wish than that, while my brief term on earth shall last, I should be the servant of Him who became the Servant of servants for me? I can say, concerning Christ’s religion, if I had to die like a dog, and had no hope whatever of immortality, if I wanted to lead a happy life, let me serve my God with all my heart; let me be a follower of Jesus, and walk in His footsteps. If there were no hereafter, I would still prefer to be a Christian, and the humblest Christian minister, to being a king or an emperor, for I am persuaded there are more delights in Christ, yea, more joy in one glimpse of His face than is to be found in all the praises of this harlotworld, and in all the delights which it can yield to us in its sunniest and brightest days. And I am persuaded that what He has been till now, He will be to the end; and where He hath begun a good work, He will carry it on. In the religion of Jesus Christ, there are clusters even on earth too heavy for one man to carry; there are fruits that have been found so rich that even angel lips have never been sweetened with more luscious wine; there are joys to be had here so fair that even cates ambrosial and the nectared wine of Paradise can scarcely excel the sweets of satisfaction that are to be found in the earthly banquets of the Lord. I have seen hundreds and thousands who have given their hearts to Jesus, but I never did see one who said he was disappointed with Him, I never met with one who said Jesus Christ was less than He was declared to be. When first my eyes beheld Him, when the burden slipped from off my heavy-laden shoulders, and I was free from condemnation, I thought that all the preachers I had ever heard had not half preached, they had not told half the beauty of my Lord and Master. So good! so generous! so gracious! so willing to forgive! It seemed to me as if they had almost slandered Him; they painted His likeness, doubtless, as well as they could, but it was a mere smudge compared with the matchless beauties of His face. All who have ever seen Him will say the same. I go back to my home, many a time, mourning that I cannot preach my Master even as I myself know Him, and what I know of Him is very little compared with the matchlessness of His grace. Would that I knew more of Him, and that I could tell it out better!

CHAPTER 12.

LETTERS TO FATHER AND MOTHER, JANUARY TO JUNE, 1850.

A man’s private letters often let you into the secrets of his heart. Read Rutherford’s letters and you see the man at once; or those of Kirk White, or Newton. A man’s writing-desk should be used to make his biography. — C. H. S.

“Newmarket,  
“January 30th, 1850.  
“My Dear Father,

“I am most happy and comfortable, I could not be more so whilst sojourning on earth, ‘like a pilgrim or a stranger, as all my fathers were.’ There are but four boarders, and about twelve day-boys. I have a nice little mathematical class, and have quite as much time for study as I had before. I can get good religious conversations with Mr. Swindell, which is what I most need. Oh, how unprofitable has my past life been! Oh, that I should have been so long time blind to those celestial wonders, which now I can in a measure behold! Who can refrain from speaking of the marvelous love of Jesus which, I hope, has opened mine eyes! Now I see Him, I can firmly trust to Him for my eternal salvation. Yet soon I doubt again; then I am sorrowful; again faith appears, and I become confident of my interest in Him. I feel now as if I could do everything, and give up everything for Christ, and then I know it would be nothing in comparison with His love. I am hopeless of ever making anything like a return. How sweet is prayer! I would be always engaged in it. How beautiful is the Bible! I never loved it so before; it seems to me as necessary food. I feel that I have not one particle of spiritual life in me but what the Spirit placed there. I feel that I cannot live if He depart; I tremble and fear lest I should grieve Him. I dread lest sloth or pride should overcome me, and I should dishonor the gospel by neglect of prayer, or the Scriptures, or by sinning against God. Truly, that will be a happy place where we shall get rid of sin and this depraved, corrupt nature. When I look at the horrible pit and the hole from which I have been digged, I tremble lest I should fall into it, and yet rejoice that I am on the King’s highway. I hope you will forgive me for taking up so much space about myself; but at present my thoughts are most about it.

“From the Scriptures, is it not apparent that, immediately upon receiving the Lord Jesus, it is a part of duty openly to profess Him? I firmly believe and consider that baptism is the command of Christ, and shall not feel quite comfortable if I do not receive it. I am unworthy of such things, but so am I unworthy of Jesu’s love. I hope I have received the blessing of the one, and think I ought to take the other also.

“My very best love to you and my dear Mother; I seem to love you more than ever, because you love my Lord Jesus. I hope yourself, dear Mother, Archer, Eliza, Emily, Louisa, and Lottie, are well; love to all…

“May we all, after this fighting life is over, meet in —

**“ *‘That Kingdom of immense delight,  
Where health, and peace, and joy unite,  
Where undeclining pleasures rise,  
And every wish hath full supplies;’***

and while you are here, may the blessings of the gospel abound toward you, and may we as a family be all devoted to the Lord! May all blessings be upon us, and may —

“I ever remain,  
“Your dutiful and affectionate son,  
**“CHAS. H. SPURGEON.”**  
“Newmarket,  
“Feb. 19th, 1850. “My Dear Mother,

“I hope the long space between my letters will be excused, as I assure you I am fully occupied. I read French exercises every night with Mr. Swindell, — Monsr. Perret comes once every week for an hour. I have 33 houses at present where I leave tracts, — I happened to take a district formerly supplied by Mrs. Andrews, who last lived in this house, and Miss Anna Swindell. Next Wednesday, — I mean tomorrow, — I am to go to a meeting of the tract-distributors. They have been at a standstill, and hope now to start afresh. On Thursday, Mr. Simpson intends coming to talk with me upon the most important of all subjects. Oh, how I wish that I could do something for Christ! Tract-distribution is so pleasant and easy that it is a nothing, — nothing in itself, much less when it is compared with the amazing debt of gratitude I owe.

“I have written to grandfather, and have received a very nice letter. I have been in the miry Slough of Despond; he sends me strong consolation, but is that what I want? Ought I not rather to be reproved for my deadness and coldness? I pray as if I did not pray, hear as if I did not hear, and read as if I did not read, — such is my deadness and coldness. I had a glorious revival on Saturday and Sunday. When I can do anything, I am not quite so dead. Oh, what a horrid state! It seems as if no real child of God could ever look so coldly on, and think so little of, the love of Jesus, and His glorious atonement. Why is not my heart always warm? Is it not because of my own sins? I fear lest this deadness be but the prelude to death, — spiritual death. I have still a sense of my own weakness, nothingness, and utter inability to do anything in and of myself, — I pray God that I may never lose it, — I am sure I must if left to myself, and then, when I am cut off from Him, in whom my great strength lieth, I shall be taken by the Philistines in my own wicked heart, and have mine eyes forever closed to all spiritual good. Pray for me, O my dear Father and Mother! Oh, that Jesus would pray for me! Then I shall be delivered, and everlastingly saved. I should like to be always reading my Bible, and be daily gaining greater insight into it *by the help of the Spirit.*I can get but very little time, as Mr. S. pushes me on in Greek and French.  
“I have come to a resolution that, by God’s help, I will profess the name of Jesus as soon as possible if I may be admitted into His Church on earth. It is an honor, — no difficulty, — grandfather encourages me to do so, and I hope to do so both as a duty and privilege. I trust that I shall then feel that the bonds of the Lord are upon me, and have a more powerful sense of my duty to walk circumspectly. Conscience has convinced me that it is a duty to be buried with Christ in baptism, although I am sure it constitutes no part of salvation. I am very glad that you have no objection to my doing so. Mr. Swindell is a Baptist.

“You must have been terribly frightened when the chimney fell down, what a mercy that none were hurt! There was a great deal of damage here from the wind. My cold is about the same as it was at home, it has been worse. I take all the care I can, I suppose it will go away soon. How are all the little ones? Give my love to them, and to Archer and Eliza. How does Archer get on? Accept my best love for yourself and Father. I hope you are well,

“And remain,  
“Your affectionate son,  
**“CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON.”**  
“Newmarket,  
“March 12th, 1850.  
“My Dear Father,

“Many thanks to you for your kind, instructive, and unexpected letter… My very best love to dear Mother; I hope she will soon be better.

“At our last church-meeting, I was proposed. No one has been to see me yet. I hope that now I may be doubly circumspect, and doubly prayerful. How could a Christian live happily, or live at all, if he had not the assurance that his life is in Christ, and his support, the Lord’s undertaking? I am sure I would not have dared to take this great decisive step were it not that I am assured that Omnipotence will be my support, and the Shepherd of Israel my constant Protector. Prayer is to me now what the sucking of the milk was to me in my infancy. Although I do not always feel the same relish for it, yet I am sure I cannot live without it.

***~~“ ‘When by sin overwhelm’d, shame covers my face, I look unto Jesus, who saves by His grace; I call on His name from the gulf of despair,~~***

***~~And He plucks me from hell in answer to prayer. Prayer, sweet prayer!  
Be it ever so feeble, there’s nothing like prayer.’~~***

“Even the Slough of Despond can be passed by the supports of prayer and faith. Blessed be the name of the Lord, despondency has vanished, like a mist, before the Sun of righteousness, who has shone into my heart! ‘Truly, God is good to Israel.’ In the blackest darkness, I resolved that, if I never had another ray of comfort, and even if I was everlastingly lost, yet I would love Jesus, and endeavor to run in the way of His commandments: from the time that I was enabled thus to resolve, all these clouds have fled. If they return, I fear not to meet them in the strength of the Beloved. One trial to me is that I have nothing to give up for Christ, nothing wherein to show my love to Him. What I *can*do, is *little;*and what I Do do, is less. The tempter says, ‘You don’t leave anything for Christ; you only follow Him to be saved by it. Where are your evidences?’ Then I tell him that I have given up my selfrighteousness, and he says, ‘Yes, but not till you saw it was filthy rags!’ All I have to answer is, that my sufficiency is not of myself.

*(*“*Thursday afternoon.)*

“I have just now received a very nice note from my dear Mother. Many thanks to you for the P.O. order. I do not know what money obligations are imposed upon members; I must do as you tell me.

*(Here a piece of the letter has been cut out.)* “I am glad brother and sister are better. Again my best love to you all.

“I am,  
“Dear Father,  
“Your affectionate son,

**“CHARLES.”**  
“Newmarket,  
“April 6th, 1850.  
“My Dear Father,

“You will be pleased to hear that, last Thursday night, I was admitted as a member. Oh, that I may henceforth live more for the glory of Him, by whom I feel assured that I shall be everlastingly saved! Owing to my scruples on account of baptism, I did not sit down at the Lord’s table, and cannot in conscience do so until I am baptized. To one who does not see the necessity of baptism, it is perfectly right and proper to partake of this blessed privilege; but were *I* to do so, I conceive would be to tumble over the wall, since I feel persuaded it is Christ’s appointed way of professing Him. I am sure this is the only view which I have of baptism. I detest the idea that I can do a single thing towards my own salvation. I trust that I feel sufficiently the corruption of my own heart to know that, instead of doing one iota to forward my own salvation, my old corrupt heart would impede it, were it not that my Redeemer is mighty, and works as He pleases.

“Since last Thursday, I have been unwell in body, but I may say that my soul has been almost in Heaven. I have been able to see my title clear, and to know and believe that, sooner than one of God’s little ones shall perish, God Himself will *cease to be,*Satan will conquer the King of kings, and Jesus will no longer be the Savior of the elect. Doubts and fears may soon assail me, but I will not dread to meet them if my Father has so ordained it; He knows best. Were I never to have another visit of grace, and be always doubting from now until the day of my death, yet ‘the foundation of the Lord standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His.’ I see now the secret, how it was that you were enabled to bear up under all your late trials. This faith is far more than any of us deserve; all beyond hell is mercy, but this is a mighty one. Were it not all of sovereign, electing, almighty grace, I, for one, could never hope to be saved. God says, ‘*You shall,*’ and not all the devils in hell, let loose upon a real Christian, can stop the workings of God’s sovereign grace, for in due time the Christian cries, ‘*I will.*’ Oh, how little love have I for One who has thus promised to save me by so great a salvation, and who will certainly perform His promise!

“I trust that the Lord is working among my tract people, and blessing my little effort. I have had most interesting and encouraging conversation with many of them. Oh, that I could see but one sinner constrained to come to Jesus! How I long for the time when it may please God to make me, like you, my Father, a successful preacher of the gospel! I almost envy you your exalted privilege. May the dew of Hermon and the increase of the Spirit rest upon your labors! Your unworthy son tries to pray for you and his Mother, that grace and peace may be with you. Oh, that the God of mercy would incline Archer’s heart to Him, and make him a partaker of His grace! Ask him if he will believe me when I say that one drop of the pleasure of religion is worth ten thousand oceans of the pleasures of the unconverted, and then ask him if he is not willing to prove the fact by experience. Give my love to my dear Mother….

“As Mr. Cantlow’s baptizing season will come round this month, I have humbly to beg your consent, as I will not act against your will, and should very much like to commune next month. I have no doubt of your permission. We are all one in Christ Jesus; forms and ceremonies, I trust, will not make us divided…

“With my best love and hopes that you are all well,  
“I remain,  
“Your affectionate son,  
“Not only as to the flesh, but in the faith,

**“CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON.”**  
“Newmarket,  
“April 20th.  
“My Dear Mother,

“I have every morning looked for a letter from Father, I long for an answer; it is now a month since I have had one from him. Do, if you please, send me either permission or refusal to be baptized; I have been kept in painful suspense. This is the 20th, and Mr. Cantlow’s baptizing day is to be the latter end of the month; I think, next week. I should be so sorry to lose another Ordinance Sunday; and with my present convictions, I hope I shall never so violate my conscience as to sit down unbaptized. When requested, I assured the members at the church-meeting that I would never do so.

“I often think of you poor starving creatures, following Mr.\_\_\_\_ for the bony rhetoric and oratory which he gives you. What a mercy that you are not dependent upon him for spiritual comfort! I hope you will soon give up following that empty cloud without rain, that type-and-shadow preacher, for I don’t think there is much substance. But, my dear Mother, why do you not go and hear my friend, Mr. Langford? He is an open-communion Baptist, and I have no doubt will receive you without baptism. Perhaps his preaching may be blest to Archer, Eliza, and my sisters, as well as to myself; would it not be worth giving up a little difference of persuasion for? God can save whom He will, when He will, and where He will, but I think Mr.\_\_\_\_’s Mount Sinai roarings are the last things to do it, to all human appearance.

“I think I might date this letter from a place in the Enchanted Ground, with the warm air of Beulah blowing upon me. One drop of the pleasures I have felt is worth a life of agony. I am afraid of becoming satisfied with this world.

“My very best love to yourself, dear Father, Eliza, Archer, Emily, Louisa, and Lottie. I hope you are well. I am very much better; thanks for the prescription; and with my love to you again,

“I remain,  
“Dear Mother,  
“Your affectionate son,

**“CHARLES.”**

“P.S. — If baptized, it will be in an open river; go in just as I am, with some others… I trust the good confession before many witnesses will be a bond betwixt me and my Master, my Savior, and my King.”  
“Newmarket,  
“May 1st, 1850.

“My Dear Mother,

“Many very happy returns of your Birthday! In this instance, my wish will certainly be realized, for in Heaven you are sure to have an eternity of happy days. May you, in your coming years, live beneath the sweet smiles of the God of peace; may joy and singing attend your footsteps to a blissful haven of rest and tranquillity! Your birthday will now be doubly memorable, for on the third of May, the boy for whom you have so often prayed, the boy of hopes and fears, your firstborn, will join the visible Church of the redeemed on earth, and will bind himself doubly to the Lord his God, by open profession. You, my Mother, have been the great means in God’s hand of rendering me what I hope I am. Your kind, warning Sabbath-evening addresses were too deeply settled on my heart to be forgotten. You, by God’s blessing, prepared the way for the preached Word, and for that holy book, *The Rise and Progress.* If I have any courage, if I feel prepared to follow my Savior, not only into the water, but should He call me, even into the fire, I love you as the preacher to my heart of such courage, as my praying, watching Mother. Impossible, I think it is, that I should ever cease to love you, or you to love me, yet not nearly so impossible as that the Lord our Father should cease to love either of us, be we ever so doubtful of it, or ever so disobedient. I hope you may one day have cause to rejoice, should you see me, the unworthy instrument of God, preaching to others, — yet have I vowed in the strength of my only Strength, in the name of my Beloved, to devote myself for ever to His cause. Do you not think it would be a bad beginning were I, knowing it to be my duty to be baptized, to shrink from it? If you are now as happy as I am, I can wish no more than that you may continue so. I am the happiest creature, I think, upon this globe.

“I hope you have enjoyed your visit, and that it will help much to establish your health. I dare not ask you to write, for I know you are always so busy that it is quite a task to you. I hope my letter did not pain you, dear Mother; my best love to you, be assured that I would not do anything to grieve you, and I am sure that I remain, “Your affectionate son,

**“CHARLES HADDON.”**  
“Mr. and Mrs. Swindell’s respects to you and dear Father.”  
“Newmarket Academy,  
“June 11th, 1850.  
“My Dear Mother,

“Many thanks to you for your valuable letter. Your notes are so few and far between, and are such a trouble to you, that one now and then is quite a treasure.

“Truly, indeed, I have much for which to bless the Lord, when I contemplate His Divine Sovereignty, and see that my salvation is entirely of His free electing love. He has chosen me to be one of His vessels of mercy; and, despite all opposition from without and from within, He will surely accomplish His own work. I have more than sufficient to induce me to give up myself entirely to Him who has bought me and purchased me with an everlasting redemption. I am now enabled to rely upon His precious promises, and to feel that I am as safe, though not so holy, as the greatest saint in Heaven.

“I have had two opportunities of addressing the Sunday-school children, and have endeavored to do so as a dying being to dying beings. I am bound to Newmarket by holy bonds. I have 70 people whom I regularly visit on Saturday. I do not give a tract, and go away; but I sit down, and endeavor to draw their attention to spiritual realities. I have great reason to believe the Lord is working, — the people are so kind, and so pleased to see me. I cannot bear to leave them. We are so feeble here that the weakest cannot be spared. We have a pretty good attendance at prayermeetings; but so few praying men, that I am constantly called upon…

“One of our Deacons, Mr.\_\_\_\_, is constantly inviting me to his house he is rather an Arminian; but so are the majority of Newmarket Christians. Grandfather has written to me; he does not blame me for being a Baptist, but hopes I shall not be one of the tight-laced, strict-communion sort. In that, we are agreed. I certainly think we ought to forget such things in others when we come to the Lord’s table. I can, and hope I shall be, charitable to unbaptized Christians, though I think they are mistaken. It is not a great matter; men will differ; we ought both to follow our own consciences, and let others do the same. I think the time would be better spent in talking upon vital godliness than in disputing about forms. I trust the Lord is weaning me daily from all selfdependence, and teaching me to look at myself as less than nothing. I know that I am perfectly dead without Him; it is His work; I am confident that He will accomplish it, and that I shall see the face of my Beloved in His own house in glory.

“My enemies are many, and they hate me with cruel hatred, yet with Jehovah Jesus on my side, why should I fear? I will march on in His almighty strength to certain conquest and victory. I am so glad that Sarah, too, is called, that two of us in one household at one time should thus openly profess the Savior’s name. We are brother and sister in the Lord; may our Father often give each of us the refreshing visits of His grace! I feel as if I could say with Paul, ‘Would that I were even accursed, so that my brethren according to the flesh might be saved!’ What a joy if God should prove that they are redeemed ones included in the covenant of grace! I long to see your face, and let my heart beat with yours, whilst we talk of the glorious things pertaining to eternal life. My best love to you and Father; may the Angel of the covenant dwell with you, and enchant you by the visions of His grace! Love to Eliza, Archer (many happy returns to him), Emily, Lottie, and Louisa; may they become members of the church in our house! I am very glad you are so well. I am so, but hard at work for the Examination, so allow me to remain,

“Your most affectionate son,  
**“CHARLES.”**  
“Master H\_\_\_\_ shall be attended to; be ye always ready for every good work. I have no time, but it shall be done.”

CHAPTER 13.

DIARY, APRIL TO JUNE, 1850.

I have sometimes said, when I have become the prey of doubting thoughts, “Well, now, I dare not doubt whether there be a God, for I can look back in my Diary, and say, ‘On such a day, in the depths of trouble, I bent my knee to God, and or ever I had risen from my knees, the answer was given me.’ “ — C. H. S.

**INTRODUCTION, BY MRS. C. H. SPURGEON.**

N OT very long after our marriage, my husband brought to me, one day, a small clasped book, and putting it into my hand with a grave and serious air, he said, “That book contains a record of some of my past spiritual experiences, wifie; take care of it, but I never want to see it again.” He never did, and to me also it was a sealed book, for I did not dare to open it; and it has lain, unrevealed, for certainly forty years since the day I first saw it. But now, with reverent hands, I take it from its hiding-place, and, as I look upon the boyish handwriting, and begin to read the thoughts of my dear one’s heart in the bygone years, I wonder whether I *can*undertake the duty of transcription, whether my eyes will see through the tears which must come, and my fingers will hold the pen without much trembling, and my heart, which loved him so well, will be able to thank God that the past *is past,*and the struggles and sorrows of earth are forever forgotten in the ecstasies of eternal glory. Lord, strengthen and help me!

The contents of the little book prove to be a continuous Diary of nearly three months’ duration, commencing April 6th, 1850, and ending on June 20th in the same year. As its pages cover the season of baptism, and the young convert’s first efforts in service for the Lord, it is full of deep interest and pathos to all who afterward knew and loved the great preacher. I feel that I am justified in at last revealing the long-kept secret of the book, for a perusal of its soul-confessions and holy resolutions can only redound to the glory of God, and show how He was leading His young servant by a way which he knew not. And I believe God would have me do this.  
The words of the dear boy of sixteen are very touching when read in the light of his subsequent marvelous career. As the trunk and branches of the future tree may, in some cases, be seen faintly outlined in the fruit it bears, so we can here discern something of the form and beauty of the fair character which the Lord was preparing for a glorious service.

How marked is his *humility,*even though he must have felt within him the stirrings and throes of the wonderful powers which were afterwards developed. “Forgive me, Lord,” he says, in one place, “if I have ever had high thoughts of myself,” — so early did the Master implant the precious seeds of that rare grace of meekness, which adorned his after life. After each youthful effort at public exhortation, whether it be engaging in prayer, or addressing Sunday-school children, he seems to be surprised at his own success, and intensely anxious to be kept from pride and self-glory, again and again confessing his own utter weakness, and pleading for God-given strength. What deep foundations were laid in this chosen soul, upon what massive pillars of truth and doctrine did God construct the spiritual consciousness of the man who was to do so great a work in the world for his Master! He was truly a “building fitly framed together,” and he grew into “a holy temple in the Lord,” “a habitation of God through the Spirit.” So young in years, when he wrote these thoughts, yet so old in grace, and possessing an experience in spiritual matters richer and broader than most Christians attain to at an advanced age! How plainly revealed in these pages are the workings and teachings of the Divine Spirit, and how equally clear are the docility, and earnestness, and humility of the pupil! Many of the sentences in the Diary are strangely prophetic of his future position and work, — notably these two, — “Make me Thy faithful servant, O my God; may I honor Thee in my day and generation, and be consecrated for ever to Thy service!” And again, “Make me to be an eminent servant of Thine, and to be blessed with the power to serve Thee, like Thy great servant Paul!”

In these breathings, too, we see where the secret of his great strength lay. He believed and trusted God absolutely, and his faith was honored in a God-like fashion. Deeply realizing his own weakness, he rested with childlike and complete dependence on his Lord. And God carried him, as a father bears his little one in his arms; and God’s Spirit dwelt in him, to teach him all things. His *whole heart*was given to God and His service, God’s promises were verities to him; and as “He abideth faithful, He cannot deny Himself,” it was with both hands that He heaped gifts and grace upon His dear servant until the time came to receive him into glory. Perhaps, of greatest price among the precious things which this little book reveals, is the beloved author’s personal and intense love to the Lord Jesus. He lived in His embrace; like the apostle John, his head leaned on Jesu’s bosom. The endearing terms used in the Diary, *and never discontinued,* were not empty words; they were the overflowings of the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost. One of the last things he said to me at Mentone, before unconsciousness had sealed his dear lips, was this, “O wifie, I have had such a blessed time with my Lord!” And it was always so, the Savior was as real to him as if his eyes could look upon Him, and it was his delight to dwell in the very presence of God, in his daily, hourly life.

Full of a sweet pain has been the task I set myself to write out these details of my dear one’s life for three short months; but if anyone shall be the gainer by it, through being drawn nearer to God, and having clearer views of Divine truth, I shall deem the pain a pleasure, and the sorrow will bring me joy.

Saved men and women date from the dawn of their true life; not from their first birthday, but from the day wherein they were born again. Their calendar has been altered and amended by a deed of Divine grace. — C. H. S.

**THE DIARY.  
1850.**

Born, January 6, 1850. Admitted to Fellowship, April 4, 1850 Baptized, May 3, 1850 Communed first, May 5, 1850 Commenced as S. S. Teacher, May 5, 1850 Joined Church at Cambridge, Oct. 2, 1850

**CONSECRATION.**

*O great and unsearchable God, who knowest my heart, and triest all my ways; with a humble dependence upon the support of Thy Holy Spirit, I yield up myself to Thee; as Thy own reasonable sacrifice, I return to Thee Thine own. I would be forever, unreservedly, perpetually Thine; whilst I am on earth, I would serve Thee; and may I enjoy Thee and praise Thee forever! Amen.*

February 1, 1850.  
**CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON.  
1850, — A BLESSED YEAR OF JUBILEE.**

*April*6. — I have had a blessed day of refreshing from the Lord, and from the glory of His face. Went round my Station District, and had a talk with several people. I trust the Lord is working here. Had some serious thoughts about baptism. “The Lord is my strength and my song; He also is become my salvation.”

*April*7. — Not well; the body bears the soul down. Heard Mr. S. from Genesis 22:8; could not take it into heart, headache would not let me. Arminianism does not suit me now. If I were long to be so heavy as I now am, I could scarcely live. Evening, could not attend to the sermon; was happier without it. I feasted all the time on —

**“ *When I soar to worlds unknown,  
See Thee on Thy judgment throne,  
Rock of Ages! cleft for me,  
I* shall *hide myself in Thee.*”**

Cannot think how Mr. S. could say that Esau, he trusted, was converted, when the Lord says, “Esau have I *hated.*”

*April*8. — Walked out after breakfast, never saw more plainly the sovereignty of God’s will. He has called me; I feel sure that He will carry me to glory. Not well. O God of grace, take me home when Thou pleasest! It is, “Mercy, mercy, mercy,” from first to last.  
*April*9. — Happy again today; if such days continue, earth and Heaven will be but one; — but what have I written? I know I have sinned this day; in Heaven, I cannot. Oh, to be holy, to be like God! I trust I shall be one day. O glorious hour, O blest abode, when I am near, and like my God. Jesus, how can I e’er forget Thee, Thou life of my delights? Hold Thou me by Thy free Spirit, and pour down upon me more love to Thee! Can hardly pray, yet, O my God, remember A\_\_\_\_\_! Oh, that I could do more for God! “By grace ye are saved.”

*April*10. — Much better in health. All more than hell, is mercy. How small is my sphere, yet what a great Being condescended to fix my state before I had a being! All things are ordered by God. Blessed be His name, though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him. Sin is all cleansed by Jesu’s blood. Doubts and fears will soon come. “Desire of my soul,” prepare me to meet them. The Lord’s presence has not departed yet; had I the tongue of an archangel, I could not praise Him enough for this. I hope all is well at home with my dear mother; I must expect the cross soon. “He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after Me, is not worthy of Me.”

*April*11. — Have had sweet thoughts upon, “I am the good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and am known of Mine.” How can one of His sheep be lost if He knows all His own?

I have read today of the iniquities of some in high places. Father, forgive them, and grant that Thy name may not be blasphemed through them! O my Beloved, sooner may I perish everlastingly than thus dishonor Thee, Thou sole desire of my heart! Heard Mr. S. from Psalm 68:18-20. I love to hear him give all the honor of our salvation to God. Shepherd of Israel, guide Thy flock into all truth! Quicken me, and make me love Thee more and more!

*April*12. — Earthly things have engaged too much of my thoughts this day. I have not been able to fix my attention entirely upon my Savior. Yet, even yet, the Lord has not hidden His face from me. Though tempted, I am not cast down; tried, but not overcome; truly it is of the Lord’s sovereign mercy. I would desire again this day to make a fresh application to the sinatoning blood of Jesus to cleanse away my sins. O God, do Thou keep me down, and then I need fear no fall! O visit Zion, and preserve Thy Church; let her yet shine forth in glory! April showers have been coming down today; the Lord does not forget His promises. Jesus took my heart: “or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Ammi-nadib.” “Tell me, O Thou whom my soul loveth, where Thou feedest, where Thou makest Thy flock to rest at noon;” I would be ever with Thee, O my spotless, fairest Beloved! Daily meet me, for Thy embrace is Heaven; sanctify me, prepare me, help me to bring forth fruit, and to be Thine forever!

*April*13. — Did not feel so tired at the end of this week; one reason is, that every day has been Sunday with me. Blessed be the Shepherd, I walk now beside the still waters. What events are transpiring in the world! Things are quite at a crisis in the Church of England. I love my little work; Lord, be with me! “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!” Trust in Him, my soul; follow hard after Him.

*April*14. — Heard Mr. S., this morning, from 3 John 4, — the great subject of justification by faith. Who could dare to hope of going to Heaven, if works are the price? I could not; it would be like offering me a possession in the sun, if I could jump up to it, and take it in my hand! Afternoon, — some of last Sunday over again. Esau does not give us a very interesting sermon. Evening subject was, Decision. I am quite encouraged. Hope I shall soon have an answer from home upon baptism.

**“*Through floods and flames, if Jesus lead,  
I’ll follow where He goes.*”**  
I would not desert Him in any one point, but keep close to Him.

*April*15. — Quite well today, and tolerably happy. First day of the races. O God, Thou makest me to differ! Had a nice prayer-meeting. “Also unto Thee, O Lord, belongeth mercy.” What else have I to trust to? Mr. P. came in this evening, and talked till past eleven, so that I lost some of the time I should have spent in devotion.

**“ *What various hindrances we meet  
In coming to a mercy-seat!  
Yet who that knows the worth of prayer,  
But wishes to be often there?*”**

*April* 16. — This evening, the friends at the Hythe will be assembled. Grant Thy gracious blessing! Read of the land Beulah. I have been there, and that, too, before coming to Giant Despair. Comfort we must not always have, or I am afraid I should go to sleep. I am now getting drowsy in spirit. Strong Deliverer, keep my eyes open! My soul seems to long after the flesh-pots of Egypt, and that after eating Heavenly manna; help and forgive me, O my Savior!

*April*17. — Read some of “Fuller upon Antinomianism.” My God, what a gulf is near me! I think I can say that I hate this religion; I would desire to love God, and to be as holy as my Father-God Himself. There is a little cloud betwixt me and my Sun of righteousness, but I doubt not that He still shines upon me. He has not left me. I am a living miracle, a walking wonder of grace that I am alive at all; much more, following on. May I from this time live nearer to Him, and honor His name more!

*April*18. — I trust the cloud has burst. I have seen some few gleams of sunshine today. I will walk on in His strength, whether it be through clouds or not. Went to chapel, very few there. I have been enabled to renew my strength; may I now run in the ways of the Lord! I begin to wonder why father has not written; he has good reason, no doubt. Lord, strengthen Thy people, and revive Thy Church by Thine enlivening grace!

*April*19. — I do not live near enough to God. I have to lament my coldness and indifference in the ways of the Lord. O God of restoring grace, visit Thy servant in the midst of the days! I will trust Him, I cannot doubt His power or His love.

**“*Yes, I love Thee and adore,  
O for grace to love Thee more!*”**  
I shall yet have another visit, and see again His smiling face. “Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in My name, He will give it you.”

*April*20. — Went round with my tracts; could not feel the Spirit of the Lord upon me. I seemed to have a clog upon my feet and my tongue. I have richly deserved this, for I have not prayed, or studied my Bible as I ought. I confess mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me. Mercy! it is all mercy! Wash me anew, O Savior, in Thy sin-atoning blood!

**“*Firm as the earth Thy gospel stands,  
My Lord, my hope, my trust.*”**  
I cannot perish if God protects me. I can do nothing. Weak and sinful worm am I.

*April*21. — This morning, Mr. S. preached from 2 Thessalonians 3:3. This is the great hope of a Christian, the main comfort of my life, — the Lord will do it. Afternoon, Matthew 9:22. Here again it is the Savior’s working; earthly physicians could not do it. Blessed art Thou, O God, for this great salvation! Evening, 3 John 4. I am not very much interested with these twice-preached sermons. On the whole, I have enjoyed much this day; — little have I deserved it, nay, not at all. No merit in me, I am sure; vilest of the vile, for so long shutting mine eyes to this great salvation and glorious state of God’s people.

Apri *l*22. — The Lord has not forsaken me. Went this evening to the prayer-meeting; engaged in prayer. Why should I fear to speak of my only Friend? I shall not be timid another time, I hope the Lord has helped me in this; He will in other things. The spirit is more brisk today, more soaring, and more enchanted with that Savior who is the life of all my joy. Faith is the precious gift of God, and love is His gift; it is all of God from first to last.

*April*23. — My prayer is in some measure answered; I trust the work has again revived. No desert is there in me; ‘tis all of mercy, I must acknowledge. I feel that I am dependent on the Lord for all, for growing grace, and for living grace. I have my daily supply, and sure enough, I do not have two days’ portion at a time. ‘Tis a mercy to feel one’s own dependence, and to be able to trust the Lord for all. Sing, O my soul, sing, for the Lord has redeemed thee, thou art safe!

*April*24. — Letter from Mr. Cantlow. Baptism on Thursday week. God help me to live worthy of Him, and that my open confession of Him may make me more diligent! Letter from Mr. Leeding better than I had thought. Truly, O Lord, my lot is in pleasant places, and I have a goodly heritage. I am to do as I please about baptism. Never do I lose anything by zeal for the truth, and close walk with my Savior; rather, I gain everything. Lord, Thou art my life; guide me, and allot my portion on this earth according to Thine own wisdom and love!

*April* 25. — Went to Burwell. Heard the examination of the children. Education is indeed a talent from the Lord. What a weight of responsibility rests upon me! I trust I shall one day employ this more to His honor. A letter from father; in truth, he is rather hard upon me. When I followed my conscience, and did not presumptuously break through the fences of the Lord about His Church, I might have expected this. My business is to follow my Savior, and not to pick out smooth paths for myself. If in any measure I have walked worthily, I would desire to give all the glory to the great Author of my salvation. I now feel so bold that, if the devil were to reproach me, I could answer him. Lord, I would ascribe it all to Thee, that I have not yet turned back, and that no enemies have yet made me to quail with terror! Onward may I press, with Heaven itself in view, trusting my salvation entirely in the hands of my Jesus, my lifts, my all in all!

*April*26. — How my father’s fears lest I should *trust*to baptism stir up my soul! My God, Thou knowest that I hate such a thought! No, I know that, could I from this day be as holy as God Himself, yet I could not atone for past sin. I have had a pretty good day. Fear, Mistrust, and Timorous are yet at sword’s length. May I be Valiant-for-Truth, and live and die in my Master’s glorious war!

*April*27. — Fear, begone! Doubts, fall back! In the name of the Lord of hosts I would set up my banner. Come on, ye demons of the pit, my Captain is more than a match for you; in His name, armed with His weapons, and in His strength, I dare defy you all. How glorious ‘twould be to die by the side of such a Leader! I am a worm, and no man, a vanity, a nothing; yet hath He set His love upon me, and why should I tremble or fear? I have been round with my tracts; may the good seed prosper, and take root! I have again to lament that I do not live so near to God as I ought. Blessed be the name of the Lord for that measure of grace which He has given me; I can trust Him for the rest.

*April*28. — Mr. S. addressed us both morning and evening from John 1:5. I could not fix upon the subject, so as to see the train of his thought. Afternoon, how I did rejoice when I brought a man to chapel, and a boy to the Sunday-school! It is the Lord! By this encouragement, in Thy strength, I pledge myself to live yet more for Thee, to fight more constantly, and to work harder. Hold Thou me up! Support me, for I can do nothing. The Lord has been with me today, though my heart has not been in such transports as heretofore. I will follow through shade as well as sunshine. Savior, dwell with me; Thine I am, help me to serve Thee, and adore Thee, world without end!

*April*29. — Went to prayer-meeting. Thought upon Matthew 8:20. When I have the presence of the Lord, nothing is a hardship to me. I would love to lodge with my Master, and to endure all things for Him. Let not my first love chill. I have no fire within to keep it alight, Thou alone canst do this, my Lord and my God. I would anew devote myself to Thee, and glory only in Thy cross, and in Thy shame.  
*April*30. — Another month has passed, time rolls away, I am nearer home. This month has brought me much holy enjoyment, much privilege; how little I have done when compared with what Jesus has done for me! What a slothful servant am I of so good a Master! Roll on, ye months; bring joy or sorrow as ye will, if God be with me, all is mine! How much like Vanity Fair is this place (Newmarket)! It is crowded with visitors; I saw two engines required to take them to London. Lord, give me strength, like the engine, to go straight on, guided by Thee, my great Conductor!

*May*1. — Another month now dawns upon me. I have lived through one, I will bless the Lord for it, and trust Him for this also. Help me to live more to Thy glory, and to honor Thee in my daily walk and conversation. The time of my baptism approaches. May I die to the world, and live alone for Thee! I would serve Thee, O Lord; but I feel a weight, a law working against this law, and holding me in partial bondage; let Thy grace break every fetter that withholds my heart from Thee!

*May*2. — Went to the lecture, very few there, not enough for a churchmeeting. Lord, revive Thy Church in Newmarket! A far happier day than I deserve, I have been able to soar a little, and see the Canaan which I desire, — though with a feeble eye. Tomorrow will be a solemn day. I have been enabled more than usual to pour out my heart in prayer. I need support now, and I feel that I shall have it. How safe are all God’s people! not one of the least of them can be lost, the oath and promise of the Lord cannot be broken. ‘Tis a sin to think that God, a God of truth, will ever desert His people; it is a shame, a blasphemy. “Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God.” “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.”

M *ay*3. — My mother’s birthday. May the sun of heaven shine upon her, and revive her, even as it has done upon the natural world this day! Started with Mr. Cantlow at eleven, reached Isleham at one o’clock. In the afternoon, I was privileged to follow my Lord, and to be buried with Him in baptism. Blest pool! Sweet emblem of my death to all the world! May I, henceforward, live alone for Jesus! Accept my body and soul as a poor sacrifice, tie me unto Thee; in Thy strength I now devote myself to Thy service forever; never may I shrink from owning Thy name!

**“*Witness, ye men and angels now,  
If I forsake the Lord!*”**

I vow to glory alone in Jesus and His cross, and to spend my life in the extension of His cause, in whatsoever way He pleases. I desire to be sincere in this solemn profession, having but one object in view, and that to glorify God. Blessing upon Thy name that Thou hast supported me through the day; it is Thy strength alone that could do this. Thou hast, — Thou wilt. Thou hast enabled me to profess Thee, help me now to honor Thee, and carry out my profession, and live the life of Christ on earth!

*May*4. — Reached Newmarket at 9; feel high in spirit, have been round with my tracts; help me to serve Thee, O my Lord! There is a report in the church that Mr. S. and I have been on the heath. Mr. A. told me of it very gruffly. Mr. H. will not commune because so many have been to the races. My Master knows, I have no need to tell Him I am innocent. Though I be cast out and rejected of the disciples, the Lord will not cast off one of His chosen. I can, in this respect, wash my hands in innocency.

*May*5. — A third, but very strong sermon, from John 1:5. How ought the people of God to be a peculiar people, zealous for good works! Lord, help me to honor Thee! This afternoon, partook of the Lord’s supper; a royal feast for me, worthy of a King’s son. Mr. S. addressed me before all the people. Sunday-school for the first time, and went visiting the people with friend M. I quite like my new work. Teachers’ prayer-meeting after evening service, from 8 to 9; five of us engaged in prayer. Went to Mr. B.’s to supper, talked with young C., stopped to family prayer, past 10 o’clock! I have been too excited today, amidst the busy whirl of constant action, to feel myself so solid as I could wish. Rock of Ages, bind me to Thyself! I can feel the bad law working yet. All is of God, He will perform His promise.

**“*His honor is engaged to save  
The meanest of His sheep.*”**

*May*6. — Went to prayer-meeting. Missionary meeting in the afternoon, upon the glory of Christ’s kingdom. “He must reign.” Savior, come and extend Thy kingdom over all the world, sway Thy scepter over all hearts! Make me Thy temple, and honor me by making me an instrument of good in Thy hands! Lord, save me from pride and from sloth, my two great enemies; keep me, oh, keep and preserve me! I am an erring sheep. It is in Thy power that I trust, upon Thy strength I rely; I am less than nothing, hold me by Thine own right hand!  
*May*7. — I have again to confess my lukewarmness; I fear I am losing my first love. Coldness and deadness seem to be natural to me; I have no inward warmth, it all comes from the Sun of righteousness, by rich, free, and sovereign grace. What a mercy that I have not been altogether frozen to death, and left to perish in my sinful distance from God! Lord, help me to follow Thee, and may Thy right hand uphold me! Strength, O Lord, I need! I would not fear, but trust in Thine omnipotence.

*May*8. — Teachers’ business meeting. Too much joking and levity to agree with my notions of what a Sunday-school teacher should be. Lord, keep me from the evil of the world, let me not be led away; but if these are Thy people, help me to serve Thee better than they, and to be more like my Master! O my God, keep me ever near to Thee, help me to live more to Thy glory, and to honor Thee more than I have hitherto done, to live alone for Thee, and to spend and be spent in Thy service! Preserve, perfect, keep, and bless me!

**“*Keep me, oh, keep me, King of kings,  
Beneath Thine own almighty wings!*”**

*May*9. — Prayer-meeting. Mr. S. has resigned. Well, we have a better Pastor, who cannot, who will not leave us. Truly, I have sunk very low; my lamp seems going out in obscurity. Lord, fan it, keep it burning yet! I know that I can never perish; yet be pleased, my God, to visit me again, to revive and uphold me, so that I may honor Thee more; make me to be an eminent servant of Thine, and to be blessed with the power to serve Thee, like Thy great servant Paul!

*May*10. — Blessed be the name of the Lord, He has not left His servant, or turned away from His chosen! Though I have often sinned, and neglected the sweet privilege of prayer, yet He hath not deserted me. Had a letter from Mr. L. I hope that the Lord will bless him, and give him many souls as seals for his hire. I wonder how they are at home. Time flies away. Seasons come and go. Lord, grant me Thy Holy Spirit to enable me to improve each moment! I am “bought with a price.”

*May* 11. — Went round my district. I trust the Lord is moving upon the face of this people. It is Thy work, O Lord; accomplish it! I feel encouraged to go on in the ways of the Lord, and still to spend my spare time in His service. Prosper Thou the work of my hands! My own soul is encouraged, my life is revived, and I hope soon to enjoy the presence of the Lord.

*May*12. — One of the days of the Son of man, — happy day when Sabbath shall never end! Went to Sunday-school at 9, stayed till service at 10:30, out at 12:15; Sunday-school at 1:45, service 3 till 4, visiting till 5. The day has thus been closely occupied. The morning’s discourse was upon 1 Corinthians 4:7. Truly, I have nothing which I have not received; I can boast of no inherent righteousness. Had the Lord not chosen me, I should not have chosen Him. Grace! Grace! Grace! ‘Tis all of grace. I can do nothing, I am less than nothing; yet what a difference, — once a slave of hell, now the son of the God of Heaven! Help me to walk worthy of my lofty and exalted vocation! Afternoon, Psalm 48:14, “This God is *my*God for ever and ever; HE WILL be *my* Guide even unto death.” I can wish for no better Guide, or more lasting Friend; He shall lead me in His own way.

Lord, permit me not to choose the road, allow me not to wander into Bypath meadow; rather carry me straight to glory! Evening, Acts 17:11. The Word of God is my chart. Lord, give me more of Berean nobility; grant me Thy grace to search the Scriptures, and to become wise unto life eternal! Thine is the gift, I cannot do it without Thee. Again would I give myself anew to Thee; bind Thou the sacrifice with cords, even to the horns of Thine altar! Let me not go away from Thee; hold me firmly in Thy gracious arms! Let Thine omnipotence be my protection, Thy wisdom my direction, Thy grace my salvation. “Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief!”

*May* 13. — A day of great, unmerited mercy. Happiness cannot exist here without some cloy. How sweet the joys of religion, of communion with God! Letter from home. All well. I thank Thee, Father, for such good tidings; bless me, even me also, O my Father! I would devote myself to Thee; it is my highest privilege to be able to give myself to Thee. Thy service is the greatest pleasure, the most untiring delight; I would, more than ever, wear Thy livery, be known as Thy servant, and become one of Thy peculiar people.

*May* 14. — In the evening, enjoyed an ecstasy of delight. I seemed transported, and able to fly beyond the bounds of this poor atom of an earth. Spiritual realities were present to view, while the flesh, like Abraham’s servant, tarried at the foot of the mountain. How much do I owe; how little good do I deserve, yea, none at all!

**“*Let Thy grace, Lord, like a fetter,  
Bind my wandering heart to Thee!*”**  
Blessed be Thy name forevermore! Bless the Lord, O my soul; follow hard after Him, love and serve Him!

*May*15. — How feeble I am! I am not able to keep myself near to God. I am compelled to acknowledge my own deadness. I confess how greatly I have strayed from Thee, Thou great Fountain of living waters; but, —

**“*Since I’ve not forgot Thy law,  
Restore Thy wandering sheep.*”**

Revive me in the midst of the years, and make Thy face to shine upon me! How much do I deserve eternal damnation! But salvation is not of desert, but of free grace. This is the plank whereon I hope to float to glory, when this world shall be a wreck, and perish in the vast abyss.

*May*16. — Went to chapel. Sermon on Psalm 23:3. How much do I need this restoration! If the Lord does not do it, I cannot. “Turn out Thine enemy and mine.” I would be passive, submitting to Thy sovereign will; Thou wilt do what is right. Lord, keep me; I will wait Thy time of revival; teach me both to work and wait, expecting and hoping that Thou wilt soon come, and restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation! I am in a low condition, yet I am eternally safe. He will lead me.

M *ay*17. — It is now a fortnight since my baptism. How solemnly have I devoted myself to Thee! I would now repeat my vows, and again solemnly devote myself to Thee.

**“*Witness, ye men and angels now,  
If I forsake the Lord.*”**

In His strength I can do all things. Thou hast sworn to save, and death and hell cannot thwart Thine everlasting purpose. Hold me! Thou hast blessed me, Thou alone canst do it. If Thou dost not save, I must perish. Thou wilt not leave me, Thou hast showed me a portion of the glory of Thy face.

*May*18. — Station District. When I first set out, I was all but dumb concerning spiritual things. Soon I felt the working of the Lord in some degree. Blessed be His holy name forever and ever, and let all the redeemed say, Amen! His is the power. Beloved, Thine is enduring beauty! Thou art glorious to behold. Give me more of the entrancing visions of Thy face, the looks of Thy love, and more constant communion with Thee! Lord, move Thou upon the earth, and bring in Thine elect from among the condemned sinners of the world!

*May*19. — Went to the Sunday-school. Mr. S. preached, this morning, from 2 Corinthians 3:6-8. How glorious is the ministration of life, how beautiful the tables of stone, when enclosed in the blessed ark of the covenant! Afternoon, Ezekiel 36:27. Evening, “What is truth?” As to interest, the sermons today have been a failure. Addressed the children upon Prayer. Went visiting with Mr. M., six fresh children. Evening at Mr. B.’s. Engaged in prayer at his family altar. Today has been a sunny day with me. The Lord has visited me from on high. Rejoice, O my soul, leap for joy, renew thy strength; run, run, in the name of the Lord! He is with me, He has been with me. Weakness He has made strength! Mighty to save, Thou shalt have all my noblest songs! Let Thy grace constrain me to love Thee, and live for Thee! I am buried with my Lord and Savior; may I be crucified to the world, and die daily! How sure is it that Thy yoke is easy, and Thy burden is light! I can do all things through Christ Jesus.

*May*20. — Went to the prayer-meeting, and engaged in prayer. How inexhaustible is the source from whence my life proceeds! How boundless the store from whence my provision comes! I must be saved, for Omnipotence has undertaken it. Another glorious day, another visit of His reviving grace, blessed be the name of the Lord! The service of the Lord were a happy service, even if such enjoyment as this was the only reward. How sweet are the visits of His grace, sweeter than honey and the honeycomb!

*May*21. — Glorious day, happy were all like this! Oh, the safety of a Christian, as sure, but not so blest, as any saint in Heaven! Lord, how can I leave Thee? To whom, or whither should I go? Thou center of my love, all glorious names in one, Thou brightest, sweetest, fairest One, that eyes have seen or angels known, I trust to Thee for salvation; without Thee, I can do nothing. I am utter weakness, Thou must do it all, or I shall perish! Love of loves, all love excelling, fix my wandering heart on Thee!

*May*22. — My weakness is my greatest strength, for then I trust alone on Jesus, when I feel my own dependence. I am an earthen vessel, I have been among the pots of the unregenerate; make me now a vessel for Thy use! Thy blood is my trust, I am washed; who shall now blacken me so as not to leave me spotless at the last? Joy, joy unspeakable, rapture divine, I fly beyond the bounds of earth, my Husband folds me in His arms, I am His, and He is mine, my glorious Prince, Redeemer, Love!

*May*23. — Went to chapel, very few there. “He restoreth my soul.” The same subject again! How true is this, how has He revived me! Short, but glorious, are the days of my refreshing, — worthy of years of sorrow and distress. O my Beloved, did my way lie over the embers of hell all my life, didst Thou but show Thyself, I would rush through the fire to meet Thee! I have not been quite so ecstatic as for some days past. I am the Lord’s forever, how much do I owe to Him! My Advocate, brother, Husband, let not my first love chill and grow cold! Keep me and preserve in Thy hands!

*May*24. — A day of undeserved joy. I am not altogether banished from the presence of the Lord. Though He slay me, I cannot but trust Him, since I have had such tokens of His love. Lord, when in darkness and distress, when my head is bowed down, then return unto Thy servant to encourage and support him! Forever, oh, forever, lashed to the Ark, and safe from the floods, I shall get at last upon the *terra firma*of glory! Oh, let me not dishonor Thee! Never may I bring a disgrace upon the cause of Christ! Keep me, and I shall be infinitely safe, and rest securely.

*May*25. — Free grace, sovereign love, eternal security are my safeguards; what shall keep me from consecrating all to Thee, even to the last drop of my blood? Went to my district with tracts, a woman gave me 24 new ones. I fear Mr. T. is doing much harm by telling the people that the Lord’s supper will save them. Work, Lord, work! Thou hast encouraged me; may I not be disappointed! “Bless the Lord, O my soul.” The Covenant is my trust, the agreement signed between my Elder brother and the Almighty standeth sure. “None shall pluck them out of My hand.”

*May*26. — Went round for the children. Sunday-school in the morning. Mr. S. preached from, “All these things are against me.” Stayed in the chapel the dinner-time, had a sweet season of prayer and communion with God. Afternoon, Jacob’s consecration of himself at Bethel. I would give myself in the same manner to Thee, my best-loved King. Evening subject, Paul’s great labors. Oh, could I emulate such a man, I should be the greatest on this earth!

*May*27. — Life of my soul, forgive me when I am so blind as to look upon an earthly object, and forget Thine own Divine beauties! Oh, for a love as strong as death, fierce as hell, and lasting as eternity!  
*May*28. — Thou hast hedged me about with thorns so that I cannot get out; this is my comfort. What name can I devise for Thee, O Beloved, equal to Thy desert? All beauties joined in one perfection, “Thou art all fair, my Love, there is no spot in Thee.” Thou didst die for me, and shall not I live for Thee? What a love is that of Jesus to me, surpassing knowledge! I can do nothing in return, but give Thee my worthless self. What! shall I dare to doubt Thy love? Can I conceive that Thou wilt leave me? Yes, I may sin so as to distrust Thee; but Thou wilt never let me go. No thief can steal away Thy precious purchase; never, never, can I be lost. Redeemed and purchased; then, how can I be snatched away? How is my soul a battlefield between the corruptions of nature and the principle of grace! They tear up the earth of my soul with the trampling of their armies; but I cannot be destroyed.

*May*29. — To the Lord belongeth strength, He has given me my portion. He putteth His treasure in earthen vessels. How happy am I to be one of His chosen, His elect, in whom His soul delighteth! But I do not live up to my Heavenly calling; I could not at all without the Lord, He has helped, — He will help, — this is my comfort. His everlasting promises are my rest, my bread, my support. Make me Thy faithful servant, O my God; may I honor Thee in my day and generation, and be consecrated forever to Thy service!

*May*30. — The stormy commotion has somewhat passed away; the sun is still shining, though a cloud may pass between. I desire more constant communion with God. Went to church-meeting, had some nice cheering conversation with old Mrs. A. Two candidates proposed; we shall have no Ordinance next Sunday. The Lord can and will feed us without it. He has kept me, and He will. The strife in my soul is now hushed, peace returns as a river upon the dry places.

*May*31. — Weakness am I in every point, I cannot keep myself in the least. Forgive me that I have tried it! I would now come, naked, stripped, exhausted, dead. I would cry, “Lash me tighter, firmer, to Thy free-grace raft of life!” Mercy is all I ask for, — continued mercy. Those whom He once loves, He loves to the end; He has once loved me, I am now secure. May the live coal within be shown to the world by the burning flames of love to Thee! May that love burn up the stubble and sin!

*June*1. — A new month; time soon glides away. How much more ought I to do this month than last! Desire of my heart, keep me nearer to Thy bosom this month! Went to South District. Talked with a woman who says there are contradictions in the Bible. Some good may be doing. He that can work, will work; and who shall hinder Him? In the Lord’s time it shall be accomplished; His time is best. Arise, O Sun of righteousness, why should this people lie in darkness?

*June*2. — Heard Mr. J. the first part of the day. Numbers 21:4. Interesting, but rather too weak. Afternoon, Revelation 19:12. Many crowns indeed does my Lord deserve; crowns of glory shall be around His sacred, blessed head. Evening, 1 John 5:4. Strong meat; the Lord has sent the manna down this evening. “Overcometh the world!” Glorious victory, amazing conquest, triumph Divine; and shall I, with such a promise, dare to doubt the power of God to keep, and guide, and preserve me?

Had a large class at Sunday-school, gave an address upon Death, — the dreadful sword hanging by a single hair above the head of the ungodly. Had tea at Mr. B’s, and combated with him for what I consider “the form of sound words.” Prayer-meeting after evening service. Seven present, six of us engaged in prayer. Bless the Sunday-school, great King! honor thy Master, O my soul; live *for*Him, live *in*Him! I am a prince; ought I not to be a good soldier, and fight for my Lord? Give me, lend me a sword, O God, and strength to wield it; let my foes and Thine be as furious as lions, Thy sword shall destroy them!

*June*3. — Prayer-meeting, engaged in prayer. Lord, when shall Thy set time to favor Zion come? When shall Thine elect be gathered in? “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” Forever, yes, forever, safe. Rejoice, rejoice, O my soul, and let thy joy constrain thee to work more earnestly and more zealously for Him! Redeemed and purchased, I am not my own. Letter from grandfather. How glad I am he does not differ!

*June*4. — I have had evidence this day of the changeableness of all mortal things. How little does it matter to me, so that my eternal inheritance is secure! Lord, help me now to mount my watch-tower against pride and sloth! Keep me always upon the look-out, lest an enemy should come unawares; forgive me, if I have ever had high thoughts of myself! Thou makest me to feel my weakness in every part; may I now trust and rely upon the arm of Omnipotence, the mercies of the Lord! Give strength, Lord, strength!

*June*5. — Awake, my soul, record the mercies of the Lord!  
**“*He justly claims a song from me,  
His lovingkindness, O how free!*”**

Mercy, I breathe Another’s air, I am a tenant of this earth at my Master’s will; sovereign grace has kept me hitherto, upon sovereign grace I now rely. What sweet moments have I had in answer to prayer; blessed be the Lord for His rich mercy thus bestowed upon me! I would now live in close communion with my King, and feast upon the riches of His love.

*June*6. — Prayer-meeting. Mr. S. spoke to us upon the Babylonian Captivity. Teachers’ meeting after the service. What a want of spirituality and vital godliness! O Lord, give me *life;*increase the vital spark, fan it to a flame! I can never perish, yet would I keep upon my watch-tower, for my enemies are many, and they hate me with cruel hatred. Help me to hate sin, and pride and sloth! I live only as Thou givest me life. I have not one atom of life of my own, I must perish if Thou desert me for one moment.

*June*7. — How manifold are Thy mercies toward me, O Lord! When I think of the great salvation which has been worked out for me, and remember that Heaven is secure, it seems too good to be true. Yet do I now believe Thy promise; may I now be entirely Thine, Thy glory my only aim! Could I but be like Paul, how honored should I be! Happy is the man whom Thou teachest, O Lord! I am happy; how can I be otherwise, since my Beloved has looked upon me, and I have seen His glorious face?

*June*8. — Could not burn with zeal as oft I have done. When, Lord, wilt Thou arise, and let Thy power be known and felt? How sweet to flap my wings to Heaven, with others following me; then lay my crown beneath His feet, and call Him Lord of all! He is deserving of all honor and praise; dominion and power are His due, and He shall have them. Many honors on His ever-blessed head! Worthy is the Lamb who has died for me. All glorious is my Beloved.

*June*9. — Mr. S. preached. Acts 16:19. Did not hear to profit. Afternoon, “Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved?” Did not hear enough about *the Beloved.*Evening, “Prepare to meet Thy God.” Oh, what a mercy to be prepared!

**“ *So whene’er the signal’s given,  
Us from earth to call away,  
Borne on angels’ wings to Heaven,  
Glad the summons to obey,  
We shall surely  
Reign with Christ in endless day!*”**

Felt rather hurt by Mr. C., he does not act quite rightly; but I hereby forgive him. I desire to look alone to Jesus, and regard His glory only. I am too proud, I am weak in every point; keep me, for I have no strength! I would look up to Thee, — the Strong, — for strength. I am Thine, keep me!

*June*10. — Letter from dear mother. Mr. S. made her his text at the prayer-meeting. Engaged in prayer. Have not been able to be much in private prayer today. The joy of my Lord, however, is not gone. I can yet trust in the God of my salvation. If I ever forget Thee, let my right hand forget her fellow. What! has He done so much for me, and shall I ever leave Him? No, —

**“*While a breath, a pulse remains,  
I will remember Thee!*”**

*June*11. — Prayer seems like labor to me, the chariot wheels drag heavily; yet they are not taken off. I will still rely upon almighty strength; and, helpless, throw myself into the arms of my Redeemer. “Leave, ah, leave me not alone!” “I will never leave Thee.” I shall yet walk the golden street of the New Jerusalem, I shall yet see His beauteous face. He loved me before the foundations of the earth, before I was created or called by grace.

*June*12. — The Lord is my Helper, He shall plead my cause. I would desire to record the gratitude I feel for the sparing mercies of the Lord, but especially for His great grace in electing me, by the sovereign councils of His love, to be one of His redeemed ones. What! shall I not live for Him, shall I keep back a single particle of my heart, and of myself, from my charming Redeemer, my King, Husband, brother, Friend? No; oh, give me strength to say, “I will never dishonor Thee”!

*June*13. — Dangers are around me, Satan stands in the way; I have no hope but in the Lord, no safety but in keeping straight on in the Heavenly road. In the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength, and inexhaustible mines of eternal love are mine; the Lord reserves them for His chosen people. Went to prayer-meeting. Tried to address my Lord in prayer. Come, my Beloved, Thou art ever mine; leave me not, O do not forsake me, my King, my Savior! Saved everlastingly!

*June*14. — Examination. Mr. M. gave me 10s. for the Missionary Society. I would thank the Lord for thus opening his hand to do good. Gave a Missionary speech. Lord, keep Thy servant low and humble at Thy feet! How prone am I to pride and vain-glory! Keep me always mindful that I have nothing which I have not received; ‘tis grace, free, sovereign grace that has made me to differ. Why should I be chosen an elect vessel? Not that I deserve it, I am sure; but it is rich love.

*June*15. — Went round my S. District, and divided my stock amongst the people, and now, Lord, I desire to commend them to Thy keeping; look upon them with pity, let them not be as sheep without a shepherd! Let Thy work go on and prosper among this people! I can do nothing; how is it that I have lived so long in my spiritual life? It is by sovereign power I stand, by Omnipotence I shall be supported. “My grace is sufficient for thee.” I trust in Him; He will perfect His own work.

*June*16. — Old Mr. W. preached; could not hear him, he spoke so low. Was set upon by him and Mr. S. Lord, help me to take firm hold of the truth, and never yield an inch! Addressed the Sunday-school children. Oh, may I be kept humble! Pride dwells in my heart. I am now to leave Newmarket; perhaps, forever. What a scene of changes is this world! How blest to have a house above the skies, eternal in the Heavens!

*June*17. — Left Newmarket at 6. Reached Stambourne about 12. Grandfather quite well. I have had journeying mercies today. This life is a journey; I know that I shall one day reach the blessed end, in bliss, unfading bliss. What can I write equal to the theme of sovereign grace? It is a miracle, a perfect miracle, that God should so love man as to die for him, and to choose him before the foundation of the world.

*June*19. — My birthday. Sixteen years have I lived upon this earth, and yet I am only — scarcely six months old! I am very young in grace. Yet how much time have I wasted, dead in trespasses and sins, without life, without God, in the world! What a mercy that I did not perish in my sin! How glorious is my calling, how exalted my election, born of the Lord, — regenerate! Help me more than ever to walk worthily, as becomes a saint! *June* 20. — Truly my lot is cast in pleasant places, and I have a goodly heritage. I can love religion now in the sunshine; may I love it and prize it under all circumstances!

(The continuous Diary thus abruptly closes, giving only the brief intimation that the dear writer goes immediately to Cambridge, as usher in Mr. Leeding’s school. There remain but three or four fragmentary entries during the ensuing months, — or years, — but these serve to show the young soldier still busy at his drill, loyal to his Lord’s colors, and already bravely fighting that “good fight of faith,” which ceased not till his Captain called him from the battlefield, to receive the victor’s reward in glory. As every word of his is precious in these days, I transcribe the four succeeding paragraphs, though unable to ascertain the dates when they were written. — S. S.)

Storms have raged around me; yet, blessed be my Father’s name, I have now some peace! “But more the treacherous calm I dread, than tempests breaking overhead.” Let me not be left even here; let Thy grace still flow into my heart! O Lord, my King, reign in me, and be glorified by me! May it please Thee to dwell in such a bramble-bush as I am, so that, though burning, I may not be consumed! Ordered in all things and sure is the everlasting covenant of redeeming love. Forever settled and eternally complete in Him is my salvation. May it be completed in myself, and may I grow up to be a man in Christ Jesus, a perfect man, prepared for the inheritance of the saints in light! Oh, that my spirituality may be revived! My matchless Immanuel, let me see once more Thy face in the temple of my heart! May I know the joy, and have the faith of God’s elect; may I rejoice in free and sovereign grace, saving me from the guilt and power of sin! Grace is a glorious theme, above the loftiest flights of the most soaring angel, or the most exalted conceptions of one of the joint-heirs with Jesus. All power is God’s, and all is engaged to protect and preserve me. Let me have my daily-grace, peace and comfort, zeal and love, give me some work, and give me strength to do it to Thy glory!

Heard Mr. C., of Bumpstead. Morning, “What doest thou here, Elijah?” Afternoon, “I am the door.” Went to the prayer-meeting before and after chapel, engaged in prayer, read the hymns, and addressed the children. What an honor it is to be but a door-keeper in the house of the Lord! Oh, to be humble, and to be always at the feet of Jesus! Then should I grow more in grace, and increase in the knowledge of the Lord. The Lord is able to keep me from falling, and He will, for He has promised never to leave one of His called children.

*Fair Day.* — Spoke to Mr. R. How can a child of God go there? “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.” Forgive him, Lord, for so forgetting his high calling! I, too, should be there, but for the grace of God. I have the seeds of all evil in my own heart; pride is yet my darling sin, I cannot shake it off. Awake, O my Lord, against the mighty, for I shall die by his hand if Thou do not help me, and lead me on to triumph! Leave me, ye vain thoughts! I have nothing but what I have received; it is the Lord’s goodness that I even have my reason.

How could I live without prayer when troubles come? How blessed to carry them to the throne! I will now say that the Lord heareth prayer, for He hath removed from me that which I feared. But, oh! could I feel the presence of the Lord as in days gone by, how joyful! Could I enjoy His face, and feast upon His love, then would it be a sort of Heaven below the skies. Yes, Thou art mine, my Savior and my King; I am bound to Thee by love, by Thine own dying love, not mine! Fairest of beings, best-beloved, come, let me yet see Thy smiling face!

CHAPTER 14.

A GOOD CONFESSION. — BAPTISM.

I R EMEMBER the difficulty that I had, when I was converted, and wished to join the Christian Church in the place where I lived (Newmarket). I called upon the minister four successive days before I could see him; each time there was some obstacle in the way of an interview; and as I could not see him, I wrote and told him that I would go down to the church-meeting, and propose myself as a member. He looked upon me as a strange character, but I meant what I said; for I felt that I could not be happy without fellowship with the people of God. I wanted to be wherever they were; and if anybody ridiculed them, I wished to be ridiculed with them; and if people had an ugly name for them, I wanted to be called by that ugly name; for I felt that, unless I suffered with Christ in His humiliation, I could not expect to reign with Him in His glory.

When I had been accepted as a member of the Congregational Church at Newmarket, I was invited to the communion table, although I had not been baptized. I refused, because it did not appear to me to be according to the New Testament order: “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.” I waited until I could go to the Lord’s table as one who had believed, and who had been baptized. I had attended the house of God with my father, and my grandfather; but I thought, when I read the Scriptures, that it was my business to judge for myself. I knew that my father and my grandfather took little children in their arms, put a few drops of water on their faces, and said they were baptized; but I could not see anything in my Bible about babes being baptized. I learned a little Greek; but I could not discover that the word “baptize” meant to sprinkle; so I said to myself, “They are good men, yet they may be wrong; and though I love and revere them, that is no reason why I should imitate them.” And they acknowledged, when they knew of my honest conviction, that it was quite right for me to act according to my conscience. I consider the “baptism” of an unconscious infant is just as foolish as the “baptism” of a ship or a bell; for there is as much Scripture for the one as for the other. Therefore I left my relations, and became what I am today, a Baptist, so-called, but I hope a great deal more a Christian than a Baptist. Many a man will go to chapel, because his grandmother did. Well, she was a good old soul; but I do not see that she ought to influence your judgment. “That does not signify,” says one, “I do not like to leave the church of my fathers.” No more do I; for I would rather belong to the same denomination as my father, I would not willfully differ from any of my friends, or leave their sect and denomination; but I must let God be above my parents. Though our parents are at the very top of our hearts, and we love: them, and reverence them, and in all other matters render them strict obedience, yet, with regard to religion, to our own Master we stand or fall, and we claim to have the right of judging for ourselves as men, and then we think it our duty, having judged, to carry out our conscientious convictions.

I once met a man who had been forty years a Christian, and believed it to be his duty to be baptized; but when I spoke to him about it, he said, “He that believeth shall not make haste.” After forty years’ delay, he talked about not making haste. I quoted to him another passage, “I made haste, and delayed not to keep Thy commandments,” and showed him what the meaning of his misapplied passage was. A person who was present when John Gill preached his very *first*sermon at Kettering, also heard him deliver his *last*in London, more than fifty years after. A*fter his death,*she joined the church over which he had presided, relating, at some length, a truly interesting experience, which gave universal pleasure to all who heard it. Her name was Mary Bailey, and it is to be hoped that none will imitate her by postponing the confession of their faith in Jesus for so long a time. She lived half a century in disobedience to her Lord, and even when she avowed His name it must have caused her deep regret that she had lingered so long in neglect of the Redeemer’s ordinance.

When I was a boy of fifteen, I believed in the Lord Jesus, was baptized, and joined the Church of Christ; and nothing upon earth would please me more than to hear of other boys having been led to do the same. I have never been sorry for what I did then; 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 that I had blundered, I would have made a change before now, and would do my best to prevent others from falling into the same delusion. 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 to be 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, who reads these lines, to have a bright eye, a light tread, a joyful heart, and overflowing spirits, I therefore plead with him to consider whether he will not follow my example, for I speak from experience, and know what I say.

Once, as I stood musing at a window, I saw a fly upon it, and made a brush with my hand to catch it. When I opened my hand, the fly was not inside, but still in the same place on the glass. Scarcely thinking what I did, I made another rush with my hand, and thought I had captured the insect, but with the same result, — there was the creature, quietly retaining his place in spite of me. *It was on the other side of the glass;*and when I saw that it was so, I smiled at my own folly. Those who attempt to find pleasure while out of Christ, will experience a like failure, for they are seeking on the wrong side of the glass. When we are on the side of Jesus, and, having believed in Him, are cleansed and forgiven, then our pursuit of joy will be successful; but till then we shall labor in vain, and spend our strength for naught.

Baptism is the mark of distinction between the Church and the world. It very beautifully sets forth the death of the baptized person to the world. Professedly, he is no longer of the world; he is buried to it, and he rises again to a new life. No symbol could be more significant. In the immersion of a believer, there seems to me to be a wondrous setting forth of the burial of the Christian to all the world in the burial of Christ Jesus. It is the crossing of the Rubicon. If Caesar crosses the Rubicon, there will never be peace between him and the Senate again. He draws his sword, and he throws away his scabbard. Such is the act of baptism to the believer. It is the burning of the boats: it is as much as to say, “I cannot come back again to you; I am dead to you; and to prove that I am, I am absolutely buried to you; I have nothing more to do with the world; I am Christ’s, and Christ’s for ever.” Then, the Lord’s supper: how beautifully that ordinance sets forth the distinction of the believer from the world in his life and that by which his life is nourished. He eats the flesh of Christ, and drinks His blood. Both these ordinances bring a cross with them to some degree, especially the first. I was noting, when reading the life of good Andrew Fuller, that, after he had been baptized, some of the young men in the village were wont to mock him, asking him how he liked being dipped, and such like questions which are common enough nowadays. I could but notice that the scoff of a hundred years ago is just the scoff of today.

This is the way of salvation, — worship, prayer, faith, profession, — and the profession, if men would be obedient, if they would follow the Bible, must be done in Christ’s way, by a baptism in water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. God requireth this; and though men are saved without any baptism, and multitudes fly to Heaven who are never plunged in the stream; though baptism is not saving, yet, if men would be saved, they must not be disobedient. And inasmuch as God gives the command, it is mine to enforce it. Jesus said to His disciples, “Go ye therefore, and preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth, and is immersed, shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned.” The Church of England Prayer-book approves dipping. It only says, if children be weak, they are to be sprinkled; and it is marvelous how many weakly children there have been born lately. The dear little ones are so tender, that a few drops suffice instead of the dipping which their own Church endorses. I would that all churchmen were better churchmen; if they would be more consistent with their own articles of faith, they would be more consistent with Scripture; and if they were a little more consistent with some of the rubrics of their own Church, they would be a little more consistent with themselves. I became a Baptist through reading the New Testament, — especially in the Greek, — and was strengthened in my resolve by a perusal of the Church of England Catechism, which declared as necessary to baptism, repentance and the forsaking of sin.

Mr. Doddridge has recommended a solemn covenant between the soul and God, to be signed and sealed with due deliberation and most fervent prayer. Many of the most eminent of the saints have adopted this excellent method of devoting themselves in very deed unto the Lord, and have reaped no little benefit from the re-perusal of that solemn document when they have afresh renewed the act of dedication. I conceive that burial with Christ in baptism is a far more Scriptural and expressive sign of dedication; but I am not inclined to deny my brethren the liberty of confirming that act by the other, if it seem good unto them, as I myself did soon after my conversion. According to my reading of Holy Scripture, the believer in Christ should be buried with Him in baptism, and so enter upon his open Christian life. I therefore cast about to find a Baptist minister, and I failed to discover one nearer than Isleham, in the Fen country, where resided a certain Mr. W. W. Cantlow. My parents wished me to follow my own convictions, Mr. Cantlow arranged to baptize me, and my employer gave me a day’s holiday for the purpose.

I can never forget the 3rd of May, 1850; it was my mother’s birthday, and I myself was within a few weeks of being sixteen years of age. I was up early, to have a couple of hours for quiet prayer and dedication to God. Then I had some eight miles to walk, to reach the spot where I was to be immersed into the Triune Name according to the sacred command. What a walk it was! What thoughts and prayers thronged my soul during that morning’s journey! It was by no means a warm day, and therefore all the better for the two or three hours of quiet foot-travel which I enjoyed. The sight of Mr. Cantlow’s smiling face was a full reward for that country tramp. I think I see the good man now, and the white ashes of the peat-fire by which we stood and talked together about the solemn exercise which lay before us. We went together to the Ferry, for the Isleham friends had not degenerated to indoor immersion in a bath made by the art of man, but used the ampler baptistery of the flowing river. Isleham Ferry, on the River Lark, is a very quiet spot, half-a-mile from the village, and rarely disturbed by traffic at any time of the year. The river itself is a beautiful stream, dividing Cambridgeshire from Suffolk, and is dear to local anglers. The navigation of this little River Lark is possible between Bury St. Edmund’s and the sea at Lynn; but at Isleham it is more in its infancy.

The ferry-house, hidden in the picture (on page 147) by the trees, is freely opened for the convenience of minister and candidates at a baptizing. Where the barge is hauled up for repairs, the preacher takes his stand, when the baptizing is on a weekday, and there are few spectators present. But on Lord’s-day, when great numbers are attracted, the preacher, standing in a barge moored mid-stream, speaks the Word to the crowds on both sides of the river. This can be done the more easily, as the river is not very wide. Where three persons can be seen standing, is the usual place for entering the water. The right depth, with sure footing, may soon be found, and so the delightful service proceeds in the gently-flowing stream. No accident or disorder has ever marred the proceedings. In the course of seven or eight miles, the Lark serves no fewer than five Baptist churches, and they would on no account give up baptizing out of doors.

The first baptizing at Isleham is recorded thus: — “Sept. 13, 1798. John Webber, sen., John Webber, jun., William Brown, John Wibrow, and Mary Gunstone were baptized by Mr. Fuller, of Kettering, at Isleham Ferry.” To me, there seemed to be a great concourse on that weekday. Dressed, I believe, in a jacket, with a boy’s turn-down collar, I attended the service previous to the ordinance; but all remembrance of it has gone from me: my thoughts were in the water, sometimes with my Lord in joy, and sometimes with myself in trembling awe at making so public a confession. There were first to be baptized two women, — Diana Wilkinson and Eunice Fuller, — and I was asked to conduct them through the water to the minister; but this I most timidly declined. It was a new experience to me, never having seen a baptism before, and I was afraid of making some mistake. The wind blew down the river with a cutting blast, as my turn came to wade into the flood; but after I had walked a few steps, and noted the people on the ferry-boat, and in boats, and on either shore, I felt as if Heaven, and earth, and hell, might all gaze upon me; for I was not ashamed, there and then, to own myself a follower of the Lamb. My timidity was washed away; it floated down the river into the sea, and must have been devoured by the fishes, for I have never felt anything of the kind since. Baptism also loosed my tongue, and from that day it has never been quiet. I lost a thousand fears in that River Lark, and found that “in keeping His commandments there is great reward.” It was a thrice-happy day to me. God be praised for the preserving goodness which allows me to write of it with delight so long afterwards!

**“ *Many days have passed since then,  
Many changes I have seen;  
Yet have been upheld till now;  
Who could hold me up but Thou?*”**

In the Isleham Vestry, in the extremely gentle and cordial companionship of the pastor, I spent a very happy evening, which I recollect was very cold, so that a peat-fire, whose white appearance I still remember, was needed to warm the room. Mr. Cantlow was for some time a missionary in Jamaica, and is mentioned three times in Hinton’s *Life of Knibb.*For thirtytwo years, this excellent man resided at Isleham, and was pastor of the church till age enfeebled him, and he welcomed our worthy student, Mr. Wilson, as his successor. He was great at giving the “soft answer which turneth away wrath;” he was beloved by his people, and universally respected in the village. His death serves as a landmark in my life, reminding me that the days are long past since I was generally spoken of as “the boy-preacher.” One correspondent kindly trusts that I shall be

“*strengthened under the infirmities of my declining years,*” which kindly wish I gratefully acknowledge.

Mr. Stevenson, in *The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, his Life and Work,*makes it out that I joined the Baptist Church a year before I was baptized; but it was not so. I never dreamed of entering the Church except by Christ’s own way; and I wish that all other believers were led to make a serious point of commencing their visible connection with the Church by the ordinance which symbolizes death to the world, burial with Christ, and resurrection to newness of life. That open stream, the crowded banks, and the solemn plunge, have never faded from my mind; but have often operated as a spur to duty, and a seal of consecration. From henceforth let no man trouble me, for He who first saved me, afterwards accepted me, — spirit, soul, and body, — as His servant, in token whereof this mortal frame was immersed beneath the wave. The outward sign has often served to bring vividly before mind and heart the spiritual meaning, and therefore is it dearly loved, for His sake who both ordained the ordinance and Himself submitted to it.

I am indebted to Mr. Wilson for the following note, which reminds me of an excellent companion I had almost forgotten: —

“Mr. W. H. Cantlow, a worthy Baptist deacon at Ipswich, well remembers, when a boy at school, walking with Mr. Spurgeon from Newmarket to Isleham, a distance of eight miles, to be at the baptism. He says: — ‘I often think of the earnest talks he had with me, and always remember one remark he made, on our way to the weeknight service, about the need of obtaining spiritual food during the week, as it was so long to have to wait from one Sunday to the other.’ The recollection of the service at the river-side is fondly cherished by several still living, who rejoice that they were there. But the most precious memory of that day is the prayer-meeting in the vestry, in the evening, where Mr. Spurgeon prayed, and people wondered, and wept for joy, as they listened to the lad. One may be excused for envying those who were there. In front of the new school-room, adjoining the chapel, is the following inscription: —

**T HIS STONE WAS LAID ON SEPTEMBER 19TH, 1888, BY MR. G. APTHORPE, IN MEMORY OF THE LATE REV. W. W. CANTLOW,  
WHO. WHILE PASTOR OF THE CHURCH, BAPTIZED THE REV, C, H. SPURGEON,  
AT ISLEHAM FERRY, ON MAY 3RD, 1850.**

“Mr. Cantlow’s grave is only a few yards off.”

Mr. Wilson also explains our picture, and adds an amusing story: — “In the view of the Ferry, the chaise and cart are waiting to cross the river by the ferry-boat. One old lighter is rotting away in the water, and another lies high and dry under repair. The box is for keeping eels until they can be sent to market; and the long pole is for crossing the river in the small boat, which is also to be seen it you look for it. The late vicar of Isleham, a very solemn man, meeting a deacon of ready wit at the Ferry, began to find fault with a recent baptizing there. Said the vicar, ‘I suppose this is the place where the people came crowding, the other Sunday, showing the little respect they had for the Sabbath-day.’ ‘There was, indeed, a great crowd,’ replied the deacon, ‘but they were all as still and attentive as in the house of God.’ ‘Is it true that the man, J. S — ,was baptized?’ inquired the vicar. ‘Yes, quite true,’ said the deacon, ‘and he seemed to be full of joy at the time.’ ‘What!’ exclaimed the vicar, ‘a man who never went to school, and cannot read a word! How much can he know about the religion he came here to profess?’ ‘Well,’ answered the deacon, with a smile, ‘very likely the poor man knows little as yet; still, he told us how he found the Savior, and became happy in His love. But,’ added the deacon, ‘do not you, sir, christen little children, declaring that you make them children of God, while you are perfectly aware that the children know nothing at all?’ “

If any ask, — Why was I thus baptized? — I answer, because I believed it to be an ordinance of Christ, very specially joined by Him with faith in His name. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” I had no superstitious idea that baptism would save me, for I was saved. I did not seek to have sin washed away by water, for I believed that my sins were forgiven me through faith in Christ Jesus. Yet I regarded baptism as the token to the believer of cleansing, the emblem of his burial with his Lord, and the outward avowal of his new birth. I did not trust in *it*; but, because I trusted in Jesus as my Savior, I felt bound to obey Him as my Lord, and follow the example which He set us in Jordan, in His own baptism. I did not fulfill the outward ordinance to join a party, and to become a Baptist, but to be a Christian after the apostolic fashion; for they, when they believed, were baptized. It is now questioned whether John Bunyan was baptized; but the same question can never be raised concerning *me.*I, who scarcely belong to any sect, am, nevertheless, by no means willing to have it doubted in time to come whether or no I followed the conviction of my heart. I read the New Testament for myself, and found believers’ baptism there; and I had no mind to neglect what I saw to be the Lord’s order. If others see not as I do, to their own Master they stand or fall; but for me, the perceptions of my understanding in spiritual things were the law of my life, and I hope they will always be so.

If I thought it wrong to be a Baptist, I should give it up, and become what I believed to be right. The particular doctrine adhered to by Baptists is that they acknowledge no authority unless it comes from the Word of God. They attach no importance to the authority of the Fathers, — they care not for the authority of the mothers, — if what they say does not agree with the teaching of the Evangelists, Apostles, and Prophets, and, most of all, with the teaching of the Lord Himself. If we could find infant baptism in the Word of God, we should adopt it. It would help us out of a great difficulty, for it would take away from us that reproach which is attached to us, — that we are odd, and do not as other people do. But we have looked well through the Bible, and cannot find it, and do not believe that it is there; nor do we believe that others can find infant baptism in the Scriptures, unless they themselves first put it there.

Our forefathers were called *Ana*-baptists, because it was said by their opponents that they re-baptized those who had been already baptized. Of course, they did nothing of the kind; but they immersed, on profession of their faith, those who had previously been sprinkled as unconscious infants. There was no ana-baptism or re-baptism there, the two things were altogether distinct. I could tell a good many stories of that kind of anabaptism. There was one of the elders of the Tabernacle Church who was — as the word is usually understood — “baptized” four times. The first time the babe was sprinkled, he was so ill that he was only half-done, according to the ritual provided for that purpose in the Prayer-book. When he got better, he was taken to the church to be properly finished off, but the parson gave the child a girl’s name instead of the one which had been selected for him. His father and mother did not like their boy running the risk of being called by the name that had been given to him, so they took him for the third time; and the clergyman then gave him his right name. When he grew up, he was converted, and I baptized him after the Scriptural order; but the Church of England had made three attempts to baptize him, and had failed every time!

CHAPTER 15

EXPERIENCES AFTER CONVERSION.

Our faith at times has to fight for its very existence. The old Adam within us rages mightily, and the new spirit within us, like a young lion, disdains to be vanquished; and so these two strong ones contend, till our spirit is full of agony. Some of us know what it is to be tempted with blasphemies we. should not dare to repeat, to be vexed with horrid temptations which we have grappled with and overcome, but which have almost cost us resistance unto blood. In such inward conflicts, saints must be alone. They cannot tell their feelings to others, they would not dare; and if they did, their Own brethren would despise or upbraid them, for the most of professors would not even know what they meant. Even those who have trodden other fiery ways would not be able to sympathize in all, but would answer the poor troubled soul, “These are points in which we cannot go with you.” Christ alone was tempted in all points like as we are, though without sin. No one man is tempted in all points exactly like another man, and each one has certain trials in which he must stand alone amid the rage of war, with not even a book to help him, or a biography to assist him, no man ever having gone that way before except that one Man whose trail reveals a nailpierced foot. He alone knows all the devious paths of sorrow. Yet, even in such byways, the Lord is with us, helping us, sustaining us, and giving us grace to conquer at the close. — C. H. S.

W HEN my eyes first looked to Christ, He was a very real Christ to me; and when my burden of sin rolled from off my back, it was a real pardon and a real release from sin to me; and when that day I said for the first time, “Jesus Christ is mine,” it was a real possession of Christ to me. When I went up to the sanctuary in that early dawn of youthful piety, every song was really a psalm, and when there

was a prayer, oh, how I followed every word! It was prayer indeed! And so was it, too:. in silent quietude, when I drew near to God, it was no mockery, no routine, no matter of mere duty; it was a real talking with my Father who is in Heaven. And oh, how I loved my Savior Christ then! I would have given all I had for Him!

How I felt towards sinners that day! Lad that I was, I wanted to preach, and —  
**“*Tell to sinners round,  
What a dear Savior I had found.*”**

One of the greatest sorrows I had, when first I knew the Lord, was to think about certain persons with whom I knew right well that I had held ungodly conversations, and sundry others whom I had tempted to sin; and one of the prayers that I always offered, when I prayed for myself, was that such an one might not be lost through sins to which I had tempted him. This was the case also with George Whitefield, who never forgot those with whom, before his conversion, he used to play cards, and he had the joy of leading every one of them to the Savior.

I think about five days after I first found Christ, when my joy had been such that [ could have danced for very mirth at the thought that Christ was mine, on a sudden I fell into a sad fit of despondency. I can tell now why it was so with me. When I first believed in Christ, I am not sure that I thought the devil was dead, but certainly I had a kind of notion that he was so mortally wounded that he could not disturb me. And then I also fancied that the corruption of my nature had received its death-blow. I read what Cowper said, —

**“Since *the dear hour that brought me to ‘Thy foot, And cut up all my follies by the roof;*”**

and I really thought that the poet knew what he was saying; whereas, never did anyone blunder so terribly as Cowper did when he said that, for no man, I think, has all his follies thus cut up by the roofs. However, I fondly dreamed that mine were, I felt persuaded they would never sprout again. I was going to be perfect, — I fully calculated upon it, — and lo, I found an intruder I had not reckoned upon, an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God. So I went to that same Primitive Methodist Chapel where I first received peace with God, through the simple preaching of the Word. The text happened to be, “*O wretch*ed man that I am: who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*....*There,” I thought, “that’s the text for me.” I had just got as far as that in the week. I knew that I had put my trust in Christ, and I knew that, when I sat in that house of prayer, my faith was simply and solely fixed on the atonement of the Redeemer. But I had a weight on my mind, because I could not be as holy as I wanted to be. I could not live without sin. When I rose in the morning, I thought I would abstain from every hard word, from every evil thought and look; and I came up to that chapel groaning because, “when I would do good, evil was present with me.” The minister began by saying, “*Paul*was not a believer when he said this.” Well now, I knew I was a believer, and it seemed to me from the context that Paul must have been a believer, too. (Now, I am sure he was.) The man went on to say that no child of God ever did feel any conflict within. So I took up my hat, and left the chapel, and I have very seldom attended such places since. They are very good for people who are unconverted to go to, but of very little use for children of God. That is my notion of Methodism. It is a noble thing to bring in strangers; but a terrible thing for those that are brought in to sit and feed there. It is like the parish pound, it is a .good place to put sheep in when they have strayed, but there is no food inside; they had better be let out as soon as possible to find some grass. I save that that minister understood nothing of experimental divinity, or of practical heart theology, or else he would not have talked as he did. A good man he was, I do not doubt, but utterly incompetent to the task of dealing with a case like mine.

Oh, what a horror I have had of sin ever since the day when I felt its power over my soul! O sin, *sin,*I have had enough of thee! Thou didst never bring me more than a moment’s seeming joy, and with it there came a deep and awful bitterness which burns within me to this day! Well do I recollect when I was the subject of excessive tenderness, — some people called it “morbid sensibility.” How I shuddered and shivered at the very thought of sin, which then appeared exceedingly sinful! The first week after I was converted to God, I felt afraid to put one foot before the other for fear I should do wrong. When I thought over the day, if there had been a failure in my temper, or if there had been a frofhy word spoken, or something done amiss, I did chasten myself sorely. Had I, at that time, known anything to be my Lord’s will, I think I should not have hesitated to do it; to me it would not have mattered whether it was a fashionable thing or an unfashionable thing, if it was according to His Word. Oh, to do His will! to follow Him whithersoever He would have me go! It seemed then as though I should never, never, never be slack in keeping His commandments.

I do not know whether the experience of others agrees with mine; but I can say this, that the worst difficulty I ever met with, or I think I can ever meet with, happened a little time after my conversion to God. When I first knew the weight of sin, it was as a burden, as a labor, as a trouble; but when, the second time, —

**“ *I asked the Lord that I might grow,  
In faith, and love, and every grace;  
Might more of His salvation know,  
And seek more earnestly His face;*”**

and when He answered me by letting all my sins loose upon me, they appeared more frightful than before. I thought the Egyptians in Egypt were not half so bad as the Egyptians out of Egypt; I thought the sins I knew before, though they were cruel task-masters, were not half so much to be dreaded as those soldier-sins, armed with spears and axes, riding in iron chariots with scythes upon their axles, hastening to assault me. It is true, they did not come so near to me as heretofore; nevertheless, they occasioned me more fright even than when I was their slave. The Israelites went up harnessed, marching in their ranks, and, I doubt not, singing as they went, because they were delivered from the daily task and from the cruel bondage; but suddenly they turned their heads while they were marching, for they heard a dreadful noise behind them, a noise of chariots and of men shouting for battle; and at last, when they could really see the Egyptians, and the thick cloud of dust rising behind them, then they said that they should be destroyed, they should now fall by the hand of the enemy. I remember, after my conversion (it may not have happened to all, but it did to me), there came a time when the enemy said, “I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil; my lust shall be satisfied upon them; I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them.” So Satan, loth to leave a soul, pursues it hot-foot. He will have it back if he can; and often, soon after conversion, there comes a time of dreadful conflict, when the soul seems as if it could not live. “Was it because there were no graves in Egypt that the Lord brought us into this condition of temporary freedom, that we might be all the more distressed by our adversaries?” So said unbelief; but God brought His people right out by one final stroke. Miriam knew it when she took her timbrel, and went forth with the women, and answered them in the jubilant song, “*Sing*ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea.” I love best of all that note in the song of Moses where he says, “*The*depths have covered them.” “There remained not so much as one of them.” What gladness must have been in the hearts of the children of Israel when they knew that their enemies were all gone! I am sure it was so with me; for, after my conversion, being again attacked by sin, I saw the mighty stream of redeeming love roll over all my sins, and this was my song, “The depths have covered them.” “Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.”

I was brought up, as a child, with such care that I knew but very little of foul or profane language, having scarcely ever heard a man swear. Yet do I remember times, in my earliest Christian days, when there came into my mind thoughts so evil that I clapped my hand to my mouth for fear I should be led to give utterance to them. This is one way in which Satan tortures those whom God has delivered out of his hand. Many of the choicest saints have been thus molested. Once, when I had been grievously assailed by the tempter, I went to see my dear old grandfather. I told him about my terrible experience, and then I wound up by saying, “*Grandfather,*I am sure I cannot: be a child of God, or else I should never have such evil thoughts as these.” “Nonsense, Charles,” answered the good old man; “it is just because you are a Christian that you are thus tempted. These blasphemies are no children of yours; they are the devil’s brats, which he delights to lay at the door of a Christian. Don’t you own them as yours, give them neither house-room nor heart-room.” I felt greatly comforted by what my grandfather said, especially as it confirmed what another old saint had told me when I was tempted in a similar manner while I was seeking the Savior.

A great many people make fun of that verse, —

**“ *‘Tis a point I long to know,  
Oft it causes anxious thought,  
Do I love the Lord, or no?  
Am I His, or am I not?*”**

If they ever find themselves where some of us have been, they will not do so arty more. I believe it is a shallow experience that makes people always confident of what they are, and where they are, for there are times of terrible trouble, that make even the most confident child of God hardly know whether he is on his head or on his heels. It is the mariner who has done business on great waters who, in times of unusual stress and storm, reels to and fro, and staggers like a drunken man, and is at his wits’ end. At such a time, if Jesus whispers that I am His, then the question is answered once for all, and my soul has received a token which it waves in the face of Satan, so that he disappears, and I can go on my way rejoicing.

I have found, in my own spiritual life, that the more rules I lay down for myself, the more sins I commit. The habit of regular morning and evening prayer is one which is indispensable to a believer’s life, but the prescribing of the length of prayer, and the constrained remembrance of so many persons and subjects, may gender unto bondage, and strangle prayer rather than assist it. To say I will humble myself at such a time, and rejoice at such another season, is nearly as much an affectation as when the preacher wrote in the margin of his sermon, “*Cry*here,” “*Smile*here.” Why, if the man preached from his heart, he would be sure to cry in the right place, and to smile at a suitable moment; and when the spiritual life is sound, it produces prayer at the right time, and humiliation of soul and sacred joy spring forth spontaneously, apart from rules and vows. The kind of religion which makes itself to order by the Almanac, and turns out its emotions like bricks from a machine, weeping on Good Friday, and rejoicing two days afterwards, measuring its motions by the moon, is too artificial to be worthy of my imitation.

Self-examination is a very great blessing, but I have known selfexamination carried on in a most unbelieving, legal, and self-righteous manner; in fact, I have so carried, it on myself. Time was when I used to think a vast deal more of marks, and signs, and evidences, for my own comfort, than I do now, for I find that I cannot be a match for the devil when I begin dealing in these things.

I am obliged to go day by day with this cry, —  
**“*I, the chief of sinners am,  
But Jesus died for me.*”**

While I can believe the promise of God, because it is His promise, and because He is my God, and while I can trust my Savior because He is God, and therefore mighty to save, all goes well with me; but I do find, when I begin questioning myself about this and that perplexity, thus taking my eye off Christ, that all the virtue of my life seems oozing out at every pore. Any practice that detracts from faith is an evil practice, but especially that kind of self-examination which would take us away from the cross-foot, proceeds in a wrong direction.  
I used, when I first knew the Savior, to try myself in a certain manner, and often did I throw stumbling-blocks in my path through it, and therefore I can warn any who are doing the same. Sometimes I would go up into my chamber, and by way of self-examination, I used to ask myself this question, — “*Am I afraid lo die?*If I should drop down dead in my room, can I say that I should joyfully close.’ my eyes?” Well, it often happened that I could not honestly say so. I used to feel that death would be a very solemn thing. “Ah, then!” I said, “I have never believed in Christ, for if I had put my trust in the. Lord Jesus, I should not be afraid to die, but I should be quite confident.” I do not doubt that many a person is saying, “I cannot follow Christ, because I am afraid to die; I cannot believe that Jesus Christ will save me, because the thought of death makes me tremble.” Ah, poor soul, there are many of God’s blessed ones, who through fear of death have been much of their lifetime subject to bondage! I know precious children of God now: I believe that, when they die, they will die triumphantly; but I know this, that the thought of death is never pleasing to them. And this is accounted for, because God has stamped on nature that law, the love of life and self-preservation; and it is natural enough that the man who has kindred and friends should scarcely like to leave behind those who are so dear. I know that, when he gets more grace, he will rejoice in the thought of death; but I do know that there are many quite safe, who will die rejoicing in Christ, who now, in the prospect of death, feel afraid of it. My aged grandfather once preached a sermon which I have not yet forgotten. He was preaching from the text, “The God of all grace,” and he somewhat interested the assembly, after describing the different kinds of grace that God gave, by saying at the end of each period, “But there is one kind of grace that you do not want.” After each part of his theme, there came the like sentence, “But there is one kind of grace you do not want.” And then he wound up by saying, “*You*don’t want dying grace in living moments, but you shall have dying grace when you need it. When you are in the condition to require it, you shall have grace enough if you put your trust in Christ.” In a party of friends, we were discussing the question whether, if the days of martyrdom should come, we were prepared to be burned. I said, “*I*must frankly tell you that, speaking as I feel to-day, I am not prepared to be burned; but I do believe that, if there were a stake at Smithfield, and I knew that I was to be burned there at one o’clock, I should have grace enough to be burned there when one o’clock came.” I was much impressed, in my younger days, by hearing a minister, blind with age, speak at the communion table, and bear witness to us who had just joined the church, that it was well for us that we had come to put our trust in a faithful God; and as the good man, with great feebleness and yet with great earnestness, said to us that he had never regretted having given himself to Christ as a boy, I felt my heart leap within me with delight that I had such a God to be my God. His testimony was such as a younger man could not have borne: he might have spoken more fluently, but the weight of those eighty years at the back of it made the old man eloquent to my young heart. For twenty years he had not seen the light of the sun. His snow-white locks hung from his brow, and floated over his shoulders, and he stood up at the table of the Lord, and thus addressed us: — “Brethren and sisters, I shall soon be taken from you; in a few more months, I shall gather up my feet in my bed, and sleep with my fathers. I have not the mind of the learned, nor the tongue of the eloquent; but I desire, before I go, to bear one public testimony to my God. Fifty and six years have I served Him, and I have never once found Him unfaithful. I can say, ‘Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and not one good thing hath failed of all the Lord God has promised.’” There stood the dear old man, tottering into his tomb, deprived of the light of heaven naturally, and yet having the Light of Heaven in a better sense shining into his soul; and though he could not look upon us, yet he turned towards us, and he seemed to say, “Young people, trust God in early life, for I have not to regret that I sought Him too soon. I have only to mourn that so many of my years ran to waste.” There is nothing that more tends to strengthen the faith of the young believer than to hear the veteran Christian, covered with scars from the battle, testifying that the service of his Master is a happy service, and that, if he could have served any other master, he would not have done so, for His service is pleasant, and His reward everlasting joy.

In my early days, I knew a good man, who has now gone to his reward, who was the means of producing, under God, a library of useful lives. I do not mean books in paper, but books in boots! Many young men were decided for the Lord by his means, and became preachers, teachers, deacons, and other workers; and no one would wonder that it was so, if he knew the man who trained them. He was ready for every good word and work; but he gave special attention to his Bible-class, in which he set forth the gospel with clearness and zeal. Whenever any one of his young men left the country town in which he lived, he would be sure to arrange a parting interview. There was a wide spreading oak down in the fields; and there he was wont to keep an early morning appointment with John, or Thomas, or William; and that appointment very much consisted of earnest pleading with the Lord that, in going up to the great city, the young man might be kept from sin, and made useful. Under that tree several decided for the Savior. It was an impressive act, and left its influence upon them; for many men came, in after years, to see the spot, made sacred by their teacher’s prayers.

Oh! how my young heart once ached in boyhood, when I first loved the Savior. I was far away from father and Mother, and all I loved, and I thought my heart would burst; for I was an usher in a school, in a place where I could meet with little sympathy or help. Well, I went to my chamber, and told my little griefs into the ears of Jesus. They were great griefs to me then, though they are nothing now. When on my knees I just whispered them into the ear of Him who had loved me with an everlasting love, oh, it was so sweet! If I had told them to others, they would have told them again; but He, my blessed Confidant, knows all my secrets, and He never tells again.

There is one verse of Scripture which, as a young believer, I used often to repeat, for it was very dear to me; it is this: “Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.” I did feel then that I was wholly Christ’s. In the marriage covenant of which the Lord speaks, when the Husband put the ring upon His bride’s finger, He said to her, “Thou hast become Mine;” and I remember when I felt upon my finger the ring of infinite, everlasting, covenant love that Christ put there. Oh, it was a joyful day, a blessed day! Happy day, happy day, when His choice was known to me, and He fixed my choice on Him! That blessed rest of soul, which comes of a sure possession of Christ, is not to be imitated, but it is greatly to be desired. I know that some good people, who I believe will be saved, nevertheless do not attain to this sweet rest. They keep on thinking that it is something that they may get when they are very old, or when they are about to die, but they look upon the full assurance of faith, and the personal grasping of Christ, and saying, “My Beloved is mine,” as something very dangerous. I began my Christian life in this happy fashion as a boy fifteen years of age; I believed fully and without hesitation in the Lord Jesus Christ; and when I went to see a good Christian woman, I was simple enough to tell her that I believed in Christ, that He was mine, and that He had saved me. I expressed myself very confidently concerning the great truth that God would ne’er forsake His people, nor leave His work undone. I was at once chid, and told that I had no right to speak so confidently, for it was presumptuous. The good woman said to me, “Ah! I don’t like such assurance as that,” and then she added, “I trust you are believing in Christ, — I hope so; — but I have never got. beyond a hope or a trust, and I am an old woman.” Bless the old woman, she was no example for us who know whom we have believed; we ought to rise far above that groveling kind of life. The man who begins right, and the boy who begins right, and the girl. who begins right, will begin by saying, “God hath said it: ‘He that believeth on Him is not condemned.’ I believe on Him, therefore I am not condemned; Christ is mine.”

Before my conversion, I was accustomed to read the Scriptures to admire their grandeur, to feel the charm of their history, and wonder at the majesty of their language; but I altogether missed the Lord’s intent therein. But when the Spirit came with His Divine life, and quickened all the Book to my newly-enlightened soul, the inner meaning shone forth with wondrous glory. I was not in a frame of mind to .judge God’s Word, but I accepted it all without demur; I did not venture to sit in judgment upon my Judge, and become the reviser of the unerring God.

Whatever I found to be in His Word, I received with intense joy. From that hour, I bless; God that, being not exempt from trouble, and especially not free from a tendency to despondency which is always with me, I yet rejoice and will rejoice, and am happy, unspeakably happy in resting upon Jesus Christ. Moreover, I have found that those points of my character which were most weak have been strengthened, while strong passions have been subdued, evil propensities have been kept under, and new principles have been implanted. I am changed; I am as different from what I was as a man could be who had been annihilated, and had then been made over again. Nor do I claim any of the credit for this change, — far from it. God has done great things for me, but He has done the same for others, and is willing to do it for any soul that seeks His face through Jesu:, Christ and His great atoning sacrifice.

I have known some men who were almost idiots before conversion, but they afterwards had their faculties wonderfully developed. Sonic time ago, there was a man who was so ignorant that he could not read, and he never spoke anything like grammar in his life, unless by mistake; and, moreover, he was considered to be what the people in his neighborhood called “daft.” But when he was converted, the first thing he did was to pray. He stammered out a few words, and in a little time his powers of speaking began to develop themselves. Then he thought he would like to read the Scriptures, and after long, long months of labor, he learned to read. And what was the next thing? He thought he could preach; and he did preach a little, in his own homely way, in his house. Then he thought, “I must read a few more books.” And so his mind expanded, until, I believe he is at the present day a useful minister, settled in a country village, laboring for God.

An idea has long possessed the public mind, that a religious man can scarcely be a wise man. It has been the custom to talk of infidels, atheists, and deists, as men of deep thought and comprehensive intellect; and to tremble for the Christian controversialist as if he must surely fall by the hand of his enemy. But this is purely a mistake; for the gospel is the sum of wisdom, an epitome of knowledge, a treasure-house of truth, and a revelation of mysterious secrets. In it we see how justice and mercy may be married; here we behold inexorable law entirely satisfied, and sovereign love bearing away the sinner in triumph. Our meditation upon it enlarges the mind; and as it opens to our soul in successive flashes of glory, we stand astonished at the profound wisdom manifest in it. I have often said that, before I knew the gospel, I had gathered up a heterogeneous mass of all kinds of knowledge from here, there, and everywhere, — a bit of chemistry, a bit of botany, a bit of astronomy, and a bit of this, that, and the other. I put them all together, in one great confused chaos; but when I learned the gospel, I got a shelf in my head to put everything upon just where it should be. It seemed to me as if, when I had discovered Christ and Him crucified, I had found the center of the system, so that I could see every other science revolving in due order. From the earth, the planets appear to move in a very irregular manner, — they are progressive, retrograde, or stationary; but if you could get upon the sun, you would see them marching round in their constant, uniform, circular motion. So is it with knowledge. Begin with any other science you like, and truth will seem to be all awry. Begin with the science of Christ crucified, and you will begin with the sun, you will see every other science moving round it in complete harmony. The greatest mind in the world will be evolved by beginning at the right end. The old saying is, “Go from nature up to nature’s God;” but it is hard work going up-hill. the best thing is to go from nature’s God down to nature; and if you once get to nature’s God, and believe Him, and love Him, it is surprising how easy it is to hear music in the waves, and songs in the wild whisperings of the winds, to see God everywhere, in the stones, in the rocks, in the rippling brooks, and to hear Him everywhere, in the lowing of cattle, in the rolling of thunders, and in the fury of tempests. Christ is to me the wisdom of God. I can learn everything now that I know the science of Christ crucified.

CHAPTER 16.

DEFENSE OF CALVINISM.

The old truth that Calvin preached, that Augustine preached, that Paul preached, is the truth that I must preach to-day, or else be false to my conscience and my God. I cannot shape the truth; I know of no such thing as paring off the rough edges of a doctrine. John Knox’s gospel is my gospel. That which thundered through Scotland must thunder through England again. — C. H. S.

I T is a great thing to begin the Christian life by believing good solid doctrine. Some people have received twenty different “gospels” in as many years; how many more they will accept before they get to their journey’s end, it would be difficult to predict. I thank God that He early taught me the gospel, and I have been so perfectly satisfied with it, that I do not want to know any other. Constant change of creed is sure loss. If a tree has to be taken up two or three times a year, you will not need to build a very large loft in which to store the apples. When people are always shifting their doctrinal principles, they are not likely to bring forth much fruit to the glory of God. It is good for young believers to begin with a firm hold upon those great fundamental doctrines which the Lord has taught in His Word. Why, if I believed what some preach about the temporary, trumpery salvation which only lasts for a time, I would scarcely be at all grateful for it; but when I know that those whom God saves He saves with an everlasting salvation, when I know that He gives to them an everlasting righteousness, when I know that He settles them on an everlasting foundation of everlasting love, and that He will bring them to His everlasting kingdom, oh, then I do wonder, and I am astonished that such a blessing as this should ever have been given to me!

**“ *Pause, my soul! adore, and wonder!  
Ask, ‘Oh, why such love to me?’  
Grace hath put me in the number  
Of the Savior’s family:  
Hallelujah!  
Thanks, eternal thanks, to Thee***

I suppose there are some persons whose minds naturally incline towards the doctrine of free-will. I can only say that mine inclines as naturally towards the doctrines of sovereign grace. Sometimes, when I see some of the worst characters in the street, I feel as if my heart must burst forth in tears of gratitude that God has never let me act as they have done! I have thought, if God had left me alone, and had not touched me by His grace, what a great sinner I should have been! I should have run to the utmost lengths of sin, dived into the very depths of evil, nor should I have stopped at any vice or folly, if God had not restrained me. I feel that I should have been a very king of sinners, if God had let me alone. I cannot understand the reason why I am saved, except upon the ground that God would have it so. I cannot, if I look ever so earnestly, discover any kind of reason in myself why I should be a partaker of Divine grace. If I am not at this moment without Christ, it is only because Christ Jesus would have His will with me, and that will was that I should be with Him where He is, and should share His glory. I can put the crown nowhere but upon the head of Him whose mighty grace has saved me from going down into the pit. Looking back on my past life, I can see that the dawning of it all was of God; of God effectively. I took no torch with which to light the sun, but the sun enlightened me. I did not commence my spiritual life-no, I rather kicked, and struggled against the things of the Spirit: when He drew me, for a time I did not run after Him: there was a natural hatred in my soul of everything holy and good. Wooings were lost upon me-warnings were cast to the wind- thunders were despised; and as for the whispers of His love, they were rejected as being less than nothing and vanity. But, sure I am, I can say now, speaking on behalf of myself, “He only is my salvation.” It was He who turned my heart, and brought me down on my knees before Him. I can in very deed, say with Doddridge and Toplady, —

**“*Grace taught my soul to pray,  
And made my eyes o’erflow.*”**  
and coming to this moment, I can add —  
**“*Tis grace has kept me to this day,  
And will not let me go.*”**

Well can I remember the manner in which I learned the doctrines of grace in a single instant. Born, as all of us are by nature, an Arminian, I still believed the old things I had heard continually from the pulpit, and did not see the grace of God. When I was coming to Christ, I thought I was doing it all myself, and though I sought the Lord earnestly, I had no idea the Lord was seeking me. I do not think the young convert is at first aware of this. I can recall the very day and hour when first I received those truths in my own soul-when they were, as John Bunyan says, burnt into my heart as with a hot iron, and I can recollect how I felt that I had grown on a sudden from a babe into a man-that I had made progress in Scriptural knowledge, through having found, once for all, the clue to the truth of God. One weeknight, when I was sitting in the house of God, I was not thinking much about the preacher’s sermon, for I did not believe it. The thought struck me, How did you come to be a Christian? I sought the Lord. But how did you come to seek the Lord? The truth flashed across my mind in a moment- I should not have sought Him unless there had been some previous influence in my mind to make me seek Him. I prayed, thought I, but then I asked myself, How came I to pray? I was induced to pray by reading the Scriptures. How came I to read the Scriptures? I did read them, but what led me to do so? Then, in a moment, I saw that God was at the bottom of it all, and that He was the Author of my faith, and so the whole doctrine of grace opened up to me, and from that doctrine I have not departed to this day, and I desire to make this my constant confession, “I ascribe my change wholly to God.”

I once attended a service where the text happened to be, “He shall choose our inheritance for us;” and the good man who occupied the pulpit was more than a little of an Arminian. Therefore, when he commenced, he said, “This passage refers entirely to our temporal inheritance, it has nothing whatever to do with our everlasting destiny, for,” said he, “we do not want Christ to choose for us in the matter of Heaven or hell. It is so plain and easy, that every man who has a grain of common sense will choose Heaven, and any person would know better than to choose hell. We have no need of any superior intelligence, or any greater Being, to choose Heaven or hell for us. It is left to our own free- will, and we have enough wisdom given us, sufficiently correct means to judge for ourselves,” and therefore, as he very logically inferred, there was no necessity for Jesus Christ, or anyone, to make a choice for us. We could choose the inheritance for ourselves without any assistance. “Ah!” I thought, “but, my good brother, it may be very true that we could, but I think we should want something more than common sense before we should choose aright.”  
First, let me ask, must we not all of us admit an over-ruling Providence, and the appointment of Jehovah’s hand, as to the means whereby we came into this world? Those men who think that, afterwards, we are left to our own free-will to choose this one or the other to direct our steps, must admit that our entrance into the world was not of our own will, but that God had then to choose for us. What circumstances were those in our power which led us to elect certain persons to be our parents? Had we anything to do with it? Did not God Himself appoint our parents, native place, and friends? Could He not have caused me to be born with the skin of the Hottentot, brought forth by a filthy mother who would nurse me in her “kraal,” and teach me to bow down to Pagan gods, quite as easily as to have given me a pious mother, who would each morning and night bend her knee in prayer on my behalf? Or, might He not, if He had pleased have given me some profligate to have been my parent, from whose lips I might have early heard fearful, filthy, and obscene language? Might He not have placed me where I should have had a drunken father, who would have immured me in a very dungeon of ignorance, and brought me up in the chains of crime? Was it not God’s Providence that I had so happy a lot, that both my parents were His children, and endeavored to train me up in the fear of the Lord?

John Newton used to tell a whimsical story, and laugh at it, too, of a good woman who said, in order to prove the doctrine of election, “Ah! sir, the Lord must have loved me before I was born, or else He would not have seen anything in me to love afterwards.” I am sure it is true in my case; I believe the doctrine of election, because I am quite certain that, if God had not chosen me, I should never have chosen Him; and I am sure He chose me before I was born, or else He never would have chosen me afterwards; and He must have elected me for reasons unknown to me, for I never could find any reason in myself why He should have looked upon me with special love. So I am forced to accept that great Biblical doctrine. I recollect an Arminian brother telling me that he had read the Scriptures through a score or more times, and could never find the doctrine of election in them. He added that he was sure he would have done so if it had been there, for he read the Word on his knees. I said to him, “I think you read the Bible in a very uncomfortable posture, and if you had read it in your easy chair, you would have been more likely to understand it. Pray, by all means, and the more, the better, but it is a piece of superstition to think there is anything in the posture in which a man puts himself for reading: and as to reading through the Bible twenty times without having found anything about the doctrine of election, the wonder is that you found anything at all: you must have galloped through it at such a rate that you were not likely to have any intelligible idea of the meaning of the Scriptures.”

If it would be marvelous to see one river leap up from the earth full-grown, what would it be to gaze upon a vast spring from which all the rivers of the earth should at once come bubbling up, a million of them born at a birth? What a vision would it be! Who can conceive it. And yet the love of God is that fountain, from which all the rivers of mercy, which have ever gladdened our race-all the rivers of grace in time, and of glory hereaftertake their rise. My soul, stand thou at that sacred fountain-head, and adore and magnify, for ever and ever, God, even our Father, who hath loved us! In the very beginning, when this great universe lay in the mind of God, like unborn forests in the acorn cup; long ere the echoes awoke the solitudes; before the mountains were brought forth; and long ere the light flashed through the sky, God loved His chosen creatures. Before there was any created being-when the ether was not fanned by an angel’s wing, when space itself had not an existence, when there was nothing save God aloneeven then, in that loneliness of Deity, and in that deep quiet and profundity, His bowels moved with love for His chosen. Their names were written on His heart, and then were they dear to His soul. Jesus loved His people before the foundation of the world-even from eternity! and when He called me by His grace, He said to me, “I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.”

Then, in the fullness of time, He purchased me with His blood; He let His heart run out in one deep gaping wound for me long ere I loved Him. Yea, when He first came to me, did I not spurn Him? When He knocked at the door, and asked for entrance, did I not drive Him away, and do despite to Ms grace? Ah, I can remember that I full often did so until, at last, by the power of His effectual grace, He said, “I must, I will come in;” and then He turned my heart, and made me love Him. But even till now I should have resisted Him, had it not been for His grace. Well, then since He purchased me when I was dead in sins, does it not follow, as a consequence necessary and logical, that He must have loved me first? Did my Savior die for me because I believed on Him? No; I was not then in existence; I had then no being. Could the Savior, therefore, have died because I had faith, when I myself was not yet born? Could that have been possible? Could that have been the origin of the Savior’s love towards me? Oh! no; my Savior died for me long before I believed. “But,” says someone, “He foresaw that you would have faith; and, therefore, He loved you.” What did He foresee about my faith? Did He foresee that I should get that faith myself, and that I should believe on Him of myself? No; Christ could not foresee that, because no Christian man will ever say that faith came of itself without the gift and without the working of the Holy Spirit. I have met with a great many believers, and talked with them about this matter; but I never knew one who could put his hand on his heart, and say, “I believed in Jesus without the assistance of the Holy Spirit.”

I am bound to the doctrine of the depravity of the human heart, because I find myself depraved in heart, and have daily proofs that in my flesh there dwelleth no good thing. If God enters into covenant with unfallen man, man is so insignificant a creature that it must be an act of gracious condescension on the Lord’s part; but if God enters into covenant with sinful man, he is then so offensive a creature that it must be, on God’s part, an act of pure, free, rich, sovereign grace. When the Lord entered into covenant with me, I am sure that it was all of grace, nothing else but grace. When I remember what a den of unclean beasts and birds my heart was, and how strong was my unrenewed will, how obstinate and rebellious against the sovereignty of the Divine rule, I always feel inclined to take the very lowest room in my Father’s house, and when I enter Heaven, it will be to go among the less than the least of all saints, and with the chief of sinners.

The late lamented Mr. Denham has put, at the foot of his portrait, a most admirable text, “Salvation is of the Lord.” That is just an epitome of Calvinism; it is the sum and substance of it. If anyone should ask me what I mean by a Calvinist, I should reply, “He is one who says, Salvation is of the Lord.” I cannot find in Scripture any other doctrine than this. It is the essence of the Bible. “He only is my rock and my salvation.” Tell me anything contrary to this truth, and it will be a heresy; tell me a heresy, and I shall find its essence here, that it has departed from this great, this fundamental, this rock-truth, “God is my rock and my salvation.” What is the heresy of Rome, but the addition of something to the perfect merits of Jesus Christ-the bringing in of the works of the flesh, to assist in our justification? And what is the heresy of Arminianism but the addition of something to the work of the Redeemer? Every heresy, if brought to the touchstone, will discover itself here. I have my own Private opinion that there is no such thing as preaching Christ and Him crucified, unless we preach what nowadays is called Calvinism. It is a nickname to call it Calvinism; Calvinism is the gospel, and nothing else. I do not believe we can preach the gospel, if we do not preach justification by faith, without works; nor unless we preach the sovereignty of God in His dispensation of grace; nor unless we exalt the electing, unchangeable, eternal, immutable, conquering love of Jehovah; nor do I think we can preach the gospel, unless we base it upon the special and particular redemption of His elect and chosen people which Christ wrought out upon the cross; nor can I comprehend a gospel which lets saints fall away after they are called, and suffers the children of God to be burned in the fires of damnation after having once believed in Jesus. Such a gospel I abhor.

**“ *If ever it should come to pass,  
That sheep of Christ might fall away,  
My fickle, feeble soul, alas!  
Would fall a thousand times a day*”**

If one dear saint of God had perished, so might all; if one of the covenant ones be lost, so may all be; and then there is no gospel promise true, but the Bible is a lie, and there is nothing in it worth my acceptance. I will be an infidel at once when I can believe that a saint of God can ever fall finally. If God hath loved me once, then He will love me for ever. God has a mastermind; He arranged everything in His gigantic intellect long before He did it; and once having settled it, He never alters it, ‘This shall be done,” saith He, and the iron hand of destiny marks it down, and it is brought to pass. “This is My purpose,” and it stands, nor can earth or hell alter it. “This is My decree,” saith He, “promulgate it, ye holy angels; rend it down from the gate of Heaven, ye devils, if ye can; but ye cannot alter the decree, it shall stand for ever.” God altereth not His plans; why should He? He is Almighty, and therefore can perform His pleasure. Why should He? He is the All-wise, and therefore cannot have planned wrongly. Why should He? He is the everlasting God, and therefore cannot die before His plan is accomplished. Why should He change? Ye worthless atoms of earth, ephemera of a day, ye creeping insects upon this bay-leaf of existence, ye may change your plans, but He shall never, never change His. Has He told me that His plan is to save me? If so, I am for ever safe.

**“ *My name from the palms of His hands  
Eternity will not erase;  
Impress’d on His heart it remains,  
In marks of indelible grace.*”**

I do not know how some people, who believe that a Christian can fall from grace, manage to be happy. It must be a very commendable thing in them to be able to get through a day without despair. f I did not believe the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints, I think I should be of all men the most miserable, because I should lack any ground of comfort. I could not say, whatever state of heart I came into, that I should be like a well- spring of water, whose stream fails not; I should rather have to take the comparison of an intermittent spring, that might stop on a sudden, or a reservoir, which I had no reason to expect would always be full. I believe that the happiest of Christians and the truest of Christians are those who never dare to doubt God, but who take His Word simply as it stands, and believe it, and ask no questions, just feeling assured that if God has said it, it will be so. I bear my willing testimony that I have no reason, nor even the shadow of a reason, to doubt my Lord, and I challenge Heaven, and earth, and hell, to bring any proof that God is untrue. From the depths of hell I call the fiends, and from this earth I call the tried and afflicted believers, and to Heaven I appeal, and challenge the long experience of the bloodwashed host, and there is not to be found in the three realms a single person who can bear witness to one fact which can disprove the faithfulness of God, or weaken Ms claim to be trusted by His servants. There are many things that may or may not happen, but this I know shall happen —

**“ *He shall present my soul,  
Unblemish’d and complete,  
Before the glory of His face,  
With joys divinely great*”**

All the purposes of man have been defeated, but not the purposes of God. The promises of man may be broken-many of them are made to be brokenbut the promises of God shall all be fulfilled. He is a promise-maker, but He never was a promise- breaker; He is a promise-keeping God, and every one of His people shall prove it to be so. This is my grateful, personal confidence, “The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me”-unworthy me, lost and ruined me. He will yet save me; and —

**“ *I, among the blood-wash’d throng,  
Shall wave the palm, and wear the crown,  
And shout loud victory*”**

I go to a land which the plough of earth hath never upturned, where it is greener than earth’s best pastures, and richer than her most abundant harvests ever saw. I go to a building of more gorgeous architecture than man hath ever builded; it is not of mortal design; it is “a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens.” All I shall know and enjoy in Heaven, will be given to me by the Lord, and I shall say, when at last I appear before Him —

**“ *Grace all the work shall crown  
Through everlasting days;  
It lays in Heaven the topmost stone,  
And well deserves the praise*”**

I know there are some who think it necessary to their system of theology to limit the merit of the blood of Jesus: if my theological system needed such a limitation, I would cast it to the winds. I cannot, I dare not allow the thought to find a lodging in my mind, it seems so near akin to blasphemy. In Christ’s finished work I see an ocean of merit; my plummet finds no bottom, my eye discovers no shore. There must be sufficient efficacy in the blood of Christ, if God had so willed it, to have saved not only all in this world, but all in ten thousand worlds, had they transgressed their Maker’s law. Once admit infinity into the matter, and limit is out of the question. Having a Divine Person for an offering, it is not consistent to conceive of limited value; bound and measure are terms inapplicable to the Divine sacrifice. The intent of the Divine purpose fixes the application of the infinite offering, but does not change it into a finite work. Think of the numbers upon whom God has bestowed His grace already. Think of the countless hosts in Heaven: if thou wert introduced there to-day, thou wouldst find it as easy to tell the stars, or the sands of the sea, as to count the multitudes that are before the throne even now. They have come from the East, and from the West, from the North, and from the South, and they are sitting down with Abraham, and with Isaac, and with Jacob in the Kingdom of God; and beside those in Heaven, think of the saved ones on earth. Blessed be God, His elect on earth are to be counted by millions, I believe, and the days are coming, brighter days than these, when there shall be multitudes upon multitudes brought to know the Savior, and to rejoice in Him. The Father’s love is not for a few only, but for an exceeding great company. “A great multitude, which no man could number,” will be found in Heaven. A man can reckon up to very high figures; set to work your Newtons, your mightiest calculators, and they can count great numbers, but God and God alone can tell the multitude of His redeemed. I believe there will be more in Heaven than in hell. If anyone asks me why I think so, I answer, because Christ, in everything, is to “have the pre-eminence,” and I cannot conceive how He could have the pre-eminence if there are to be more in the dominions of Satan than in Paradise. Moreover, I have never read that there is to be in hell a great multitude, which no man could number. I rejoice to know that the souls of all infants, as soon as they die, speed their way to Paradise. Think what a multitude there is of them! Then there are already in Heaven unnumbered myriads of the spirits of just men made perfect-the redeemed of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues up till now; and there are better times coming, when the religion of Christ shall be universal; when —

**“*He shall reign from pole to pole,  
With illimitable sway,*”**

when whole kingdoms shall bow down before Him, and nations shall be born in a day, and in the thousand years of the great millennial state there will be enough saved to make up all the deficiencies of the thousands of years that have gone before. Christ shall be Master everywhere, and His praise shall be sounded in every land. Christ shall have the pre-eminence at last; His train shall be far larger than that which shall attend the chariot of the grim monarch of hell.

Some persons love the doctrine of universal atonement because they say, “It is so beautiful. It is a lovely idea that Christ should have died for all men; it commends itself,” they say, “to the instincts of humanity; there is something in it full of joy and beauty.” I admit there is, but beauty may be often associated with falsehood. There is much which I might admire in the theory of universal redemption, but I will just show what the supposition necessarily involves. If Christ on His cross intended to save every man, then He intended to save those who were lost before He died. If the doctrine be true, that He died for all men, then He died for some who were in hell before He came into this world, for doubtless there were even then myriads there who had been cast away because of their sins. Once again, if it was Christ’s intention to save all men, how deplorably has He been disappointed, for we have His own testimony that there is a lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, and into that pit of woe have been cast some of the very persons who, according to the theory of universal redemption, were bought with His blood. That seems to me a conception a thousand times more repulsive than any of those consequences which are said to be associated with the Calvinistic and Christian doctrine of special and particular redemption. To think that my Savior died for men who were or are in hell, seems a supposition too horrible for me to entertain. To imagine for a moment that He was the Substitute for all the sons of men, and that God, having first punished the Substitute, afterwards punished the sinners themselves, seems to conflict with all my ideas of Divine justice. That Christ should offer an atonement and satisfaction for the sins of all men, and that afterwards some of those very men should be punished for the sins for which Christ had already atoned, appears to me to be the most monstrous iniquity that could ever have been imputed to Saturn, to Janus, to the goddess of the Thugs, or to the most diabolical heathen deities. God forbid that we should ever think thus of Jehovah, the just and wise and good!

There is no soul living who holds more firmly to the doctrines of grace than I do, and if any man asks me whether I am ashamed to be called a Calvinist, I answer- I wish to be called nothing but a Christian; but if you ask me, do I hold the doctrinal views which were held by John Calvin, I reply, I do in the main hold them, and rejoice to avow it. But far be it from me even to imagine that Zion contains none but Calvinistic Christians within her walls, or that there are none saved who do not hold our views. Most atrocious things have been spoken about the character and spiritual condition of John Wesley, the modern prince of Arminians. I can only say concerning him that, while I detest many of the doctrines which he preached, yet for the man himself I have a reverence second to no Wesleyan; and if there were wanted two apostles to be added to the number of the twelve, I do not believe that there could be found two men more fit to be so added than George Whitefield and John Wesley. The character of John Wesley stands beyond all imputation for self-sacrifice, zeal, holiness, and communion with God; he lived far above the ordinary level of common Christians, and was one “of whom the world was not worthy.” I believe there are multitudes of men who cannot see these truths, or, at least, cannot see them in the way in which we put them, who nevertheless have received Christ as their Savior, and are as dear to the heart of the God of grace as the soundest Calvinist in or out of Heaven.

I do not think I differ from any of my Hyper-Calvinistic brethren in what I do believe, but I differ from them in what they do not believe. I do not hold any less than they do, but I hold a little more, and, I think, a little more of the truth revealed in the Scriptures. Not only are there a few cardinal doctrines, by which we can steer our ship North, South, East, or West, but as we study the Word, we shall begin to learn something about the Northwest and North-east, and all else that lies between the four cardinal points. The system of truth revealed in the Scriptures is not simply one straight line, but two; and no man will ever get a right view of the gospel until he knows how to look at the two lines at once. For instance, I read in one Book of the Bible, “The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Yet I am taught, in another part of the same inspired Word, that “it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.” I see, in one place, God in providence presiding over all, and yet I see, and I cannot help seeing, that man acts as he pleases, and that God has left his actions, in a great measure, to his own free-will. Now, if I were to declare that man was so free to act that there was no control of God over his actions, I should be driven very near to atheism; and if, on the other hand, I should declare that God so over-rules all things that man is not free enough to be responsible, I should be driven at once into Antinomianism or fatalism. That God predestines, and yet that man is responsible, are two facts that few can see clearly. They are believed to be inconsistent and contradictory to each other. If, then, I find taught in one part of the Bible that everything is foreordained, that is true; and if I find, in another Scripture, that man is responsible for all his actions, that is true; and it is only my folly that leads me to imagine that these two truths can ever contradict each other. I do not believe they can ever be welded into one upon any earthly anvil, but they certainly shall be one in eternity. They are two lines that are so nearly parallel, that the human mind which pursues them farthest will never discover that they converge, but they do converge, and they will meet somewhere in eternity, close to the throne of God, whence all truth doth spring.

It is often said that the doctrines we believe have a tendency to lead us to sin. I have heard it asserted most positively, that those high doctrines which we love, and which we find in the Scriptures, are licentious ones. I do not know who will have the hardihood to make that assertion, when they consider that the holiest of men have been believers in them. I ask the man who dares to say that Calvinism is a licentious religion, what he thinks of the character of Augustine, or Calvin, or Whitefield, who in successive ages were the great exponents of the system of grace; or what will he say of the Puritans, whose works are full of them? Had a man been an Arminian in those days, he would have been accounted the vilest heretic breathing, but now we are looked upon as the heretics, and they as the orthodox. We have gone back to the old school; we can trace our descent from the apostles. It is that vein of free-grace, running through the sermonizing of Baptists, which has saved us as a denomination. Were it not for that, we should not stand where we are today. We can run a golden line up to Jesus Christ Himself, through a holy succession of mighty fathers, who all held these glorious truths; and we can ask concerning them, “Where will you find holier and better men in the world?” No doctrine is so calculated to preserve a man from sin as the doctrine of the grace of God. Those who have called it “a licentious doctrine” did not know anything at all about it. Poor ignorant things, they little knew that their own vile stuff was the most licentious doctrine under Heaven. If they knew the grace of God in truth, they would soon see that there was no preservative from lying like a knowledge that we are elect of God from the foundation of the world. There is nothing like a belief in my eternal perseverance, and the immutability of my Father’s affection, which can keep me near to Him from a motive of simple gratitude. Nothing makes a man so virtuous as belief of the truth. A lying doctrine will soon beget a lying practice. A man cannot have an erroneous belief without by-and-by having an erroneous life. I believe the one thing naturally begets the other. Of all men, those have the most disinterested piety, the sublimest reverence, the most ardent devotion, who believe that they are saved by grace, without works, through faith, and that not of themselves, it is the gift of God. Christians should take heed, and see that it always is so, lest by any means Christ should be crucified afresh, and put to an open shame.

In my early Christian days, I remember seeing a man about to enter a place of worldly amusement. Though he was a professing Christian, he was going to spend the evening in a dancing booth at the village fair, drinking and acting as other men did. I called out to him, just as he was at the entrance, “What doest thou there, Elijah?*....*Why do you ask me such a question as that?” said he. I asked again, “What doest thou there, Elijah? Art thou going in there?*....* “Yes,” he replied, with some sort of blush, “I am, but I can do so with impunity; I am a child of God, and I can go where I like, and yet be safe.” “I could not,” said I; “if I went there, I know I should commit sin. It is a place of danger, and I could not go there without great risk of sinning against God.” “Ah!” said he, “I could; I have been before, and I have had some sweet thoughts there. I find it enlarges the intellect. You are narrow-minded; you do not appreciate these good things. It is a rich treat, I assure you; I would go if I were you.” “No,” I said, “it would be dangerous for me; from what I hear, the name of Jesus is profaned there; and there is much said that is altogether contrary to the religion I believe. The persons who attend there are none of the best, and it will surely be said that birds of a feather flock together.” “Ah, well!” he replied, “perhaps you young men had better keep away; I am a strong man, I can go;” and off he went to the place of amusement. My soul revolted from the man ever afterwards, for I felt that no child of God would ever be so wicked as to take poison in the faith that his Father would give him the antidote, or thrust himself into the fire, in the hope that he should not be burned. That man was an apple of Sodom, and I guessed that there was something rotten at the core; and I found by experience that it was so, for he was a downright sensualist even then. He wore a mask, for he was a hypocrite, and had none of the grace of God in his heart.

(This is evidently the man mentioned in the Diary, on page 146, and is quite a different person from “Old Roads” — see pages 23 and 24, — who was rebuked by “the child” for frequenting the Stambourne public-house, and who, through that rebuke, was restored to a consistent Christian life.)

CHAPTER 17.

BEGINNING TO SERVE THE LORD.

“As Jesus passed forth from thence, He saw a man named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom, and He saith unto him, Follow Me; and he arose, and followed Him.” This is a little bit of autobiography. Matthew wrote this verse about himself. I can fancy him, with his pen in his hand, writing all the rest of this Gospel; but I can imagine that, when he came to this very personal passage, he laid the pen down a minute, and wiped his eyes. He was coming to a most memorable and pathetic incident in his own life, and he recorded it with tremulous emotion. This verse reads to me so tenderly that I do not know how to communicate to you just how I feel about it. I have tried to imagine myself to be Matthew, and to have to write this story; and I am sure that, if I had not been inspired as Matthew was, I should never have done it so beautifully as he has done it, for it is so full of everything ‘flint is touching, tender, timid, true, and gracious.

I know another man, not named “Matthew,” but “Charles,” and the Lord said to him, “Follow Me;” and he also arose, and followed Him. I do not know all that He saw when He looked upon me, I fear that He saw nothing in me but sin, and evil, and vanity; but I believe that He did say to Himself concerning me, “I see one to whom I can teach My truth, and who, when He gets a hold of it, will grip it fast, and never let it go, and one who will not be afraid to speak it wherever he is.” So the Lord saw what use He could make of me. There is an adaptation in men, even while they are unconverted, which God has put into them for their future service. Luke was qualified to write his Gospel because he had been a physician; and Matthew was qualified to write the particular Gospel which he has left us, because he had been a publican. There may be a something about your habits of life, and about your constitution, and your condition, that will qualify you for some special niche in the Church of God in the years to come. O happy day, when Jesus shall look upon you, and call you to follow Him! Happy day, when He did look upon some of us, and saw in us what His love meant to put there, that He might make of us vessels of mercy meet for the Master’s use! — C. H. S.

D O not see how our sense of oneness to Christ could ever have been perfected if we had not been permitted to work for Him. If He had been pleased to save us by His precious blood, and then leave us with nothing to do, we should have had fellowship with Christ up to a certain point, but (I speak from experience) there is no fellowship with Christ that seems to me to be so vivid,

so real to the soul, as when I try to win a soul for Him. Oh, when I come to battle with that soul’s difficulties, to weep over that soul’s hardness; when I begin to set the arguments of Divine mercy before it, and find myself foiled; when I am in a very agony of spirit, and feel that I could die sooner than that soul should perish; then I get to read the heart of Him whose flowing tears, and bloody sweat, and dying wounds showed how much He loved poor fallen mankind.

I think that, when I was first converted to God, if the Lord had said, “I have taken you into My house, and I am going to make use of you, and you shall be a door-mat for the saints to wipe their feet on,” I should have said, “Ah, happy shall I be if I may but take the filth off their blessed feet, for I love God’s people; and if I may minister to them in the slightest degree, it shall be my delight!” I know it did not come into my head, at that time, that I should be a leader in God’s Israel. Ah, no; if I might but sit in the corner of His house, or be a door-keeper, it had been enough for me! If, like the dog under the table, I might get a crumb of His mercy, were it but flavored by His hand, because He had broken it off, that was all I wanted. In that day when I surrendered myself to my Savior, I gave Him my body, my soul, my spirit; I gave Him all I had, and all I shall have for time and for eternity. I gave Him all my talents, my powers, my faculties, my eyes, my ears, my limbs, my emotions, my judgment, my whole manhood, and all that could come of it, whatever fresh capacity or new capability I might be endowed with. Were I, at this good hour, to change the note of gladness for one of sadness, it would be to wail out my penitent confession of the times and circumstances in which I have failed to observe the strict and unwavering allegiance I promised to my Lord. So far from regretting what I then did, I would fain renew my vows, and make them over again. I pray God, if I have a drop of blood in my body which is not His, to let it bleed away; and if there be one hair in my head which is not consecrated to Him, I would have it plucked out.

The very first service which my youthful heart rendered to Christ was the placing of tracts in envelopes, and then sealing them up, that I might send them, with the hope that, by choosing pertinent tracts, applicable to persons I knew, God would bless them. And I well remember taking other tracts, and distributing them in certain districts in the town of Newmarket, going from house to house, and telling, in humble language, the things of the Kingdom of God. I might have done nothing for Christ if I had not been encouraged by finding myself able to do a little. Then I sought to do something more, and from that something more, and I do not doubt that many of the servants of God have been led on to higher and nobler labors for their Lord, because they began to serve Him in the right spirit and manner. I look upon the giving away of a religious tract as only the first step, not to be compared with many another deed done for Christ; but: were it not for the first step, we: might never reach to the second; but that being attained, we are encouraged to take the next, and so, at the last, God helping us, we may be made extensively useful.

I think I never felt so much earnestness after the souls of my fellowcreatures as when I first loved the Savior’s name, and though I could not preach, and never thought I should be able to testify to the multitude, I used to write texts on little scraps of paper, and drop them anywhere, that some poor creatures might pick them up, and receive them as messages of mercy to their souls. I could scarcely content myself even for five minutes without trying to do something for Christ. If I walked

along the street, I must have a few tracts with me; if I went into a railway carriage, I must drop a tract out of the window; if I had a moment’s leisure, I must be upon my knees or at my Bible; if I were in company, I must turn the subject of conversation to Christ, that I might serve my Master. It may be that, in the young dawn of my Christian life, I did imprudent things in order to serve the cause of Christ; but I still say, give me back that time again, with all its imprudence and with all its hastiness, if I may but have the same love to my Master, the same overwhelming influence in my spirit, making me obey my Lord’s commands because it was a pleasure to me to do anything to serve my God.  
How I did then delight to sit in that upper room where stars looked between the tiles, and hear the heavenly conversation which, from a miserable pallet surrounded by ragged hangings, an enfeebled saint of the Lord did hold with me! Like divers, I valued the pearl, even though the shell might be a broken one; nor did I care where I went to win it. When those creaking stairs trembled beneath my weight, when that bottomless chair afforded me uneasy rest, and when the heat and effluvia of that sick room drove my companion away, did I not feel more than doubly repaid while that friend of Jesus told me of all His love, His faithfulness, and His grace? It is frequently the case that the most despised servants of the Lord are made the chosen instruments of comforting distressed souls, and building them up in the faith.

I love to see persons of some standing in society take an interest in Sabbath-schools. One great fault in many of our churches is that the children are left for the young people to take care of; the older members, who have more wisdom, taking but very little notice of them; and very often, the wealthier members of the church stand aside as if the teaching of the poor were not (as indeed it is) the special business of the rich. I hope for the day when the mighty men of Israel shall be found helping in this great warfare against the enemy. In the United States, we have heard of presidents, judges, members of Congress, and persons in the highest positions, not condescending, — for I scorn to use such a term, — but honoring themselves by teaching little children in Sabbath-schools. He who teaches a class in a Sabbath-school has earned a good degree. I had rather receive the title of S.S.T. than M.A., B.A., or any other honor that ever was conferred by men.

There is no time for work like the first hours of the day; and there is no time for serving the Lord like the very earliest days of youth. I recollect the joy I had in the little service I was able to render to God when first I knew Him. I was engaged in a school all the week; but I had the Saturday afternoon at liberty, and though I was but a boy myself, and might rightly have used that time for rest, it was given to a tract-district, and to visiting the very poor within my reach; and the Sabbath-day was devoted to teaching a class, and later on, also to addressing the Sunday-school. When I began to teach, — was very young in grace then, — I said to the class of boys whom I was teaching, that Jesus Christ saved all those who believed in Him. One of them at once asked me the question, “Teacher, do*you* believe in Him?” I replied, “Yes, I hope I do.” Then he inquired again, “But are you not sure?” I had to think carefully what answer I should give. The lad was not content with my repeating, “I hope so.” He would have it, “*If*you have believed in Christ, you *are*saved.” And I felt at that time that I could not teach effectually until I could say positively, “*I*know that it is so. I must be able to speak of what I have heard, and seen, and tasted, and handled of the good Word of life.” The boy was right; there can be no true testimony except that which springs from assured conviction of our own safety and joy in the Lord. If I was ever a little dull, my scholars began to make wheels of themselves, twisting round on the forms on which they sat. That was a very plain intimation to me that I must give them an illustration or an anecdote; and I learned to tell stories partly by being obliged to tell them. One boy, whom I had in the class, used to say to me, “*This*is very’ dull, teacher; can’t you pitch us a yarn?” Of course he was a naughty boy, and it might be supposed that he went to the bad when he grew up, though I am not at all sure that he did; but I used to try and pitch him the yarn that he wanted, in order to get his attention again.

At one of the teachers’ meetings, the suggestion was adopted that the male teachers should, in turn, give a few words of address on the lesson at the close of the teaching, alternating in so doing with the superintendent. f15 My turn came in due .course. After I had spoken, the superintendent requested me to take his place in addressing the school on the following Sabbath, and when I had done this, he asked me, as I did so well, to speak to the children each Lord’s-day. But to this I demurred, not deeming it fair to the other teachers. “Well,” he said, “on Sunday week, I shall expect you to give the address in my stead.” The precedent thus instituted soon became a kind of usage; so that, for a time, it was usual for one of the teachers and myself to speak on alternate Sabbaths. Speedily something else followed. The older people also took to coming when I spoke; and that, ere long, in such numbers that the auditory looked more like that of a chapel than a school, — a circumstance which the old pastor, jealous of the seeming invasion of his province, did not quite like. I always spoke as best I could, after carefully preparing my subject. Though only a youth, I said, “I think I am bound to give myself unto reading, and study, and prayer, and not to grieve the Spirit by unthought-of effusions;” and I soon found that my hearers appreciated what I said. Oh, but, how earnestly I did it all! I often think that I spoke better then than I did in later years, for I spoke so tremblingly, but my heart went with it all. And when I began to talk a little in the villages on the Sunday, and afterwards every night in the week,. I know that I used to speak then what came fresh from my heart. There was little time for gathering much from books; my chief library was the Word of God and my own experience, but I spoke out from my very soul, — no doubt with much blundering, and much weakness, and much youthful folly, but oh, with such an intense desire to bring men to Christ! I often felt that I could cheerfully lay down my life if I might but be the means of saving a poor old man, or bring a boy of my own age to the Savior’s feet. I feel it a great joy to have been called to work for my Lord in the early hours of my life’s day; and I hope by-and-by to be able to say, “O God, Thou hast taught me from my youth: and hitherto have I declared Thy wondrous works. Now also when I am old and grey-headed, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed Thy strength unto this generation, and Thy power to every one that is to come.” I do not think my Lord will turn His old servant off; when I get old, men may become tired of me, but He will not; He will hear my prayer, —

**“*Dismiss me not Thy service Lord.*”**

I can truly say, that I never did anything which was a blessing to my fellowcreatures without feeling compelled to do it. For instance, before I thought of going to a Sabbath-school to teach, someone called, — asked me, — begged me, — prayed me to take his class. I could not refuse to go; and there I was, held hand and foot by the superintendent, and was compelled to go on. Then I was asked to address the children; I thought I could not, but I stood up, and stammered out a few words. It was the same on the first occasion when I attempted to preach to the people, — I am sure I had no wish to do it, — but there was no one else in the place who could, and the little congregation must have gone away without a single word of warning or invitation. How could I suffer it? I felt forced to address them; and so it has been with whatever I have laid my hand to. I have always felt a kind of impulse which I could not resist; but, moreover, I have felt placed by Providence in such a position that I had no wish to avoid the duty, and if I had desired it, I could not have helped myself.

I shall never forget standing by the bed-side of a youth who had been in my Sunday-school class; he had received very little good training at home, and though he was but a lad of seventeen, he became a drunkard, and drank himself to death at one debauch. I saw him, and talked to him, and tried to point him to the Savior, and heard at last the death-rattle in his throat; and as I went downstairs, I thought everybody a fool for doing anything except preparing to die. I began to look upon the men who drove the carts in the street, those who were busy at their shops, and those who were selling’ their wares, as being all foolish for attending to anything except their ,eternal business, and myself most of all foolish for not pointing dying sinners to a living Christ, and inviting them to trust in His precious blood. And yet, in an hour or so, all things took their usual shape, and I began to think that I was not dying after all, and I could go away and be as unconcerned as before, — I could begin to think that men were, after all, wise in thinking of this world, and not the next; I mean not that I really thought so, but I tear I acted as if I thought so; the impression of the death-bed was so soon obliterated. It is sadly true, that even a Christian will grow by degrees so callous, that the sin which once startled him, and made his blood run cold, does not alarm him in the least. I can speak from my own experience. When first I heard an oath, I stood aghast, and knew not where to hide myself; yet now, if I hear an imprecation or blasphemy against God, though a shudder still runs through my veins, there is not that solemn feeling, that intense anguish, which I felt when first I heard such evil utterances. By degrees we get familiar with sin. I am fearful that even preaching against sin may have an injurious effect upon the preacher. I frankly confess that there is a tendency, with those of us who have to speak upon these themes, to treat them professionally, rather than to make application of them to ourselves; and thus we lose our dread of evil in some degree’., just as young doctors soon lose their tender nervousness in the dissecting-room. We are compelled in our office to see ten thousand things which at first are heart-breakers to us. In our young ministry, when we meet with hypocrisy and inconsistency, we are ready to lie down and die; but the tendency in after years is to take these terrible evils as matters of course. Worldliness, covetousness, and carnality, shock us most at the outset of our work is not this a sad sign, that even God’s ministers may feel the hardening effect of sin? I daily feel that the atmosphere of earth has as much a tendency to harden my heart as to harden plaster which is newly spread upon the wall; and unless I am baptized anew with the Spirit of God, and constantly stand at the foot of the cross, reading the curse of sin in the crimson hieroglyphics of my Savior’s dying agonies, I shall become as steeled and insensible as many professors already are.

CHAPTER 18.

CAMBRIDGE LIFE AND LETTERS, 1850-1851.

I T was my privilege, at Cambridge, to live in a house where, at eight o’clock, every person, from the servant to the master, would have been found for half-an-hour in prayer and meditation in his or her chamber. As regularly as the time came round, that was done, just as we par took of our meals at appointed hours. If that were the rule in all households, it would be a grand thing for us. In the old Puritanic times, a servant would as often answer one who inquired for him, “Sir, my master is at prayers,” as he would nowadays reply, “My master is engaged.” It was then looked upon as a recognized fact that Christian men did meditate, and study the Word, and pray; and society respected the interval set apart for devotion. It is said that, in the days of Cromwell, if you had walked down Cheapside at a certain hour in the morning, you would have seen the blinds down at every house. Alas! where will you find such streets nowadays? I fear that: what was once the rule, is now the exception.

When I joined the Baptist Church at Cambridge, — one of the most respectable churches that can be found in the world, one of the most generous, one of the most intelligent, — this was a good many years ago, when I was young, — nobody spoke to me. On the Lord’s-day, I sat at the communion table in a certain pew; there was one gentleman in it, and when the service was over, I said to him, “I hope you are quite well, sir?” He said, “You have the advantage of me.” I answered, “I don’t think I have, for you and I are brothers.” “I don’t quite know what you mean,” said he. “Well,” I replied, “when I took the bread and wine, just now, in token of our being one in Christ, I meant it, did not you?” We were by that time in the street; he put both his hands on my shoulders, — was about sixteen years old then, — and he said, “Oh, sweet simplicity!” Then he added, “You are quite right, my dear brother, you are quite right; come in to tea with me. I am afraid I should not have spoken to you if you had not first addressed me.” I went to tea with him that evening; and when I left, he asked me to go again the next Lord’s-day, so I went, and that Sabbath day he said to me, “You will come here every Sunday evening, won’t you?” That dear friend used to walk with me into the villages when I afterwards went out to preach, and he remains to this day one of the truest Christian friends I have, and often have we looked back, and laughed at the fact that I should have dared to assume that Christian fellowship was really a truth. 1 remember that he said to me at the time, “I am rather glad you spoke to me, for it’ you had gone to some of our deacons, I am afraid you would not have received quite as friendly a reply as I have given you.”

(In August, 1850, C. H. Spurgeon went to Cambridge, to assist his old tutor, Mr. Leeding, who was conducting a private school in the University town. On page 44, Mr. Spurgeon has recorded his recollections of Mr. Leeding; the following is the tutor’s account of his pupil, as furnished by him to Mr. Spurgeon for this Autobiography, in March, 1890: —

“My acquaintance with the Rev. Charles Haddon Spurgeon commenced in 1845, when I was engaged by Henry Lewis, Esq., of Colchester, having just passed the Degree Examination at St. John’s College, Cambridge. I was to conduct his school for boarders and day-pupils, and it was agreed that the course of studies should be designed to ground and advance them in the course of a first-class education. Besides the usual English subjects, some began Latin and French; Spurgeon began Latin at this time. We worked together for four years, and left at the same time, he to proceed to another school (at Maidstone), and myself (who left merely because the terms of the increase of my salary were said to absorb all the profit) to return home to Cambridge, where some friends desired that I should remain, and conduct a school of my own, several pupils being ready for me. Spurgeon had made good progress with me at Colchester; in mathematical studies, he was far ahead of the rest, and generally took the first prize in the general examination.

“Before I had been many months at Cambridge, I received a letter from his father, begging me to take him as an assistant with no salary, but only to receive such help in his studies as would contribute to qualify him for public life.”

(Mr. Spurgeon had preserved among his papers Mr. Leeding’s reply to his father’s letter; it was as follows: —  
“Academy,  
“Union Road,  
“Cambridge,  
“Aug. 6th, 1850.

“My Dear Sir,

“I hasten to reply to your most welcome letter, which I received this morning. I have more than once wished it possible that an arrangement could be made for securing your son’s services in the event of an increase in my school; but my partial success has appeared to me a bar to such an engagement, for I have such an estimate of him, that I could never have started the proposal on such terms as have proceeded from you. I will readily engage to give him all the assistance in my power for the prosecution of his own studies, and his board and washing in return for his assistance. You do me an honor, that I am perhaps unworthy of, in making this proposition when you have a premium at your option, but I must say you could not send him to anyone who feels so great an interest in and affection for him, nor to a situation where he could possibly have better opportunities for improving himself. You may, with Mrs. S., rest assured of his domestic comfort, as I am sure he will himself anticipate. I am unwilling to pledge myself at present to an engagement that shall bind me to give a salary hereafter. I am sure we shall not differ in that particular when once it necessarily occurs.

“Your offer, coming to me at this particular juncture, is a striking interposition of the Providence of God on my behalf. Through a violent cold, I have for the last fortnight been suffering from inflammation on the chest, which has rendered so much speaking extremely painful, and now at length very dangerous; so much so that I have been on the point of applying to a person in the town for his assistance. You will at once see how acceptable Charles’s presence will be to me now; it will be doing me a great kindness if he can be allowed to set out as soon as possible. I will expect him on Thursday. If you intended him to travel by third class, I will gladly pay his fare from London by second, and also any expense of carriage of any part of his luggage that may require to be sent after him.

“With many thanks for your united Christian regards and kindness, “I am,  
“Dear Sir,  
“Yours faithfully,

“E. S. LEEDING.”  
“Mr. J. Spurgeon.”  
(Mr. Leeding’s account of his young assistant continues: —

“After a few months’ residence with me, he began preaching in two or three villages near Cambridge; he became popular among his hearers, and extended his circuit until he excited much interest among the Dissenters of Cambridge, some of whom (members of the St. Andrew’s Street Baptist Church, once the scene of Rev. Robt. Hall’s labors,) proposed to send him to a Dissenting College. At the time, it seemed to me that such a foundation had been laid for his literary progress, that the advantages to be thus acquired would not repay the time occupied in such a course, and the scheme was abandoned. Soon after, some of his friends proposed that he should compete for a sizarship at St. John’s College (which would have reduced the expenses of a College course £3o per annum), but it seemed to myself and others that three years (the time of College work at Cambridge), would be too long a period to expend on studies whose bearing on ministerial work is so remote as that of mathematics, and this also was abandoned. He now became more than ever intent upon preaching, — reading, besides the Greek: Testament, the Septuagint translation, Whateley’s Logic, etc., and soon occupied constantly the pulpit at Waterbeach, a large village a few miles from Cambridge. It must not be omitted that the final decision as to College studies was made after what we deemed a Providential incident f16 which took place at Cambridge.”)

“Cambridge,  
“August 22nd, 1850.  
“My Dear Father,

“I received your kind note this morning. We do not have our letters till 10 o’clock... Mr. Leeding is very much better; has been in the school... I am studying through Romans in the Greek, with Barnes, Doddridge, and Chalmers for my commentaries. Mr. Leeding gives me every attention, and I hope to progress rapidly. Our lecture tonight was on, ‘ Having loved His own,... He loved them unto the end.’ Give my respects to all friends making inquiries. Mr. and Mrs. L. desire their kind respects to you. My love to dear Mother, Eliza, Archer, Emily, Lottie, and Louisa, and accept the same yourself. I again thank you for your kindness to me.

I will do my best with my clothes, and hope ever to be — “Your affectionate son,  
**“CHARLES.”**

“No. 9, Union Road,  
“Cambridge,  
“19th Sept., ‘50.

“My Dear Father,

“I received your kind letter in due time. I joined the Church here at the Lord’s table last Ordinance day. I shall write for my dismission; I intended to have done so before. The Baptists are by far the most respectable denomination in Cambridge; there are three Baptist Chapels, — St. Andrew’s Street, where we attend, Zion Chapel, and Eden Chapel. There is a very fine Wesleyan Chapel and some others;. I teach in the Sunday-school all the afternoon Mr. Leeding takes the morning work. Last Sabbath-day we had a funeral sermon from Hebrews 6:11, 12. We have a prayer-meeting at 7 in the morning, and one after the evening service; they are precious means of grace, I trust, to my soul. How soon would the lamps go out did not our mighty Lord supply fresh oil; and’ if it were not for His unshaken promise to supply our need out of the fullness of His grace, poor indeed should we be.

“Yes, where Jesus comes, He comes to reign: how I wish He would reign more in my heart; then I might hope that every atom of self, self-confidence, and self-righteousness, would be quite swept out of my soul. I am sure I long for the time when all evil affections, corrupt desires, and rebellious, doubting thoughts shall be overcome, and completely crushed beneath the Prince’s feet, and my whole soul be made pure and holy. But so long as I am encaged within this house of clay, I know they will lurk about, and I must have hard fighting though the victory by grace is sure. Praying is the best fighting; nothing else will keep them down.

“I have written a letter to grandfather; I am sorry he is so poorly. He wants the promises now, and why may not young and old live upon them? They are the bread-corn of Heaven, the meat of the Kingdom; and who that has once tasted them will turn to eat husks without any sweetness and comfort in them? God’s power will keep all His children; while He says to them, ‘ How shall ye who are dead to sin live any longer therein?’ I feel persuaded that I shall never fathom the depths of my own natural depravity, nor climb to the tops of the mountains of God’s eternal love. I feel constrained day by. day to fall fiat down upon the promises, and leave my soul in Jesu’s keeping. It is He that makes my feet move even in the slow obedience which marks them at present, and every attainment of grace must come from Him. I would go forth by prayer, like the Israelites, to gather up this Heavenly manna, and live upon freegrace.

“Add to all your great kindness and love to me, through my life, a constant remembrance of me in your prayers. I thank you for those petitions which you and dear Mother have so often sent up to the mercy-seat for me. Give my love to my sisters and brother, and accept the same for yourself and dear Mother. Hoping you are all quite well,

“I remain,  
“Your obedient, affectionate son,  
**“CHAS. H. SPURGEON.”**  
“Cambridge,  
“October 3rd, 1850.  
“My Dear Mother,

“I am generally so slack of news, that I have been ashamed to send a letter with nothing in it. I was last night admitted into membership with this church by dismission from Newmarket. May my future relation with them, whether brief or protracted, be for the glory of Jesus Christ! I am very fond of Mr. Roffe; I like his preaching very much. There is to be a baptizing this evening .... I trust that a year or two of study with Mr. Leeding will be of equal benefit to me with a College education ..... I have found a great many Christian friends; last Sunday I had two invitations to tea. I went to the house of Mr. Watts, a coal merchant, and spent the time very happily. We read round with the children, and it seemed just like home-days. I have not had a letter from Stambourne, nor from Aunt, I am quite solitary.

“Mr. Roffe preached a delightful sermon from ‘ I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.’ I trust I can look by faith to the hills, and confidently expect the help. I think I learn more every day of my own natural depravity and love of sin’ how stupid should I be if I trusted to my own heart! If my salvation depended upon my continuance in the fervor of devotion, how soon should I perish! How joyful it is to know that Jesus will keep that which I have committed to Him, and that he will at length save every one of His redeemed ones!

“Give my best love to dear Fat. her, and accept the same yourself. I hope you are both well’ give my love to Eliza, Archer, Emily, a kiss to Louisa and Lottie. I thank you for your many prayers; continue yet to plead for me, and may I ever bee

“Your affectionate son,  
**“CHARLES.”**

“No. 9, Union Road,  
“Cambridge,  
“Oct., 1850.

“My Dear Father,

“I have received your kind, interesting letter, and the P.O. enclosed. Aunt [‘Walker] has written to me, and with much sorrow has told me her case. Mr. W. has; promised to let me have any of his books that may be of use to me. I did not ask, but he sent that word himself Truly, the Lord putteth down one, and setteth up another, according to His ancient decrees. How blest to feel assured that Heaven’s treasures never can rust, nor can any thief rob us of our inheritance!

“I went to Mr. Watts’s again last Sunday; I am quite a member of the family. I am going on Friday to a party at his house with Rev. Roffe, Rev. Keen, and Rev. Edmonds, and other friends. I anticipate much spiritual enjoyment. I would, however, look unto the Lord; for vain is the help of man. I always connect in my mind the deep depravity, and utter disease of my soul, with the allconquering power of my blessed Lord, who will save every one of His redeemed. Mr. Roffe beautifully says, ‘The Scripture says not, the believer *shall*be saved; but, he *is*saved, and has eternal life abiding in him.’ Perfectly justified, and on the road to perfect sanctification, though proceeding very slowly; who shall refuse to rejoice in the Lord? Secure of an inheritance in the skies, I would desire to walk worthy of my exalted calling, and live down every calumny, and prove the error of those who speak reproachfully concerning our liberty in the Lord. How blessed to feel sure that our sins are covered! How manifold are the mercies of the Lord to me; all things work together for good] Since I am persuaded of my interest in Jesus, and can by feeble faith lay hold on Him, I will not fear what man can do unto me .....

“Give my love to dear Mother, and all others at home; accept the same yourself, with my sincere gratitude,  
“From your affectionate son,  
**“CHAS. H. SPURGEON.”**

“No. 9, Union Road, “Cambridge,  
“Nov. 12th, 1850.

“My Dear Mother, “I have just received *The Maidstone Journal,*in which you will see an advertisement of Mr. Walker’s sale. In one of my late letters to Aunt (having heard you speak of her as somewhat trusting to works), I ventured, as a babe in grace, to touch upon the subject, — I trust, with becoming prudence as well as boldness. I then received a letter from Uncle, — a long one, too, — containing much good and even religious advice; of course, speaking as (Oh, how I desire it!) a Christian should speak. Mixed up with it, there was a tincture of naturalism or reason, l have therefore ventured on another letter, and have, I trust, said, though feebly, what: a boy should say to a dying Uncle. False fear should never prevent us from being faithful with men walking on the confines of the grave. Could I make religion more the business of my life, how happy should I be! I am conscious I do not live up to my duties or my privileges; and did I not feel sure that Jesus will certainly complete what He has begun, I should never think of reaching Heaven; but, by His might, I would look confidently for it.

“I have found a little work here. I have twice spoken to the Sunday-school, and am to read an Essay on some subject connected with Sunday-schools at the next meeting of the Teachers’ Institute for the town. I only do so just to fill up. I have been. driven to it, Mr. Watts and some others having taken their turns. I hope yet, one day, to prove myself no Antinomian, though I confess my daily sins and shortcomings; yet I would not willfully sin, and I feel some hatred to it. I desire to hate it more.

“I hope you enjoy your health, and that, with deal’ Father, you have much of the marrow of the gospel as your daily meat. Give my love to all at home, and accept the same for yourself and Father. I am pursuing my studies, though I can say little about progress.

I am most happy, and quite well; and hoping to see you before many weeks,  
“I remain,  
“Your most affectionate son,  
**“CHARLES.”**

(The following are the letters to the Aunt and Uncle referred to in the foregoing letter; the first part of the one written to Mrs. Walker is missing: — )

“The body of Christians, of which for some little while I have been a member, is not distinguished for high standing in the world. I trust I shall never be rich, lest I should by force of additional temptation ever bring dishonor upon the name of Him with whom I have entered into solemn league and covenant. Would that, as I have been buried with Him in baptism, I might have the inward spiritual grace, and be dead to the world, but alive unto the service of the Lord!

“There has been much stir here about the late Popish Aggression, — the clergy seem to be very anxious about it ..... I hope Uncle will not write to me until he is well. He is so very kind; but he may tire himself Tell him I am now studying Paine’s *Elements of Mental Science*and Porter’s *Lectures on Homiletics.*I cannot in Greek get further than the Testament. We have only thirteen boys.

“Accept my best love and thanks to yourself and Uncle, and permit me ever to subscribe myself,  
“Your most affectionate nephew,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**  
“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 one 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 soulcontention, 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 haw.’ 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, brave as lions, and valiant for the truth and cause of King Jesus, and by the help o! 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.”**

“Monday.  
“My Dear Mother,

“I write to acknowledge and thank you for a box from home. Dear Mother, you are indeed very kind; how I ought to bless God for such parents! .... Mr. Leeding is very much obliged to you for the ham, and Mr. Spurgeon, your son, desires to thank you for a nice cake, apples, etc. I wish you had not laid your hand on the *Key to the Bible;*for, if I had had it, [ should have been delighted to have given it to my dear Mother. Perhaps I may take the credit for it now....

We have no minister yet. Mr. Leeding said, the other morning, ‘ I need not ask you how you are; you are always well, like some tree.’ I have been, several times, to see a lady in this town, Mother of one of our boys. She goes to church, but I have reason to think her an eminent Christian. She is all day in pain, never goes out, and can hardly sleep. She made me think of your rheumatics. She has four little .children. They are rich; her husband is a good, kind sort of man, but he is not, I fear, a renewed man. She has wave upon wave. She has no one to speak to. I think it a privilege to talk to any of God’s people, to comfort and console them. We do not know how many need our prayers.  
“My best love, dear Mother, to you and Father.

“Your affectionate son,  
**“CHARLES.”**  
“Cambridge,  
“Thursday, Dec., 1850.  
“Miss Caroline Louisa Spurgeon,

“Your name is so long that it will almost reach across the paper. We have one young gentleman in our school whose name is Edward Ralph William Baxter Tweed; the boys tease him about his long name; but he is a very good boy, and that makes his name a good one. Everybody’s name is pretty, if they are good people. The Duke of Tuscany has just had a little son; the little fellow was taken to the Catholic Cathedral, had some water put on his face, and then they named him-you must get Eliza to read it, — Giovanni Nepomerceno Maria Annunziata Guiseppe Giovanbaptista Ferdinando Baldassere Luigi Gonzaga Pietro Allesandro Zanobi Antonino. A pretty name to go to bed and get up with; it will be a long while before he will be able to say it all the way through! If anyone is called by the name of Christian, that is better than all these great words: it is the best name in the world, except the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. My best love to you. I hope you will enjoy yourself, and try to make others happy, too; for then you are sure to be happy yourself; whereas, if you only look out to please yourself, you will make others uncomfortable, and will not make even yourself happy. However, of course, you know that, and I need not tell you of it. A happy Christmas to you!

“Your loving brother,  
**“CHARLES.”**

(Letter addressed to Master William Cooper, one of C. H. Spurgeon’s former pupils at Newmarket: — )  
“9, Union Road,  
“Cambridge,  
“\_\_\_\_, 1851.

“My Dear William,

“You see, by this address, that I am no longer at Mr. Swindell’s, but am very comfortable here in a smaller school of about fifteen boys. I suppose you are at home, but find farming is not all play, nor perhaps altogether so profitable or pleasant as study; it is well said, ‘ We do not know the value of our mercies till we lose them.

“Knowing (in some humble measure, at least,) the value of religion, let me also bring it before your attention. If you give yourself time to think, you will soon remember that you must die; and if you meditate one more moment, you will recollect that you have a soul, and that soul will never die, but will live for ever; and if you die in your present state, it must live in endless torment. You are an accountable being; God, who made you, demands perfect obedience. But you must own that you have sinned; say not, ‘ I am not a great sinner,’ for one sin only would be sufficient to sink your soul for ever in the pit of perdition. The sentence of death stands against you, and mercy alone stays its execution. Seeing now that you are in such danger, how do you think to escape? Surely you will not be content to die as you are, for you will one day find it no light matter to endure the hot displeasure of an angry God. Do you imagine that, if you live better for the future, God will forgive your past offenses? That is a mistake; see if you can find it in the Bible.

“Perhaps you intend to think about religion after you have enjoyed sin a little longer; or (but surely you are not so foolish) possibly you think that you are too young’ to die. But who knows whether that future time will be afforded, and who said that you can turn to Christ just when you please? Your heart is deceitful above all things, and your natural depravity so great that you will not turn to God. Trust not, then, to resolutions made in your own strength, they are but wind; nor to yourself, who are but a broken reed; nor to your own heart, or you are a fool. There is no way of salvation but Christ; you cannot save yourself, having no power even to think one good thought; neither can your parents’ love and prayers save you; none but Jesus can, He is the Savior of the helpless, and I tell you that He died for all such as feel their vileness, and come to Him for cleansing.

“You do not deserve salvation; well, there is not a jot of merit on the sinner’s part mentioned in the covenant. You have nothing; you are nothing; but Christ is all, and He must be everything to you, or you will never be saved. None reach Heaven but by free-grace, and through free-grace alone. Even a faint desire after any good thing came from God, from whom you must get more, for He giveth liberally, and no poor sinner, begging at His door, was ever yet sent empty away.

“Look at the blessedness of real religion, no one is truly happy but a child of God. The believer is safe, for God has promised to preserve him; and if once you have the pearl of great price, it cannot be taken from you. The way to Heaven is faith, ‘looking unto Jesus;’ this faith is the gift of God, and none but those who have it know its value. Oh, may you possess it! — is the earnest prayer of —

“Yours faithfully,  
**“CHARLES H. SPURGEON.**  
“Cambridge,  
“May 3, 1851.  
“My Dear Mother,

“Many happy returns of this day, I pray for you. Another year’s journey of the vast howling wilderness have you gone; you have leaned on the arm of your Beloved, and are now nearer the gates of bliss. Happy as the year has been, I trust, to you, yet I do not think you would wish to traverse it over again, or to go back one step of the way. Glorious, wondrous, has been the grace shown to all of us, as members of the mystical body of Christ, in preservation, restraint from sin, constraint to holiness, and perseverance in the Christian state. What shall a babe say to a Mother in Israel? And yet, if I might speak, I would say, ’Take this year’s mercies as earnests of next year’s blessings.’ The God who has kept you so long, you may rest assured will never leave you. If He had not meant to do good continually to you, He would not have done it at all. His love in time past, in the past year, forbids you —

**“*‘FORBIDS YOU to think,  
He’ll leave you at last in trouble to sink’***

“The rapturous moments of enjoyment, the hallowed hours of communion, the blest days of sunshine in His presence, are pledges of sure, certain, infallible glory.

Mark the providences of this year; how clearly have you seen His hand in things which others esteem chance! God, who has moved the world, has exercised His own vast heart and thought for you. All your life, your spiritual life, all things have worked together for good; nothing has gone wrong, for God has directed, controlled all. ‘Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God?’ He who counts the hairs of our heads, and keeps us as the apple of His eye, has not forgotten you, but still loves you with an everlasting love. The mountains have not departed yet, nor the hills been removed, and till then we may have confidence that we, His own people, are secure.

“But I am writing what to you are everyday meditations. Well, dear Mother. you know where this comes from, only from your boy. Let us rejoice together; your prayers for us I know will be answered, they are sure to be, for God has said so. May God’ give you a feast — honey, wine, milk, — may you be satisfied with marrow and fatness, satiated with the dainties and luxuries of religion, and rejoice exceedingly in the Lord! I remember that, a year ago, I publicly professed the name of Jesus by baptism. Pray for me, that I may not dishonor my profession, and break my solemn vow. While I look back through the year, I can see a Great Exhibition of love and grace to me, more marvelous than even that now opened in Hyde Park. Give my love to dear Father, Archer, and sisters; and accept the same doubly. I trust all are well. I have nothing the matter with me. Mr. and Mrs. L. desire respects. Many thanks for the postal order.

“I am,  
‘Your affectionate son,  
**“CHARLES H. SPURGEON.”**

CHAPTER 19.

“THE BOY-PREACHER OF FENS.”

MY FIRST SERMON.

I R EMEMBER well the first place in which I addressed a congregation of adults, and the illustration above sets it clearly before my mind’s eye. It was not my first public address by a great many, for at Newmarket, and Cambridge, and elsewhere, the Sabbath-school had afforded me ample scope for speaking the gospel; but no regular set discourse to a congregation met for Divine worship had I delivered till one eventful Sabbath evening, which found me in a cottage at Teversham, holding forth before a little assembly of humble villagers. The tale is not a new one, but it is worth telling again.

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. A number of worthy brethren preach the gospel in the various villages surrounding Cambridge, taking each one his turn according to plan. In my 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 zealous workers belonged to the Association, and labored as true yokefellows. My 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, I can speak from personal experience as to one case.

I had, one Saturday, finished morning school, and the boys were all going home for the half-holiday, when in came the aforesaid “*Bishop*” to ask me to go over to Teversham, the next 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 I remember it rightly, and I think I do, for, at: the time, in the light of that Sunday evening’s revelation, I 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 me 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 did I know when I was cajoled into accompanying a young man to Teversham.

My Sunday-school work was over, tea had been taken, and I set off through Barnwell, and away along the Newmarket Road, with a gentleman some few years my senior. We talked of good things, and at last I expressed my hope that he would feel the presence of God while preaching. He seemed to start, and assured me 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 it’ I had been, I was quite unprepared. My companion only repeated that *he,*in a still 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 delivered 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 satisfaction 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 the 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-winded farm-laborers and their wives were gathered together; we sang, and prayed, and read the Scriptures, and then came my first sermon. How long, or how short: it was, I cannot now remember. It was not half such a task as I had feared it would be, but I was glad to see my way to a fair conclusion, and to the giving out of the last hymn. To my own delight, I had not broken down, nor stopped short in the middle, nor been destitute of ideas, and the desired haven was in view. I made a finish, and took up the hymn-book; but, to my astonishment, an aged voice cried out, “Bless your dear heart, how old are you?” My very solemn reply’ was, “You must wait till the service is over before making any such inquiries. Let us now sing.” We did sing, the young preacher pronounced the benediction, and then there 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 my awe of “the 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 as 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 line 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 commence their service for Christ by doing great things, and therefore do nothing at all; let none of my 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 aspiring to 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 keeps prating 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.

(Preaching at the Music Hall, Royal Surrey Gardens, on Lord’s-day morning, March 13th, 1859, upon the words, “Unto you therefore which believe He is precious,” Mr. Spurgeon said: — This text calls to my recollection the opening of my ministry. It is about eight years since, as a lad of sixteen, I stood up for the first time in my life to preach the gospel in a cottage to a handful of poor people, who had come together for worship. I felt my own inability to preach, but I ventured to take this text, “Unto you therefore which believe He is precious.” I do not think I could have said anything upon any other text, but Christ was precious to my soul, and I was in the flush of my youthful love, and I could not be silent when a precious Jesus ‘was the subject. I had but just escaped from the bondage of Egypt, I had not forgotten the broken fetter; still did I recollect those flames which seemed to burn about my path, and that devouring gulf which opened its mouth as if ready to swallow me up. With all these things fresh in my youthful heart, I could speak of His preciousness who had been my Savior, and had plucked me as a brand from the burning, and set me upon a rock, and put a new song in my mouth, and established my goings. And now, at this time, what shall I say? “What hath God wrought!” How hath the little one become a thousand, and the small one a great people! And what shall I say concerning this text but that, if the Lord Jesus was precious then, He is as precious now? And if I could declare, then, that Jesus was the object of my soul’s desire, that for Him I hoped to live, and for Him I would be prepared to die, can I not say, God being my witness, that He is more precious to me this day than ever He was? In the recollection of His unparalleled mercy towards the chief of sinners, I must anew devote myself to Him, and afresh surrender my heart to Him who is my Lord and King. This remark is uttered by way of introduction, it may seem egotistical, but that I cannot help. I must give glory to God in the midst of the great congregation, and pay my vows to the Lord now in the midst of all His saints, in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem!)

Considerable weight is to be given to the judgment of men and women who live near to God, and in most instances their verdict will not be a mistaken one. Yet this appeal is not final nor infallible, and is only to be estimated in proportion to the intelligence and piety of those consulted. I remember well how earnestly I was dissuaded from preaching by as godly a Christian matron as ever breathed; I endeavored to estimate, with candor and patience, the value of her opinion; but it was outweighed by the judgment of persons of wider experience. If a man be truly called of God to the ministry, I will defy him to withhold himself from it. A man who has really within him the inspiration of the Holy Ghost calling him to preach, cannot help it, — he must preach. As fire within the bones, so will that influence be until it blazes forth. Friends may check him, foes criticize him, despisers sneer at him, the man is indomitable; he must preach if he has the call of Heaven. All earth might forsake him; but he would preach to the barren mountain-tops. If he has the call of Heaven, if he had no congregation, he would preach to the rippling waterfalls, and let the brooks hear his voice. He could not be silent. He would become a voice crying in the wilderness, “Prepare ye the way of the Lord.” I no more believe it possible to stop ministers than to stop the stars of heaven. I think it no more possible to make a man cease from preaching, if he is really called, than to stay some mighty cataract, by seeking, in an infant’s cup, to catch the rushing torrent. The man has been moved of Heaven, who shall stop him? He has been touched of God, who shall impede him? With an eagle’s wing, he must fly; who shall chain him to the earth? With a seraph’s voice, he must speak; who shall seal his lips? And when a man does speak as the Spirit gives him utterance, he will feel a holy joy akin to that of Heaven; and when it is over, he wishes to be at his work again, he longs to be once more preaching. Is not the Lord’s Word like a fire within *me?*Must I not speak if God has placed it there?

I was for three years a Cambridge man, though I never entered the University. I could not have obtained a degree, because I was a Nonconformist; and, moreover,’ it was a better thing for me to pursue my studies under an admirable scholar and tender friend, and to preach at the same time. I was, by my tutor’s own expressed verdict, considered to be sufficiently proficient in my studies to have taken a good place on the list had the way been open. “You could win in a canter,” said he to me. I had, however, a better College course, for, when I first began to preach, this was my usual way of working. I was up in the morning early, praying and reading the Word; all the day, I was either teaching my scholars ‘or studying theology as much as I could; then, at five in the evening, I became a traveling preacher, and went into the villages around Cambridge, to tell out what I had learned. My quiet meditation during the walk helped me to digest what I had read, and the rehearsal of my lesson in public, by preaching it to the people, fixed it on my memory. I do not mean that I ever repeated a single sentence from memory, but I thought my reading over again while on my legs, and thus worked it into my very soul; and I can bear my testimony that I never learned so much, or learned it so thoroughly, as when I used to tell out, simply and earnestly, what I had first received into my own mind and heart. I found that I derived greater benefit by proclaiming to others what I had learned than if I had kept it all to myself.

I must have been a singular-looking youth on wet evenings, for I walked three, five, or even eight miles out and back again on my preaching work; and when it rained, I dressed myself in waterproof leggings and a mackintosh coat, and a hat with a waterproof covering, and I carried a dark lantern to show me the way across the fields. I am sure that I was greatly profited by those early services for my Lord. How many times I enjoyed preaching the gospel in a farmer’s kitchen, or in a cottage, or in a barn! Perhaps many people came to hear me because I was then only a boy. In my young days, I fear that I said many odd things, and made many blunders; but my audience was not hypercritical, and no newspaper writers dogged my heels; so I had a happy training-school, in which, by continual practice, I attained such a degree of ready speech as I now possess.

I had many adventures, and a great variety of experiences in this itinerating work. I recollect one summer’s evening, when I had engaged to preach at a village not far from Waterbeach; but, before I could reach my destination, the sky darkened, and a severe thunderstorm burst over the district. Some people are terrified at lightning; but ever since I believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, I have had no fear in a storm, however severe it might be. I distinctly remember, while quite a lad, being in my uncle’s house one night during a tremendous tempest. The older folks were all afraid; but I had really trusted myself with the Lord Jesus, and I did not dare to fear. The baby was upstairs, and nobody was brave enough to fetch it down because of a big window on the stairs. I went up to the bedroom, and brought the child to its Mother, and then read a Psalm, and prayed with my relatives, who were trembling in terror. There was real danger, for a stack was set on fire a short distance away; but I was as calm as in the sunshine of a summer’s day, not because I was naturally courageous, but because I had unshaken confidence in my Lord. I love the lightnings, God’s thunder is my delight; I never feel so well as when there is a great thunder and lightning storm. Then I feel as if I could mount up as with the wings of eagles, and my whole heart loves then to sing, —

***~~“ The God that rules on high,  
And thunders when He please,  
That rides upon the stormy sky,~~***

***~~And manages the seas.~~***

***~~“ This awful God is ours,  
Our Father and our love;  
He shall send clown His Heavenly powers  
To carry us above.”~~***

Men are by nature afraid of the heavens; the superstitious dread the signs in the sky, and even the bravest spirit is sometimes made to tremble when the firmament is ablaze with lightning, and the pealing thunder seems to make the vast concave of heaven to tremble and to reverberate; but I always feel ashamed to keep indoors when the thunder shakes the solid earth, and the lightnings flash like arrows from the sky. Then God is abroad, and I love to walk out in some wide space, and to look up and mark the opening gates of heaven, as the lightning reveals far beyond, and enables me to gaze into the unseen. I like to hear my Heavenly Father’s voice in the thunder.

On this particular occasion, while walking to the place where I was to preach, I was enjoying the storm; but as I was passing a cottage on the road, I noticed a woman who seemed to be greatly alarmed and in sore distress because of the tempest. I did not like to pass by, and leave a fellow-creature in trouble, so I entered the house, read a few verses of Scripture, and prayed, and so comforted the woman. I then proceeded to my destination, to fulfill my engagement. On entering the village, I took off my waterproof coat, because the smooth surface appeared to reflect `the vivid flashes of lightning in a way that might alarm the timid. I found that, because of the severity of the tempest, the people were not expecting that there would be a service; so I went round from house to house, and invited them to come to the regular meeting place. This unusual method of gathering a congregation brought me many hearers; the service was held, and, at its close, I walked back to my Cambridge home.

One night, having been preaching the Word in a country village, I was walking home, all by myself, along a lonely footpath. I do not know what it was that ailed me, but I was prepared to be alarmed; when, of a surety, I saw something standing in the hedge, — ghastly, giant-like, and with outstretched arms. Surely, I thought, for once I have come across the supernatural; here is some restless spirit performing its midnight march beneath the moon, or some demon of the pit wandering abroad. I deliberated with myself a moment, and having no faith in ghosts, I plucked up courage, and determined to solve the mystery. The monster stood on the other side of a ditch, right in the hedge. I jumped the ditch, and found myself grasping an old tree, which some waggish body had taken pains to cover with whitewash, with a view to frighten simpletons. That old tree has served me a good turn full often, for I have learned from it to leap at difficulties, and find them vanish or turn to triumphs.

Frequently, in those country places, when preaching in a low-pitched building crowded with people, I have seen the candles burn dimly for want of air, — a clear indication that we were killing ourselves by inhaling an atmosphere from which the vitalizing principle had almost all gone. I have been afraid of the lights going out, and have thought it better to let the congregation depart rather sooner than usual. On one occasion, having a candle on each side of me in a small pulpit, I was somewhat vigorous, and dashed one of my luminaries from its place. It fell upon the bald head of a friend below, who looked up with an expression which I can see at this moment, and it makes me smile still. I took no more notice of the accident than to weave it into what I was saying; and I believe most of my hearers considered it to have been a striking practical illustration of the remark which accompanied it, “How soon is the glory of life dashed down!”

In my earlier days, I read, somewhere or other, in a volume of Lectures upon Homiletics, a statement which considerably alarmed me at the time: it was something to this effect: — “If any man shall find a difficulty in selecting a text, he had better at once go back to the grocer’s shop, or to the plough, for he evidently has not the capacity required for a minister.” Now, as such had been very frequently my cross and burden, I inquired within myself whether I should resort to some form of secular labor, and leave the ministry; but I have not done so, for I still have the conviction that, although condemned by the sweeping judgment of the lecturer, I follow a call to which God has manifestly set His seal. I was so much in trouble of conscience through the aforesaid severe remark, that I asked my grandfather, who had been in the ministry some fifty years, whether he was ever perplexed in choosing his theme. He told me frankly that this had always been his greatest trouble, compared with which, preaching in itself was no anxiety at all. I remember the venerable man’s remark, “The difficulty is not because there are not enough texts, but because there are so many, that I am in a strait betwixt them.” We are something like the lover of choice flowers, who finds himself surrounded by all the beauties of the garden, with permission to select but one. How long he lingers between the rose and the lily, and how great the difficulty to prefer one among ten thousand lovely blooms! To me, still, I must admit, my text-selection is a very great embarrassment, —*embarras de richesse, as*the French say, — an embarrassment of riches;, very different from the bewilderment of poverty, — the anxiety of attending to the most pressing of so many truths, all clamoring for a hearing, so many duties all needing enforcing, and so many spiritual needs of the people all demanding supply. I confess that I frequently sit hour after hour praying and waiting for a subject, and that this is the main part of my study; much hard labor have I spent in manipulating; topics, ruminating upon points of doctrine, making skeletons out of verses, and then burying every bone of them in the catacombs of oblivion, drifting on and on over leagues of broken water, till I see the red lights, and make sail direct to the desired haven. I believe that, almost any Saturday in my life, I prepare enough outlines of Sermons, if I felt at liberty to preach them, to last me for a month, but I no more dare to use them than an honest mariner would run to shore a cargo of contraband goods.

I am always sure to have the most happy day when I get a good text in the morning from nay Master. When I have had to preach two or three sermons in a day, I have asked Him for the morning subject, and preached from it; and I have asked Him for the afternoon’s topic or the evening’s portion, and preached ,from it, after meditating on it for my own soul’s comfort, — not in the professional style of a regular sermon-maker, but feasting upon it for myself. Such simple food has clone the people far more good than if I had been a week in manufacturing a sermon, for it has come warm from the heart just after it has been received in my own soul; and therefore it has been well spoken, because well known, well tasted, and well felt. Sometimes, my texts have come to me in a very remarkable way. While I was living at Cambridge, I had, as usual, to preach in the evening at a neighboring village, to which I had to walk. After reading and meditating all day, I could not meet with the right text. Do what I would, no response came from the sacred oracle, no light flashed from the Urim and Thummim; I prayed, I searched the Scriptures, I turned from one verse to another, but my mind would not take hold of a text; I was, as Bunyan would say, “much tumbled up and down in my thoughts.” Just then, I walked to the window, and looked out. On the other side of the narrow street in which I lived, I saw a poor solitary canary bird upon the slates, surrounded by a crowd of sparrows, who were all pecking at it as if they would tear it to pieces. At that moment the verse came to my mind, “*Mine* heritage is unto me as a speckled bird, the birds round about are against her.” I walked off with the greatest possible composure, considered the passage during my long and lonely walk, and preached upon the peculiar people, and the persecutions of their enemies, with freedom and ease to myself, and I believe with comfort to my rustic audience. The text was sent to me, and if the ravens did not bring it, certainly the sparrows did.

While I was living at Cambridge, I once heard Mr. Jay, of Bath, preach. His text was, “Let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ.” I remember with what dignity he preached, and yet how simply. He made one remark which deeply impressed my youthful mind, and which I have never forgotten; it was this, “You do need a Mediator between yourselves and God, but you do not need a Mediator between yourselves and Christ; you may come to Him just as you are.” Another of his striking sayings was this, “Popery is a lie, Puseyism is a lie, baptismal regeneration is a lie.” I recollect also that, in the course of his sermon, Mr. Jay said that ladies were sometimes charged with dressing in too costly a fashion. He told us that he did not himself know much about that matter; but, if they would let him hear what their income was, he would tell them how many yards of silk, satin, lace, or ribbon, they could afford. My recollections of Mr. Jay were such as I would not like to lose. It usually happens that, when we listen to a venerable patriarch, such as he then was, there is all the greater weight in his words because of his age. I fancy that, if I had heard the same sermon preached by a young man, I should not have thought much of it; but there appeared all the greater depth in it because it came from an old man standing almost on the borders of the grave.

In an early part of my ministry, while but a lad, I was seized with an intense desire to hear Mr. John Angell James; and, though my finances were somewhat meager, I performed a pilgrimage to Birmingham, solely with that object in view. I heard him deliver a week-evening lecture, in his large vestry, on that precious text, “*Ye*are complete in Him.” The savor of that very sweet discourse abides with me to this day, and I shall never read the passage without associating therewith the quiet but earnest utterances of that eminent man of God. Years afterwards, on being in Mr. James’s company, I told him that I went all the way from Cambridge to Birmingham to hear him preach. On my mentioning the text, he replied, “Ah! that was a Calvinistic sermon. You would enjoy that; but you would not get on with me always.” I was glad also to have the opportunity of thanking him for that precious book of his, *The Anxious Enquirer,*which has been the means of bringing so many sinners to the Savior, and which I had found exceedingly helpful when I was seeking the Lord.

**A CRITICAL JUNCTURE IN THE YOUNG PREACHER’S HISTORY.**  
“Cambridge,  
“May 15/51.  
“My Dear Father,

“.. *..*My choice of return home is easily made. I hope very much you will be so kind as to let me go to the Exhibition. Mr. C\_\_\_\_ , who was at Mr. Lewis’s, has just called to see me ..... I am going to his house to tea, he lodges with Mr. R\_\_\_\_. I guess I feel no mercy for him; I mean, Mr. R ; a cap and gown are poor things to sell one’s principles for. 32u *have not written to Mr. Leeding.*Where is Mr. Walker? I cannot write, for I know nothing of his whereabouts. We have no minister yet. We have had some excellent supplies. I am very comfortable, and I may say, happy. Were it not for my vile heart, I might rejoice’. I am the least of God’s people, I am sure I am the worst. But yet I *am*one; I believe in Jesus and trust in Him, and this, I take it, is the evidence of life. I can fall into His arms, though I cannot rest on my own merits, for I have none. Jesus and Jesus alone is my defense. I know you pray for me. I think I have felt the answer to your earnest entreaties. Sometimes, I pour my heart out sweetly, freely; at another time, I can hardly bring up a petition. What a contrast, mixture, paradox I am! I hope you and dear Mother are well. Love to all.

“Your affectionate son,  
**“CHARLES.”**

(The sentence in the above letter — “ *You have not written to Mr. Leeding*,” — implies that an important communication from Mr. John Spurgeon was anxiously awaited at Cambridge by both tutor and pupil. When it arrived, Mr. Leeding wrote the following reply, which was the means of retaining C. H. Spurgeon at Cambridge, and so, indirectly, affected the whole of his future life: — )

“Union Road,  
“Cambridge,  
“June 11th, 1851.

“My Dear Sir,

“I hasten to reply to your note, which I should have been glad to have received earlier. I did not expect to part with Charles before the end of next week, but a few days are of little consequence, and you may rest assured of his leaving Cambridge by the first train on Monday next.

“As I conceive you have written with candor, I shall think myself criminal if I do not reply in the same spirit upon the subject of your son’s future career. I have been thankful unceasingly for that merciful Providential arrangement that first brought him under my roof, as well for the assistance he renders me, as for the wholesome influence of his piety and general character; it will be a severe blow to me to lose him, on the latter account especially. I will gladly give him f5 per half-year for the next two half-years, when he shall have a fair addition in proportion to the increase of the school; that increase is slow at present, but I have still good hope of all the success I desire; I have had most malignant foes to contend with, but their violence has fallen on their own heads.

“With regard to Charles’s improvement, I can speak with confidence as to those points which are directed to his future life as a minister or a teacher. He has read a great deal,, and has made excellent progress in his facility in reading Latin authors; he has done well in Greek, but he had much more to do in that department, and appeared to have done nothing of service in that since he left Mr. Lewis’s. You may rely on my word, as a Christian man, that he is in the clear path of mental improvement and eminence. I am positive he is in as fair a way of preparation for the ministry as he would be were he in a College with that view. “You may make up your minds that he is safe for the ministry, and in a very few years; he has first-rate abilities, a head adequate to the investigation of the deepest points, accompanied with a fluency of utterance. He is considered a most valuable help in the Sabbathschool, and is treated with the greatest kindness by one gentleman connected with it, who often expresses the highest esteem for him, and indeed makes him his most intimate friend. That gentleman is a man of sound judgment and genuine piety, in affluent  
circumstances, and the father of a family; whatever lack of honor Charles may experience ‘ in his own country,’ I can tell you he is not without honor here. He has also regularly served at preachingstations connected with our church, and is universally acceptable. One of the lay preachers, in whom I place the greatest confidence, has expressed to me a high opinion of him, and has authorized me to say that he has no doubt, at seasonable time, the church will properly estimate his talents for the ministry.

“I might add to this; but I judge this is sufficient to convince you that you will consult his interests by allowing him to remain here at least another year. I lay some claim to disinterestedness in this matter; if I considered his interests would be best served by his seeking for a larger salary elsewhere, I should feel it my duty to advise it. He might get a little more money, but he would have far less opportunity for self-improvement. The thought has several times occurred to me that, as he is young’, and has some years before him ere he could enter the ministry, he might be able to pass through the Cambridge University course. This would be of great advantage to him as a student, and a good recommendation to him. He might pursue the same work that I did, and pay his own expenses without costing you a shilling; if my school increases pretty well, it can be done; — a year hence will be early ,enough to decide this.

“I am, as you must perceive, anxious to retain him, as much for his sake as my own; but if you are desirous of more money than I offer for the next year, I must yield to the painful alternative of parting with him; at the same time, I am sure you will be taking a wrong step.  
“Hoping yourself, Mrs. S., and your family are well, “I remain,  
“Dear Sir,  
“Yours most faithfully,

**“E. S. LEEDING.”** “Mr. Spurgeon.”

(The following letter shows that Mr. Spurgeon had his request concerning going to the Great Exhibition granted, and it also expresses his gratitude that he was shortly to return to Cambridge, though probably even he scarcely realized then how much was involved in his father’s decision: — )

“Colchester,  
“June 25 (1851).  
“My Dear Aunt,

“I enclose this in Uncle’s note. Is he better? I have much enjoyed my three days in London, and am now happy at home. I am very thankful that, if spared, I am going back to Cambridge. Of my progress there, I am not ashamed; it should and might have been greater, but still it is somewhat. My faults I have not learned there, I had the same at Maidstone, and I am not at all fond of having blame thrown on the place where Providence has placed me. I am all fault, but what God’s grace has made right. I am content to be evil spoken of, if I can but grow in grace and serve God. Where I have most opportunity of telling sinners the way of salvation, and of preparation for a future course of labor, I trust I shall always feel most happy. Human wisdom I desire to gain, but only in subservience and as handmaid to spiritual knowledge and Divine instruction.

“Grandfather is now with us; he preached last night on ‘ Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee: He shall never suffer the righteous to be moved.’ A blessed thing it must be for the new-born sons of God to have such a stay in the hour of trouble; and he who, having left hi,; own righteousness, trusts alone on Jesus, has a perfect right to this promise.

“Mother is gone to old Mr. ‘Merchant’s 51st anniversary at Layer Breton. He is almost past preaching, and stands a monument of the unchanging love of God, who, having once. loved a person, will always love him. The motto over his pulpit is, ‘We preach Christ, and Him crucified.’ I am sure you need all the comforts of the gospel now, and I wish I knew enough to be able to give them faithfully and successfully; that is reserved for future lessons of experience. None who rely on Jesus ,Christ will ever find their troubles too heavy; for all those who take Him as their whole Savior, He is a supporter.

May God deal kindly with you, and support you!  
“Love to self and Uncle from all.  
“I am,  
“Your affectionate nephew,

**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

CHAPTER 20.

FIRST OUTLINES OF SERMONS, 1851-1852.

A MONG the many literary treasures so carefully preserved by Mr. *S*purgeon, there are two sets of books containing his first brief Outlines of Sermons, and the more lengthy manuscripts which he used to prepare until the claims of his London pastorate made impossible to continue doing so any longer. Probably, by that time, he also felt that he did not need to write so fully as in his early preaching days; and, shortly afterwards, as he often told his students, the revision of his printed Sermons gave him all the advantages that he might have derived from more elaborate preparation for the pulpit.

The first volume of Outlines must have been commenced very soon after Mr. Spurgeon began to preach, for the second written in it was only the fourth discourse delivered by the youthful evangelist. The text was Revelation 21:27, and it was preached at Barton, near Cambridge, on February 9th, 1851. This fact fixes, approximately, the date of the commencement of that wonderful world-wide ministry which the Lord so long and so greatly blessed, and which He still continues most graciously to own and use. Such intense interest attaches to these early record:;, that the Autobiography would be incomplete unless it included at least a few specimens of the beloved preacher’s first homiletic efforts. Mr. Spurgeon had himself intended, long ago, to publish a selection from them; in the Preface to *The New Park Street Pulpit*for 1857, he announced that he hoped shortly to issue a volume, of his earliest Sermons, while Pastor at Waterbeach, but this was prevented by the pressure of his rapidly increasing work. The Outlines are valuable, not only because of their intrinsic merits, but also as the first products of the mind and heart which afterwards yielded so many thousands of discourses to the Church and the world, for the glory of God and the good of men. It must be remembered that they were made by a youth of sixteen; literally, “the boy-preacher.” At the beginning of Vol. 1. is a *textual*index, showing that the seventy-seven Outlines were based upon passages taken from fifteen Books in the Old Testament, and sixteen in the New Testament; while at the end is a *subject* index, which bears a remarkable resemblance to those which set forth the contents of every volume of the *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.*Happy preacher, who commenced, as he continued, and concluded, the ministry he “received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.” As indicating the character of the whole series, the first three Sermon-notes are given in the present work, together with one Outline from each of the succeeding volumes, *facsimile*reproductions of the highly-adorned titlepages of Vols. 1. and I1., and the characteristic inscriptions written by Mr. Spurgeon at the commencement and conclusion of most of the volumes.

**OUTLINE 1. — ADOPTION.**

“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will.” — Ephesians 1:5.

Meaning of the term. Common among Romans. Two instances in Scripture, — Moses and Esther. Adoption differs from Justification and Regeneration.

I. THE SENSE IN WHICH BELIEVERS ARE SONS OF GOD.

Not as Jesus. More so than creatures.  
(i) In some things spiritual adoption agrees with civil.

**1.** In name and thing. **2.** To an inheritance. **3.** Voluntary on the part of the Adopter. **4.** Taking the Adopter’s name. **5.** Received into the Family. **6.** Considered as children: food, protection, clothing, education, attendance provided. **7.** Under the control of the Father.

(ii) In some things they disagree.

**1.** Civil adoption requires the consent of the adopted. **2.** Civil adoption was intended to provide for childless persons. **3.** In civil adoption, the adopted had something to recommend him.**4.** The nature of a son could not be given. **5.** The children did not inherit till their father’s death.**6.** The Pontifex might make it void.

II. THE CAUSE OF ADOPTION.

1. The Person: God. Father. Son. Spirit.  
2. The motive. free-grace, not works.

III. THE OBJECTS OF IT.

Elect sinners, not angels. All believers. not all men, but justified men.

IV. THE EXCELLENCY OF IT.

**1.** It is an act of surprising grace. (1 John 3:1.) Consider the persons. **2.** It exceeds all others. **3.** It makes men honorable. **4.** Brings men into the highest relations. **5.** Includes all things. **6.** Immutable and everlasting.

V. THE EFFECTS OF IT.

1. Share in the love, pity, and care of God. 2. Access with boldness. 3. Conformity to the image of Jesus. 4. The Holy Spirit. 5. Heirship. Encouragement. Appeal to saints and sinners.  
OUTLINE II. — NECESSITY OF PURITY FOR AN ENTRANCE INTO HEAVEN.

“And there shall in no wise enter into it any, thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which arc written in the Lamb’s book of life.” — Revelation 21:27.

I. THE STRICTNESS OF THE LAW .... “any thing that defileth.”

Satan cannot. Sin cannot. What a matter of rejoicing to Christians! How can man enter?  
Not by ceremonies. Not by the law. Not by sincere obedience in part.

The heart must be purified.  
All past sin forgiven. How? By free-grace.  
All present sin crucified. How? By the Holy Spirit.  
All future sin avoided. How? By the Spirit’s help.

II. THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF ENTRANCE .... “in no wise.”

God has said so. He will not allow it; nor will the angels; nor the redeemed. A wicked man would not be happy in Heaven.

No prayers, cries, groans, strife, can get a dead, unholy sinner into Heaven. If a man is not in, he is out for ever, no coming in, no change. Call to enter in by faith in Jesus Christ.

OUTLINE III. — ABRAHAM JUSTIFIED BY FAITH.  
“And he believed in the LORD; and He counted il to him for righteousness.” — Genesis 15:6.

I. THE FACT… “he believed in the Lord.”

Leaving his country. Life in Canaan. Sodom.  
Isaac’s birth. Promises to him. Isaac’s sacrifice.  
Two sorts of faith  
**1.** Historical, or dead faith.  
**2.** Living faith, producing works.

II. THE RESULT… “He counted it to him for righteousness.”

**1.** Sins forgiven, — **2.** Righteousness imputed, — by faith.  
By it, he gained God’s favor and love, Heaven, and eternal life.

These bring —  
Peace. How easy lies the head that does no ill!  
Love. When we are pure, we love God.  
Joy. The justified person has true joy.  
Comfort. All things work together for good.  
Security. None can condemn, nor destroy.

III. AS ABRAHAM WAS SAVED, SO MUST WE BE.

Not by works, or Abraham would have been.  
Not by ceremonies. Abram believed before circumcision.

Reasons why sinners and Christians should believe God; exhortations to faith.  
OUTLINE 133. — BY FAITH JERICHO FELL.  
“By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days.” — Hebrews 11:30.

Faith is the one grand essential in salvation. It must be inwrought, or else there will be no spiritual life at first. It is necessary ewer after in numberless ways. We cannot have knowledge of gospel doctrines without faith, nor can we lay hold on the promises without it. The graces are all dependent on faith. He loves most who believes most. He will have most zeal who has; most faith. Humility is produced by faith, and hope breathes through faith. In doing good to others, and particularly in combat with evil, let us have faith.

I. FAITH IS THE GRACE TO WHICH VICTORY IS GIVEN.

**1.** The other graces are not decked with laurel, lest man should steal their crowns; but faith is too tall, man cannot reach its head. Faith has less to do with man, and more to do with God than any of the other graces; for faith is looking away from self, and trusting the Eternal.

**2.** Faith gains the victory because she engages the arm of the Almighty on her behalf. She has power with Him, and therefore she prevails. **3.** That man is most able to bear with humility the joy of victory who endured the conflict by faith; he will give all the glory to God.

**4.** other graces do wonders, but faith does impossibilities. She is the only grace that can act in certain places, and under certain circumstances. She is intended for this very purpose.

II. FAITH WINS HER VICTORIES IN GOD’S APPOINTED WAY.

1. She uses no means of her own contrivance; she waits upon God for guidance.  
2. She neglects not His appointments; she is not presumptuous. 3. When she uses the means, she does not despise them. She ungirds the sword, — she follows the ark, — she hears the rams’ horns. 4. She is laughed at for seeming folly; but in her turn she smiles.

**5.** She does her Maker’s will, and she expects the blessing, but all in an orderly way. That is no faith at all which believes and does nothing. We may not expect to be saved by faith, unless that faith pushes us on to run in God’s way. Whether we seek salvation, the good of our friends, the stopping of evil, or the destruction of our corruptions, let us seek it in the Divinely-appointed way.

III. FAITH WINS HER VICTORIES IN GOD’S TIME.

1. She goes round Jericho thirteen times; she expects the wall will come down at last, so round and round she goes.

**2.** She expects that, on the Lord’s appointed day, her sins will all be overthrown, and she thinks her work well repaid when she knows this will happen. Therefore is she persevering in the conflict.

Now let us apply these thoughts —  
**1.***To the pulling down of Jericho in our own hearts.*

We want to slay all the old sinful inhabitants, but the lofty wall stands firm. Let us have faith. Let us follow the ark. Let us hear the sound of the trumpets, even though they are only rams’ horns. Let us go round the wall all the seven days, — that is, all the week, — all the days of our life. Let us inwardly groan, but not grumble with our lips; and soon, when the ordained day arrives, the walls will tremble, we shall shout, and our enemies will be gone.

**2.***To the pulling down of Jericho in the world.*

Sin has strong and lofty towers. The Tower of Babel or Babylonish Rome, idolatry, etc., — let us yet believe that these will tumble to the earth. Let us continue our rounds as minister, Sunday-school teachers, and Christian workers. Keep the poor rams’ horns going; do your duty, and one day Jesus shall reign universally.

**3.***To the pulling down of Jericho in this village.*

Dagon stands fast here; but the ark of God is come. The trumpeters of God have long blown the trumpet; the rams’ horns are still sounding a loud rough blast. Many are following the ark, but the time for the complete victory has not quite come. Keep on, brethren, and give a great shout, all at once, — by faith, — and down will come the mighty walls.

The Lord help us to believe His Word, and then fulfill to us His promises! *Amen,*through JESUS.  
(The following poem was written by Mr. Spurgeon at the time that he prepared and preached the foregoing discourse: —)  
**THE FALL OF JERICHO. *The day is come, the seventh morn  
Is usher’d in with blast of horn;***

***~~Tremble, ye tow’rs of giant height, This is the day of Israel’s might.  
Six days ye mock’d the silent band, This hour their shout shall shake your land. Old Jordan’s floods shall hear the sound, Yon circling hills with fear shall bound.~~***

***~~Thou palm — tree’d city, at thy gates Death in grim form this moment waits; See, hurrying on the howling blast, That dreaded hour, thy last, thy last.~~***

***~~Lo, at the leader’s well-known sign, The tribes their mighty voices join, With thund’ring noise the heavens are rent, Down falls the crumbling battlement; Straight to the prey each soldier goes, The sword devours his helpless foes. Now, impious! on your idols call; Prostrate at Baal’s altar fall. In vain your rampart and your pride, Which once Jehovah’s power defied.~~***

***~~Now Israel, spare not, strike the blade In heart of man, and breast of maid;  
Spare not the old, nor young, nor gay, Spare not, for Justice bids you slay.~~***

***~~Who shall describe that dreadful cry? These ears shall hear it till they die. Pale terror shrieks her hideous note, War bellows from his brazen throat,~~***

***~~Death tears his prey with many a groan, Nor earth itself restrains a moan.~~***

***~~Ho! vultures, to the banquet haste, Here ye may feast, and glut your taste;  
H o! monsters of the gloomy wood, Here cool your tongues in seas of blood. But, no; the flames demand the whole,  
In blazing sheets they upward roll; They fire the heavens, and cast their light Where Gibeon pales with sad affright; A lurid glare o’er earth is cast, The nations stand, with dread aghast.  
The shepherd on the distant plain  
Thinks of old Sodom’s fiery rain; He flies a sheltering hill to find, Nor casts one lingering look behind.  
The magician scans his mystic lore, Foretells the curse on Egypt’s shore;  
The Arab checks his frighted horse, Bends his wild knee, and turns his ‘course.  
E’en seas remote behold the glare, And hardy sailors raise their prayer.~~***

***~~Now, in dim smoke, the flames expire That lit the city’s fun’ral fire, The glowing embers cease to burn: Haste, patriot, fill the golden urn! In crystal tears her dust embalm, In distant lands, in strife or calm, Still press the relic to thy heart, And in the rapture lose the smart!~~***

***~~It must not be; her sons are dead, They with their Mother burned or bled;  
not one survives: the vip’rish race Have perish’d with their lodging-place. No more lascivious maidens dance, No youths with lustful step advance, No drunkard’s bowl, no rite unclean, No idol mysteries are seen.  
A warrior stands in martial state, And thus proclaims her changeless fate: “Accursed city, blot her name From mind of man, from lip of fame. Curs’d be the man, and curs’d his race, Who dares his house on thee to place; He founds it on his firstborn’s tomb, And crowns it with the brother’s doom.” Thus God rewards the haughty foe,  
Great in their sin and overthrow.  
He ever reigns immortal King;  
With Israel’s song the mountains ring.~~***

***~~Yet ‘mid the justice dread, severe,  
Where pity sheds no silv’ry tear,  
A gleam of golden mercy strays,~~***

***~~And lights the scene with pleasing rays.~~***

***~~One house escapes, by faith secure:,  
The scarlet thread a token sure,  
Rahab, whose seed in future time  
Should bear the virgin’s Son sublime.~~***

***~~Thus, when the Thund’rer grasps His arms,  
And fills our earth with just alarms,  
His hand still shields the chosen race,  
And ‘midst His wrath remembers grace.~~***

***~~(At the end of the hundredth Outline, Mr. Spurgeon wrote: — ) For this 100, I bless the Lord, for the good is His. May they be the seed of many a plant of the Lord!  
(Inscription inside front cover of Volume II: — )  
FINIS.  
June 19. My 18th birthday. With my staff I crossed this Jordan, and now I am become two bands.  
Lovingkindness runs faster than time; it outstrips me, and then waits to be gracious.~~***

(Inscription at the end of Volume II: — )  
Better is the end of life than the beginning.  
Better the end of labor than the starting.

These sketches are so many proofs of the power of ‘faith… By faith I got them.

They are evidences of God’s love, — for oft have they come just at the moment when, had they tarried, I had been undone.  
Blessed be God for making men so much His darlings as to let them speak His Word!

May it be my topmost desire to live as much to God’s glory as possible; and —

**“ *When I shall die,  
‘Receive me,’ I’11 cry,  
‘For Jesus has lov’d me,  
I cannot tell*why.’”**

In health, contentment, and peace, June 19/52, only feeling the thorns of sin and sin’s effects.  
**OUTLINE 172. — THE CHURCH AT ANTIOCH.**

“And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.” — Acts 11:26.

Kings are wont to chronicle their wars; mighty men expect to be made to live after death in the historic page; but though these matters have a certain amount of interest, what is it compared with the interest attaching to this inspired Book of the Acts of the Apostles? The History of England is not so important as this one portion of the Bible. It is a “Book of Martyrs,” — Stephen, Paul, and many more. It is a “Book of voyages and travels,” of thrilling and permanent interest. It is Vol. 1. of “The Christian Times.” It is a book of de. bates, speeches, addresses, sermons, etc.

The church at Antioch has a history so interesting that I only pray that I may be helped to make it so, as I give —

I. A BRIEF SKETCH OF THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH IN ANTIOCH.

Certain saints, driven by persecution from Jerusalem, fled to Antioch, and commenced there their labors of love. Their names are unmentioned, but God knoweth them, and they are now receiving their reward. Let my name perish, but let Christ’s name last for ever.

The Lord’s hand helped them, and many believed, and turned unto the Lord. These were so pious that the church in Jerusalem heard of it, and for their further edification sent down Barnabas to labor among them. He was full of faith and the Holy Ghost, and under him the church grew so great that he went after Paul to assist him.

The saints at Antioch were a liberal people; and, by God’s grace, continuing to increase, they soon had five pastors, and the Holy Ghost put it into their minds to send out, as missionaries elsewhere, two who became eminently successful. Thus, Antioch became a Mother-church to many surrounding parts. Paul and Barnabas used to return there, after their laborious missionary tours. They anchored at Antioch, as in a haven of refuge.

**1.**Let us note that the gospel is not of necessity a slowly-progressing affair. The first preachers were very successful, for it seems that in about two years the church at Antioch was firmly established. That church grew amazingly, then why should not ours, and why should not all others grow in similar fashion? The conversion of the world will not always go on at snail-pace, and we ought to pray that it may not in this place. O God, grant it!

**2.** Let us notice the principal elements of success in this case, believing them to be the same in all. There were things from *God, the ministers,*and *the people.*God in Providence shielded this Gentil Jerusalem from persecution, and gave peace to the people. He sent them faithful ministers, and with those ministers He sent His Spirit.

The ministers preached the Lord Jesus. Barnabas was a good, kind, faithful, Spirit-filled man. Paul also was a mighty preacher of the Word.

The people must have had much grace, — a close cleaving to God and to one another, — liberality and readiness to assist any work of faith, — and abundance of that jewel called “all prayer.”

II. A FEW REMARKS UPON THE TITLE FIRST GAINED BY THIS CHURCH AT

ANTIOCH, — “CHRISTIANS.”

Perhaps the name was given as a designation by the Gentiles, gladly adopted by the disciples, and sanctioned by Divine authority. They had hitherto styled themselves “disciples,” “the faithful,” “the elect,” “brethren.” The Jews called them Nazarenes, Galileans, etc. The sect was so small that, doubtless, among the masses of the heathen, it was nondescript; but, in Antioch, the talent, the zeal, the number, the influence, and (in some cases) the wealth of the members of the new church made it needful that it should have a name. The name given is a good one, —

**CHRISTIANS.**

**1.** This intimates that there was much unity among the disciples, so that one name would apply to all. Blessed time when this unity shall return, and we shall be all gathered in one!

**2.** This shows that the conversation, singing, worship, preaching, etc., of these men and women must have been much about Christ; else, how would the common people know their name?

**3.** This shows that their life and conduct must have been according to the example of Christ; otherwise, the more knowing members of the community would have denied their right to the title.

***But I also am called a Christian****.*

How honorable a name! Manaen, the foster-brother of Herod, was more honored in bearing this name than by his connection with an earthly prince. Paul, at one time a learned doctor in the Pharisaic school, owns this name of Christian as his highest title. Surely, ‘tis a title which an angel might almost covet. But what does this name show?

**1.** That I am a believer in the Divine mission of Jesus, — a believer in His official name, “*Christ.*” Let me then take care to trust in Him most implicitly, and never by my doubts dishonor Him.

**2.** That I am a professed imitator of the holy, harmless, undefiled, loving, generous Jesus; let me then really be so in all things.  
**3.** That I am a lover of Jesus; ‘then let my conversation and talk and meditation be concerning Him.

A Christian is one who is anointed to be a priest unto God, to offer continual prayer’ and praise in the name of Jesus. Bearing the one name which the glorious army of martyrs, the great apostles of Christ, and the saints in all ages, have borne, may we honor the name of Jesus, and on our shoulder bear the cross of Jesus!

(Inscription at the end of Volume III: — )  
Praise, praise, unto Him who causeth the river to run on still, — though, as some say, unfed by natural streams.

God doeth good, and all the good herein is every atom His. Bear witness, oh, paper, of my thanks for these instances of grace!

(Inscription on Title-page of Volume IV: — )  
In this volume, may I have the pen of a ready writer!  
(Inscription at the back of Title-page: — )  
By faith, I begin this volume.  
(note at the end of Outline No. 200: — )

I desire to record thanks for this second 100. May God receive glory *from* them as well as *for*them!  
**OUTLINE 212. — NOWISE CAST OUT.**  
“All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.” — John 6: 37.  
Upon reading this verse, one feels inclined to break out with the angelic song, “Behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy.”  
Here are two sets of doctrine, the high and the low conjoined; surely, this passage will suit all, from the “Hyper” down to the Primitive. I. THE ETERNAL “SHALL” — POSITIVE.  
II. THE ETERNAL .”WILL” — NEGATIVE.

I. THE POSITIVE ETERNAL “SHALL.” “All that the Father giveth Me shall

come to Me.”  
These words may be regarded as —  
**1.** A prophecy of our Lord, the Prophet of His people.  
**2.** A solemn oath of God the Son.  
**3.** A triumphant boast of Jesus the Conqueror.  
**4.** A challenge to death and hell.  
In these words, He speaks like one —  
**1.** Who knows the number of His people: “all.”  
**2.** Who regards past and present as one: “giveth.”  
**3.** Who knows His rights are good: “shall.” And —  
**4.** Who is convinced of His own power to perform what He has promised. But this is of no comfort to us unless we can see —  
**1.** That He has given us the Holy Spirit.  
**2.** That we have given ourselves to Him.

If we have done so, then let us glory in these blessed words, and sing them aloud, —  
“*All that the Father giveth Me shall come lo Me.*”

II. THE NEGATIVE ETERNAL “WILL.” “And him that cometh to Me I will in

no wise cast out.”

Notice here the Speaker, — our Lord Jesus Christ. The Father has never spoken thus in His absolute character; it were an insult to try to go to Him except through Christ, when He has made His Son the only medium of access to Him.

Notice the character addressed, — not the Jew that cometh, not the king or rich man that cometh, not the good man that cometh, not the young or old, but “*him that cometh*,” whosoever he may be.

Notice the words of Jesus. “I will in no wise cast out.” It is very strong in the original; Christ means, “I will not, not, not,” or, “I will never, never, never cast out any who come to Me.” Christ will not cast them out —

**1.** Because of their great sins.  
**2.** Because of their long delays.  
**3.** Because of their trying other saviors.  
**4.** Because of the hardness of their hearts.  
**5.** Because of their little faith.  
**6.** Because of their poor and dull prayers.  
**7.** Because everyone else passes them by.

When they are once in, they are in for ever. Christ will not cast them out —

**1.** Because of their unbelief.  
**2.** Because of their old corruptions.  
**3.** Because of their backslidings.  
Read, write, print, shout, —  
“*Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out.*”

What is it to come to Christ? Men do not know what it is; they fancy it is to reform themselves, to be moral, honest, good, upright, etc., etc. But it is, to trust, to believe in Jesus. “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and *thou* shalt be saved.”

Great Savior, I thank Thee for this text; help Thou me so to preach from it that many may come to Thee, and find eternal life!

CHAPTER 21.

THE YOUNG SOUL-WINNER AT WATERBEACH.

Coming, one Thursday in the late autumn, from an engagement beyond Dulwich, my way lay up to the top of the Herne Hill ridge. I came along the level out of which rises the steep hill I had to ascend. While I was on the lower ground, riding in a hansom cab, I saw a light before me, and when [ came near the hill, I marked that light gradually go up the hill, leaving a train of stars behind it. This line of new-born stars remained in the form of one lamp, and then another, and another. It :reached from the foot of the hill to its summit. I did not see the lamplighter. I do not know his name, :nor his age, nor his residence; but I saw the lights which he had kindled, and these remained when he himself had gone his way. As I rode along, I thought to myself, “How earnestly do I wish that my life may be spent in lighting one soul after another with the sacred flame of eternal life! I would myself be as much as possible unseen while at my work, and would vanish into the eternal brilliance above when my work is done.” — C. H. S.

D ID you ever walk through a village notorious for its drunkenness and profanity? Did you ever see poor wretched beings, that once were men, standing, or rather leaning, against the posts of the ale-house, or staggering along the street? Have you ever looked into the houses of the people, and beheld them as dens of iniquity, at which your soul stood aghast? Have you ever seen the poverty, and degradation, and misery of the inhabitants, and sighed over it? “Yes,” you say, “we have.” But was it ever your privilege to walk through that village again, in after years, when the gospel had been preached there? It has been mine. I once knew just such a village as I have pictured, — perhaps, in some respects, one of the worst in England, — where many an illicit still was yielding its noxious liquor to a manufacturer without payment of the duty to the government, and where, in connection with that evil, all manner of riot and iniquity was rife.

There went into that village a lad, who had no great scholarship, but who was earnest: in seeking the souls of men. He began to preach there, and it pleased God to turn the whole place upside down. In a short time, the little thatched chapel was crammed, the biggest vagabonds of the village were weeping floods of tears, and those who had been the curse of the parish became its blessing. Where there had been robberies and villainies of every kind, all round the neighborhood, there were none, because the men who used to do the mischief were themselves in the house of God, rejoicing to hear of Jesus crucified. I am not telling an exaggerated story, nor a thing that ‘I do not know, for it was my delight to labor for the Lord in that village. It was a pleasant thing to walk through that place, when drunkenness had almost ceased, when debauchery in the case of many was dead, when men and women went forth to labor with joyful hearts, singing the praises of the ever-living God; and when, at sunset, the humble cottager called his children together, read them some portion from the Book of Truth, and then together they bent their knees in prayer to God. I can say, with joy and happiness, that almost from one end of the village to the other, at the hour of eventide, one might have heard the voice of song coming from nearly every roof-tree, and echoing from almost every heart. I do testify, to the praise of (god’s grace, that it pleased the Lord to work wonders in our midst. He showed the power of Jesu’s name, and made me a witness of that gospel which can win souls, draw reluctant hearts, and mold afresh the life and conduct of sinful men and women.

(The village here referred to is, of course, W ATERBEACH, where Mr. Spurgeon first preached in October, 1851, as the following letter proves: — )

“No. 9, Union Road,  
“Cambridge,  
“October 15th (1851).

“My Dear Father,

“I received your most welcome note, and beg pardon if you think me negligent in returning thanks. I have been busily employed every Lord’s-day; not at home once yet, nor do I expect to be this year. Last Sunday, I went to a place called Waterbeach, where there is an old-established church, but not able to support a minister. I have engaged to supply to the end of the month. They had, for twenty years, a minister who. went over from Cambridge in the same way as you go to Tollesbury. After that, they tried to have a minister; but as they could not keep him, he has left, and they will have to do as they used to do. There is rail there and back, and it is only six miles.

“I am glad you have such good congregations. I feel no doubt there is a great work doing there; — the fields are ripe unto the harvest, the seed you have sown has yielded plenty of green, let us hope there will be abundance of wheat. Give my love to dear Mother; you have indeed had trials. I always like to see how you bear them. I think I shall never forget that time when Mother and all were so ill. How you were supported! How cheerful you were! You said, in a letter to me, —

**“ *When troubles, like a gloomy cloud,  
Have gathered thick, and thundered kind,  
He near my side has always stood;  
His lovingkindness, O how good!’***

“I trust that you are all well, and that the clouds are blown away. I am quite well, I am happy to say. Where is Aunt? It is four months since I have heard anything from her, or about her. We have no settled minister yet, nor do we expect any. I thank you much for your sermon; it will just do for me.

“How greatly must I admire the love that could choose me to speak the gospel, and to be the happy recipient of it! I trust my greatest concern is to grow in grace, and to go onward in the blessed course. I feel jealous lest my motive should change, fearing lest I should be my own servant instead of the Lord’s. How soon may we turn aside without knowing it, and begin to seek objects below the sacred office!

“Mr. and Mrs. L. are well, and send their respects. Grandfather has asked me to go to Stambourne, but I cannot afford to go his way.

With love to you,  
dear Mother, and all at home,  
“I am,  
“Your affectionate son,

**“CHAS. H. SPURGEON.”**

(The text of Mr. Spurgeon’s *first*Sermon at Waterbeach was Matthew 1. 21. This passage was also the subject of his *last*Sermon as Pastor there, and of his *first Sermon as Pastor at New -Park Street,*though a different discourse was delivered on each occasion. It is delightful to notice that JESUS was the keynote of his ministry both in Waterbeach and in London, and that not one of his many thousands of Sermons was out of harmony with that opening note.

The following is the Outline of the first Sermon at Waterbeach: — )  
**OUTLINE 33. — SALVATION FROM SIN.**  
“Thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins.” — Matthew 1:21.  
The two parts of this Salvation are Justification and Sanctification.

I. JUSTIFICATION, INCLUDING PARDON AND IMPUTATION OF

RIGHTEOUSNESS.  
1. Pardon, — free, perfect, instantaneous, irreversible, bringing with it deliverance from the consequences of sin, which are —

God’s just displeasure.  
The curse of the law.  
Incapacity for Heaven.  
Liability, yea, certain destination to eternal punishment.

**2.** Imputation of righteousness, causing a man to be regarded as holy, sinless, worthy of commendation and reward.  
Its accompaniments are, —

God’s love. Blessing of the law.  
Capacity for Heaven.  
A right and title, yea, certain possession of Heaven.

This Jesus effected. As to the first, by His sufferings and death; as to the second, by His holy obedience to the law.

II. SANCTIFICATION, INCLUDING DELIVERANCE FROM SIN, AND POSITIVE

HOLINESS.  
1. Victory over — (1) our natural depravity, (2) the habits of sin, (3) temptations, (4) backslidings.  
2. Working in us all holy affections. (1) Holy nature. (2) Holy habits. (3) Desires for holiness. (4) Progress in Divine grace.  
Sanctification is unlike Justification, in that it is gradual, imperfect, progressional, never consummated but in Heaven.  
This is the work of Jesus, — (1) by showing us His example and commands, (2) by the Holy Spirit.  
This is the beauteous salvation Jesus gives, complete deliverance from the guilt, consequences, and effects of sin.

The choicest happiness which a mortal can know is that of doing good to a fellow-creature. To save a body from death, almost gives us Heaven upon earth. Some men boast that they have sent many souls to perdition, that they have hurled a great number of their fellows out of the world. We meet, now and then, a soldier who glories that, in battle, he struck down many foemen, that his swift and cruel sword reached the heart of a host of his enemies; but I count not that glory. If I thought I had been the means of the death of a single individual, I should scarcely rest at night, for the spirit of that murdered wretch would ever seem to be staring at me. I should remember that I had slain him, and perhaps sent his soul unshriven and unwashed into the presence of his Maker. To me, it is wonderful that men can be found to be soldiers, I say not if it be right or wrong; still, I marvel that they can follow such an occupation. I know not how, after a battle, they can wash the blood from their hands, wipe their swords, and put them by, and then lie down to slumber, and their dreams be undisturbed. If I were in their place, the tears would fall hot and scalding on my cheek at night, and the shrieks of the dying and the groans of those approaching eternity would torture mine ear. I cannot imagine how others can endure it. To me, it would be the very portal of hell, if I knew that I had been a destroyer of my fellow-creatures.

But what bliss it is to be the instrument of saving bodies from death! Those monks on Mount St. Bernard, surely must feel happiness when they rescue men from death. The dog comes to the door, and they know what he means; he has discovered some poor weary traveler who has lain down to sleep in the snow, and is dying from cold and exhaustion. Up rise the monks from their cheerful fire, intent to act the good Samaritan to the lost one. At last they see him; they speak to him, but he answers not. They try to discover if there is breath in his body, and they fear he is dead. They take him up, and give him remedies; hastening to their hostel, they lay him by the fire, and warm and chafe him, looking into his face with kindly anxiety, as much as to say, “*Poor*creature! art thou dead?” When, at last, they perceive some heaving of the lungs, what joy is in the breast of those brethren, as they say, “*His*life is not extinct!” It would be a privilege to chafe one hand of that poor man, and so help to restore him. Or, suppose another case. A house is in flames, and in it is a woman with her children, who cannot by any means escape. In vain she attempts to come downstairs; the flames prevent her. She has lost all presence of mind, and knows not how to act. A strong man comes, and says, “*Make*way! make way! I must save that woman!” And cooled by the genial streams of benevolence, he marches through the fire. Though scorched, and almost stiffed, he gropes his way. He ascends one staircase, then another; and though the stairs totter, he places the woman beneath his arm, takes a child on his shoulder, and down he comes, twice a giant, having more might than he ever possessed before. He has jeopardized his life, and perhaps an arm may be disabled, or a limb taken away, or a sense lost, or an injury irretrievably done to his body; yet he claps his hands, and says, “*I*have saved lives from death!” The crowd in the street hail him as a man who has been the deliverer of his fellow-creatures, honoring him more than the monarch who has stormed a city, sacked a town, and murdered myriads. But, alas! the body which was saved from death to-day, may die to-morrow. not so the soul that is saved from death: it is saved everlastingly. It is saved beyond the fear of destruction. And if there be joy in the breast of a benevolent man when he saves a body from death, how much more blessed must he be when he is made the means in the hand of God of saving “*a*soul from death,” and hiding a multitude of sins! It was Richard Knill, that blessed missionary of the cross to whom I am personally so deeply indebted, who said that, if there were only one unconverted person in the whole world, and if that person lived in the wilds of Siberia, and if every Christian minister and every private believer in the world had to make a pilgrimage to that spot before that soul were brought to Christ, the labor would be well expended if that one soul were so saved. This is putting the truth in a striking way, but in a way in which everyone who realizes the value of immortal souls, will heartily concur.  
When I began to preach in the little thatched chapel at Waterbeach, my first concern was, Would God save any souls through me? They called me a ragged-headed boy, and I think I was just that; I know I wore a jacket. After I had preached for some little time, I thought, “*This*gospel has saved me, but then somebody else preached it; will it save anybody else now that I preach it?” Some Sundays went over, and I used to say to the deacons, “Have you heard of anybody finding: the Lord under my ministry? Do you know of anyone brought to Christ through my preaching?” My good old friend and deacon said, “I am sure somebody must have received the Savior; I am quite certain it is so.” “Oh!” I answered, “but I want to know it, I want to prove that if is so.”

How my heart leaped for joy when I heard tidings of my first convert! I could never be satisfied with a full congregation, and the kind expressions of friends: I longed to hear that hearts had been broken, that tears had been seen streaming from the eyes of penitents. How I did rejoice, as one that findeth great spoil, one Sunday afternoon, when my good deacon said to me, “God has set His seal on your ministry in this place, sir.” Oh, if anybody had said to me, “Someone has left you twenty thousand pounds,” I should not have given a snap of my fingers for it, compared with the joy which I felt when I was told that God had saved a soul through my ministry! “Who is it?” I asked. “Oh, it is a poor laboring man’s wife over at such-and-such a place! She went home broken-hearted by your Sermon two or three Sundays ago, and she has been in great trouble of soul, but she has found peace, and she says she would like to speak to you.” I said, “Will you drive me over there? I must go to see her;” and early on the’. Monday morning I was driving down to the village my deacon had mentioned, to see my first spiritual child. I have in my eye now the cottage in which she lived; believe me, it always appears picturesque. I felt like the boy who has earned his first guinea, or like a diver who has been down to the depths of the sea, and brought up a rare pearl. I prize each one whom God has given me, but I prize that Woman most. Since then, my Lord has blessed me to many thousands of souls, who have found the Savior by hearing or reading words which have come from my lips. I have’ had a great many spiritual children born of the preaching of the Word, but I still think that woman was the best of the lot. At least, she did not live long enough for me to find many faults in her. After a year or two of faithful witness-bearing, she went home, to lead the way for a goodly number who have followed her. I remember wall her being received into the church, and dying, and going to Heaven. She was the first seal to my ministry, and a very precious one. No Mother was ever more full of happiness at the sight of her first-born son. Then could I have sung the song of the Virgin Mary, for my soul did magnify the Lord for remembering my low estate, and giving me the great honor to do a work for which all generations should call me blessed, for so I counted and still count the conversion of one soul. I would rather be the means of saving a soul from death than be the greatest orator on earth. I would rather bring the poorest woman in the world to the feet of Jesus than I would be made Archbishop of Canterbury. [ would sooner pluck one single brand from the burning than explain all mysteries. To win a soul from going down into the pit, is a more glorious achievement than to be crowned in the arena of theological controversy as *Dr. Sufficientissimus;*to have: faithfully unveiled the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ will be, in the final judgment, accounted worthier service than to have solved the problems of the religious Sphinx, or to have cut the Gordian knot of Apocalyptic difficulty. One of my happiest thoughts is that, when I die, it shall be my privilege to enter into rest in the bosom of Christ, and I know that I shall not enjoy my Heaven alone. Thousands have already entered there, who have been drawn to Christ under my ministry. Oh! what bliss it will be to fly to Heaven, and to have a multitude of converts before and behind, and, on entering the glory, to be able to say, “Here am I, Father, and the children Thou hast given me.”

A minister will never, I should think, forget his earliest converts. He lives to see hundreds begotten unto God by his means, but of these who were the children of his youth he still treasures delightful memories, for are they not his first-born, his might, and the beginning of his strength? I can recall an elderly woman who had found peace with God through my youthful ministry, and especially do 1 recollect her wail of woe as she told of the days of her ignorance, and the consequent godless bringing up of her children. Her words were somewhat as follows, and I write them down for the good of Mothers who labor hard out of love to their dear ones, and provide them with all necessaries for this life, but never think of the life to come: —

“Oh, sir!” said she, “I should be quite happy now, only I have one sore trouble which keeps me very low. I am so sad about my dear children. I was left with eight of them, and I worked hard at the wash-tub, and in other ways, morning, noon, and night, to find bread for them. I did feed and clothe them all, but I am sure I don’t know how I did it. I had often to deny myself, both in food and clothing; and times were very hard with me. Nobody could have slaved worse than I did, to mend, and clean, and keep a roof over our heads. I cannot blame myself for any neglect about their bodies; but as to their souls, I never cared about my own, and of course I never thought of theirs. Two of them died. I dare not think about them. God has forgiven me, but I can’t forget my sin against my poor children; I never taught them a word which could be of any use to them. The others are all alive, but there is not one of them in the least religious. How could they be when they saw how their Mother lived?. It troubles me more a good deal than all the working for them ever did; for I’m afraid they are going down to destruction, and *all through their cruel Mother.*”

He. re she burst into tears, and I pitied her so much that I said I hardly thought she was *cruel,*for she was in ignorance, and would never intentionally have neglected anything that was for her children’s good. “Don’t excuse me,” said she, “for if I had used my common sense, I might have known that my children were not like the sheep and the horses which die, and there’s an end of them. I never thought about it at all, or I might have known better; and I feel that I was a cruel Mother never to have considered their souls at all. They are all worldly, and none of them go to a place of worship, year in and year out. I never took them there, and how can I blame them? As soon as I was converted, I went .down to my eldest son, who has a large family, and I told him what the Lord had done for me, and entreated him to come here With me to the services; but he said he wondered what next, and he had no time. When I pleaded hard with him, he said he was sure I meant well, but ‘ it was no go,’ — he liked his Sunday at home too well to go to hear parsons. You know, sir, you can’t bend a tree; I ought to have bent the twig when I could have done it. Oh, if I had but led him to the house of God when he was little! He would have gone then, for he loved his Mother, and so he does now, but not enough to go where I want him. So, you see, I can do nothing with my son now. I was a cruel Mother, and let the boy go into the fields, or the streets, when he should have been in the Sunday-school. Oh, that I could have my time back again, and have all my children around me as little ones, that I might teach them about my blessed Savior! They are all beyond me now. What can I do?”

She sat down and wept bitterly, and I heartily wish all unconverted Mothers could have seen her, and heard her lamentations. It was very pleasant to know that she was; herself saved, and to see in her very sorrow the evidence of her genuine repentance; but, still, the evil which she lamented was a very terrible one, and might well demand a lifetime of mourning. Young Mother, do not, as you love your babe, suffer it to grow up without Divine instruction. But you cannot teach your child if you do not know the Lord Jesus yourself. May the good Lord lead you to give your heart to Christ at once, and then help you to train your dear little ones for Heaven!

There was one woman in Waterbeach who bore among her neighbors the reputation of being a regular virago, and I was told that, sooner or later, she would give me a specimen of her tongue-music. I said, “All right; but that’s a game at which two can play.” I am not sure whether anybody reported to her my answer; but, not long afterwards, I was passing her gate, one morning, and there stood the lady herself; and I must say that her vigorous mode of speech fully justified all that I had heard concerning her. The typical Billingsgate fish-woman would have been nowhere in comparison with her. I made up my mind how to act, so I smiled, and said, “Yes, thank you; I am quite well, I hope you are the same.” Then came another outburst of vituperation, pitched in a still higher key, to which I replied, still smiling, “Yes, it does look rather as if it is going to rain; I think I had better be getting on.” “Bless the man!” she exclaimed, “he’s as deaf as a post; what’s the use of storming at him?” So I bade her, “Good morning,” and I am not sure whether she ever came to the chapel to hear the “deaf” preacher who knew it was no use to give any heed to her mad ravings.

If I could have had a hope of doing her any good, I would have gone into her house, and talked with her, for I certainly went into some queer places while I was in that region.! used to think that, where my Master went, I need never be ashamed to go; and I have gone into some persons’ houses, before I came to London, that I should have felt ashamed to enter if they had not invited me on a Sabbath-day. As I have stepped in there for the purpose of giving them religious advice, some have said to me, “What! going into that house? .... Yes, and quite right, too. ‘The whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick.’” I have gone after “the lost sheep of the house of Israel,” and I have won their hearts because I went there, and talked to ‘them of their sins. But had I stayed away, there would have been something of this spirit, “Stand by, for I am holier than you are; I cannot enter your house, because you are such an outrageous sinner.” But when I go and talk to a man, and lay my hand on his shoulder, and ask him questions, he does not mind telling out his state of mind when I am under his own roof; and when I am gone, he says, “That man is not ashamed to speak to his fallows, I like that kind of preacher.”

While I was at Waterbeach, I had one man who caused me many bitter tears. When I first knew him, he was the ringleader in all that was bad; a tall, fine, big fellow, and one who could, perhaps, drink more than any man for miles around him, — a man who would curse and swear, and never knew a thought of fear. He was the terror of the neighborhood; there were many incendiary fires in the region, and most people attributed them to him. Sometimes, he would be drunk for two or three: weeks at a spell, and then he raved and raged like a madman. That man came to hear me; I recollect the sensation that went through the little chapel when he entered. He sat there, and fell in love with me; I think that was the only conversion that he experienced, but he professed to be converted. He had, apparently, been the subject of genuine repentance, and he became outwardly quite a changed character; he gave up his drinking and his swearing, and was in many respects an exemplary individual. All the parish was astonished. There was old Tom So-and-so weeping, and it was rumored about that he felt impressed; he began regularly to attend the chapel, and was manifestly an altered man. The public-house lost an excellent customer; he was not seen in the skittle-alley, nor was he detected in the drunken rows that were so common in the neighborhood. After a while, he ventured to come forward at the prayer-meeting; he talked about what he had experienced, what he had felt and known. I heard him pray; it was rough, rugged language, but there was such impassioned earnestness, I set him down as being a bright jewel in the Redeemer’s crown. He held out six, nay, nine months he persevered in our midst. If there was rough work to be done, he would do it; if there was a Sunday-school to be maintained, six or seven miles away, he would walk there. At any risk, he would be out to help in the Lord’s work; if he could but be of service to the meanest member of the Church of Christ, he rejoiced greatly. I remember seeing him tugging a barge, with perhaps a hundred people on board, whom he was drawing up to a place where I was going to preach; and he was glorying in the work, and singing as gladly and happily as any one of them. If anybody spoke a word against the Lord or His servant, he did not hesitate a moment, but knocked him over.

So he went on for a time; but, at last, the laughter to which he was exposed, the jeers and scoffs of his old companions, — though at first he bore them like a man, — became too much for him. He began to think he had been a little too fanatical, a little too earnest. He slunk up to the place of worship instead of coming boldly in; he gradually forsook the weeknight service, and then neglected the Sabbath-day; and, though often warned, and often rebuked, he returned to his old habits, and any thoughts of God or godliness that he had ever known, seemed to die away. He could again utter the blasphemer’s oath; once more he could act wickedly with the profane; and he — of whom we had often boasted, and said, in our prayer-meetings, “Oh! how much is God glorified by this man’s conversion! What cannot Divine grace do?” — to the confusion of us all, was to be seen sometimes drunk in our streets, and then it was thrown in our teeth, “This is one of your Christians, is it? — one of your converts gone back again, and become as bad as he was before?” Before. I left the district, I was afraid that there was no real work of grace in him. He was a wild Red Indian sort of a man; I have heard of him taking a bird, plucking it, and eating it raw in the field. That was not the act of a Christian man, it was not one of the things that are comely, and of good repute. After I left the neighborhood, I asked after him, and I could hear nothing good of him; he became worse than he was before, if that was possible; certainly, he was no better, and seemed to be unreachable by any agency.

Among my early hearers at Waterbeach was one good old woman whom I called “Mrs. Much-afraid.” I feel quite sure she has been many years in Heaven, but she was always fearing that she should never enter the gates of glory. She was very regular in her attendance at the house of God, and was a wonderfully good listener. She used to drink in the gospel; but, nevertheless, she was always doubting, and fearing, and trembling about her own spiritual condition. She had been a believer in Christ, I should think, for fifty years, yet she had always remained in that timid, fearful, anxious state. She was a kind old soul, ever ready to help her neighbors, or to speak a word to the unconverted; she seemed to me to have enough grace for two people, yet, in her own opinion, she had not half enough grace for one.

One day, when I was talking with her, she told me that she had not any hope at all; she had no faith; she believed that she was a hypocrite. I said, “Then don’t come to the chapel any more; we don’t want hypocrites there. Why do you come?” She answered, “I come because I can’t stop away. I love the people of God; I love the house of God; and I love to worship God.” “Well,” I said, “you are an odd sort of hypocrite; you are a queer kind of unconverted woman.” “Ah!” she sighed, “you may say what you please, but I have not any hope of being saved.” So I said to her, “Well, next Sunday, I will let you go into the pulpit, that you may tell the people that Jesus Christ is a liar, and that you cannot trust Him.” “Oh!” she cried, “I would be torn in pieces before I would say such a thing as that. Why, He cannot lie! Every word He says is true.” “Then,” I asked, “why do you not believe it?” She replied, “I do believe it; but, somehow,. I do not believe.’ it for myself; I am afraid whether it is for me.” “Have you not any hope at all?” I asked. “No,” she answered; so I pulled out my purse, and I said to her, “Now, I have got £5 here, it is all the money I have; but I will give you that £5 for your hope if you will sell it.” She looked at me, wondering what I meant. “Why!” she exclaimed, “I would not sell it for a thousand worlds.” She had just told me that she had not any hope of salvation, yet she would not sell it for a thousand worlds!

I fully expect to see that good old soul when I get to Heaven, and I am certain she will say to me, “Oh, dear sir, how foolish I was when I lived down there at Waterbeach! I went groaning all the way to glory when I might just as well have gone there singing. I was always troubled and afraid; but my dear Lord kept me by His grace, and brought me safely here.” She died very sweetly.; it was with her as John Bunyan said it was with Miss Much-afraid, Mr. Despondency’s daughter. Mr. Great-heart had much trouble with those poor pilgrims on the road to the Celestial City; for, if there was only a straw in the way, they were fearful that they would stumble over it. Yet Bunyan says, “When the time was come for them to depart, they went to the brink of the river. The last words of Mr. Despondency were, ‘ Farewell night, welcome day.’ His daughter went through the river singing.” Our Lord often makes it calm and peaceful, or even joyous and triumphant, for His departing timid ones. He puts some of His greatest saints to bed in the dark, and they wake up in the eternal light; but He frequently keeps the candle burning for Mr. Little-faith, Mr. Feeblemind, Mr. Ready-to-halt, Mr. Despondency, and Miss Much-afraid. They go to sleep in the light, and they also wake up in the land where the Lamb is all the glory for ever and ever.

CHAPTER 22.

THE LORD’S HAND BEHIND THE MAID’S MISTAKE.

The life of Jonah cannot be written without God; take God out of the prophet’s history, and there is no history to write. This is equally true of each one of us. Apart from God, there is no life, nor thought, nor act, nor career of any man, however lowly or how, Per high. Leave out God, and you cannot write the story of anyone’s career. If you attempt it, it will be so ill-written that it shall be clearly perceived that you have tried to make bricks without straw, and that you have sought to fashion a potter’s vessel without clay. I believe that, in a man’s life, the great secret of strength, and holiness, and righteousness, is the acknowledgment of Goal. When a man has no fear of God before his eyes, there is no wonder that he should run to an excess of meanness, and even to an excess of riot. In proportion as the thought of God dominates the mind, we may expect to find a life that shall be true, and really worth living; but in proportion as we forget God, we shall play the fool. It is the fool who says in his heart, “No God,” and it is the fool who lives and acts as if there were no God. In every godly life there is a set time for each event; and there is no need for us to ask, “*Why*is the white here and, the black there; why this gleam of sunlight and that roar of tempest; why here a marriage and there a funeral; why sometimes a harp and at other times a sackbut?” God knows, and it is a great blessing for us when we can leave it all in His hands. — C. H. S.

S OON after I had begun to preach the Word in the village of Waterbeach, I was strongly advised to enter Stepney, now Regents Park, College, to prepare more fully for the ministry. Knowing that solid learning is never an encumbrance, and is often a great means of usefulness, I felt inclined to avail myself of the opportunity of attaining it: although I hoped that 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, 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 exactly at the time appointed, and was shown into a room where I waited patiently 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 make inquiries as to the unreasonably long delay At last, patience having had her perfect work, and my school-engagements requiring me to attend to my duties as an usher, the bell was set in motion, and on the arrival of the servant, the waiting young man was informed that the Doctor had tarried in another room until he could stay no longer, and had ,gone off to London by train. The stupid girl had given no information to the family that anyone had called, and had been shown into the drawing-room; and, 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 thanked the Lord very heartily for the strange Providence which forced my steps into another 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 one of the village-stations of the Cambridge Lay Preachers’ Association, I walked slowly, in a meditative 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 a loud voice, but which may have been a singular illusion. Whichever it was, the impression was vivid to an intense degree; 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 another point of view, and to challenge my motives and intentions. I remembered the 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 solemnly 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, in all probability I had never been where and what I now am. I was conscientious in my obedience to the monition, and I have never seen cause to regret it.

Waiting upon the Lord for direction will never fail to afford us timely intimation of His will; for though the ephod is no more worn by a ministering priest, the Lord[ still guides His people by His wisdom, and orders all their paths in love; and in times of perplexity, by ways mysterious and remarkable, He makes them to “hear a voice behind them, saying, ‘ This is the way, walk ye in it.’” Probably, if our hearts were more tender, we might be favored with more of these sacred monitions; but, alas! instead thereof, we are like the horse and the mule, which have no understanding, and therefore the bit and bridle of affliction take the place of gentler means, else might that happier method be more often used, to which the psalmist alludes when he says, “*Thou*shalt guide me with Thine eye.”

(The following letters give further particulars concerning the proposed College course: — )  
“Cambridge,  
“Feb. 24, 1852.  
“My Dear Father,

“Mr. Angus, the tutor of Stepney College, preached for us on Sunday, Feb. 1. Being at my own place, I had no opportunity of seeing him, and was very surprised when, on Monday, I was told that he wanted to see me. I assure you, I

never mentioned myself to him, nor to anyone, — this came quite unexpectedly. I suppose the deacons of our church, hearing of my doings at Waterbeach, had thought right to mention me to him.

“Well, I went to the place of meeting; but, by a very singular occurrence, we

missed each other; he waited in the parlor, while I was shown into the drawing-room, and the servant forgot to tell him I had come. As he was going to London, and could not wait, he wrote the enclosed.”

(On the envelope containing the following letter, there is this note in Mr.

Spurgeon’s handwriting: —  
“Sent to Mr. Watts because he is my dear friend, and Mr. A. knew he would give it: to me. Mr. Watts treats me like a son; he is well qualified to be a father: he will do anything for me, I know.”)

“College,  
“Tuesday, Feb. 3, 1852.  
“Dear Sir,

“I am sorry that I missed seeing Mr. Spurgeon yesterday, and now write, through you, in the hope that you will lay this note before him. I cannot, of course’., in any way pledge our Committee in the matter; but if, on prayerfully considering the whole case, he apply for admission here, I can assure him of a candid, friendly consideration of his application. There is a great need of hearty, devoted ministers; and to form such, so that they may occupy important posts, and wear well, we need to ‘have them thoroughly furnished, especially with Bible knowledge. I should regret for your friend to settle without thorough preparation. He may be useful in either case, but his usefulness will be very much greater, it will fill at all events a wider sphere, with preparation than without it.

“Applications must be sent to us before May, our Session beginning in September; and if Mr. S. think further of it, I shall be glad in due time to hear from him.

“Yours truly,  
**“JOSEPH ANGUS.”**

“Mr. Watts,  
“Wood Merchant, etc.,  
“Cambridge.”

(Mr. Spurgeon’s letter to his father continues: — )

“I have waited thus long because (1) I wanted to get a little more to tell you; (2) I do not want to appear to desire to go to College at your expense. I do not

wish to go until I can pay for it with my own money, or .until friends offer to help, because I do not want to burden you. It is said by almost all friends that I ought to go to College: I have no very great desire for it; in fact, none at all. Yet I have made it a matter of prayer, and I trust, yea, I am confident, God will guide me.

“Of course, you are my only earthly director and guide in these matters; your judgment always has been best; you must know best. But perhaps you will allow me just to state my own opinion, not because I shall trust in it, but only that you may see my inclination. I think, then, (with all deference to you,) that I had better not go to College yet, at least not just now, for —

“ **1.** Whatever advantages are to be derived from such a course of study, I shall be more able to improve when my powers are more developed than they are at present. When I know more, I shall be more able to learn.

“ **2.** Providence has thrown me into a great sphere of usefulness, — a congregation of often 450, a loving and praying church, and an awakened audience. Many already own that the preaching has been with power from Heaven. Now, ought I to leave them?

“ **3.** In a few years’ time, I hope to improve my financial position, so as to be at no expense to you, or at least not for all. I should not like to know that you were burdening yourself for me. I should love to work my own way as much as possible. I know you like this feeling.

“ **4.** I am not uneducated. I have many opportunities of  
improvement now; all I want is more time; but even that, Mr. Leeding would give me, if it were so arranged. I have plenty of practice; and do we not learn to preach by preaching? You know what my style is. I fancy it is not very College-like. Let it be never so bad, God has blessed it, and I believe He will yet more. All I do right, He does in me, and the might is of Him. I am now well off; I think as well off as anyone of my age, and I am sure quite as happy. If I were in need, I think the people might be able to raise more for me. Now, shall I throw myself out, and trust to Providence as to whether I shall ever get another place as soon as I leave College?

“ **5.** But, no; — I have said enough, — you are to judge, not 1. I leave it to God and yourself; but, still, I should like you to decide in this way. Of course, I have a will, and you now know it; but I say, ‘ not mine, but your will, and God’s will.’

“I have just acknowledged the letter, and said that I could make no reply until I had consulted my friends. I think it might be as well, if you think so, too, to let Mr. Angus know’ as much as is right of my present position, that he may be favorable toward me at any future time...

“I hope you will excuse my scrawl, for, believe me, I am fully employed. Last night, I thought of writing; but was called out to see a ,:lying man, and I thought I dare not refuse. The people at W would not like to get even a hint of my leaving them. I do not know why they love me, but they do; it is the Lord’s doing.

“Give my love and many thanks to dear Mother, Archer, and sisters. If at any time you think a letter from me would be useful, just hint as much, and I will write one. May God keep me, in every place, from every evil, and dwell with you, and abide with you for ever; and with my best love,

“I am,  
“Dear Father,  
“Your affectionate son,

**“CHARLES.”**  
(Extract from C. H. Spurgeon’s letter to his father, March 9th, 1852: — )

“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 says the church there, unanimously, and so say three of our deacons at Cambridge.”

(Letter from Deacon King to C. H. Spurgeon’s father: — ) “Waterbeach,  
“March 20, ‘52.

“Dear Sir,

“Having heard, with deep regret, of your intention of placing your son at Stepney College, I write to say that, if you were aware of all the circumstances connected with his ministry at Waterbeach, I think you would defer doing so, at least for a time.

“Allow me to say that, since his’ coming, the congregation is very much increased, the aisles and vestry being often full, and many go away for want of room; there are several cases of his being made useful in awakening the careless; and although we have only known him about five months, the attachment is as strong as if we had been acquainted with him as many years; and if he were to leave us just now, it: would be the occasion of general *‘Lamentation, Mourning, and Woe.’*Added to which, he has no wish to go, but rather the reverse; and his friends in Cambridge, who previously recommended his going, now hesitate, and feel disposed to alter their opinion. If you, sir, could come over, and see for yourself, you would find that this account is not exaggerated, but perhaps would be ready to exclaim, ‘The hall was not told me.’ That we may be Divinely directed to act as shall be most conducive to the promotion of the Redeemer’s glory, in connection with the best interests of those around us,’ is: the sincere desire and earnest prayer of — “Yours respectfully,

“C. King, on behalf of the Church and Congregation.”

“P.S. — Our friends are very anxious that Mr. S. should continue with us at least a year. Your acceding to this would cause many devout thanksgivings to God, and we hope would be attended with lasting benefit to many amongst us. A line to this effect would much oblige.”

“April 6th, 1852. “My Dear Father,

“I am sorry that anything I said in my letter should have grieved you. It was nothing you *said*that made your letter a sad one; it was only my thoughts of leaving the people at ‘Beach. I thank you most sincerely for your very kind offer, and also for your assurance that I am at perfect liberty to act as I think it is the will of God I should act. I am sure I never imagined that you would force me, — it was only my poor way of expressing myself that caused the blunder, — and I do now most affectionately entreat forgiveness of you if I said anything that had a shadow of wrong in it, or if I have thought in any wrong manner. I have desired, all along, to act the part of a dutiful son to an affectionate parent; and if I fail, I feel sure that you and dear Mother will impute it rather to my weakness in act, than to a want of love.

“With regard to my decision, — I have said so much in my’ last that more would be unnecessary. I do really think it to be my duty to continue in the place which I now occupy, — for a short time at least. I have been assured that never were more tears shed in Waterbeach, at any time, than when I only hinted at leaving. They could[ not give me stronger tokens of their affection than they *did* give. One prayer went up from all,’ Lord, keep him here!’ I am assured by Mr. King that the’ people have had ministers whom one lot were very pleased with, but there always was a party opposed; but now, though he has a good scope for observation, he has not heard one opinion contrary to me. The Lord gave me favor with the people, and I am so young that they look over many faults; I believe this is one of the facts of the case. The worst is, I am in a dangerous place; the pinnacle is not so safe as the quiet vale. I know you pray that I may be kept humble, and I know I do. Oh, if the clouds pass without rain, how sorrowful I shall feel! When I have been thinking on the many difficulties in preaching the Word, the doctrine of election has been a great comfort to me. I *do*want men to be saved, and it is my consolation that a multitude no man can number are by God’s immutable decree ordained to eternal life. So we cannot labor in vain, we must have *some;*the covenant renders that secure.

“I shall always be glad o! some of your skeletons, for though I do not want them to make me lazy, yet they give some hints when a passage does not open at once. It will be too much trouble for you to write them, but I have no doubt Archer will copy them for me ..... As to my cash, I have bought a great many books lately, for my constant work requires them, and you know Mr. L. would not have many of the class of books I want. Yet I calculate on having £15 in hand at Midsummer, or by God’s blessing, more. I think that (of course, I mean, if God prosper me,) I shall be able to save enough to put myself to College, and if not, if I should go, which, as you say, is not very certain, why then friends at Cambridge would help me if I could not manage it. Has taken the positive steps yet with regard to joining the church? If not, tell her, *I blush that she should blush to own her Lord.*Do not forget me in earnest prayer ..... My very best love to my dear Mother. I am sure she can tell all the Mothers in the world that parents’ prayers are not forgotten. I daresay you think God saved the worst first; if you do not, I do. I believe I have given you more trouble than any of the others, but I did not mean it; and I still believe that I have given you joy, too, and I hope the trouble, though not repaid, will yet be recompensed by a comfort arising from seeing me walk in the truth. Remember me to Emily.... The little ones are getting big, I suppose; my love to them, I hope they will be God’s daughters.

“I remain,  
“Your affectionate son,  
**“CHARLES.”**  
(Part of undated letter from C. H. Spurgeon to his Mother; the first portion is missing: — )

“I need your prayers doubly at this time. I know I shall have them, and I believe I have felt the blessing of them more than once. The Lord visit you both, and bear you up in His everlasting arms! Troubles you have had, but I believe the comforts have always kept you joyful in tribulation; cast down, but not in despair.

“Bless the Lord, I must say, for making me His son; ‘tis of His own sovereign mercy. not one good thing has failed. I have felt corruptions rise, and the old man is strong, — but grace always comes in just at the critical time, and saves me from myself. The Lord keep me! I have no hope of going on well but by His power. I know that His almighty arm is all-sufficient. Get everyone you can to pray for me; a prayer is more precious than gold, it makes me rich. Lift up your’ arms, like Moses; there is a great battle both in me and out of me. Jesus intercedes; sweet thought, to one who needs just such a Pleader. Jehovah-Jesus, His people’s buckler, is near; an ever-present help in time of trouble; not afar off. We live in Him, He is all around us; who shall destroy His favorites, His darlings? I have had for one of my sermons, John 15:9: ‘As the Father hath loved Me, so have I loved you: continue ye in My love.’ Here is (1.) *Love without beginning.*God never began to love Jesus. (2.) *Love without limit.*God loves Jesus with an unbounded love. (3.) *Love without change.*God always loved Jesus alike:, equally. (4.) *Love without end.*When will God leave off loving Jesus? Even so does Jesus love you and me.

**“*‘The weakest saint shall win the day,  
Though death and hell obstruct the way.’***

“How are all Christian friends? Love to Mr. Langford, and my best respects; tell him I desire: a special interest in his prayers. I want to feel ‘ less than nothing,’ but this is a very great attainment. Thank Father for his letter; the Lord of hosts prosper his labors abundantly! My very best love to yourself I hope, if it is right:, that your hands are well. Kiss the little ones, and give them my love. May they learn of Jesus! I am glad Archer gets on so well; may your ten thousand prayers for us be answered by Him that heareth prayer! Emily is stronger, I hope, ask her to think whether she loves Jesus with all her heart.

“I should very much like to know where Aunt lives. I have asked several times, but I have not learned yet. I do not expect many letters from home. Father is so much engaged, that I wonder I get so many. If you want to know any points in which I am not quite explicit enough, write and ask at any time.

My affairs are your affairs. I hope always to do that which you would approve of.  
“Love to all once more, —  
“From your affectionate son,  
**“CHARLES.”**  
(Extract from letter from C. H. Spurgeon to his Mother, November, 1852: — )

“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 that I held back from love to God and His cause, and [ 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 that I have been at Waterbeach, I have had a different house for my home every Sabbath 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 ‘tis false! They do all they can. Our anniversary passed off grandly’ six were baptized; crowds on crowds stood by the river; the chapel was afterwards crammed, both to the tea and the sermon.”

At this anniversary, (in 1852,) my venerable friend, Mr. Cornelius Elven, of Bury St. Edmund’s, as a man of mark in that region, was requested to preach, and right well do I remember his hearty compliance with my request. I met him at the station as he alighted from a third-class carriage, which he had selected in order to put the friends to the least possible expense for his traveling. His bulk was stupendous, and one soon saw that his heart was as large as his body. There was a baptismal service in the river in connection with the anniversary, but Mr. Elven said that he could not go into the water with us, for if he got wet through, there were no garments nearer than Bury St. Edmund’s that would fit him. He gave me much sage and holy advice during his visit, advice which came to me with much the same weight as Paul’s words came to Timothy. F17 He bade me study hard, and mind and keep abreast of the foremost Christians in our little church; “for,” said he, “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.” I felt the common sense of the observation, and the spur was useful. The sermons of the day were very homely in style, and preeminently practical. I remember his reading the narrative of Naaman the Syrian, and his pithy comments thereon. He seemed to have taken Matthew Henry for his model, and in the course of one of the services he gave us Henry’s inimitable description of the Father receiving the prodigal, which occurs in the commentator’s exposition of Luke 15. With a voice deeptoned and graciously tender, he said:*—* “When he was yet a great way off, his father saw him,’ — here were eyes of mercy; ‘ and had compassion,’ — here were bowels of mercy; ‘and ran,’ — here were feet of mercy; ‘ and fell on his neck,’ — here were arms of mercy; ‘ and kissed him,’ — here were lips of mercy; — it was all mercy!” But one thing above all others fixed itself upon my memory, and when I heard of the good man’s departure, it came before me with great vividness; he told me anecdotes of the usefulness of addressing individuals one by one about their souls, and urged the duty upon me with great earnestness, quoting again and again from the life of a certain Harlan Page. Being busy with a thousand matters, I had never looked up the biography which he so strongly recommended; but my first thought, when I learned of his death, was, Harlan Page. Cornelius Elven completed an honorable ministry of fifty years in his native town, and passed away amid the respectful regrets of all the inhabitants, and the deep affection of his church. He was a man of large and loving heart, with a vivacious mind, and interesting manner of ‘utterance. He was not only the friend of my youth, but he also preached for me in London in after days. He used, with a merry laugh, to tell the story of a lady who came to hear me at New Park Street, but putting her head inside the door, and seeing the vast form of Cornelius Elven, she retreated, exclaiming, “No, no; the man has too much of the flesh about him, I cannot hear him.” It was a very unjust judgment, for the dear man’s great bulk was a sore affliction to him. Peace to his memory! I weave no lading Wreath for his tomb, but I catch the gleaming of that immortal crown which the Master has placed upon his brow. He was a good man, full of faith and of the Holy Ghost.

(Professor Everett has preserved the following reminiscence of this period: —

“In or about 1852, I was occupying a post in a high-class school, — Mr. Thorowgood’s, at Totteridge, near London, — and there being a vacancy for another assistant, I wrote, with Mr. Thorowgood’s approval, to my old friend Spurgeon, proposing that he should come and fill it. He asked for a few days to decide definitely, and then wrote declining, chiefly on the ground that he was unwilling to renounce the evangelistic work which he combined with the position ‘he then held. He stated, then, or in a subsequent letter, that he had preached more than three hundred times in the previous twelve months, and that the chapel at Waterbeach was not only full, but crowded with outside listeners at the open windows.”)

CHAPTER 23.

REMINISCENCES AS A VILLAGE PASTOR.

My witness is, and I speak it for the honor of God, that He is a good Provider. I have been east upon the Providence of God ever since I left my father’s house, and in all cases He has been my Shepherd, and I have known no lack. My first income as a Christian minister was small enough in all conscience, never exceeding fortyfive pounds a year; yet I was as rich then as I am now, for I had enough; and I had no more cares, nay, not half as many then as I have now; and when I breathed my prayer to God then, as I do now, for all things temporal and spiritual, I found Him ready to answer me at every pinch, — and full many pinches I have had. Many a pecuniary trial have I had in connection with the College work, which depends for funds upon the Lord’s moving His people to liberality: my faith has been often tried, but God has always been faithful, and sent supplies in hours of need If any should tell me that prayer to God was a mere piece of excitement, and that the idea of God answering human cries is absurd, I should laugh the statement to scorn, for my experience is not that of one or two singular instances, but that of hundreds of cases, in which the Lord’s interposition, for the necessities of His work, has been as manifest as if He had rent the clouds, and thrust forth His own naked arm and bounteous hand to supply the needs of His servant. — C. H. S.

W HEN I became Pastor at Waterbeach, the people could do very little for my support, and therefore I was an usher in a school at Cambridge at the same time. After awhile, I was obliged to give up the latter occupation, and was thrown on the generosity of the people. They gave me a salary of £45 a year, but as I had to pay 12s. a week for two rooms which I occupied, my income was not sufficient to support me; but the people, though they had not money, had produce, and I do not think there was a pig killed by any one of the congregation without my having some portion of it, and one or other of them, when coming to the market at Cambridge, would bring me bread, so that I had enough bread and meat to pay my rent with, and I often paid my landlady in that fashion.

There was one old man at Waterbeach who was a great miser. On one of my visits to the place, after I had removed to London, I heard that, in his last illness, he had a bed made up in the sitting-room downstairs, and ordered his grave to be dug just outside the window, so as to reduce the cost of his funeral as much as possible. One of the friends who was talking about him said, “*He*was never known to give anything to anybody.” “*Well,*” I replied, “*I*know better than that, for, one Sunday afternoon, he gave me three half-crowns and as I was wanting a new hat at the time, I got it with the money.” “Well,” rejoined the friend, “I am quite sure he never forgave himself for such extravagance as that, and that he must have wanted his three half-crowns back again.” “Ah, but!” I answered, “*you* have not heard the whole of the story yet, for, the following Sunday, the old man came to me again, and asked me to pray for him that he might be saved from the sin of covetousness, “*for,*” said he, “*the*Lord told me to give you half-a-sovereign, but I kept back half-a-crown, and I can’t rest of a night for thinking of it.”

(Dr. D. A. Doudney, describing an interview with Mr. Spurgeon at “Westwood,” wrote in *The Gospel Magazine*for March, 1892: — “Among other subjects brought up was that of Dr. Gill’s *Commentary.*I was asked by Mr. Spurgeon how it was that I was led to reproduce it. Its truthful character was urged as a reason, as well as its great price putting it beyond the power of ministers in general to possess it. My own copy simply bound in plain canvas boards had cost me f6 10s. Moreover, I was anxious to set up an Industrial School, and thus find occupation for the youths of the parish. ‘ In what volume,’ asked Mr. Spurgeon, ‘did the names of the subscribers appear?’ I could not recollect, but, withdrawing for a moment to his study, he quickly reappeared with the fourth volume of the Old Testament, — the last issued upon the completion of the work, and, pointing to his own name, said, ‘ You published it in half-crown parts, or else I could not have taken it in.’ Here was a fair specimen of Mr. Spurgeon’s character, — his proverbial simplicity and honesty. How few, in like manner, amid such surroundings, and having attained, as he had, to such a name, and such a popularity, would have made that frank statement,’ You published it in half-crown parts, or I could not have taken it in.’”  
The following inscriptions, in Mr. Spurgeon’s handwriting, are in his set of volumes of Dr. Gill’s *Commentary: —*

In Vol. 1. — “I subscribed for this, and took the monthly parts. “C. H. SPURGEON, 1852.  
“To this Author’s Pulpit I was permitted to succeed in 1854. “C*.*H. SPURGEON.”

In Vol. V.*—*“I subscribed for these vols. of Gill in monthly parts, and had them bound. December, 1852.  
“C. H. SPURGEON,  
“living in Cambridge,  
“Baptist Minister of Waterbeach.

“In April, 1854, unanimously elected Pastor of the same Church, which once met in Carter Lane, under Dr. Gill, and then Dr. Rippon, — now New Park Street, Southwark.

“In the year 186I, this Church migrated to the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Newington Butts, having far outgrown the space of New Park Street Chapel.”

In Vol. V1. — “Many sneer at Gill, but he is not to be dispensed with. In some respects, he has no superior. He is always well worth consulting. “C. H. S. 1886.”  
In Vol. IV., as stated by Dr. Doudney, Mr. Spurgeon’s name appears in the list of subscribers to the work: —  
“Spurgeon, C., Union Road, Cambridge.”)

Of late years, I have heard a great deal against deacons, and have read discussions as to their office, evidently suggested by no idolatrous reverence for their persons: Many of my brethren in the ministry bitterly rate them, others tremble at the mention of their very name; and a few put on their armor, and prepare to do battle with them wherever they go, as if they were the dragons of ministerial life. I have been accused of saying that “a deacon is worse than a devil, for if you resist the devil, he will flee from you, but if you resist a deacon, he will fly at you.” This is no saying of mine; I never had any cause to speak so severely; and although, in some cases, it may be true, I have never had any experimental proof that it is so. not one in a hundred of the sayings that are fathered upon me are mine at all; and as to this one, it was in vogue before I was born. I pardon the man who preached from James 1. 6 before that drunken Solomon, James 1. of England and V1. of Scotland, — the temptation was too great to be resisted; but let the wretch be for ever execrated, if such a man really lived, who celebrated the decease of a deacon by a tirade from the words, “*It* came to pass that the beggar died.” I forgive the liar who attributed such an outrage to me, but I hope he will not try his infamous arts upon anyone else.

My observation of deacons leads me to say that, as a rule, they are quite as good men as the pastors, and the bad and good in the ministry and the diaconate are to be found in very much the same proportions. If there be lordly deacons, are there not lordly pastors? If there be ignorant, crotchety men among deacons, are there not their rivals in our pulpits? The Church owes an immeasurable debt of gratitude to those thousands of godly men who study her interests day and night, contribute largely of their substance, care for her poor, cheer her ministers, and in times of trouble as well as prosperity, remain faithfully at their posts. Whatever there may be here and there of mistake, infirmity, and even wrong. I am sure, from wide and close observation, that the most of our deacons are an honor to our faith, and we may style them, as the apostle did his brethren, “*the*glory of Christ.” The deacons of my first village pastorate were in my esteem the excellent of the earth, in whom I took great delight. Hard-working men on the week-day, they spared no toil for their Lord on the Sabbath; I loved them sincerely, and do love them still. In my opinion, they were as nearly the perfection of deacons of a country church as the kingdom could afford.

Yet, good as my deacons were, they were not perfect in all respects. I proposed to them, on one occasion, that I should preach on the Sunday evening by the river side, and the remark was made by one of them, “Ah! I do not like it, it is imitating the Methodists.” To him, as a sound Calvinist, it was a dreadful thing to do anything which Methodists were guilty of; to me, however, that was rather a recommendation than otherwise, and I was happy to run the risk of being Methodistical. All over England, in our cities, towns, villages;, and hamlets, there are tens of thousands who never will hear the gospel while open-air preaching is neglected. I rejoice that God *allows*us to preach in churches and chapels, but I do not pretend that we have any apostolical precedent for it, certainly none for confining our ministry to such places. I believe that we are permitted, if it promotes order and ,edification, to set apart buildings for our worship; but there is no warrant for calling these places sanctuaries and houses of God, for all places are alike holy where holy men assemble. It is altogether a mischievous thing that we should confine our preaching within walls. Our Lord, it is true, preached in the synagogues, but He often spake on the mountain side, or from a boat, or in the court of a house, or in the public thoroughfares. To Him, an audience was the only necessity. He was a Fisher of souls of the true sort, and not like those: who sit still in their houses, and expect the fish to come to them to be caught. Did our Lord intend a minister to go on preaching from his pulpit to empty pews, when, by standing on a chair or a table outside the meeting-house, he might be heard by hundreds? I believe not, and I held the same opinion at the very beginning of my ministry, so I preached by the river side, even though my good deacon thought that, by so doing, I was imitating the Methodists.

Another of those worthy brethren, a dear old Christian man, said to me, one day, when I was at his house to dinner, “My dear sir, I wish you would not preach those: *invitation sermons.*You are too general in your appeals; you seem to press the people so much to come to Christ. I do not like it; for it is not at all consistent with my doctrinal views.” “Well,” I replied, “what would you have me preach?” “Well, sir,” he said, “though I don’t like such preaching, yet it is evident that the Lord does; for my son-in-law was converted to God under one of those sermons; and when I came home, the other Sunday, so angry with you for being such a Fullerite, there was my daughter crying fit to break her heart; so,” he added, “don’t you take any notice of an old man like me. As long as God blesses you, you go on in your own way.” I said to him, “*But,*my clear brother, don’t you think, if God approves of this kind of preaching, that you ought to like it, too?*....*Well,” he answered, “*perhaps*I ought; but I am an old man, and! have always been brought up in those views. I am afraid I shall not get out of them; but don’t you take the slightest notice of what I say.” That was exactly what I had determined in my own mind that I would do, so we agreed after all.

One of my Waterbeach deacons was named King. He was a very methodical man, and kept the accounts and the church-books in admirable order. He was a calm, thoughtful, judicious brother; but he had a full proportion of zeal and warmth. His wife was made to match, and the pair were second to none in the village for grace and wisdom. Mr. King was a miller; and in his cottage by the mill I have often spent a happy night, and have met his excellent son, who was then the Pastor of the Baptist Church in Aldreth, Cambridgeshire. I remember our hearty laugh at the junior King, for borrowing a horse to ride to a preaching engagement, and then appearing at the place *leading the horse,*having only ridden him a very little way, and walked with him all the rest of the road because he seemed skittish. The elder Mr. King once gave me a kindly hint in a very delicate manner. He did not tell me that I should speak more guardedly in the pulpit; but when I left his house, one Monday morning, I found a pin in my Bible, stuck through Titus i1. 8: “Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.” nothing could have been in better taste. The wise rebuke was well deserved and lovingly taken. It was so deftly given that its value was thereby increased indefinitely. Mr. King was a deacon of deacons to me, and to the Waterbeach Church; and his son was worthy of such a father.

On one occasion, there had been a meeting to raise money for homemission work; the collection had just been made, and the deacons had brought all the plates to the table-pew, when an old gentleman entered. He could not help being late at the meeting, though his heart was there all the time. His feet would have carried him down to the chapel two hours before, only duty forbade. As soon, however, as he had concluded his business, off he walked, saying to himself, “I’m afraid I shall be too late, but I shall at least hear how they have go on. The Lord grant a blessing on the meeting, and on the good work in hand!” It was Father Sewell, — an Israelite indeed, — the very image of Old Mr. Honest in Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress.*As soon as I caught sight of my aged friend, I said, “Our brother who has just come in will, I am sure, close the meeting by’ offering prayer for God’s blessing on the proceedings of this evening.” He stood up, but he did not pray. He did not shut his eyes; but, on the contrary, he seemed to be looking for something. He did not clasp his hands, but put them into his pockets, and fumbled there with much perseverance. “I am afraid,” I said, “that my brother did not understand me. Friend Sewell, I did not ask you to *give,*but *to pray.*” “Ay, ay!” replied the straightforward, bluff old saint, “but I could not pray till I had given; it would be hypocrisy to ask a blessing on that which I did not think worth giving to.” There was not the least ostentation in the good man; it was his honest heart pouring out its true feelings; and, odd as his behavior seemed, his conduct preached the whole congregation such a sermon as they would not readily forget.

In my first pastorate, I had often to battle with Antinomians, — that is, people who held that, because they believed themselves to be elect, they might live as they liked. I hope that heresy has to a great extent died out, but it was sadly prevalent in my early ministerial days. I knew one man, who stood on the table of a public house, and held a glass of gin in his hand, declaring all the while that he was one of the chosen people of God. They kicked him out of the public-house, and when I heard of it, I felt that it served him right. Even those ungodly men said that they did not want any such “elect” people there. There is no one who can live in sin, — drinking, swearing, lying, and so on, — who can truly declare that he is one of the Lord’s chosen people. I recollect one such man, — and he was a very bad fellow, — yet he had the hardihood to say, “*I*know that I am one of God’s dear people.” “So you are,” said I; “dear at any price, either to be given or thrown away!” He did not like my plain Speaking, but it was true; for that was the only sense in which he was one of God’s dear people. From my very soul, I detest everything that in the least savors of the Antinomianism which leads people to prate about being secure in Christ while they are living in sin. We cannot be saved *by or for*our good works, neither can we be saved *without*good works. Christ never will save any of His people *in*their sins; He saves His people *from*their sins. If a man is not desiring to live a holy life in the sight of God, with the help of the Holy Spirit, he is still “*in*the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.” I used to know a man of this class, who talked a great deal about “*saving faith.*” He was notorious for his evil life, so I could not make out what he meant by saving faith, until the collection was taken, and I noticed how carefully he put his fingernail round a threepenny piece for fear lest it should be a fourpenny; then I understood his meaning. But the idea of “saving faith” apart from good works, is ridiculous. The saved man is not a perfect man; but his heart’s desire is to become perfect, he is always panting after perfection, and the day will come when he will be perfected, after the image of his once crucified and now glorified Savior, in knowledge and true holiness.

While I was minister at Waterbeach, I used to have a man sitting in front of the gallery, who would always nod his head when I was preaching what he considered sound doctrine, although he was about as bad an old hypocrite as ever lived. When I talked about justification, down went his head; when I preached about imputed righteousness, down it went again. I was a dear good man in his estimation, without doubt. So I thought I would cure him of nodding, or at least make his head keep still for once; so I remarked, “*There*is a great deal of difference between God electing you, and your electing yourself; a vast deal of difference between God justifying you by His Spirit, and your justifying yourself by a false belief, or presumption; this is the difference,” said I, — and the old man at once put me down as a rank Arminian, — “you who have elected yourselves, and justified yourselves, have no marks of the Spirit of God; you have no evidence of genuine piety, you are not holy men and women, you can live in sin, you can walk as sinners walk, you have the image of the devil upon you, and yet you call yourselves the children of God. One of the first evidences that anyone is a child of God is that he hates sin with a perfect hatred, and seeks to live a holy, Christlike life.” The old Antinomian did not approve of that doctrine; but I knew that I was preaching what was revealed in the Word of God.

There was another man, of that sort, who at one time frequently walked out with me into the villages where I was going to preach. I was glad of his company till I found out certain facts as to his manner of life, and then I shook him off, and I believe: he hooked himself on to somebody else, for he must needs be gadding abroad every evening of the week. He had many children, and they grew up to be wicked men and women; and the reason was, that the father, while he was constantly busy at this meeting and that, never tried to bring his own boys and girls to the Savior. He said to me, one day, “*I*never laid my hand upon my children;” so I answered, “*Then*I think it is very likely that God will lay His hand upon you.” “*Oh!*” he said, “*I*have not even spoken sharply to them.” “*Then,*” I replied, “*it*is highly probable that God will speak very sharply to you; for it is not His will that parents should leave their children unrestrained in their sin.”

I knew another man, in those early days, who used to travel a long distance every Sabbath to hear what he called “*the*truth.” Neither his wide nor any of his children went to any place of worship, and when I talked to him very seriously about them, he told me that “*the*Lord would save His own;” to which I could not help replying that the Lord would not “*own*” him. He demanded my authority for that statement, so I gave him this proof-text, “If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.” One of his companions said to me, one day, that he knew how many children of God there were in the parish were he lived; there were *exactly five. I*was curious to learn their names, so I asked him who the five were, and much to my amusement he began by saying, “*There*is *myself.*” I stopped him at this point, with the query whether he was quite sure about the *first*one. Since then, his character has gone I know not where, but certainly he will get on better without it than with it; yet he was the first on his own list, and a few others of the same black sort made up the five. There were, in the other places of worship to which he did not go, men, whose .characters for integrity and uprightness, ay, and for spirituality and prayerfulness, would have been degraded by being put into comparison with his; yet he set himself up as judge in Israel, and pretended to know exactly how many people of God were in the village. “The Lord knoweth them that are His.” I bless God that I have learned to have very little respect for the vision of *the man*with the measuring line. When I see an angel with it, I am glad enough; but when I see: *a man*with it, I tell him that he must give me a warrant from God, and show me how he is to know the elect by any other method than that laid down by our Lord Jesus Christ: “By their fruits shall ye know them.”

I have sometimes been greatly obliged to a wicked world for what it has done to inconsistent professors of religion. While I was Pastor at Waterbeach, a certain young man joined the church. We thought he was a changed character, but there used to be in the village, once a year, a great temptation in the form of a feast; and when the feast came round, this foolish fellow was there in very evil company. He was in the long room of a public house, in the evening, and when I heard what happened, I really felt intense gratitude to the landlady of that place. When she came in, and saw him there, she said, “Halloa, Jack So-and-so, are *you*here? Why, you are one of Spurgeon’s lot, yet you are here; you ought to be ashamed of yourself. This is not fit company for you. Put him out of the window, boys.” And they did put him out of the window on the Friday night, and we put him out of the door on the Sunday, for we removed his name from our church-book. Where was he to go to? The world would not have him, and the church would not have him; if he had been all for the world, the world would have made something of him; and if he had been all for Christ, Christ would have made something of him. But as he tried to be a little for each, and so nothing to either, his life became a wretched one; as he walked the streets, people pointed at him with scorn. The Christians turned away, thinking him a hypocrite, as I fear he was; and the worldlings called him one, and made: his name a by-word and a proverb.

In those early days, I had sometimes to contend with the Antinominian preachers as well as With their people. I once found myself in the midst of a company of ministers and friends, who were disputing whether it was a sin in men that they did not believe the gospel. Whilst they were discussing, I said, “Gentlemen, am I in the presence of Christians? Are you believers in the Bible, or are you not?” They said, “We are Christians, of course.” “Then,” said I, “does not the Scripture say, ‘of sin, because they believe not on Me’? And is it not the damning sin’ of men, that they do not believe on Christ?” I should not have imagined, if I had not myself heard them, that any persons would be so wicked as to. venture to assert that “it is no sin for a sinner not to believe on Christ.” I should have thought that, however far they might wish to push their sentiments, they would not tell a lie to uphold the truth; and, in my opinion, this is what such men really do. Truth is a strong tower, and never requires to be buttressed with error. God’s Word will stand against all man’s devices. I would never invent a sophism to prove that it is no sin on the part of the ungodly not to believe, for I am sure it is. When I am taught in the Scriptures that “this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light,” and when I read, “*He*that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God,” I affirm, and the Word declares it, *unbelief is a sin.*Surely, with rational and unprejudiced persons, it cannot require any reasoning to prove it. Is it not a sin for a creature to doubt the Word of its Maker? Is it not a crime and an insult to the Deity, for me, an atom, a particle of dust, to dare to deny His Words? Is it not the very summit of arrogance and the height of pride for a son of Adam to say, even in his heart, “God, I doubt Thy grace; God, I doubt Thy love; God, I doubt Thy power”? I feel that, could we roll all sins into one mass, — could we take murder, blasphemy, lust, adultery, fornication, and everything that is vile, and unite them all into one vast globe of black corruption, — they would not even then equal the sin of unbelief. This is the monarch sin, the quintessence of guilt, the mixture of the venom of all crimes, the dregs of the wine of Gomorrah; it is the A1 sin, the masterpiece of Satan, the chief work of the devil. Unbelief hardened the heart of Pharaoh, — it gave license to the tongue of blaspheming Rabshakeh, — yea, it became a deicide, and murdered’ the Lord Jesus Christ. Unbelief! it has mixed many a cup of poison it has brought thousands to the gallows, and many to a shameful grave, who have murdered themselves, and rushed with bloody hands before their Creator’s tribunal, because of unbelief. Give me an unbeliever, — let me know that he doubts ‘God’s Word, — let me know that he distrusts His promise and His threatening; and with that for a premise, I will conclude that the man shall, by-and-by, unless them is amazing restraining power exerted upon him, be guilty of the foulest and blackest crimes. Unbelief is a Beelzebub sin; like Beelzebub, it is the leader of all evil spirits. It is said of Jeroboam that he sinned, and made Israel to sin; and it may be said of unbelief that it not only itself sins, but it makes others sin; it is the egg of all crime, the seed of every offense; in fact, everything that is evil and vile lies couched in that one word unbelief.

In striking contrast to those apologists for sin, I met in my first pastorate, as I have often done since, a number of persons who professed to be perfect, and who said that they had lived so many months or years without sinning against God. One man, who told me that he was perfect, was hump-backed; and when I remarked that I thought, if he were a perfect man, he ought to have a perfect body, he became so angry that I said to him, “*Well,*my friend, if *you*are perfect, there are a great many’ more as near perfection as you are.” “*Oh*!” he exclaimed, “*I*shall feel it for having been betrayed into anger.” He said that he had not been angry for many years; I had brought him back to his old state of infirmity, and painful as it might be for him, I have no doubt that it did him good to see himself as he really was. When a man thinks that he is a full-grown Christian, he reminds me of a poor boy whom I used to see. He had such a splendid head for his body that he had often to lay it on a pillow, for it was too weighty for his shoulders to carry, and his Mother told me that, when he tried to stand up, he often tumbled down, overbalanced by his heavy head. There are some people who appear to grow very fast, but they have water on the brain, and are out of due proportion; but he who truly grows in grace does not say, “Dear me! I can feel that I am growing; bless the Lord! Let’s sing a hymn, ‘I’m a growing! I’m a growing!’” I have often felt that I was growing smaller; I think that is very probable, and a good thing, too. If we are very great in our own estimation, it is because we have a number of cancers, or foul gatherings, that need to be’. lanced, so as to let out the bad matter that causes us to boast of our bigness.

Our Wesleyan brethren have a notion that they are going to be perfect here on earth. I should be very glad to see them when they are perfect; and if any of them happen to be in the position of servants, wanting situations, I would be happy to give them any amount of wages I could spare, for I should feel myself highly honored and greatly blessed in having perfect servants; and what is more, if any of them are masters, and need servants, I would undertake to come and serve them without any wages at all if I could but find a perfect master. I have had one perfect Master ever since I first knew the Lord, and if I could be sure that there is another perfect master, I should be greatly pleased to have him as an under-master, while the great Supreme must ever be chief of all. One man, who said he was perfect, called upon me once, and asked me to go and see him, for I should receive valuable instruction from him if I did. I said, “I have no doubt it would be so; but I should not like to go to your house, I think I should hardly be able to get into one of your rooms.” “How is that?” he inquired. “Well,” 1 replied, “I suppose that your house would be so full of angels that there would be no room for me.” He did not like that remark; and when I made one or two other playful observations, he went into a towering rage. “Well, friend,” I said to him,” I think, after all, I am as perfect as you are; but *perfect men*ever get angry?” He denied that he was angry, although there was a peculiar redness about his cheeks, and a fiery flash in his eyes, that is very common to persons when they are in a passion. At any rate, I think I rather spoiled his perfection, for he evidently went home much less satisfied with himself than when he came out. I met another man who considered himself perfect, but he was thoroughly mad; and I do not believe that any of the pretenders to perfection are better than good maniacs, a superior kind of Bedlamites; for, while a man has got a spark of reason left in him, he cannot, unless he is the most impudent of impostors, talk about being perfect. He who imagines such a thing must be insane; for any man who examines himself for five minutes, in the light of God’s Word, will find enough in his own heart to drive from him any shadow of a thought about being perfect in this world. I have little patience with such willfully blind people, and when I hear of some who are said to be perfectly holy, and of others who are utterly foolish, I think the two classes are wonderfully alike. I have met with a few people who seemed to me almost perfect, but they have been the very ones who have groaned most over their own imperfections; while those with whom I have come into contact, who have professed to be holy and without blemish, have been the most imperfect individuals I have ever known.  
My own experience is a daily struggle with the evil within. I wish I could find in myself something friendly to grace; but, hitherto, I have searched my nature through, and have found everything in rebellion against God. At one time, there comes the torpor of sloth, when one ought to be active every moment, having so much to do for God, and for the souls of men, and so little time in which to do it. At another time, there comes the quickness of passion; when one should be calm and cool, and play the Christian, bearing with patience whatever has to be endured, there come the unadvised word and the rash expression. Anon, I am troubled with conceit, the devilish whisper, — I can call it no less, — “How well thou hast done! How nobly thou hast played thy part!” Then crawls out distrust, — foul and faithless, — suggesting that God does not regard the affairs of men, and will not interpose on my behalf. Yet, what would I not give if I might but be perfect! Sometimes, I think that, if God’s people mentioned in the Old and New Testaments had all been perfect, I should have despaired; but, because they seem to have had just the kind of faults I grieve over in myself, I do not feel any more lenient toward my faults, but I do rejoice that I also may say with each of them, “The Lord will *perfect*that which concerneth *me.*” He will most assuredly, beyond a doubt, bring to perfection my faith, my love, my hope, and every grace. He will perfect His own purposes; He will perfect His promises, He will perfect my body, and perfect my soul. While I am fully persuaded that perfection is absolutely impossible to any man beneath the sky, I feel equally sure that, to every believer, future perfection is certain beyond a doubt. The day shall come when the Lord shall not only make us better, but shall make us perfectly pure and holy; when He shall not merely subdue our lusts, but when He shall cast the demons out altogether; when He shall make us holy, and unblameable, and unreprovable in His sight. That day, however, I believe, shall not come until we enter into the joy of our Lord, and are glorified together with Christ in Heaven. Then, but not till then, shall He present us “*faultless*before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.”

While I was going about the Cambridgeshire villages, preaching and visiting, it often saddened me to see, especially in the houses of the poor, Roman Catholic pictures hanging on the walls, — I suppose, because they happened to be rather pretty, and very cheap. Popish publishers have very cleverly managed to get up pictures of the Virgin Mary, and the lying fable of her assumption to Heaven, and all sorts of legends of saints and saintesses; and being brightly colored, and sold at a low price, these vile productions have been introduced into thousands of houses. I have seen, to my horror, a picture of God the Father represented as an old man, — a conception almost too hideous to mention, — yet the picture is hung up in the cottages of England; whereas the Lord has expressly commanded us not to make any likeness or image of Him, or to try to represent His appearance in any way, and any attempt to do so is disobedient and even blasphemous.

It was grievous also to find what gross ignorance prevailed among many of the villagers concerning the way of salvation. They seemed, somehow, to have got into their heads the notion that they could not be saved because they could not read, and did not know much. Frequently, when I asked anything about personal salvation, I received the answer, “Oh, sir, I never had any learning!” and that was supposed to be a sufficient excuse for not having repented of sin, and trusted in the Savior. Yet the unlearned need not stay away from Christ. It was said of an old Greek philosopher, that he wrote over his door, “None but the learned may enter here;” but Christ, on the contrary, writes over His door, “He that is simple, let him turn in hither.” I can ‘testify that great numbers of those humble country folk accepted the Savior’s invitation, and it was delightful to see what a firm grip they afterwards had of the verities of the faith; many of them became perfect masters in divinity. I used to think, sometimes, that if they had degrees who deserved them, diplomas would often be transferred, and given to those who hold the plough-handle or work at the carpenter’s bench; for there is often more divinity in the little finger of a ploughman than there is in the whole body of some of our modern divines. “Don’t they understand divinity?” someone asks. Yes, in the letter of it; but as to the spirit and life of it, D.D. often means DOUBLY DESTITUTE.

An incident that I once witnessed at Waterbeach furnished me with an illustration concerning death. A company of villagers, the younger branches of a family, were about to emigrate to another land. The aged Mother, who had not for some years left her cottage fireside, came to the railway-station from which they must start. I stood among the sorrowful group as their friend and minister. I think I see the many embraces which the fond Mother gave to her son and daughter, and her little grandchildren; I can picture them folding their arms about her aged neck, and then saying farewell to all the friends in the village who had come to bid them adieu. A shrill sound is heard; it sends a pang through all hearts, as if it were the messenger of death to her who is about to lose the props of her household. In great haste, at the small village station, the passengers are hurried to their seats; they thrust their heads out of the carriage window; the aged parent stands on the very edge of the platform that she may take her last look at them. There is a whistle: from the engine, and away goes the train. In an instant, the poor woman, jumping from the platform, rushes along the railway, with all her might crying, “My children! My children! My children! They are gone, and I shall never see them again.” The illustration may not be classical; but, nevertheless, I have been reminded of it by many a death, when I have seen the godly suddenly snatched away. They have gone from us, swiftly as the wind itself could bear them, or as the hasty ,Naves of the sea could bury them out of our sight. It is our affliction and trouble that we must remain behind and weep, for they are gone beyond recall; yet there is something pleasant in the picture. It is but a departure; — they are not destroyed; they are not blown to atoms; they are not taken away to prison; — ’tis but a departure from one place to another. They still live; they still are blessed. While we weep, they are rejoicing; while we mourn, they are singing psalms of praise; and, by-and-by, in God’s good time, we shall meet them again, to be parted no more for ever.

There was an amusing incident in my early Waterbeach ministry which I have never forgotten. One day, a gentleman, who was then mayor of Cambridge, and who had more than once tried to correct my youthful mistakes, asked me if I really had told my congregation that, if a thief got into Heaven, he would begin picking the angels’ pockets. “Yes, sir,” I replied, “I told them that, if it were possible for an ungodly man to go to Heaven without having his nature changed, he would be none the better for being there; and then, by way of illustration, I said that, were a thief to get in among the glorified, he would remain a thief still, and he would go round the place picking the angels’ pockets!.... But, my dear young friend,’ asked Mr. Brimley, very seriously, “don’t you know that the angels haven’t any pockets?.... No, sir,” I replied, with equal gravity, “I’ did not know that; but I am glad to be assured of the fact from a gentleman who does know. I will take care to put it all right the first opportunity I get.” The following Monday morning, I walked into Mr. Brimley’s shop, and said to him, “I set that matter right yesterday, sir,” “What matter?” he inquired. “Why, about the angels’ pockets!” “What *did*you say?” he asked, in a tone almost of despair at what he might hear next. “Oh, sir, I just told the people I was sorry to say that I had made a mistake the last time I preached to them, but that I had met a gentleman, the mayor of Cambridge, — who had assured me that the angels had no pockets, so I must correct what [ had said, as I did not want anybody to go away with a false notion about Heaven. I would therefore say that, if a thief got among the angels without having his nature changed, he would try to steal the feathers out of their wings! .... Surely, you did not say that?” said Mr. Brimley. “I did, though,” I replied. “*Then,*” he exclaimed, “I’ll never try to set you right again,” which was just exactly what I wanted him to say.

Once, while I was at Waterbeach, I had a sleepy congregation. It was on a Sabbath afternoon; — those afternoon services in our English villages are usually a doleful waste of effort. Roast beef and pudding lie heavy on the hearers’ souls, and the preacher himself is deadened in his mental processes while digestion claims the mastery of the hour. The ‘people had been eating too much dinner, so they came to chapel heavy and dull, and before long many of them were nodding. So I tried an old expedient to rouse them. I shouted with all my might, “Fire! Fire! Fire!” When, starting from their seats, some of my hearers asked where it was, I answered, as other preachers had done in similar circumstances, “In hell, for sinners who will not accept the Savior.”

On another occasion, I had a trouble of quite a different character. I had preached on the Sunday morning, and gone home to dinner, as was my wont, with one of the congregation. The afternoon sermon came so close behind the morning one, that it was difficult to prepare the soul, especially as the dinner was a necessary but serious inconvenience where a clear brain was required. By a careful measuring of diet, I remained in an earnest, lively condition; but, to my dismay, I found that the pre-arranged line of thought was gone from me. I could not find the trail of my’ prepared sermon; and press my forehead as I might, the missing topic would not come. Time was brief, the hour was striking, and in some alarm I told the honest farmer that I could not for the life of me recollect what I had intended to preach about. “Oh!” he said, “never mind; you will be sure to have a good word for us.” Just at that moment, a blazing block of wood fell out of the fire upon the hearth at my feet, smoking into my eyes and nose at a great rate. “There,” said the farmer, “there’s a text for you, sir, — ’Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?*...*No,” I thought, “it was not plucked out, for it fell out of itself.” Here, however, was a text, an illustration, and a leading thought as a nest-egg for more. Further light came, and the discourse was certainly not worse than my more prepared effusions; it was better in the best sense, for one or two came forward declaring themselves to have been aroused and converted through that afternoon’s sermon. I have always considered that it was a happy circumstance that I had

forgotten the text from which I had intended to preach.

(The following is a *facsimile*of Mr. Spurgeon’s Outline of the discourse that came to him in this singular manner. In this instance, the notes must have been written out afterwards. The numbers at the foot of the Outline mean that the service at Waterbeach, that Sabbath afternoon, was the 412th time that Mr. Spurgeon had preached, — although he was then only eighteen years of age, — and that he took the same subject again at six other places.)

CHAPTER 24.

MEMORABLE SERVICES FROM WATERBEACH

A FTER I had been preaching at Waterbeach for about a year or so, I was invited to conduct anniversary and other special services in various places. On several occasions, I had very curious experiences. One eccentric individual, whose acquaintance I made in those early days, was Mr. Porto Brown, “the miller of Houghton.” He asked me over to preach in his chapel, and from Saturday night to Monday morning I had the felicitous misery of being his guest, — I can use no other term to describe the strange mixture of emotions that I felt while under his roof. nothing of special interest occurred the first night, but when I came downstairs, the following morning, Mr. Brown said to me, “*We*always provide two eggs for the minister’s breakfast on Sunday morning; the phosphorus in them feeds the brain, and it looks as though you will need plenty of mental nourishment to-day.” I made no reply to this remark, thinking it was better to bide my time, and when I did open fire, to give him such a broadside as he did not expect. There were three services during the day; Mr. Brown preached in the morning, a neighboring minister in the afternoon, and myself at night. After we had returned to my host’s house, and had taken supper, the good man leaned back in his easy chair, with his eyes closed and the fingertips of each hand touching, and began to soliloquize aloud:*—* “O Lord, we thank Thee for a good day all through! In the morning, Lord, Thy unworthy servant was privileged to speak in Thy name, — with some degree of liberty, and he hopes also with some measure o! acceptance to the people. In the afternoon, a worth)’ brother preached a good, sound, solid, gospel sermon; — nothing very brilliant; but, still, likely to be useful. In the evening, Lord, we had a regular steam-engine, — ran over everything and everybody.” Then, opening his eyes, and looking across at me, he began a dialogue which, as nearly as I can recollect it, ran as follows: —

*Brown*. — Young man, whoever persuaded you that you could preach? *Spurgeon*. — I believe, sir, that the Lord called me to this work, and I

have found a good many people who are of the same opinion. B. — How long have you been a minister?

*Spurgeon* — A little more than twelve months. *Brown* — How many souls did you save, last year? *Spurgeon* — None, sir. *Brown* — None? You have been a minister twelve months, and yet there

have been no souls saved. You ought to be ashamed to confess it; though, if you have preached the same doctrines as you gave us to-night, I am not surprised to hear that no souls have been saved.

*Spurgeon* — I did not say that souls had not been saved; I said that I did

not save any. I am happy to know that the Lord ***has***saved some through my instrumentality.

*Brown* — Most of your brethren would have said, “humble

instrumentality,” when, all the while, they were as proud as Lucifer. But that is only the common ministerial cant; you knew well enough what I meant. Well, how many were converted?

*Spurgeon* — Twenty-one, I believe, sir. *Brown* — How often do you preach? *Spurgeon* — Three times on the Sunday, and once in the week, at

Waterbeach; and nearly every night in the week somewhere else.

*Brown* — We will only reckon the Sunday morning and evening sermons;

afternoon services never save anybody, the people are too sleepy to listen after dinner. So, let us say, a hundred and four sermons, and twenty-one souls saved; that is eighty-three sermons wasted! Indeed, we might say, a hundred and three, for the whole twenty-one souls might just as well have been saved under one sermon. Do you live at Waterbeach?

*Spurgeon* — No, sir; I live at Cambridge, where I teach in a school. *Brown* — Oh, then; you are only an apprentice boy at present, just trying

your hand at preaching! Your ministry is a sort of off-hand farm, to be cultivated at odd times. What salary do your people give you?

*Spurgeon* — £45 a year. *Brown* — Oh, that accounts for everything.! Souls can’t be saved under

f100 a year; that is, of course, where the people can afford to pay it, and that amount is little enough for any minister. Well, now, my young friend, let me give you a bit of good advice. You’ll never make a preacher; so just give it up, and stick to your teaching.

When, in after years, I reminded him of his advice and prophecy, he used waggishly to say, “Ah! there’s no knowing how much good a man may do by a little timely correction; no doubt my sharp speech put you on your mettle.” That was really the case, though not in the sense he meant. I soon discovered that he was a rank Arminian, and when he attacked the Calvinism that was so dear to me. I denounced his system of doctrine as being worthless theology. I found that he used to give his money to different Missionary Societies according to the proportion of converts they reported as brought to the Lord at the lowest possible cost! He would take the various Annual Reports, divide the amount expended by the number of additions to the churches, and then subscribe the most where the amount per head was the least! There was a modicum of truth at the back of what he said; but I was really shocked by the way he talked about conversions being dependent upon the money contributed, so I spoke out my opinion as freely as he did his, and gave him a Roland for his Oliver without the slightest compunction. It was a battle royal, and both the old gentleman and the ‘prentice boy grew sufficiently warm; but no scars remained on either combatant. On the Monday morning, Mr. Brown walked to Huntingdon with me in loving conversation, and afterwards sent me Haldane’s “*Life*” as a present, with his sincere regards; and I, whom he had horrified with his doctrinal statements, felt an inward drawing towards the bluff heretic. No doubt he purposely put forward his most *outer*views of doctrine on that occasion to draw out the youthful preacher, probably intending to set him right on many points; but he had an unpromising pupil to deal with, one who had no tear of Porto Brown, or Professor Finney, or any other Arminian, before his eyes, but held his own opinion with a firmness which interested and did not displease the good but eccentric miller, who had usually dealt with softer material when criticizing the young gentlemen who preached in his chapel on Sundays.

Another singular character with whom I became acquainted early in my ministry, was old Mr. Sutton, of Cottenham. He had never seen me, but he heard that I was a popular young minister, so he invited me over to preach his anniversary sermons. I was in the vestry of the chapel before the morning service, and when the aged man came in, and saw me, he seemed greatly surprised to find that I was so young. After gruffly exchanging the usual greetings, he remarked, “*I*shouldn’t have asked you here, had I known you were such a bit of a boy. Why, the people have been pouring into the place all the morning in wagons, and dickey-carts, and all kinds of vehicles! More fools they!” he added. I said, “*Well,*sir, I suppose it will be so much the better for your anniversary; still, I can go back as easily as I came, and my people at Waterbeach will be very glad lo see me.” “*No, no,*” said the old pastor; “*now*you are here, you must do the best you can. There is a young fellow over from Cambridge, who will help you; and we shan’t expect much from you;” and thereupon he paced the room, moaning out, “*Oh,*dear! what a pass the world is coming to when we get as preachers a parcel of boys who have not got their Mother’s milk out of their mouths!”

I was in due time conducted to the pulpit, and the old minister sat upon the stairs, — I suppose, ready to go on with the service in case I should break down.

After prayer and singing, I read, from the Book of Proverbs, the chapter containing the words, “The hoary head is a crown of glory.” When I had gone so far, I stopped, and remarked, “I doubt it, for, this very morning, I met with a man who has a hoary head, yet he has not learnt common civility to his fellow-men.” Proceeding with the reading, I finished the verse, — “if it be found in the way of righteousness.” “Ah!” I said, “that’s another thing; a hoary head would then be a crown of glory, and, for the matter of that, so would a red head, or a head of any other color.” I went on with the service, and preached as best I could, and as I came down from the pulpit, Mr. Sutton slapped me on the back, and exclaimed, “Bless your heart! I have been a minister nearly forty years, and I was never better pleased with a sermon in all my life; but you are the sauciest dog that ever barked in a pulpit.” All the way home from the chapel, he kept on going across the road to speak to little groups of people who were discussing the service. I heard him say, “I never knew anything like it in all my life; and to think that I should have talked to him as I did!” We had a good time for the rest of the day, the Lord blessed the Word, and Mr. Sutton and I were ever afterwards the best of friends. F18

I shall never forget Mr. Sutton’s description of a sermon he had preached; I had the notes of the discourse from his own lips, and I trust they will remain as notes, and never be preached from again in this world. The text was, “The nighthawk, the owl, and the cuckoo.” That might not strike anyone as being exceedingly rich in matter; it did not so strike me, and therefore I innocently inquired, “And what were the heads?” He replied most archly, “Heads? why, wring the birds’ necks, and there are three directly, ‘the night-hawk, the owl, and the cuckoo.’” He showed that these birds were all unclean under the law, and were plain types of unclean sinners. Night-hawks were persons who pilfered on the sly, also people who adulterated their goods, and cheated their neighbors in an underhand way without being suspected to be rogues. As for the owls, they typified drunkards, who are always liveliest at night, while by day they will almost knock their heads against a post because they are so sleepy. There were owls also among professors. The owl is a very small bird when he is plucked; he only looks big because he wears so many feathers; so, many professors are all feathers, and if you could take away their boastful professions, there would be very little left of them. Then the cuckoos were the church clergy, who always utter the same note whenever they open their mouths in the church, and live on other birds’ eggs with their churchrates and tithes. The cuckoos were also, I think, the free-willers, who were always saying, “Do-do-do-do.” Was not this rather too much of a good thing? Yet, from the man who delivered it, the discourse would not seem at all remarkable or odd.

The same venerable brother preached a sermon equally singular, but far more original and useful; those who heard it will remember it to their dying day. It was from this text: “The slothful man roasteth not that which he took in hunting.” The good old man leaned upon the top of the pulpit, and said, “Then, my brethren, he *was*a lazy fellow!” That was the exordium; and then he went on to say, “He went out a-hunting, and after much trouble he caught his hare, and then was too idle to roast it. He was a lazy fellow indeed!” The preacher made us all feel how ridiculous such idleness was, and then he said, “But, then, you are very likely quite as much to blame as this man, for you do just the same. You hear of a popular minister coming down from London, and you put the horse in the cart, and drive ten or twenty miles to hear him; and, then, when you have heard the sermon, you forget to profit by it. You catch the hare, and do not roast it; you go hunting after the truth, and then you do not receive it.” Then he went on to show that, just as meat needs cooking to prepare it for assimilation in the bodily system, — I do not think he used that word, though, — so the truth needs to go through a certain process before it can be received into the mind, that we may feed thereon and grow. He said he should show us how to cook a sermon, and he did so most instructively. He began as the cookery books do, — “First, catch your hare.” “So,” he said, “first, get a gospel sermon.” Then he declared that a great many sermons were not worth hunting for, and that good sermons were mournfully scarce, and it was worth while to go any distance to hear a solid, old-fashioned, Calvinistic discourse. Then, after the sermon had been caught, there was much about it which might be necessary because of the preacher’s infirmity, but which was not profitable, and must be put away. Here he enlarged upon discerning and judging what we heard, and not believing every word of any man. Then followed directions as to roasting a sermon; — run the spit of memory through it from end to end, turn it round upon the roasting-jack of meditation, before the fire of a really warm and earnest heart, and in that way the sermon would be cooked, and ready to yield real spiritual nourishment. I am only giving just the outline of the discourse, and though it may look somewhat laughable, it was not so esteemed by the hearers. It was full of allegory, and kept up the attention of the people from the beginning to the end.

“Well, my dear sir, how are you?” was my salutation to him, one morning, “I’m pleased to see you so well at your age.” “Yes, I am in fine order for an old man, and hardly feel myself failing at all.” “I hope your good health will continue for years to come, and that, like Moses, you will go down to your grave with your eye undimmed, and your natural force unabated.” “All very fine,” said the old gentleman, “*but,*in the first place, Moses never went clown to his grave at all, he went up to it; and, in the next place, what is the meaning of all you have been talking about? Why did not the eye of Moses wax dim? *....*I suppose, sir,” said I, very meekly, “*that*his natural mode of life and quiet spirit had helped to preserve his faculties, and make him a vigorous old man.” “*Very*likely,” said he, “*but*that’s not what I am driving at: what’s the meaning, the spiritual teaching of the whole matter? Is it not just this? Moses is the law, and what a glorious end of the law the Lord gave it on the Mount of His finished work; how sweetly its terrors were all laid to sleep with a kiss from God’s mouth! and, mark you, the reason why the law no more condemns us is not because its eye is dim, so that it cannot see our sins, or because its force, with which to curse and punish us, is abated; but Christ has taken it up to the Mount, and gloriously made an end of it.”

Such was Mr. Sutton’s usual talk, and such was his ministry. Peace to his ashes. He was a quaint old man, who, after being a shepherd of sheep for between thirty and forty years, became a shepherd of men for a similar period; and he often told me that his second flock was “*a*deal more sheepish than the first.” The converts, who found the road to Heaven under his preaching, were so many that, when we remember them, we are like those who saw the lame man leaping after he heard the word of Peter and John; they were disposed to criticize, but “*beholding*the man that was healed standing with Peter and John, they could say nothing against it.”

In the beginning of my preaching experience, there was a dear good man who, when I took the service for him, would persist in announcing the hymn commencing —

**“*Mighty God! while angels bless Thee,  
May*an infant *lisp Thy name?*”**

That was to be sung with special reference to me, and at first it was all very proper, for the veteran saint might well regard me as “*an*infant” in spiritual things; but, ten years later, when I went down into the country to preach for him again, there was still the same hymn to be sung before my sermon, —

**“*Mighty God! while angels bless Thee,  
May*an infant *lisp Thy name?*”**

And when I was forty years of age, and the venerable man was near the close of his long life, and I went once more to help him by a sermon, I still had to join the congregation in singing —

**“*Mighty God! while angels bless Thee,  
May*an infant *lisp Thy name?*”**

I thought that I was rather a largish infant, and felt that I would have preferred to choose my own hymns.  
On another occasion, the minister of the place where I was preaching would give out the hymns, and the hymn-book in use was that one by Dr. Watts in which there are first the Psalms, and then Books I., II., and III. of Hymns. I had selected a hymn out of one of the divisions, but by some mistake the minister had turned to the wrong part of the book, and before he had discovered his error, he was reading —

***~~“ When the Eternal bows the skies  
To visit earthly things,  
With scorn Divine He turns His eyes  
From towers of haughty kings.~~***

***~~“ He bids His awful chariot roll  
Far downward from the skies,  
To visit every humble soul  
With pleasure in His eyes.”~~***

***~~Those who are familiar with the hymns of Dr. Watts, know that the last verse begins —  
‘Just like His nature is His grace,  
All sov’reign and all free;”~~***

and when the minister had read these two lines, he said, “We won’t sing this hymn.” I felt that, under the circumstances, the hymn ought to be sung, so I said, “If you please, we *will*sing that hymn; or we will not have any at all if we do not have that one.” So the minister shut up the book, and I went on with the sermon. I had fixed upon quite: a different subject for my discourse; but when such a challenge was given to me, I felt compelled to change my theme, so I announced as my text, “I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy,” and I preached from those words a discourse full of good sound doctrine, — sixteen ounces to the pound, — which filled with delight the hearts of all the brethren and sisters who loved the marrow and fatness of the faith which some call Calvinism, but which we trace back to our Lord Himself and His apostles.

In my early ministerial days, I was invited to preach at Isleham, Cambridgeshire:, where I was baptized. I was to conduct the morning service; my brother Aldis, I think it was, preached in the afternoon; and then I was to take my turn again in the evening. The people at Isleham had such a belief that I should draw a congregation, that they went and borrowed the largest chapel in the place. I shall never forget it, because I preached that morning at eleven o’clock to seven persons! That was all the people I had; and I remember how I told them that they reminded me of the way ducks act when they go through a doorway, they always lower their heads; they will do it even when they are going in or out of a barn. The entrance may be twenty feet high, but a duck never goes through it without putting his head down, for fear he might possibly hit the top of the door! So I said to the people, “You were so afraid of your place being overcrowded that you borrowed that big chapel for seven people!” Well, being there, I resolved that I would preach that morning at my very best, although the congregation was so small. The brother, who took the afternoon service, said to me, “I can’t think how you did it; you were as earnest, and you preached as well as if you had had the place crowded.” “Yes,” I replied, “I thought that was the only way to make sure of getting it full in the evening; so I determined that I would lay out all my guns, and make the greatest possible impression upon those few people.” In the afternoon, we had a very decent audience of, perhaps, a hundred or a hundred and fifty; but when I preached at night, there was not standing room in the place. Though I did not compliment myself upon gathering the crowd, yet I could not help saying that, if I had not preached at my best to the seven people in the morning, I should not have had the large company at night, for those who were there at the first service went away, and talked about how well they had got on, and so induced many others to come out in the evening to hear for themselves.

CHAPTER 25.

SERMONETTES

T HERE are probably few, if any, detailed records of the services mentioned in the preceding chapters, and the number of persons, still living, who were among “the boy-preacher’s” first hearers, must be continually diminishing. Even their reminiscences of his preaching would be necessarily very incomplete after so great a lapse of time. It is, therefore, a happy circumstance that Mr. Spurgeon

was moved first to write, and then to preserve, considerable portions of the discourses that, in those early days, were the means of winning so many souls for the Lord Jesus Christ. The manuscripts are by no means full reports of the young Pastor’s utterances, — they are Sermonettes rather than Sermons, — but they tell what were the subjects brought before the notice of the villagers who crowded “the little thatched chapel” at Waterbeach, and they also show how the various topics were handled. Following the arrangement adopted in Chapter 20., one Sermonette is given from each of the Volumes V., V1., and VII., with the inscriptions written at the beginning and end of the earlier books in the series.

Volume V. commences thus, —  
Feb. 26, 1853.

“Jehovah Jireh,” — “I am ever with you.”  
“It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man.” “It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in princes.” Underneath thee are the everlasting arms.  
Never have I sought in vain.

**OUTLINE 243. — CHRIST OUR SURETY** “Be surely for Thy servant for good. let not the proud oppress me.” — Psalm 119:122.

The 22nd verse of Hebrews 7 supplies a comment on this text. These are the only two places in Scripture in which a surety between God and man is mentioned; but though spoken of sparingly, it is none the less important,

I. CONSIDER WHEREIN CHRIST IS A SURETY.  
II. WHAT HE ENGAGED TO DO AS A SURETY.  
III. WHAT BENEFITS FLOW TO US THROUGH HIS SURETYSHIP.

I. CONSIDER IN WHAT SENSE JESUS IS A SURETY.

**1.** Not for His Father, — to us, — for God is so true, His word and oath so firm, that we need not wish for a Surety; and, indeed, it would not be an assistance to our faith, since he who doubts the Father would doubt the Son.

**2.** Not as promising in our behalf. He is not bound to see that we perform our obligations, for He knows well enough that we could not pay a farthing of our debt to God, even if we would.

**3.** But He is our Surety by taking all our debts upon Himself, — standing in our stead, — promising to do what we ought to have done.

We will illustrate this subject from instances in the world. A son, about to set up in business, has little money; but his father says, “Charge the goods to my account; let him have them, but send me the bill, I will be surety for its payment.”

A poor man is in prison for debt, and must continue to lie there unless someone pays 1.t for him. A philanthropist, like John Howard, comes in, and bids the creditor loose his prisoner, and accept himself as surety for the debtor.

Damon is in prison, condemned to die; but he wishes first to see his children. His friend, Pythias, is chained in his place, and engages to die in his stead if he does not return at the appointed time.

II. WHAT CHRIST ENGAGED TO DO AS A SURETY.

Not more than He could do, — for He is God.  
Not more than He will do, — for He is faithful.  
1. He has promised to render to the law perfect obedience. This was our debt; but He has taken it away, canceled it for ever.

**2.** He has promised to satisfy justice for our debt of punishment. Just as Paul wrote to Philemon, concerning Onesimus, “If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that on mine account I will repay it.” This Christ has done for all believers.

**3.** He has engaged to bring all the elect home to glory. Judah said he would bear the blame if he did not bring Benjamin back. Jacob had to be responsible for the sheep of Laban. So Jesus is bound by covenant to save every believer.

III. WHAT BLESSINGS FLOW TO US THROUGH CHRIST’S SURETYSHIP.

**1.** Complete pardon, — for the punishment of our sin has been transferred from us to Him, and we are reckoned as if we had ourselves endured the full penalty of our guilt.

**2.** Complete justification. What Christ does for us is counted as done by ourselves, so that we are now considered as sinless, and acceptable unto God by Jesus Christ.

**3.** Freedom from fear, — a settled peace. We have no ground for despondency or terror; no bailiff can arrest us now, for our debt is fully paid.

**4.** Everlasting security. Our whole indebtedness is gone, and we are safe for ever.

How foolish not to seek this Surety! How dangerous to delay, for death may come, and God demand His due, and we shall have nothing with which to pay our debt! A life of holiness cannot pay it. Tears, groans, and prayers cannot pay it. An eternity of woe cannot pay it.

Faith looks to Jesus as Surety, and desires no other means of paying the debt. Trust Him, then, and you are free for ever.

Lord, aid me!  
(Inscription at the end of Volume V: — )

The Lord is my Banner; why am I fearful when God furnishes me with all that is needful?  
(Inscription at the beginning of Volume VI: — )

O Lord, I am entirely dependent on Thine aid! Do not cut off the supplies, but ever give me to drink of Thy fountain, and to guide others to the same Divine spring.

**OUTLINE 311. — CHRIST IS PRECIOUS.**  
“Unto you therefore which believe He is precious.” — 1 Peter 2:7. This was the theme of the first sermon I ever preached; I hope it is my theme now, and ever shall be, — living, dying, and glorified.

This is one of the texts from which everyone imagines he could preach; but which, for that very reason, is all the more difficult to preach from to your satisfaction. However, if the Good Spirit will apply to your hearts my few homely thoughts, your being satisfied will not matter. Here we have, —

I. A PRECIOUS PEOPLE.  
II. A PRECIOUS CHRIST.  
III. A PRECIOUS EXPERIENCE.

I. A PRECIOUS PEOPLE.

Not so in themselves, but quite the reverse; yet they are so in the eyes of their Lord and Savior. They are His special favorites. They are His crown jewels.

They are all believers, whether they have great faith or little faith. They are not mere repeaters of creeds, but true, hearty believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is only these precious people who are able to see the preciousness of Christ. Faith is indispensable to the enjoyment of Christ. Can a child know how precious is gold before he has been taught its value? Does the beggar in the street appreciate a picture by Raphael, or can the ignorant rightly estimate the value of learning?

Faith is the eyesight of the soul, whereby it discerns spiritual beauty. Faith is the mouth which relishes Heavenly sweetness.

God has made faith the mark of His precious people, because it is a grace which greatly exalts God, and, at the same time, abases the creature. Precious are God’s people, — elect, redeemed, guarded, fed, nurtured, and at last glorified.

II. A PRECIOUS CHRIST.

What need is there for me to enlarge here? We, who believe, know that Chris,: is precious.

**1.** My Christ is more precious to me than anything that my fellow-creatures have. I see some who live in palaces, sit on thrones, wear crowns, and feast on dainties. I have heard of Alexanders, Napoleons, and Caesars; but I envy them not, for *Christ is more precious to me than all earthly dominion.*

I see others with great riches; they are afraid of losing what they have, yet they are’ groaning after more. They have many cares through their wealth, and they must leave it all one day; but Christ is better than all earthly riches. Shall I give up Christ for gold? No, for *Christ is more precious to me than wealth could ever be.*

Some men have noble minds; they long for knowledge, they toil that they may measure the earth, survey the heavens, read the lore of the ancients, dissolve minerals, etc., but Chri*st is better to me than learning.*

Others pant for fame. I shall be forgotten, save by the few whose steps I guided in the path to Heaven; but I weep not at that, for *Christ is more precious to me than fame.*

**2.** He is more precious than anything I myself have.’.  
If I have a home and a fireside, and feel a comfort in them, yet, if called to suffer banishment, I have a better home. *Christ is better lo me than home.*

If I have relatives, — Mother and father, — or faithful friends; these I value, and rightly, too. ‘Tis a bitter pang to lose them, but *Christ is better than relatives or friends.*He is my Husband, my brother, my Lover.

I have health, and that is a precious jewel. Take it away, and pleasures lose their gloss; but my Jesus is mine still, and He *is heller than health; yea, life itself is valueless in comparison with Him.*

When I consider the glory of His nature, the excellence of His character, the greatness of His offices, the richness of His gifts, surely He is indeed precious.

III. A PRECIOUS EXPERIENCE.

Merely to say that Christ is precious, is nothing; but to know that He is precious, to feel it in truth, is everything.

**1.** The self-denials of missionaries, —  
**2.** The sufferings of martyrs, —  
**3.** The deathbeds of saints, —  
all attest the reality of the experience here spoken of.

Have *we*felt it? If so, may we once more feel it at His table! Oh, to live ever with the taste of this honey in our mouths, — to feast even on the name of our dear Redeemer!

O precious One, help! Help! Help!  
**OUTLINE 327. — “PRAISE YE THE LORD.”**  
“Praise ye the LORD. Praise ye the LORD from the heavens: praise Him in the heights.” — Psalm 148:1.

Having once and again exhorted you to the most excellent work of praising God, it may seem unnecessary to mention it again. Yet it is most probable that some of you have neglected the duty; and if you have not, you ,.’ill find your soul still prepared to hear more on the subject, that you may rise to higher flights and more animated strains.

There are two places where we can praise God, — in Heaven and on earth. There are two great ways of praising God, — by song and by service.

I. ON EARTH, WE HAVE TWO WAYS OF PRAISING GOD, — BY SONG AND

BY SERVICE.

**1** ***.****By song.*Almost all great events have been celebrated in song; poets have employed their utmost ability in this way. One of the oldest books in the world, next to the Bible, sings of the ten years’ siege of Troy. Virgil, the almost equal of the mighty Homer, sang, “Arms and the man.” The taking of Jerusalem, the discovery of America, great battles, notable births, and even the sinking of ships, have found poets to celebrate them. In early times, the wily priests called in music and poetry to aid in their false worship. Whether Jupiter or Baal, Bacchus or Moloch, Venus or Thammuz, Dagon or Neptune, was worshipped, hymns or paeans were chanted in their praise, making valleys and mountains ring with the heathen melodies.

Nor has true religion — offspring of Heaven, whose life-blood came from Christ upon the cross, — refused to employ poesy in the worship of the great Jehovah, who says, “I am God, and there is none else.” In our days, the poet of the sanctuary puts into our mouths his simple yet harmonious strains. Sometimes, we sing, —

***“Behold the glories of the Lamb!”***  
At other times, filled with holy rapture, we sing, —  
***“What equal honors shall we bring!”***  
or, though in lowlier notes, we —  
***“Join our cheerful songs  
With angels round the throne;”***

or, to a solemnly grand tune, we sing, —  
***‘Keep silence, all created things.’***

Our friends opposite (the Wesleyans) have the warm and fervent strains of Wesley, —

***“* Hark, *the herald angels sing.” “Jesu, lover of my soul.” “Oh, for a heart to praise my God!”***

Then we have Doddridge singing, —  
***“Jesus, I love Thy charming name.” “Grace! ‘tis a charming sound!”***

Sometimes, —  
***“*All *hail the power of Jesus’ name I”***

rises loftily to a noble tune Then, John Newton, the African blasphemer, who was converted, while standing at the helm of the ship in a storm, as he recalled a text his Mother taught him, — leads us in singing, —

***“*How *sweet the name of Jesus sounds I” “Sweeter sounds than music knows, Charm me in Immanuel’s name.” “When any turn from Zion’s way;”*** or his companion, the amiable, tender, loving Cowper, sings, — ***“There is a fountain fill’d with blood;”*** or, —  
***“*God *moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform.”***

Toplady, strong in faith, sings, —  
***“*A *debtor to mercy alone.” “Jesus immutably the same;”***

or, —  
***“Rock of ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in Thee.”***

But why enumerate when we all have a large store of sacred poetry, dear to us even from childhood, and treasured in our memories? If we go back to the times of the second Reformation, we find the Covenanters in Scotland and the old Conventiclers of England, under such men as Baxter, Bunyan, Cameron, etc., etc., ever fond of hymning God’s praises. In the first Reformation, Luther’s hymns and ballads probably did more than his massive tomes to help forward the good cause. Look on yon Alpine steeps and vales, where but here and there a cottage can be seen. Wait awhile, and you shall hear the songs of praise ascending to the God of Heaven. In apostolic times, the prisoners of Philippi heard the voices of Paul and Silas praising God at midnight. Paul and James agree in advising us to sing; and our Lord Himself sometimes joined with His apostles in singing a hymn. Mary and Elizabeth sang praises unto God.

Go back to the age of the prophets, and see how often their inspired writings are songs. Retreat still further till you come to the golden age of psalmody. Solomon and David especially are full of praise to Jehovah.

***“Bless the Lord, O my soul!”  
“*Make *a joyful noise unto the Lord all ye lands;”***

Who can forget the song of Deborah, or the song of Moses? Who does not believe that, long ere their day, the sons of God, in their meetings at the throne of grace, sang praises unto God? I believe, with Milton, that in Eden’s garden sublimer songs were heard than any that we fallen beings can even imagine. Let us, then, praise the Lord by singing.

**2.***By service,*we may praise God as much as by song.  
Our common duties should be done in such a manner that they may become spiritual worship.  
Then there is the temple worship of the Lord’s house on the Sabbath and also on week-days.

Then, acts of charity, liberality, and holy labor for souls, performed by the tract-distributor, the Sunday-school teacher, the minister, the deacon; above all, by the missionary who risks his life for his Master’s honor and service; — all these are praising the Lord as they minister unto Him in various ways. In some way or other, let all of us who believe in Jesus serve our God right heartily. Let us be like the woman who anointed Christ with the precious ointment, loving much, since we have had much forgiven.

II. IN HEAVEN, THE SAME TWO MODES OF PRAISING GOD ARE

EMPLOYED.

**1.** *By song.*The angelic hosts praise Him now as they have ever done. We read that these sons of God shouted for joy on Creation’s morning; and they still praise the Lord whenever a prodigal returns. The saints now add their notes, and sing what angels cannot sing, — how Immanuel, God with us, suffered and died for them. How sweet their voices, how matchless their tunes, how glorious the melody! How magnificent the Heavenly concert will be when all the ransomed throng at once shall sing unto Him who loved them, and washed them from their sins in His own blood!

**2.** *By service.*Even in the garden of Eden, Adam had to till the ground; and in Heaven no idlers are to be found, all there are employed. Some are ministering spirits, some attendant angels, some are studying the perfections of Deity, and others are framing music to His praise. They have, doubtless, far more to do with us than we wot of God, who makes all things work, and work together in harmony, and work together for the good of His chosen people, will not leave His noblest creatures unemployed.

Let us, then, begin *song*and *service*below, that soon we may continue our worship on high with a sweeter *song*and nobler *service.*  
(The above was the 600th discourse delivered by Mr. Spurgeon. It was preached at Waterbeach in the course of his last year as Pastor there.)

CHAPTER 26.

GLIMPSES OF ESSEX CAMBRIDGESHIRE 1853.

It has been my privilege and joy, sometimes, to tarry for a little season amongst the lowly. I have had a seat given me in the chimney corner, and, by-and-by, as the time to retire for the night drew nigh, the good man of the house has said to me, “Now, sir, will you kindly read for us to-night, as you are here?” And I have noticed the faces of the little group around me, as I have read some portion like this, “*Truly,*God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.” Then I have said to the father of the family, “I will not lead you in prayer this time; you must be priest in your own house, and yourself pray.” So the good man has prayed for his children, and when I have seen them rise up from their knees, and kiss their parent for the night, I have thought, “Well, if this is the kind of family that the religion of Jesus Christ makes, ‘ let the whole earth be filled with His glory.’ For the present blessedness and for the eternal happiness of man, let God’s Kingdom come, and let His will be done on earth even as it is done in Heaven.” — C. H. S.

I W AS delighted, one Sabbath evening in the year 1853, when driving from the village where I had supplied for a minister, to see in one place a father, with four or five little ones about him, sitting on a small plot of grass before the cottage door. He had a large Bible on his knee, and the children also had their Bibles; and he in the midst was holding his finger up, with all solemnity and earnestness, in simple style endeavoring to enforce some sacred truth. It was a road but little frequented on the Sabbath-day, and I Should hope that scarcely a rumbling or rattling noise was heard there on the holy day of rest, saving the gig bearing the minister to and from the place of his labor, or other vehicles carrying devout worshippers to the house of God. It appeared almost a sacrilege to drive by, — although I was returning from a sacred errand, — it seemed a pity to break the spell even for a moment, and to take the eyes and the attention of the little ones for an instant from such sweet employment. A little further was a house which had a small workshop adjoining it. The door was open, so I could see that no one was inside; but there stood a chest, and on it lay a Bible of the largest kind, and on the floor below was a cushion which still bore the impress of knees which, I trust, had been bent in wrestling prayer. Perhaps a Mother had there been begging at the Redeemer’s hands the souls of her dearly-beloved children; or, possibly, some son, in answer’ to that Mother’s prayer, had been secretly pouring out his heart, and crying for mercy from the hands of God. Yet once more, I saw a little girl spelling over to her parents the words of the Book of Truth, and I felt constrained to pray that the daughter and the lowly pair might all be able to read their titles clear to mansions in the skies. I have seen hills and forests, vales and rivers, fine buildings and romantic ruins, but never, never have I seen a sight more simple, more beautiful, nor more sublime. Blest households, of which these things can be written! May you not be solitary instances, but may God raise up thousands like unto you!

Household piety is the very cream of piety. There is no place in which religion so sweetly opens all its charms as in the family gathered round the hearth. Who does not admire the house where, at the hour of prayer, all are assembled, and the head of the household reads from the sacred page the Word of Inspiration, and then all on bended knee seek for a blessing on themselves that day, or in joyful strains give thanks to Heaven for the manifold mercies so freely and so constantly dispensed? Who, on the other hand, can refrain from pitying the family where the day is a round of duties begun and ended without one prayer to God, — no place where all may come together in supplication, and feel as one, — no way for the parent to express his thoughts of love for the souls of his offspring? I know the sweetness of kneeling at eventide beneath the paternal roof, and hearing my father say, “Lord, we bless Thee that our son has again returned to us in health and strength; and, after an absence from each other, we praise Thee that we now meet an unbroken circle. Oh, our God, we beg most earnestly of Thee that we may all meet: around the throne in Heaven, not one being left behind!” The father’s words are all but choked in their utterance whilst he weeps tears of joy to think that his first-born is walking in the ways of God, and the Mother sobs aloud, and her tears are falling, big with gratitude, that once more she is kneeling beside her son, the delight of her eyes, whilst the whole tribe are around her secure from death and ill.

I pity the wretch without a chair or bed on which to rest his weary limbs; I pity the miserable creature who shivers in the wintry blast, and finds no fire to give the needed heat; but I pity far more the homeless creature, for he is truly homeless, — who has no altar, no family prayer. Half the happiness is absent where this is neglected. I despise unmeaning formality, but this is no form. Spoiler, lay not thy ruthless hand on this most sacred thing! Rather let the queen of night forget to rise with all her train of stars than that family devotion should even begin to be neglected. The glory of Britain is her religion, and one of religion’s choicest treasures is the Christian home. Who is so foolishly alarmed as ever to suppose that an invading host will ravage our fair shores when the whole land is studded with castles, — not with turret towers, ‘tis true, but yet with places where the God of Jacob dwells, residing as a fire around, a glory in the midst? Go invader, go, the prayer of households will blow thee adown the white cliffs of Albion like chaff before the wind! The flag of old England is nailed to the mast, not by our sailors, but by our God; and He has fastened it there with something stronger than iron, — He has nailed it with the prayers of His people, the fathers, Mothers, sons, and daughters, with whom He delights to dwell. From’ the tents of Jacob arise the fairfooted sons of Zion, who on the mountains stand declaring good tidings of great joy, and from these tabernacles there is gradually gathering a host, glittering and white, who continually praise God and the Lamb.

(The foregoing paragraphs and the two following letters show that Mr. Spurgeon was preaching in his native county of Essex twice, if not thrice, or even oftener, during the year 1853. He had treasured, among his most precious papers of those early days, evidently with a view to inclusion in his Autobiography, this characteristic epistle from his venerable grandfather: —

“Dear Charles,

“I just write to say that we hope nothing will occur to prevent our exchange on Sabbath, the 14th of August. Will you come by Broxted? If so, your Uncle will bring you to Stambourne. I have hardly made up my mind whether I shall drive through, or leave my pony at my son Obadiah’s; but my intention is to be at Waterbeach on the Wednesday. As you ought to be on the way, and as so many want to see as well as hear you, don’t you stay on my account. I had too much respect manifested to me the last time I was with your good people, so no doubt they will gladly receive me again. I am, and have been for some days, very poorly. I hope, by the blessing of God, I shall soon be all right once more. I must — I ought to expect pains and aches now; yet how natural it is to wish to be free from them! But if this was always the case, it would be bad for us, for we should become cold, careless, glued to the world, — pride and self-righteousness would arise within us. But our Savior’s declaration has gone forth, and cannot be recalled, ‘In the world ye shall have tribulation;… in Me, ye shall have peace.’

“With kind love to you, in which all here, if they knew I was writing, would unite,  
“Believe me to be,  
“Your affectionate grandfather,

**“J. SPURGEON.”**  
“Stambourne,  
“July 27/53.”  
“N.B. — Some People Do Not Date Their Letters; I Do, And Think It Quite Right.”)

(Two months later, Mr. Spurgeon wrote, to one of his uncles at Stambourne, the letter printed on the next page. This communication is interesting, not only because of its faithful reference to the ordinance of believers’ baptism, but also from its revelation of the intense longing of the young preacher to be doing more for his Lord, either at home or abroad. Verily, the Holy Spirit, whose coming he so ardently desired, was preparing him for the wide sphere of service which was so soon after to open up for him.)

“9, Union Road,  
“Cambridge,  
“Sep. 27/53.

“My Dear Uncle,

“I have two or three reasons for writing to you just at this time. We are going to have a baptizing service on October 19, and I should be so glad to see my uncle following his Master in the water. I am almost afraid to mention the subject, lest people should charge me with giving it undue prominence; if they will do so, the? must. I can bear it for my Master’s sake. I know you love my Jesus; and the mention of His name makes the tear rush to your eye, and run down your cheek. Better than wife or child is our Beloved; you can sing, —

***“Yes, Thou*art *precious to my soul,  
My*transport *and my trust;  
Jewels to Thee are gaudy toys  
And gold is sordid dust.’***

“You can lift your eye to Heaven, and, on your bended knee, before the presence of your Redeemer, exclaim, “Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee.’

“Now, my beloved brother in Jesus, can you refuse to perform this one easy act for Him? ‘No,’ you say,’ I do not refuse; I would do it at once if I were sure He had commanded it. I love Him too well to keep back any part of my obedience.’ Ah! but you ARE sure it is your duty, — or, permit me to hint that you may be sure, — for it is clearly revealed in the New Testament. Taking the lowest view of it, *suppose*it is your duty, only make a *supposition*of it, — now, can you go to bed happily with the bare *supposition*that you are refusing to practice an express command of your Redeemer? Surely, a true lover of his Divine Master will never let even a supposed duty rest; he will want to be sure either that it is his duty, or that it is not; and knowing that, he will act accordingly.

“I charge you, by the debt — the infinite debt, you owe to Christ, — I charge you, by the solemnity of all our Savior’s commands, — I charge you, by the shortness of time, and the near approach of the awful judgment, — not to trifle with convictions of the rightness of this ordinance, not to put off a serious, prayerful inquiry as to whether it is, or is not, enjoined upon all believers in Jesus, and then to carry out your conscientious conviction. If Christ commands me to hold up my little finger, and I do not obey Him, it looks like a coolness in my love to Him; and I feel assured that I should sustain loss by the neglect.

“I will not press the matter as one in authority; I only beg of you, as a friend, and a dear friend, as well as a loving relative, not to forget or trifle with the commands of One dearer still to me.  
“Now with regard to coming for a week to preach at Stambourne and neighboring villages, I am yours to serve to the utmost; — not on the Sabbath, but all the week. I have a good sphere of labor here, but I want to do more, if possible. There is a great field, and the laborers must work with all their might. I often wish I were in China, India, or Africa, so that I might preach, preach, preach all day long. It would be sweet to die preaching. But I want more of the Holy Spirit; I do not feel enough — no, not half enough, — of His Divine energy. ‘Come Holy Spirit, come!’ Then men must be converted; then the wicked would repent, and the just grow in grace.

“If I come, I shall not mind preaching two evenings in Stambourne if you cannot get other convenient places; and I should love to have some good, thoroughly-hot prayer-meetings after the services. I wish it were possible to preach at two places in one evening, but I suppose time would hardly permit me to do that. Consult the friends, send me word, and I am your man.

“As to the books, you had better bring them yourself when you come to be baptized. Mr. Elven, of Bury, is going to preach the sermon for me; and, as we have not many candidates this time, we shall all the more value your presence.

“If you do not come, — I cross that out, because you M UST, — then send the books when you can. *I left some tracts in Mr. Howell’s*gig. I should be obliged if you will see after them if you go to Hedingham. I should like to go there, too, if I come.

“You may show grandfather all I have written, if you like, for truth is truth, even if he cannot receive it; — still, I think you had much better not, for it is not at all likely he will ever change an opinion so long roofed in him, and it is never worth while for us to mention it if it will only irritate, and do no good. I wish to live in unity with every believer, whether Calvinist, Arminian (if not impossible), Churchman, Independent, or Wesleyan; and though I firmly believe some of them are tottering, I do not like them well enough to prop them up by my wrangling with them.

“My best respects and regards to Aunt, — Uncles and Aunts, — cousins, — grandfather, — Mr. Unwin, Will Richardson, and all the good people in Stambourne, not excepting yourself.  
“I am,  
“Yours most truly,

**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

(The “Will Richardson” here mentioned was a godly ploughman, at Stambourne, to whom C. H. Spurgeon, while living at his grandfather’s, was devotedly attached; and the friendship between them was continued in after years. The first volume of *The New Park Street Pulpit*contains the following reference to him: — “I recollect walking with a ploughman, one day, — a man who was deeply taught, although he was a ploughman; and, really, ploughmen would make a great deal better preachers than many College gentlemen, — and he said to me, ‘Depend upon it, my good brother, if you or I ever get one inch above the ground, we shall get just that inch too high.’” This was a favorite utterance of the good man, as appears from the brief sketch of him written by Pastor J. C. Houchin: —

“When I came to Stambourne, one of the old men who had overlived their former Pastor, and whose grey hairs adorned the table-pew of the old chapel, was William Richardson, a farm-laborer, and a man of clear and strong mind. He was able to read, so as to make fair use of his Bible and hymn-book, and he had a heartfelt knowledge of the gospel. It is said that ‘ Master Charles’ was very fond of Will, and that Will used to like to talk with the boy, and that the two have been seen walking up and down the field’ together when Will was following the plough.

“Will Richardson had a reputation for what they call *‘cramp’*sayings, many of which used to be retailed in the village twenty years ago. On one occasion, when a young minister, just settled in the neighborhood, had occupied the pulpit for the day, in exchange with the present Pastor, he was met at the foot of the pulpit stairs by Will, who, shaking his hand, said, ‘Ah, young man, you have got a good many stiles to get over before you get into Preaching Road!’ Will spoke the truth, as it turned out, but it was pretty straight hitting.

“Visiting him, one day, and finding him full of faith, and giving glory to God, on my expressing a strong desire for fellowship with him in those experiences, he remarked that, when the sun shone, and the bees were at work, if there was honey in one skep, there was enough to fill another. Some friends had visited him, and had observed that, if they were blessed with his experiences, they should be beyond all doubt and fear; and he replied that God only gave these great things when His former gifts had been made good use of. I quoted the parable of the talents, and he said, ‘That is it.’

“Will was wont to say, ‘Depend upon it, if we get one inch above the ground in our own estimation, we get just that inch too high.’

“On one occasion, I found him excessively weak, but quite sensible, and he said, ‘ Don’t we read of one of old tried in the fire?’ I quoted the passage, and he replied, ‘That is gold indeed.’ He then said that he had felt the two armies of the flesh and the spirit as lively in him now as when he was well and about in the world, and that he was disappointed and grieved to find it so, as it gave the enemy his chief advantage. So Satan had laid all his sins for years past before him, and insinuated that they must end in his destruction. ‘But,’ said Will, ‘ I was enabled to say to him, “God is a gracious and holy God, and what He has put into my heart, He will not take away any more; and He has put love into my heart; and if He were to send me to hell, I must love Him still.” And I told him not to say any more to me about my sins, but to “go to the Lord about them; for He knows whether I be pardoned, and made His child, or whether I be a hypocrite.” He could not carry such a message. Then there seemed to come a strong voice, which said, “He shall die in the Lord.” And oh, the peace and the joy, I cannot describe to you nor nobody! Oh, that His dear name was known and loved by every person all over the whole world!’

“My last visit, in July, 187o, four days before his death, showed the ruling passion for *‘cramp’*sayings to be strong in death. He was quite sensible, and after conversation, I took up the Bible, and, opening it at the seventeenth of John, I commenced reading, when he shouted aloud, *‘Oh, that is my blood horse!*’ I said, ‘ What do you mean?’ and he replied, ‘ I can ride higher on that chapter than on any other.’ So I read it, and prayed with him for the last time.”)

(The uncle, referred to in the following playful note, has kindly sent it for the Autobiography, with another and longer letter which appears in Chapter 30., so that, clearly, he was living .at the time it was written, although he had not answered his nephew’s previous communications: — )

“No. 60, Park Street,  
“Cambridge,  
“\_\_\_\_\_, 1853.

“My Dear Aunt,  
“Can you kindly inform me whether Mr. James Spurgeon, Junr., of the parish of Stambourne, Essex, is yet alive? I have written two letters to the said gentleman, and, as he was a particular friend of mine, I begin to feel somewhat anxious seeing that I have had no reply. If you should find, among the papers he has left, any letter directed to me, I shall feel much obliged by your forwarding the same.

“When I was last at his house, he was extremely kind to me, and I flattered myself that, if I should ever have occasion to ask a favor, I should not be refused; or, if denied, it would be in so kind a manner that it would not look like neglect. If he is alive, and not gone beyond the seas, please to give him my kind love the first time you meet him, and tell him I suppose he must have gout in his hands, so that he cannot write. Should it turn out that it is so, keep all wines and spirits from him, as they are bad things for gouty folk; and be so good as to foment his hands with warm water boiled with the heads of poppies. By this treatment, the swelling will subside; and, as soon as he is able, if you find him at all tractable, put a pen in his hand, and make him write his name, and post it to me, so that I may be sure he is alive. Ah, ‘tis a sad thing people will get gouty!

“But perhaps he is gone. Well, poor fellow, he was not the worst that ever lived; I felt sorry to part from him the last time, and, as the Irishman said, I hoped he would, at any rate, have let me know that he was dead. I thought you were the most likely person to know him, as I have seen you at his house several times when I have been there. I trust you will just send me a line to let me know how the poor fellow is, if alive at all.

“With best love to you and the little ones,  
“I am,  
“Yours truly,

**“CHARLES H. SPURGEON.”**

CHAPTER 27.

LAST DEAR AT WATERBEACH AND CAMBRIDGE.

B RIGHT constellation of Jubilee celebrations has risen on our age; amongst them, as one star in the galaxy, too small to be recognized singly, was the Waterbeach Baptist Chapel Jubilee. The year 1853 beheld the grass of fifty years growing in the small spot surrounding the meeting-house where a crowd of willing worshippers often assembled in the memorable days of my first pastorate. The village should! not be unknown to fame, for the records of the Baptist Church prove that Rowland Hill first exercised in Waterbeach his gifts as a minister of Jesus, after riding over *from* Cambridge by stealth between the hours of College duty. The house still stands in which he is said to have commenced his labors as a preacher. Long before that time, the sainted Holcroft, the apostle of Cambridgeshire, ejected by the Act of Uniformity front his living at Bassingbourne, had founded a church in this village, as in many others around. When confined in Cambridge Castle for the truth’s sake, he obtained favor in the eyes of his jailer, who allowed him by night to visit Waterbeach, where he preached and administered the ordinances of our Lord to his little band of followers, returning always before morning light awoke his slumbering foes. Since then, the little vessel, launched in boisterous times, has been safely steered by its Captain even until, now. It has passed through rough waters and fierce storms; but it still lives, thanks to Him who sits at the helm.

(The following hymns, composed by the young Pastor, were sung at the Water-. beach Jubilee services on Lord’s-day, June 26th, 1853: — ) **THE ONE REQUEST.**

***~~If to my God I now may speak,  
And make one short request;  
If but one favor I might seek~~***

***~~Which I esteem the best, —  
I would not choose this earth’s poor wealth; How soon it melts away!  
I would not seek continued health; A mortal must decay.~~***

***~~I would not crave a mighty name; Fame is but empty breath.  
Nor would I urge a royal claim; For monarchs bow to death.~~***

***~~I would not beg for sinful sweets; Such pleasures end in pain. Nor should I ask fair learning’s seats; Love absent, these are vain.~~***

***~~My God, my heart would choose with joy, Thy grace, Thy love, to share; This is the sweet which cannot cloy, And this my portion fair.~~***

***~~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 gulfs 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 my 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 legion’d 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 ravish’d sight,  
When I shall bathe in sweet delight,~~***

***~~One joy all joys shall far excel,  
To see Thy face, Immanuel!~~***

At our Waterbeach prayer-meetings, we used sometimes to have very quaint utterances from certain of the brethren who led the devotions of the assembly. I once heard a poor man offer this singular supplication: “Lord, watch over these young people during the feast time, for Thou knowest, Lord, how their enemies watch for them as a cat watches for mice.” Some ridiculed the form of the petition, but it appeared to me to be natural and expressive, considering the person who presented it. When it was known that I was coming to London, I was made the subject of many remarkable requests. One queer old man offered a very extraordinary prayer for me. I did not understand it at the time, and I hardly think he ought to have prayed it in public in that shape. He pleaded that I might be able “to swallow bush-faggots cross-ways.” It was a very strange prayer; but I have often done just what he asked that I might do, and it has cleared my throat wonderfully; and there is many a man, who cannot now speak out boldly for God, who will be obliged to have some of those bush-faggots thrust down his throat; and when those great troubles come, and he is compelled to swallow them, then he will grow to be a man in Christ Jesus, who will proclaim with power to others the truths he has tried and proved in his own experience.  
Another of my country brethren prayed that I might be “delivered from the bleating of the sheep;” and, for the life of me, I could not make out what he meant. I am not sure that he understood it himself, but I quite understand it now. He meant to ask the Lord that I might live above the fear of man, so that, when some persons said to me, “How much we have been edified today!” I might not be puffed up; or if another said, “How dull the discourse was to-day!” I might not be depressed. There is no leader of the flock who will not occasionally wish to be delivered from the bleating of the sheep, for they bleat such different tunes sometimes. There is some old bellwether, perhaps, that is not bleating in the right style, and one is apt to be troubled about it; but it is a great thing to feel, “Now, I am not going to be influenced by the way these sheep bleat. I am set to lead them rather than to let them lead me, and I am going to be guided by something far more reliable than the bleating of the sheep, namely, the voice of the Great Shepherd.” I soon found that the best way to be delivered from the bleating of the sheep was to seek to be filled with the spirit of the Good Shepherd.

(On page 229, there is the Outline of the *first*Sermon preached by Mr. Spurgeon at Waterbeach; the following are his notes of his *last*Sermon as Pastor of the little village church which had been so greatly increased under his ministry: —)

**OUTLINE 365. — JESUS SAVES FROM SIN.** “Thou shall call His name JESUS:  
for He shall save His people from their sins.” — Matthew 1:21.

As this was. my first text in Waterbeach, so, by the help of God, it shall be the one with which I close my stated ministry among you, — in order that Jesus may be Alpha and Omega with us. Let us speak of —

I. THE GLORIOUS NAME.  
II. THE WONDROUS SALVATION.  
III. THE BLESSED PEOPLE.

I. THE GLORIOUS NAME: Jesus, or Joshua, “the Savior.”

Two men, who had borne this name before, — Joshua the son of Nun, and Joshua the son of Jozadak, — were both types of Christ.

Joshua, the son of Nun, —  
Fought for Israel, and overcame.  
He led them through Jordan.  
He divided their inheritance for them.

Joshua, the son of Jozadak, —  
Restored the priesthood, and  
Rebuilt the temple;

but how much greater is our Joshua, Jesus, the Son of God! All that these two men did, and far more, He has done in His glorious work of saving His people.

II. THE WONDROUS SALVATION.

The salvation Jesus wrought for His people is salvation from sin.

**1.** From the result of sin, — the anger of God, — death, — hell, — loss of Heaven. He who trusts in Jesus is pardoned for all his offenses against God.

**2.** From the guilt and charge of sin, so that we become innocent in the sight of God, yea, and even meritorious through the righteousness of Jesus. This justification is instantaneous, perfect, unalterable, and brings with it all the blessings which by right only belong to perfection.

**3.** From the very being of sin. There is in each of us our original depravity, and our acquired habits, but these the Lord graciously takes away; and puts in their place a new nature, and holy desires leading to holy acts.

This is a gradually progressive work.

These three things pardon, justification, and sanctification, — must go together. God will not justify an unpardoned or unsanctified sinner at the last.

Oh, how glorious is this salvation! My soul, often muse thereon!

III. THE BLESSED PEOPLE.

Not known at first, but mingled with others; some of all countries, ranks, and characters, shall be brought in. The marks by which they are distinguished are —

**1.** A sincere desire after Heaven.  
**2.** A devout seeking for God.  
**3.** Diligent labor to find the way of salvation.  
**4.** Great abhorrence of sin.  
**5.** Sense of personal nothingness.  
**6.** Humble reliance on Jesus.

And now, my Father, make Thy servant mighty at last to wrestle with sinners! Come, O Father, to mine assistance, by the ever-blessed Spirit, for JESUS CHRIST’S sake! Amen.

Before I left Cambridge, to come to London, I went: one day into the library of Trinity College, and there! noticed a very fine statue of Lord Byron. The librarian said to me, “Stand here, sir.” I did as I was directed, and as I looked at it I said, “What a fine intellectual countenance! What a grand genius he was! .... Come here,” said the librarian, “and look at the other side of the statue.” I said, “Oh! what a demon! There stands the man who could defy the Deity.” He seemed to have such a scowl and such a dreadful leer on his face, as Milton would have painted upon Satan when he said, “Better to reign in hell, than serve in Heaven.” I turned away, and asked the librarian, “Do you think the artist designed this?.... Yes,” he said, “he wished to picture the two characters, — the great, the grand, the almost-superhuman genius that Byron possessed, and yet the enormous mass of sin that was in his soul.” Was ever libertine more free in his vices? Was ever sinner more wild in his blasphemy? Was ever poet more daring in his flights of fancy? Was ever any man more injurious to his fellows? Yet what did Byron say? There is a verse of his which just tells us what he felt in his heart; the man had all that he wanted of sinful pleasure, but here is his confession, —

***“I fly, like a bird of the air,  
In search of a home and a rest;  
A balm for the sickness of care, —  
A bliss for a bosom unblest.”***

Yet he found it not, for he had no rest in God. He tried pleasure till his eyes were red with it; he tried vice till his body was sick; and he descended into his grave a premature old man  
In the year 1853, I was asked to give an address at the annual meeting of the Cambridge Sunday School Union, in the Guildhall of. that town. There were two other ministers to speak, both of them much older than myself; and, as a natural consequence, I was called upon first. I do not now recollect anything that I said on that occasion, but 1 have no doubt that I spoke in my usual straightforward fashion I do not think there was anything in my remarks to cause the other speakers to turn upon me so savagely as they did when it came to their turn to address the large gathering. One of them, in particular, was very personal and also most insulting in his observations, specially referring to my youth, and then, in what he seemed to regard as a climax, saying that it was a pity that boys did not adopt the Scriptural practice of tarrying at Jericho till their beards were grown before they tried to instruct their seniors.

Having obtained the chairman’s permission, I reminded the audience that those who were bidden to tarry at Jericho were not boys, but full-grown men, whose beards had been shaved off by their enemies as the greatest indignity they could be made to suffer, and who were, therefore, ashamed to return home until their beards had grown again. I added that, the true parallel to their case could be found in a minister who, through falling into open sin, had disgraced his sacred calling, and so needed to go into seclusion for a while until his character had been to some extent restored. As it happened, I had given an exact description of the man who had attacked me so unjustly, and for that reason all who were present, and knew the circumstances, would be the more likely to remember the incident. There was in the hall, that evening, a gentleman from Essex, — Mr. George Gould, of Loughton, — who felt so deeply sympathetic with me in the trying position in which I had been placed, through no fault of my own, and who also was so much impressed by what he had heard that, shortly afterwards, meeting in London old Mr. Thomas Olney, one of the deacons of the church worshipping in New Park Street Chapel, he pressed him to try to secure my services as a supply for the vacant pulpit, and thus became, in the hand of God, the means of my transference from Cambridgeshire to the metropolis.

(The night before he came to London, Mr. Spurgeon gave the following poem, which he had composed, to the ladies with whom he had lodged after leaving Mr. Leeding’s school; it has probably never been published until now: — )

**THE NOBLE ARMY OF MARTYRS**.

***~~Rouse thee, Music! Rouse thee, Song! Noble themes await thee long. not the warrior’s thund’ring car, not the battle heard afar,  
not the garment rolled in blood, not the river’s redden’d flood; Subjects more sublime I sing, Soar thee, then, on highest wing!~~***

***~~Sing the white-robed hosts on high, Who in splendor suns outvie; Sing of them, the martyr’d band, With the palm-branch in their hand: Fairest of the sons of light, Midst the bright ones doubly bright.~~***

***~~Who are these? Of noble birth? Were they monarchs of the earth? Kings of Babel’s ancient state, Lords of Persia, proud and great, Grecian heroes, bold and brave, Romans, making earth their slave?~~***

***~~No , — but hearken! Heav’n replies, List the music from the skies: — “These are they who dared to die, Champions of our Lord on high.~~***

***~~At His name they bow’d the knee, Sworn to worship none but He. Fearless of the tyrant’s frown,~~***

***~~Mindful of the promised crown; Trampling on Satanic rage,  
Conqu’ring still from age to age.  
Come, the glorious host review, March the glittering squadrons through.”~~***

***~~Some, from show’rs of deadly stones, Some, from wheels, — with broken bones, Snatch’d by sweet seraphic might, Borne above the tyrant’s spite, — Wondrous in their dying hour, Rose above the demon’s power. Some by cruel racks were torn, others were in sunder sawn. Hunger, nakedness, and thirst, Sword, and ax, and spear accurs’d, Cross, and knife, and fiery dart, All conspiring, join’d their smart: Yet, unconquer’d e’en in death, Triumph fill’d their latest breath.~~***

***~~Yonder rank in chariots came, Blazing o’er with fiery flame; Now, in burnish’d arms they shine, Glorious in the gift Divine.~~***

***~~Some, from jaws of cruel beasts, Rose to Heav’n’s triumphal feasts; Some, in dungeons long immured, Saw in death their crown secured,~~***

***~~Writhing in their tortures dread, Smiled as if on downy bed.~~***

***~~These, from Rome’s dark dungeons flew; These, on Alps, the despot slew; These, by Spanish priests were: slain; These, the Moslem curs’d in vain.~~***

***~~Yonder stands a gallant host, Martyrs from the Gallic coast, Heroes from Bartholomew, Soldiers to their Master true.~~***

***~~These, again, in shining row, Saw the fiery torments glow, They in Smithfield kiss’d the stake, Blest to die for Jesus’ sake.~~***

***~~Those who, further in the plain, Lift to Heav’n the lofty strain, In the ocean found a grave, Plung’d by force beneath the wave.~~***

***~~Some, by English prelates tried, On the scaffold firmly died; Scorn’d to own prelatic sway, Nobly dared to disobey.  
Covenanters bold are there, Sons of Scotia’s mountains bare, Mingled with the valiant band, Heroes of my fatherland.~~***

CHAPTER 28.

DR. RIPPON’S PRAYER AND ITS ANSWER.

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.”

I am told that my venerable predecessor, Dr. Rippon, used often, in his pulpit, to pray for somebody, of whom he knew nothing, who would follow him in the ministry of the church, and greatly increase it. He seemed to have in his mind’s eye some young man, who, in after years, would greatly enlarge the number of the flock, and he often prayed for him. He died, and passed away to Heaven, a year or two after I was born. Older members of the church have told me that they have read the answer to Dr. Rippon’s prayers in the blessing that has been given to us these many years. — C. H. S.

T HE Christians commonly called Baptists are, according to my belief, the purest part of that sect which, of old, was “*everywhere*spoken against,” and I am convinced that they have, beyond their brethren, preserved the ordinances of the Lord Jesus as they were delivered unto the saints. I care very little for the “*historical*church” argument; but if there be anything at all in it, the plea ought not to be filched by the clients of Rome, but should be left to that community which all along has held by “*one*Lord, one faith, and one baptism.” This body of believers has not been exalted into temporal power, or decorated with worldly rank, but it has dwelt for the most part in dens and caves of the earth, — “destitute, afflicted, tormented,” — and so has proved itself of the house and lineage of the Crucified. The church which most loudly claims the apostolical succession wears upon her brow more of the marks of Antichrist than of Christ; but the afflicted Anabaptists, in their past history, have had such fellowship with their suffering Lord, and have borne: so pure a testimony, both to truth and freedom, that they need in nothing to be ashamed. Their very existence under the calumnies and persecutions which they have endured is a standing marvel, while their unflinching fidelity to the Scriptures as their sole rule of faith, and their adherence to the simplicity of gospel Ordinances, is a sure index of their Lord’s presence among them. It would not be impossible to show that the first Christians who dwelt in this land were of the same faith and order as the believers now called Baptists. The errors of the churches are all more or less modern, and those which have clustered around the ordinance of baptism are by no means so venerable for age as some would have us suppose. The evidence supplied by ancient monuments and baptisteries, which still remain, would be conclusive in our favor were it not that upon this point the minds of men are not very open to argument. Foregone conclusions and established ecclesiastical arrangements are not easily shaken. Few men care to follow truth when she leads them without the camp, and calls them to take up their cross, and endure to be thought singular even by their fellow-Christians.

The church now worshipping in the Metropolitan Tabernacle F19 took its rise front one of the many assemblies of immersed believers who met in the borough of Southwark. Crosby, in his *History of the Baptists,*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 they 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. This seems to have been a period of much religious heart-searching, in which the ordinances of churches were tried by the Word of God, and men were determined to retain nothing which was not sanctioned by Divine authority; hence, there were many public disputes upon baptism, and, in Consequence, many became adherents of believers’ immersion, and Baptist churches sprang up on all sides. Truth suffers nothing from free discussion; it is, indeed, the element in which it most freely exerts its power. I have personally known several instances in which sermons in defense of infant baptism have driven numbers to more Scriptural views, and I have felt that, if Paedo-Baptists will only preach upon the subject, Baptists; will have little to do but to remain quiet and reap the sure results. It is a dangerous subject for any ministers to handle who wish their people to abide by the popular opinion on this matter.

How long William Rider exercised the ministerial office, I am unable to tell; but the church’s next record, bearing date 1668, says: — “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, being then in the twentyeighth year of his age. Previous to his coming to London, Keach 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. For publishing a little book, *The Childs Instructor,*Keach was fined, imprisoned, and put in the pillory at Aylesbury and Winslow; but he continued to labor in the country until 1668, when he came to London, and very speedily was chosen Pastor of the late Mr. Rider’s congregation.

Benjamin Keach was one of the most useful preachers of his time, and for thirty-six years built up the Church of God with sound doctrine. Having been in his very earliest days an Arminian, and having soon advanced to Calvinistic views, he preserved the balance in his preaching, and was never a member of that exclusive school which deems it to be unsound to persuade men to repent and believe. He was by no means so highly Calvinistic as his great successor, Dr. Gill; but evidently held much the same views as are now advocated from the pulpit of the Tabernacle. Nor must it be supposed that he was incessantly preaching upon believers’ baptism, and other points of denominational peculiarity; his teaching was sweetly spiritual, intensely Scriptural, and full of Christ. Whoever else kept back the fundamental truths of our holy gospel, Benjamin’ Keach did not so. During the time of an indulgence issued by Charles I1., the congregation erected a large meeting-house, capable of holding “*near*a thousand hearers,” in Goat’s ‘Yard Passage, Fair Street, Horse-lie-down, Southwark, and this is the first house of prayer actually set apart for Divine worship which I find that our church possessed. The joy of being able to meet in quiet to worship God, the delight of all assembling as one church, must have been great indeed. I have tried to imagine the cheerful salutations with which the brethren-greeted each other when they all gathered in their meeting-house of timber, and worshipped without fear of molestation. The architecture was not gorgeous, nor were the fittings luxurious; but the Lord was there, and this made amends for all. In all probability, there were no seats, for at that time most congregations stood, and pews are mentioned, in after days, as extras which persons erected for themselves, and looked upon as their own property. Mr. Keach trained his church to labor in the service of the Lord. Several were by his means called into the Christian ministry, his own son, Elias Keach, among them. He was mighty at home and useful abroad. By his means, other churches were founded, and meeting-houses erected; he was, in fact, as a pillar and a brazen wall among the Baptist churches of his day, and was in consequence deservedly had in honor. He “*fell*on sleep,” July 16, 1704, in the sixtyfourth 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 that 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 a while, 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. He had great natural gifts, but felt in need of more education, and set himself to work to obtain it as soon as he was settled over the church. To be thoroughly furnished for the great work before him, was his first endeavor. Crosby says of him: — “He was a very painful and laborious minister of the gospel, and though he had not the advantage of an academical education, yet, by his own industry, under the assistance of the famous Mr. Ainsworth (author of the Latin dictionary), after he had taken upon him the ministerial office, he acquired a good degree of knowledge in the languages, and other useful parts of literature, which added luster to those natural endowments which were very conspicuous in him.” In his later days, as the lease of the meeting-house in Goat’s Yard had nearly run out, preparation was made for erecting a new place of worship in Unicorn Yard. Spending himself in various works of usefulness, Mr. Stinton worked on till the 11th of February, 1718, when a close was put to his labors and his life. He was taken suddenly ill, and saying to his wife, “! *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.

The loss of its Pastor is always a serious matter to a Baptist church, not only because it is deprived of the services of a well-tried and faithful guide, but because, in the process of selecting a successor, some of the worst points of human nature are apt to come to the front. All may unite in the former Pastor, but where will they find another rallying point? So many men, so many minds. All are not prepared to forego their own predilections, some are ready to be litigious, and a few seize the opportunity to thrust themselves into undue prominence. If they would all wait upon the Lord for His guidance, and consent to follow it when they have obtained it, the matter would move smoothly; but, alas! it is not always so. In the present instance, there came before the church an excellent young man, whose after life proved that he was well qualified for the pastorate, but either he was too young, being only twenty or one-andtwenty years of age, or there were certain points in his manner which were not pleasing to the older friends, and therefore he was earnestly opposed. The deacons, with the exception of Mr. Thomas Crosby, schoolmaster, and son-in-law of Keach, were resolved that this young man, who was no other than JOHN GILL, from Kettering, should not become the Pastor. He found, however, warm and numerous supporters, and when the question came to a vote, his admirers claimed the majority, and in all probability their claim was correct, for the other party declined a scrutiny of the votes, and also raised the question of the women’s voting, declaring, what was no doubt true, that apart from the female vote John Gill was in the minority. The end of the difference was that about half the church withdrew from the chapel in Goat Yard, and met in Mr. Crosby’s school-room, claiming to be the old church, while another portion remained in the chapel, and also maintained that they were the original church. The question is now of small consequence, if it ever had any importance, for the company who rejected Gill, after selecting an excellent preacher, and prospering for many years, met with a checkered experience, and at length ceased to exist. In all probability, the division promoted the growth of the cause of Christ, and whatever unhappy circumstances marred it for a while, both parties acted conscientiously, and in a very short time were perfectly reconciled to each other. Mr. Gill’s people did not long worship in Crosby’s school-room, but, as the other friends were moving out and erecting another meeting-house in Unicorn Yard, they came back to the old building in Goat Yard, and found themselves very much at home.

Dr. Gill’s pastorate extended over no less a period than fifty-one years, reaching from 1720 to 1771*,*and he proved himself to be a true master in Israel. His entire ministry’ was crowned with more than ordinary success, and he was by far the greatest scholar the church had yet chosen; but he cannot be regarded as so great a soul-winner as Keach had been, neither was the church at any time so numerous under his ministry as under that of Keach. His method of address to sinners, in which for many years a large class of preachers followed him, was not likely to be largely useful. He cramped himself, and was therefore straitened where there was no Scriptural reason for being so. He does not appear to have had the public spirit of Stinton, though he had a far larger share of influence in the churches, and was indeed a sort of archbishop over a certain section. The ordination discourses and funeral sermons which he preached must have amounted to a very large number’; it seemed as if no Particular Baptist minister could be properly inducted or interred without Dr. Gill’s officiating. In the beginning of the year 1719, the church at Horsleydown invited him to preach with a view to the pastorate, and he was ordained March *22,*1720. Little did the friends dream what sort of a 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 Paedo-Baptist 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. 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 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. In 1757, the church under his care erected a new meeting-house for him in Carter Lane, St. Olave’s Street, Southwark, near London Bridge; which he opened on October 9, preaching two sermons from Exodus 20:24.

In the Doctor’s later years, the congregations were sparse, and the membership seriously declined. He was himself only able to preach once on the Sabbath, and living in a rural retreat in Camberwell, he could do but little in the way of overseeing the church. It was thought desirable that some younger minister should be found to act as co-pastor. To this, the Doctor gave a very decided answer in the negative, asserting “that Christ gives *pastors,*is certain; but that he gives *co-pastors,*is not so certain.” He even went the length of comparing a church with a co-pastor to a woman who should marry another man while her first husband lived, and call him co-husband. Great men are not always wise. However, by his stern repudiation of any division of his authority, the old gentleman held the reins of power till the age of seventy-four, although the young people gradually dropped off, and the church barely numbered 150 members. Soon, the venerable divine became too feeble for pulpit service, and confined himself to his study and the writing-desk, and by-and-by he found that he must lie down to rest, for his day’s work was done. He died as he had lived, in a calm, quiet manner, resting on that rich sovereign grace which it had been his joy to preach. The last words he was heard to speak were, “O my Father, my Father!” He died at Camberwell, October 14, 1771, and was buried in Bunhill Fields. His eyesight had been preserved to him so that he could read small print by candle-light even to the last, and he never used glasses. His was a mind and frame of singular vigor, and he died before failing sight, either mental or physical, had rendered him unfit for service: in this as highly favored as he had been in most other respects. He was one of the most learned men that the Baptist denomination has ever produced. His great work, *The Exposition of the Old and New Testaments,* is still held in the highest esteem even by those whose sentiments widely differ from the author’s. His *Body of Divinity*is also a masterly condensation of doctrinal and practical theology, and his *Cause of God and Truth*is high*l*y esteemed by many. The system of theology with which many identify his name has chilled many churches to their very soul, for it has led them to omit the free invitations of the gospel, and to deny that it is the duty of sinners to believe in Jesus: but for this, Dr. Gill must not be altogether held responsible, for a candid reader of his Commentary will soon perceive in it expressions altogether out of accord with such a narrow system; and it is well known that, when he was dealing with practical godliness, he was so bold in his utterances that the devotees of HyperCalvinism could not endure him. “Well, sir,” said one of these, “if I had not been told that it was the great Dr. Gill who preached, I should have said I had heard an Arminian.”

The mighty commentator having been followed to his grave “by his attached church and a numerous company of ministers and Christian people, among whom he had bee. n 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 offense 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 affection, they should be assisted to build a meeting-house for their own convenience, and the sum of £300 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. It is somewhat remarkable, as illustrating the perversity of human judgment, that the seceding friends, who objected to Rippon’s youth, elected for their pastor Mr. William Button, who was younger still, being only nineteen years of age. His father, however, was a deacon under Dr. Gill, and therefore no doubt the worthy youth was regarded with all the more tenderness; nor did he disappoint the hopes of his friends, for he labored on for male than forty years with the utmost acceptance. The friends who remained with young John Rippon had no reason to regret their choice: the tide of prosperity set in, and continued for half a century, and the church again came to the front in denominational affairs. The chapel in Carter Lane was enlarged, and various agencies and societies set in notion; there was, in fact, a real revival of religion in the church, though it was of that quiet style which became a Baptist church of the straiter sort. Rippon was rather clever than profound; his talents were far inferior to those of Gill, but he had more tact, and so turned his gifts to the greatest possible account. He said many smart and witty things, and his preaching was always lively, affectionate, and impressive. He was popular in the best sense of the term, — beloved at home, respected abroad, and useful everywhere. Many souls were won to Jesus by his teaching, and out of these a remarkable number became themselves ministers of the gospel. The church-book abounds with records of brethren preaching before the church, as the custom was in those days.  
In his later years, Dr. Rippon was evidently in very comfortable circumstances, for we have often heard mention of his carriage and pair, or rather, “glass coach and two horses.” His congregation was one of the wealthiest within the pale of Nonconformity, and always ready to aid the various societies which sprang up, especially the Baptist Foreign Mission, and a certain Baptist Itinerant Society, which I suppose to have represented the Baptist Home Mission. The Pastor occupied no mean position in the church, but ruled with dignity and discretion, — perhaps;, ruled a little too much. “How is it, Doctor, that your church is always so peaceful?” said a much-tried brother minister. “Well, friend,” said Rippon, “you see, we don’t call a church-meeting to consult about buying a new broom every time we want one, and we don’t entreat every noisy member to make a speech about the price of the soap the floors are scrubbed with.” In many of our smaller churches, a want of common sense is very manifest in the management, and trouble is invited by the foolish methods of procedure. Dr. Rippon once said that he had some of the best people in His Majesty’s dominions in his church, and he used to add with a nod, — “*and some of the worst*” Some of the latter class seem to have got into office at one time, for they were evidently a hindrance rather than a help to the good man, though from his independent mode of doing things the hindrance did not much affect him. As well as I can remember it, the story of his founding the Almshouses and Schools, in 1803, runs as follows. The Doctor urges upon the deacons the necessity of such institutions; they do not see the urgency thereof; he pleads again, but, like the deaf adder, they are not to be charmed, charm he never so wisely. “The expense will be enormous, and the money cannot be raised;” this was the unceasing croak of the prudent officers. At length the Pastor says, “The money can be raised, and shall be. Why, if I don’t go out next Monday, and collect £500 before the evening meeting, I’ll drop the proposal; but: while I am sure the people will take up the matter heartily, I will not be held back by you.” Disputes in this case were urged in very plain language, but with no degree of bitterness, for the parties knew each other, and had too much mutual respect to make their relationships in the church depend upon a point of difference. All were agreed to put the Doctor to the test, and challenged him to produce the £500 next Monday, or cease to importune them about Almshouses. The worthy slow coaches were up to time on the appointed evening, and the Doctor soon arrived. “Well, brethren,” said he, “I have succeeded in collecting £300; — that is most encouraging, is it not?.... But,” said two or three of them at once in a hurry, “you said you would get £500, or drop the matter, and we mean to keep you to your word.” “By all means,” said he, “*and*I mean to keep my word, too, for there is £800 which the friends gave me almost without asking, and the rest is nearly all promised.” The prudent officials were taken aback, but recovering themselves, they expressed their great pleasure, and would be ready to meet the Pastor at any time, to arrange for the expending of the funds. “No, no, my brethren,” said the Doctor, “I shall not need your services. You have opposed me all along, and now I have done the work without you, you want to have your say in it to hinder me still; but neither you nor any other deacons shall plague a minister about this business. So, brethren, you can attend to something else.” Accordingly, the old trust deed of the Almshouses had a clause to the effect that the Pastor should elect the pensioners, “*no deacon interfering.*”

‘When the time came for removing the Almshouses and Schools to the fine block of buildings erected by our friends in the Station Road, Walworth, near the Elephant and Castle Railway Station, I had great pleasure in inducing the Charity Commissioners to expunge this objectionable clause, and to give the Pastor and deacons unitedly the power to select the objects of the charity.

Dr. Rippon continued in the pastorate from 1773 to 1836, a period of sixty-three years. He outlived his usefulness, and it was a wonderful instance of Divine care over the church that the old gentleman did not do it serious injury. He retained the will to govern after the capacity was gone:, and he held his power over the pulpit though unable to occupy it to profit. Supplies who came to preach for him were not always allowed to officiate; and when they did, the old minister’s remarks from his pew were frequently more quaint than agreeable. It is not an unqualified blessing to live to be eighty-five. During the last few months, MR. CHARLES ROOM, with the Doctor’s full. approbation, acted as his assistant, but he resigned upon the decease of Dr. Rippon. He left with the esteem and good wishes of the church, and afterwards exercised a useful ministry at Portsea. In 1830, six years before Dr. Rippon’s death, the old sanctuary in Carter Lane was closed, to be pulled down for making the approaches to the present London Bridge. Due compensation was given, but a chapel could not be built in a day, and, therefore, for three years, the church was without a home, and had to be indebted to the hospitality of other congregations. After so long a time for choice, the good deacons ought to have pitched upon a better site for the new edifice; but it is not judging them hardly when I say that they could not have discovered a worse position. If they had taken thirty years to look about them with the design of burying the church alive, they could not have succeeded better. New Park Street is a low-lying sort of lane close to the bank of the River Thames, near the enormous breweries of Messrs. Barclay and Perkins, the vinegar factories of Mr. Potts, and several large boiler works. The nearest way to it from the City was over Southwark Bridge, *with a toll to pay.*No cabs could be had within about half-a-mile of the place, and the region was dim, dirty, and destitute, and frequently flooded by the river at high tides. Here, however, the new chapel must be built because: the ground was a cheap freehold, and the authorities were destitute of enterprise, and would not spend a penny more than the amount in hand. That God, in infinite mercy, forbade the extinction of the church, is no mitigation of the shortsightedness which thrust a respectable community of Christians into an out-of-the-way position, far more suitable for a tallow-melter’s business than for a meeting-house. The chapel, however, was a neat, handsome, commodious, well-built edifice, and was regarded as one of the best Baptist chapels in London. Dr. Rippon was present at the opening of the new house in 1833, but it was very evident that, having now found a place to meet in, the next step must be to find a minister to preside over the congregation. This was no easy task, for the old gentleman, though still revered and loved, was difficult to manage in such matters. Happily, however, the deacons were supremely judicious, and having kept the church out of all rash expenditure, they also preserved it from all hasty action, and tided over affairs till the worn-out Pastor passed away to his rest, and with due funereal honors was laid in that Campo Santo of Nonconformists, — the cemetery of Bunhill Fields, of which it had been his ambition to become the historian and chronicler. There are thousands in Heaven who were led first to love the Savior by his earnest exhortations. He quarried fresh stones, and built up the church. He molded 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.

The next Pastor 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. During Mr. Angus’s pastorate, the privilege of communing at the Lord’s table was extended to members of other churches, whether baptized or not, and this was done quietly and without division, though a considerable minority did not agree with it. The church remains a community of baptized believers, and its constitution will not admit any persons into its membership but those immersed upon personal profession of faith in the Lord Jesus;; but it does not attempt to judge the order and discipline of other churches, and has fellowship in the breaking of bread with all churches which form parts of the mystical body of Christ: thus it endeavors to fulfill at the same time the duties of purity and love. In December, 1839, the Baptist Missionary Society invited Mr. Angus to become its Home Secretary. a sense of the importance of the Missionary Society, and the fact that, after much deliberation, the Committee could not discover anyone else about whom they could be at all unanimous, were the motives which led him to leave the church, to the deep regret of all the members.

After the removal of Dr. Angus, the church was happily directed to hear MR. JAMES SMITH, whose ministry in Cheltenham was an abundant guarantee that he was likely to prove the right man to collect a congregation in New Park Street. He was Pastor for about eight years and a half, from 1841 to 1850, and then returned to Cheltenham, from which many of his best friends are of opinion that he ought never to have removed. He was a man of slender education, but of great natural ability, sound in the faith, intensely earnest, and a ready speaker. Few men have ever been more useful than he. 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 the Lord had not forgotten His people, and in due time He poured them out such a blessing that there was not room to receive it. Let me tell once more the pleasing story.

On the last Sabbath morning in November, 1853, I walked, according to my 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 five or six honest miles of it, which I usually measured, each Sunday, foot by foot, unless I 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, I was all aglow with my walk, and ready for my pulpit exercises. Sitting down in the table-pew, a letter, bearing the postmark of London, was passed to me. 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 me upon the table, — the great Dr. Rippon, out of whose Selection I was about to choose the hymns for our worship. The late Dr. Rippon seemed to hover over me as an immeasurably great man, the glory of whose name covered New Park Street Chapel and its pulpit with awe unspeakable. I 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 clown in Norfolk. He shook his head, and remarked 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 me 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 had come for me to look out the hymns, therefore the letter was put away, and, as far as I can remember, was for the day quite forgotten.

The next day, this answer was sent to the letter from the London deacon: —

“No. 60, Park Street,  
“Cambridge,  
“November 28th, 1853.

“My Dear Sir,

“I do not reside at Waterbeach, and therefore: your letter did not reach me till yesterday, although the friends ought to have forwarded it at once. My people at Waterbeach are hardly to be persuaded to let me come, but I am prepared to serve you on the 11th [December]. On the 4th, I could not leave them; and the impossibility of finding a supply at all agreeable to them, prevents me from leaving home two following Sabbaths. I have been wondering very much how you could have heard of me, and I think I ought to give some account of myself, lest I should come and be out of my right place. Although I have been more than two years minister of a church, which has in that time doubled, yet my last birthday was only my nineteenth. I have hardly ever known what the fear of man means, and have all but uniformly had large congregations, and frequently crowded ones; but if you think my years would unqualify me for your pulpit, then, by all means, I entreat you, do not let me come. The Great God, my Helper, will not leave me to myself. Almost every night, for two years, I have been aided to proclaim His truth. I am therefore able to promise you for the 11th, and should you accept the offer, I will come on Saturday afternoon, and return on Monday. As I shall have to procure a supply, an early answer will oblige —

“*Yours*most truly,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

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 traveled to London. Though it is so long ago, yet it seems but yesterday that I lodged for the night at a boarding-house in Queen Square, Bloomsbury, to which the worthy deacon had directed me. As I wore a huge black satin stock, and used a blue handkerchief with white spots, the young gentlemen of that boarding-house marveled 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*me after their own fashion, and I was encouraged accordingly! What tales were narrated of the great divines of the metropolis, and their congregations! One, I 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 my hearing, and when I was shown to bed in a cupboard over the front door, I was not in an advantageous condition for pleasant dreams. New Park Street hospitality never sent the young minister to that far-away hired room again; but, assuredly, that Saturday evening in a London boarding-house was about the most depressing agency which could have been brought to bear upon my spirit. On the narrow bed I 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 my rusticity with such amusement, pitiless the spare room which scarcely afforded me space to kneel, pitiless even the gas-lamps which seemed to wink at me as they flickered amid the December darkness. I had no friend in all that city full of human beings, but felt myself to be among strangers and foreigners, and hoped to be helped through the scrape into which I had been brought, and to escape safely to the serene abodes of Cambridge and Waterbeach, which then seemed to be Eden itself. The Sabbath morning was clear and cold, and I wended my way along Holborn Hill towards Blackfriars and certain tortuous lanes and alleys at the foot of Southwark Bridge. Wondering, praying, fearing, hoping, believing, — I felt all alone, and yet not alone. Expectant of Divine help, and inwardly borne down by my sense of the need of it, I traversed a dreary wilderness of brick to find the spot where my message was to be delivered. One text rose to my lips many times, I scarcely know why, — “He must needs go through Samaria.” The necessity of bur Lord’s journeying in a certain direction, is. no doubt repeated in His servants; and as my journey was not of my 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 New Park Street Chapel, I felt for a moment amazed at my own temerity, for it seemed to my eyes to be a large, ornate, and imposing structure, suggesting an audience wealthy and critical, and far removed’ from the humble folk to whom my 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 I felt that, by God’s help, I was not yet out of my depth, and was not likely to be with so small an audience. The Lord helped me very’ graciously, I had a happy Sabbath in the pulpit, and spent the interval with warm-hearted friends; and when, at night, I trudged back to the Queen Square narrow lodging, I was not alone, and I no longer looked on Londoners as flinty-hearted barbarians. My tone was altered; I wanted no pity of anyone, I 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 I had only heard his roar miles away.

(The friend who walked back with Mr. Spurgeon to his lodging in Queen Square, at the close o! the first Sabbath evening’s service at New Park Street Chapel, was Mr. Joseph Passmore. That walk was the prelude to a life-long friendship and happy association in church work and in the publication of the beloved Pastor’s many works. The following is the first letter ever written by Mr. Spurgeon to his friend, and is included in the Autobiography through the kindness of his eldest son and namesake, Mr. Joseph Passmore: — )

“May 17th, 1854.  
“My Dear brother,

“I am extremely obliged to you for your kind present. I find that all the kindness is not in the country, some at least grows in town; and, if nowhere else, it is ‘to be found in a house in Finsbury.

“It is sweet to find oneself remembered. I trust the harmony between us may never receive the slightest jar, but continue even in }leaven. We have, I trust, just commenced a new era; and, by God’s blessing, we will strive to make it a glorious one to our Church. Oh, that our hopes may all be realized! I feel assured that your constant prayers are going up fervently to Heaven; let us continue wrestling, and the wished-for blessing must arrive.

“With Christian regards to you and Mrs. Passmore,  
“I am,  
“Yours most truly,

**C. H. SPURGEON.”**

CHAPTER 29.

FIRST SERMONS AT PARK STREET CHAPEL.

Let every man, called of God to preach the Word, be as his Maker has fashioned him. Neither Paul, nor Apollos, nor Cephas is to be ‘imitated by John; nor are John’s ways, habits, and modes of utterance to be the basis for a condemnation of any one or all of the other three. As God gives to every seed its own body as it rises from the soil, so to each man will He grant his own appropriate development, if he will but be content to let his inner self reveal itself in its true form. The good and the evil in men of eminence are both of them mischievous when they become objects of servile imitation; the good when slavishly copied is exaggerated into formality, and the evil becomes wholly intolerable. It each teacher of others went himself to the school of our one only Master, a thousand errors might be avoided. — C. H. S.

T HE text of Mr. Spurgeon’s first sermon in London has long been well known; but, until now, there does not appear to have been any printed record of the opening discourse in that marvelous Metropolitan ministry which was destined to exercise such a mighty influence, not only throughout London, and the United Kingdom, but “unto the uttermost part of the earth.” Happily, the young preacher had written at considerable length the message he felt called to deliver on that occasion in his Master’s name, and now, after a whole generation has passed away, his longforgotten words will speak to a far larger audience than he addressed that winter’s morning (December 18th, 1853,) in New Park Street Chapel. It may interest some readers to know that the sermon was the 673rd that Mr. Spurgeon had preached. The evening discourse appears to have been redelivered at a later period, taken down in shorthand, and afterwards revised by Mr. Spurgeon for publication in *The Baptist Messenger.*

MORNING SERMON.

THE FATHER OF LIGHT.

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” — James 1:17.

Some sciences and subjects of study are to us inexhaustible. We might ever find in them fresh matter for instruction, wonder, and research. If we were to descend into the depths of the earth, with the geologist, and bring up the skeletons of extinct monsters, and note the signs of great convulsions, and study the old and new formations and strata; or if we were to soar aloft, with the astronomer, and attempt to measure the heavens, and count the stars; we should ever be lost in the new discoveries which we should make. The same may be said of all the natural sciences. Whatever the subject of his study may be, it does not seem possible that man should ever be able to say, “I have nothing more to learn; I am master of it all.”

But should it one day happen that our race has so progressed in knowledge, and become so well informed as to leave nothing unknown, — should nature be stript of all her mystery, and the heavens, the sea, and the earth be all perfectly understood, — there will yet remain one subject upon which the sons of men may meditate, dispute, and ponder; but it shall still be unknown. That subject is, — GOD, of whom, with humble reverence, I am now to speak. May it please the great Spirit of wisdom to enlarge our minds, and guide our hearts into an understanding of that portion of truth concerning Him which is revealed in the text! We have, here, —

I. A MAJESTIC FIGURE.  
II. A GLORIOUS ATTRIBUTE.  
III. A GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

I. A MAJESTIC FIGURE.

God is here called “the Father of lights,” — comparing Him to the sun. It is most true that this lower world is the reflection of the upper one. In it, once, the face of God might have been seen as on some glassy lake; but sin has ruffled the surface of the waters, so that the portrait is broken, and presented only in pieces. Yet there are the pieces, — the wrecks of the picture, — and we will not throw them aside. Let us lift up our eyes on high, and behold the only object which is worthy to be called an emblem of Deity. We think we can see several ideas couched in the figure used in our text by the apostle.

**1.***Independence; or, Self-existence.*

God is the only self-existent Being. The sun is not really so; but he is far more independent than any other object we know of. All else of nature is continually borrowing; vegetables draw their nourishment from the soil, animals from them, or from one another, man from all; — he is the greatest beggar in the universe. The moon lights her nightly torch at the sun’s lamp, the planets rekindle theirs in his bright storehouse. Mother Earth is greatly dependent on the sun; despite the pride of her children, what is she but a tiny globule dancing in the rays of that majestic orb? The sun gives, but takes not; bestows on all, receives from none, leans on none; but lives alone, in his own solemn grandeur and glory.

Such is God, the great I AM, who sits on no borrowed throne, and begs no leave to be. All things are of Him, and by Him. He needs them not; were they all annihilated, it would not injure Him. He could exist, as He has from eternity existed, alone. He has in Himself all that is worth having. On Him all things lean; He leans on none. But we can scarcely speak of Him, —

***“Who, light Himself, in uncreated light,  
Invested deep, dwells awfully retired  
From mortal eye, or angel’s purer ken.  
Whose single smile has, from the first of time,  
Fill’d overflowing all those lamps of heaven  
That beam for ever through the boundless sky;  
But should He hide His face, th’ astonish’d sun And all th’ extinguish’d stars would loosening reel Wide from their spheres, and chaos come again.”***

**2.** *Sublimity*is another idea suggested by the figure in the text. The sun is one of the most magnificent of created things; when he shows himself, the moon and stars conceal their blushing faces. Seen in any part of his course, he is a grand object. When first he tinges the Eastern sky with his rising beams, when he sits serenely in mid-heaven at noon, or when he retires in splendor at eventide, grandeur is always one of his characteristics. He is too bright for our eyes to gaze upon, although we are at such a vast distance from him.

Far more sublime is God. Who shall describe Him? His angelic servants are glorious, the starry floor of His throne is glorious; what must He Himself be?

***“Imagination’s utmost stretch  
In wonder dies away.”***

Well may angels veil their faces, for even their eyes could not endure His brightness. No man can see Him. His train was all that Moses saw. Borrow the eagle’s eye and wing, soar on and on until the glory overcomes you, and you fall reeling back to the earth; do it again and again, and you will find that man cannot see God. Clouds and darkness are round about Him, for He may truly have it said to Him, —

***“Dark with’ excessive bright Thy skirts appear.”***

**3.** *Power*also seems a prominent idea in this expression of the apostle: “*The*Father’ of lights.” The sun is as a giant coming out of his chamber; and, like a strong man, he rejoices to run a race. He drags the whole immense solar system along in his majestic course, nor can any oppose him. How mightily he still moves on in his appointed course!

So is our God glorious in His power. No one knows His might; it is like Himself, infinite. He speaketh, and His Word is with power. He willeth, and His will is omnipotent. Who can thwart His purposes? Shall nature? No; the hills melted like wax at the presence of the Lord. They skipped before Him like rams. By His power, the waters are divided; fire singes not His servants; wild beasts are tamed. He lifteth His finger, and the flood ariseth; He droppeth it, and the waters assuage. In vain could mountains, torrents, stars, and all the elements war against Him. Who can conquer Him in battle? Shall man? No; He counteth all men but as a drop in a bucket. He that sitteth in Heaven hath His enemies in derision. Shall the devils in hell withstand Him? No; once have they fallen from the battlements of Heaven, and in vain is their loudest roar. Satan is chained, and led as a conquer’d monarch to grace God’s victory over him. He is God’s slave, and unwillingly doth his Master’s will. O beloved, what a God is here revealed to us! Put this thought under thy pillow; and when troubles arise, still calmly sleep on, for His power protecteth thee from all evil! **4.** But *Beneficence*seems even more the leading idea of the text. The sun is. absolutely necessary to our being; there would be no light, no heat, no life, no rain, nothing without him. He is necessary also to our well-being; the sun is indeed the great philanthropist; he visits every land, he gives freely, and gives to all, to the peasant as well as to the prince. Curse him, or bless him, he is the same; he does not refuse his light even to the felon, but he visits the prisoner in his cell.

Such also is God, the good, the greatly-good. Should He withdraw His face, Heaven would not be Heaven. Without God, the whole universe would be a valley full of dry bones, a horrible charnel-house. Oh, how good is our God! He confines not His mercies to any one race; the Hottentots are as welcome to His love as are any of us. The sinful receive His grace, and lose their former evil nature. He gives to sinners, and to the unthankful; and if men were not by nature blind, they would see by His light; the defect is in them, and not in Him.

Yon sun has shone on my cradle, it will beam on my death-bed, and cast a gleam into my grave. So doth God, the Beneficent, gild our path with sunshine. Earth were a gloomy vault without Him.; with Him, it is light and joyous, the porch of a still more blissful state.

II. A GLORIOUS ATTRIBUTE.

The apostle, having thus introduced the sun as a figure to represent the Father of lights, finding that it did not bear the full resemblance of the invisible God, seems; constrained to amend it by a remark that, *unlike the* sun, *our Father has no turning, or variableness.*

The sun has *parallax,’*or, variation; he rises at a different time each day, and he sets at various hours in the course of the year. He’. moves into other parts of the heavens. He is clouded, eclipsed, and even suffers a diminution of light from some mysterious decrease of the luminiferous ether which surrounds him. He also has *tropic,’*or, turning. He turns his chariot to the South, until, at the solstice, God bids him reverse his rein, and then he visits us once more. But God is superior to all figures or emblems. He is immutable. The sun changes, mountains crumble, the ocean shall be dried up, the stars shall wither from the vault of night; but God, and God alone, remains ever the same. Were I to enter into a full discourse on the subject of immutability, my time, if multiplied by a high number, would fail me. But reminding you that there is no change in His power, justice, knowledge, oath, threatening, or decree, I will confine myself to the fact that His love to us knows no variation. How often it is called *unchangeable,*everlasting love! He loves me now as much as He did when first: He inscribed my name in His eternal book of election. He has not repented of His choice. He has not blotted out one of His chosen; there are no erasures in that book; all whose names are written in it are safe for ever. Nor does God love me less now than when He gave that grand proof of love, His Son, Jesus Christ, to (tie for me. Even now, He loves me with the same intensity as when He poured out the vials of justice on His darling to save rebel worms. We have all had times which we considered times of special love, when His candle shone round about us, and we basked in the light of His smiling face; but let us not suppose that He really loved us more then than now. Oh, no! He then discovered His love in a way pleasing to flesh and blood; but trials are equally proofs of His love. In the fight with Apollyon in the Valley of Humiliation, in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, or in ‘Vanity Fair, He will be ever the same, and will love us neither more nor less than when we sing with seraphic voices the songs of Heaven.

Death, sometimes, in the prospect, is very trying to flesh and blood; but if this truth of God’s unchanging love were well remembered, death would not be such a trial to us as it has been to many. We should know that He who helped Jacob to gather up his feet, and die, — that He who enabled David to say, “Although my house be not so with God; yet He hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things,, and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although He make it not to grow,” — and that He who permitted Stephen to fall asleep amid a shower of stones:, will be the Deliverer of all who trust in Him. Throughout eternity, there shall be no jars, not a breath of strife; but the same uninterrupted, blessed unity shall prevail for ever, and God will continue to bestow upon us His unchanging love. Thanks be unto Him for loving us so!

III. A GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

The apostle, having .introduced God as the Father of lights, and qualified the figure, now proceeds to ascribe all good gifts to Him alone: “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.” If it seemed perfectly reasonable that, at the rising of the sun, nature should welcome it with song, is it not even more reasonable that, at the name of *the*Father’ of lights, we should lift up a song? What is said here, is what angels can sing in Heaven; it is what Adam could have hymned in Paradise; it is what every Christian feels heartily willing to confess.

Ever since the Fall, this verse has had an added emphasis of meaning, since in us, by nature, there dwells no good thing, and by our sin we have forfeited every right to any favor from God. So that our *natural gifts,*such as beauty, eloquence, health, life, and happiness, all come from Him equally with our *graces.*We have nothing which we have not received. Earth, one day, shall make this song thrill through infinity; Heaven shall join the chorus; the region of chaos and old night shall shout aloud, and even hell’s unwilling voice shall growl out an acknowledgment of the fact that “*Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.*”

I have succeeded in my object if, with me, you can from your hearts say, at the contemplation of Jehovah, — “Glory be unto the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end! AMEN.”

EVENING SERMON.

THE FAULTLESS ASSEMBLY.  
“They are without fault before the throne of God.” — Revelation 14:5.

It is well, beloved, sometimes to get aside from the worry of business, to have a little conversation concerning that future world to which we are tending. We will, therefore, indulge in a brief contemplation of Heaven, and will speak concerning those things which, if we are the Lord’s people, we are soon to realize when we shall be —

***“Far from a world of grief and sin,  
With God eternally shut in,”***  
to live with Him for ever.

There are three things in these words; first, *the character of the people in* Heaven: “they are *without fault;*” secondly, *who they are .’*“*they*are without fault;” and then, thirdly, *where they are’*“*they*are without fault *before the throne of God.*”

I. THE PEOPLE IN HEAVEN ARE OF A CERTAIN PECULIAR CHARACTER:

“without fault.”

I have never discovered such creatures living upon earth, and do not suppose I ever shall. I might travel many a weary journey before I could find a man in the three kingdoms that would be “without fault;” yea, if an angel were to be sent down to the world for this purpose, he might fly round it many a time, till his wings were weary, yet never find a man “without fault.” I knew a man, once, who told me that he was perfect; but he soon got very cross when I began to speak, and I saw that he was perfect only in one thing, — he was perfect in weakness; that was the only perfection he had. It is only now and then that you meet with a man who has the impudence to tell you that he is perfect; but you can soon see, from the very look of him, that he is not perfect, for at any rate he is not perfect in humility; he seems to glory in his perfection, and all the while his very mouth betrayeth him. That eye of pride, and that lip of lust with which he speaks, as he lusteth for the praise of men, tell you that he is far from being perfect. A faultless creature, — where is there such a being on earth? Fly, Gabriel, fly I enter thou the loftiest palace, and then go to the humblest cottage, go to the most remote realm, to the most civilized, polite, and educated people, and thou shalt find no perfect being; nay, go into the church, go into the pulpit, thou wilt ne’er find a perfect man nor a perfect minister. Imperfection is stamped upon all things; and, save the completeness that is in Christ Jesus, and the perfection we have in Him, perfection is nowhere to be found beneath the skies; nor in Heaven itself could it be found unless God were there, for He alone can make a creature perfect. But there, beloved, is perfection; despite the faults of men on earth, when they shall have been fitted for the skies by God’s most precious grace, they shall stand before God “without fault.”

We will, first, look at our own faults, and then admire those glorious beings above, and the grace of God in them, that they are “without fault.” I think there are three great faults in the Church of God at large, as a body, from which those who are in Heaven are entirely free. Those three are, — a want of love to one another; a want of love to souls; and a want of love to Jesus Christ.

I. We need not go far without seeing that there is, among Christians, *a*

***want of love to one another.***There is not too much love in our churches; certainly, we have none to give away. We have heard that — *“Whatever brawls disturb the street,  
There should be peace at home;”*

but it is not always as it *should*be. We have known Churches where the members can scarcely sit down at the Lord’s table without some. disagreement. There are people who are always finding fault with the minister, and there are ministers finding fault with the people; there is among them “a spirit that lusteth to envy,” and “where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work.” We have met with people among whom it would be misery to place ourselves, because we love not war; we love peace and charity. Alas! how continually do we hear accounts of disputings and variance in churches! O beloved, there is too little love in the ‘churches! If Jesus were to come amongst us, might He not say to us, “This is My commandment, that ye love one another; but how have you kept it when you have been always finding fault with one another? and how ready you have been to turn your sword against your brother!”?

But, beloved, “they are without fault before the throne of God.” Those who on earth could not agree, are sure to agree when they get to Heaven. There are some who have crossed swords on earth, but who have held the faith, and have been numbered amongst the saints in glory everlasting. There is no fighting amongst them now; “they are without fault before the throne of God.” There are many, who would never sit at the same table with each other when they were upon earth, though they were the children of God; but now, side by side, they are standing and singing to the same tune, “Glory be to God and to the Lamb!” We discover, by reading the records of distinguished men, that there has scarcely been one eminent man who could walk side by side with his fellow. Like great mountains, they touch at their foundations; certainly, they unite nowhere else. But in Heaven all stand side by side, and there is no disunion amongst them. We know that, in many churches, some of the richer members will scarcely notice the poorer; but it will not be so above, there is true love there. We hear of church-members who have been sick for months, yet no brother or sister-member has ministered to them; but in Heaven it is not so, there is no neglect there. They cannot suffer there; but if it were possible that they could suffer, so sweet would be: the love displayed towards each other, that suffering would be removed in a moment. Ask the cherubim if they ever knew a jar in Christ’s glorified Church above; and they would say, “Nay.” And if you could make all the blessed ones pass in review, and ask them if they love one another, “Yes,” they would say, “*with*a pure heart, fervently; and though we had brawls and disputings on earth, they are all forgotten now, for the blood of Christ, that covers a multitude of sins, has ended all our disagreements; and that holy mantle of a Savior’s love, that He casts over all our faults, has ended all our wars with one another. We are all one in Christ Jesus; would to God we had seen more of this oneness when below!” They are “without fault” in that respect, beloved, above. There is no harshness there; there is no ill humor there; there is no bitterness there; there is no envy, no evil-speaking, no spite, no uncharitableness, there; “*they*are without fault before the throne of God.” Oh, how my wearied spirit longs to be there! I wish not to live with men of strife; the lions’ den is not for me, nor the house of leopards. Give me the quiet place where the oil runneth down from the head even to the skirts of the garments. Let me live in peace with all Christ’s Church; let me not find fault with anyone. Sooner will I allow them to sheath their daggers in my heart than I would draw mine in angry contest. Thank God! there are some of us who can say, “There is not a man living with whom we are at arm’s length any more than the infant that is just born.” There are some of us who can give our hand very readily to anyone in whom we see anything that is pleasing to the Spirit of God; but when we see anything that is contrary to the Spirit, we say, “Oh! that I had wings — not like an eagle to fly at my brother, — oh! that I had wings like a dove, that I might fly away, and be at rest.” That happy time shall soon come, beloved, when we, like those above, shall be “without fault before the throne of God.”

**2.** A second fault is, that there is *a great want of love to souls.*John Bunyan gives the portrait of a man whom God intended to be a guide to Heaven; have you ever noticed how beautiful that portrait is? He has a crown of life over his head, he has the earth beneath his feet, he stands as if he pleaded with men, and he has the Best of Books in his hand. Oh! I would that I were, for one moment, like that pattern preacher; that I could plead with men as John Bunyan describeth. We are all of us ambassadors for Christ, and we are told that, as ambassadors, we are to beseech men as though God besought them by us. How I do love to see a tearful preacher! How I love to see the man who can weep over sinners; whose soul yearns over the ungodly, as if he would, by any means, and by all means, bring them to the Lord Jesus Christ! I cannot understand a man who stands up and delivers a discourse in a cold indifferent manner, as if he cared not for the souls of his hearers. I think the true gospel minister will have a real yearning after souls, something like Rachel when she cried, “Give me children, or else I die;” so will he cry to God, that He may have His elect born, and brought home to Him. And, methinks, every true Christian should be exceedingly earnest in prayer concerning the souls of the ungodly; and when they are so, how abundantly God blesses them, and how the church prospers! But, beloved, souls may be damned, yet how few of you care about them! Sinners may sink into the gulf of perdition, yet how few tears are shed over them! The whole world may be swept away by a torrent down the precipice of woe, yet how few really cry to God on its behalf! How few men say, “Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people!” We do not lament before God the loss of men’s souls, as it well becomes Christians to do.

Ah! but in Heaven, they love souls. Angels rejoice over one sinner that repenteth. As a good Puritan said, “Whenever a prodigal returns, they set all Heaven’s bells ringing, because there is another sinner come back.” O beloved, when you get a convert to bring to the church, you see some of the members look at him, through their spectacles, as if they would frighten the poor timid one! Many do not, like angels, rejoice over him; but they look at him as if they were afraid he was a hypocrite. The poor soul stands trembling before the church; the hand of the Lord is mighty upon him, but they sit by as coldly as if they were on a judgment seat, and have neither love nor mercy for him. I know that, when a church increases, there should be judgment and discretion shown, and I would rather have too much of what I am speaking against, than too little of it; but, sometimes, the members look at the converts, and say, “It cannot be possible; how should *they*be gathered in?” And when there is an addition to their numbers, they even go home with a heavy heart, as if the church were likely to come to harm by admitting them. Give me a church-meeting where they weep with joy over those who come in, and say, “Bless the Lord, there is another poor soul rescued from the world!” I think it is a sort of mark of the sheep, that they love to see,. the lambs; and I think it is a feature of the Lord’s family, that they love to see another child born into it. When you see anyone brought to the Lord, do you not bless God for it? When you hear that such an one has received grace and mercy, do you not bless God for it? No, not half so much as you ought; we are not half thankful enough to our Father for it. But, up there, beloved, they are “without fault” in that matter, and they do rejoice:, every one of them, when they see souls brought in. Methinks, young man, your pious Mother will rejoice when God brings you to His feet; and those godly friends of yours shall lift up their notes high in Heaven, when they see those dear to them on earth united to the Church of God on high. Blessed be God’s name for them, they are “without fault before the throne of God;” and especially in this matter of their love to souls.

**3.** The other fault I mentioned was, *want of love lo Jesus Christ.*Yes, how little there is among us of love to Jesus Christ! When I think of myself, sometimes, and think of the Lord Jesus, it does appear as if I did not love Him at all. When I think of that “love so amazing, so Divine,” which led Him to give Himself for me; when I remember that in me was no good thing, yet He loved me when I was dead in trespasses and sins; loved me when I hated Him, loved me when I spurned Him, loved me when I despised and rejected Him, and hid, as it were, my face from Him; for “He was despised and rejected of men,… He was despised,… and we esteemed Him not;” — when I think of all this, I cannot but wonder in my heart that I do not consecrate myself more entirely to Him. Oh, if we did but love that sweet Lord Jesus with more ardor and devotedness! He has love enough for us, but how little is our love for Him!

Methinks there is nothing over which a Christian should groan so much as the littleness of his love to the Savior. When our faith is small, we often lament; but we should recollect that love is the flower of faith, and springs from frith; and when that is feeble, it is a sign that faith also is feeble. Rutherford somewhere beautifully, says, “O Lord Jesus, let me love Thee, and that will be Heaven enough for me; for I find such sweetness in loving Thee that, if it were possible that Thou didst not love me, Thou canst not be so cruel as to prevent me loving Thee; and if Thou wouldst but let me have the presumption to love Thee, I think it would be Heaven enough.” Rutherford felt it was so sweet to love his Lord, he found it was so delightful to have his heart go out to the Savior, that so long as the Lord would let him love Him, he would be thankful for it, even though his Lord did not love him. Beloved, there is nought like the love of Jesus to make us happy! I love the doctrines of grace as well as any mortal living does, but I love Jesus better; I love Christ’s people as much as anyone can, but I love Christ best. Oh, His sweet, glorious, exalted person! that is the object of our love; we look upon all else as the clothes of Jesus, the crown of Jesus. And we love the Lord Jesus, for His own blessed name’s sake; we love Him for what we know of Him; still, the fault is that we do not know enough of Him, and we do not love Him enough. But up there, beloved, “*they*are without fault before the throne of God.” Ask those bright spirits whether they know Jesus, and love Jesus, and how would they answer you? Spirit immortal, dost thou love Jesus? Hear his answer! He stops not to tell you, but he repeats the song he sings in Heaven, “*Blessing,*and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.” Ask him whether he loves Christ, he does not stay to tell you, but sweeps his fingers across the golden strings of his harp, and again lifts up his thrice-glorious voice in praise of the name of Jesus.

***“‘Jesus! my Lord!’ their harps employs;  
‘Jesus! my Love!’ they sing;  
‘Jesus! the life of all my joys!’  
Sounds sweet from every string.”***

If there were nothing else to expect in Heaven but that we should know Christ better and love Him more, that is all the Heaven that any of us need desire. To touch with our finger His wounded side, to grasp His nailpierced hands, to gaze on His benignant face, to look on those compassionate eyes which once were cold and glazed in the tomb, — to know Him, and to love Him perfectly, — that were Heaven enough; and it shall be so, for “they are without fault before the throne of God,” and so shall we be.

We have thus described, beloved, the people in Heaven without fault before the throne. We have been necessarily brief, and we might have enlarged considerably, by observing how they are without fault *in the opinion of others,*and *in their own opinion,*for now they cannot see any fault in themselves. But, best of all, they are without fault *in God’s opinion,*for even the scrutinizing eye of Jehovah sees no fault in them. He looks upon them, and beholds not the shadow of a stain. That God, ‘who sees every little insect in the air, and every creeping thing at the bottom of the sea, can perceive nothing wrong in His people in Heaven; no, nor even here, when He considers them in Christ. But more especially then, when we shall be completely sanctified by the Spirit, there shall be no indwelling corruption, no original sin, all that is sinful in us shall be gone; and God Himself upon His throne shall say, “They are without fault before Me.” As He looks upon the living stones in the. Heavenly Temple, perfectly joined together with the vermilion cement of Christ’s blood, He will say of them all, “They are without fault.”

II. Now, let us inquire, WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE THAT ARE WITHOUT

FAULT?

“Oh!” says one, “they are the apostles.” Certainly, they are “without fault.” Another says, “They are some eminent saints such as Noah, Elijah, and Daniel.” No; not them exclusively, beloved. Another friend says, “They are some faithful ministers who preach the truth very boldly; therefore they are without fault before the throne.” No; they are not the only ones who are without fault; I will tell you who they are. “I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father’s name written in their foreheads.” “After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne:, and unto the Lamb.” These are the faultless people; the chosen ones of God, the elect; these are they who have the Father’s name written in their foreheads; those whom God selected out of the world to show forth His praise; the hundred and forty-four thousand, and the multitude which no man could number who were redeemed from among men. It does not matter whether they have been great sinners or little sinners, they are all “without fault before the throne” now; it matters not whether they have been swearers, drunkards, whoremongers, or what not, they are “without fault before the throne” if they are but amongst the number whom God hath chosen and sanctified. It matters not what they were; it matters not whether men despised them, or found fault with them; we care not whether they have been put in the pillory of scorn, and hoofed and hissed at by mankind, all ‘the elect are “without fault” in the person of Jesus Christ; and they shall all be. at the last bright and glorious day before the throne in person “without fault” in themselves, when God shall gather home His people, and glorify His ransomed ones. *They*are without fault; they are without fault before the throne; they are those whom God hath chosen, those who have their Father’s name in their foreheads.

By reading the earlier part of this chapter, you will see that *they were all redeemed persons .’*“The hundred and forty and four thousand, which were *redeemed front the earth.*” “These were *redeemed from among men,* being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.” All who were redeemed shall stand before God without speck or .blemish,. We will not go into the doctrinal part of this subject, but simply speak of it as a matter of experience. “They are without fault.” Do you ask,

beloved, “Am I one of the redeemed?” Canst thou say that the blood of the Lamb has been sprinkled upon thy lintel, and thy door post? Hast thou, by faith, sat down and fed on that Paschal Lamb? Is He thy rod, thy stay, thy all in all, thy very existence? Can thy faith lay her hand on that dear head of His, and there confess thy sin? Canst thou see traces of His blood on thy conscience? Hast thou marks of His blood on thy soul? Art thou bloodwashed? Hast thou felt that Jesus Christ is thine? Canst thou say, —

***“I’m a poor sinner, and nothing at all,  
But Jesus Christ is my all in all”?***  
Canst thou see the purchase price given for thee? Canst thou sing, —

***“* Oh! *how sweet to feel the flowing  
Of his sin-atoning blood!  
With Divine assurance knowing  
He hath made my peace with God”?***

If so, though thou mayest be loaded with sin, though conscience may condemn thee, though Satan may bring all thy faults before thee, thou shalt be “without fault before the throne of God.” Thou mayest have been a black and gross sinner, thou mayest have been a great backslider, thou mayest have been horribly wicked, almost as bad as the devil himself; thou mayest have had risings of corruption, so horrible that thou darest not reveal them to thy fellow-man; thou mayest be the subject of insinuations so vile and black that thou puttest thy hand to thy mouth to prevent their finding utterance; the flesh may be struggling so hard against the spirit that thou dost scarcely know which shall have the predominance, and thou art crying, “*If*it be so, why am I thus?” — it may be that thou art lying down, self-condemned and law-condemned, fearing that the sword of Justice will smite thy head from thy shoulders; and yet, with all this, thou shalt one day be “without fault before the throne of God,” for thou hast been redeemed by Christ’s atoning blood.

O beloved, when I look back upon my past life, I am horrified at the thought of what I should have come to if God had left me to work out my own righteousness! I was the subject of black thoughts and sad feelings, I sinned against early warnings and pious training, against God, against my own soul and body; and yet I know that, notwithstanding all these sins, I shall one day be “*without*fault before the throne of God.” Possibly I may be addressing some man who has been notoriously guilty of swearing, and drunkenness, and every filthy vice, yet he has come to be a believer in Christ; or perhaps he is saying, “I am condemned, there is nothing but hell for me; I know I cannot be pardoned.” Nay, poor sinner, if thou art trusting in Jesus, God’s law cannot condemn twice. If God’s law has condemned thee, God’s grace absolves thee, if thou tremblest at God’s Word, and sayest, “*I*am a sinner, but I trust the Savior.” Recollect the apostle’s message, “*This*is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief;” — as if Paul would say that you cannot go further in sin than the chief of sinners went. What sayest thou to this, O drunkard? One day, the Lord having mercy on thee, thou shalt stand, white as driven snow, before the Majesty on high. What sayest thou to this, O thou whose mouth has been stained with black oaths? If thou hast fled to Jesus to be saved, one day, unblemished and complete, thou shalt join in the hallelujahs of the glorified before the throne of God. O youth, though thou hast gone into the very kennel of sin, and raked up all that is vile and base; though thou hast gone down, down, down, till it seemed impossible for thee to take another step into the hell of sin; even thou shalt stand “*without*fault before the throne of God,” if thou art a believer, trusting in the blood of Jesus, and hast that blood applied to thy soul. And thou, O woman, outcast, lost, ruined; though thou dost hide thy face, ashamed to bear the gaze of man, and comest with stealthy steps into God’s house, as if afraid to be seen, for thou knowest what thou hast been; ay, but a woman, who was a sinner, once washed the Savior’s feet with her tears, and why? Because He had washed her heart with blood; — and, O thou poor, guilty Magdalene, there is blood that can wash even thee! Though thou hast stains as black as hell upon thee, Christ’s blood can wash them out; that precious blood can take away all thy sins. His blood availed for me, and, having availed for me, where shall I find another whose guilt shall go beyond the merit of His sacrifice, whose crimes shall exceed His power to save? Never shall I find such an one, for Christ has boundless grace. I always love that phrase of Hart’s, —

***“*A *sinner is a sacred thing, The Holy Ghost hath made him so.”***

Ah! let me know that I am addressing such a sinner! I will preach the gospel to real, *bona-fide,*actual, positive sinners; and no flesh and blood shall stop me for evermore in all my sermons, as long as God gives me life and breath, breaching to those real sinners. As for your sham sinners, the people, who talk very daintily of being sinners, I have no good opinion of them. John Berridge said that he kept a rod for sham beggars, and I will keep one for these pretenders. I love to see one who feels himself to be a real sinner; not the one who says, just by way of compliment, that he is a sinner; not the one who can read the Ten Commandments all through, and say that he has not broken any of them; but the real sinner, the downright guilty man, the man who is a thorough sinner, and knows it, that is the man to whom I like to preach the gospel. O sinner, — you, *you,*you, — if you are trusting in Christ’s name, and if His blood has been sprinkled on your conscience, shall yet stand before the throne of God “*without*fault.” Or, as the good man in Yorkshire said, when he was dying, and someone told him he had been a great sinner, “Ah!” said he, “I have been a great sinner, but there is a crown in Heaven which Gabriel cannot wear; it will fit no head but mine, and I shall wear it, too, for I am bought and paid for by the blood of Christ; and I shall be with Him soon.” Bought and paid for by the blood of Christ, thou also, believing soul, shalt be “*without*fault before the throne of God.”

Beloved, there is one thought that will suggest itself to some of you, and that is, *there are some of your relatives that are*“*without fault! before the throne of God.*” There is a dear, pious Mother, on whose knees you sat in childhood, over whose grave you wept: and she is “without fault before the throne.” You loved her, but when you look back, you can see that there was a little fault of some kind in her; perhaps she loved her children too much, there was some fault or other that she had: but she has no fault now. And there, husband, is your beloved wife, who cheered you on your way; you look back, and almost faultless as you in your fondness deemed her, yet you feel that she was not quite free from some little error: but she is “without fault before the throne” now. If you could behold her now, you would see her, — as the Interpreter described the pilgrims who had been washed, — “fair as the moon.” Mother, there is your daughter; and there are our brothers and sisters who have crossed the flood. When speaking on this subject of re-union with departed friends, we can say, —

***“* E’en *now, by faith, we join our hands  
With those that went before;  
And greet the blood-besprinkled bands,  
On the eternal shore!”***

The members of our churches have ascended up to our Father, and to their Father, and to Christ’s Father, and now “they are without fault before the throne of God.” Oh, to be “without fault”? If I might ask one thing of God, if it were not sinful to ask such a thing, methinks I would ask, “Let me die now, that I may go and be without fault before Thy throne!”

***“O that the happy word were given, —  
Loose me, and let me rise to Heaven,  
And wrap myself in God!”***

Why are we afraid to die? What are the pains, the groans, the dying struggle? It is the paying of a penny for a pound to go through them, that so we may get to Heaven.

***“* Oh *I if my Lord would come and meet,  
My soul should stretch her wings in haste,  
Fly fearless through death’s iron gate,  
Nor feel the terrors as she passed.’***

“They are without fault before the throne of God.” Yes, they are there; and perhaps we, too, shall be there in a few days. I am no prophet, nor the son of a prophet; but it may be that one of us, who loves the Lord, will be with Him before long; but whether it be so or not, whichever one of us is to depart, we know that it is to be “without fault.” So we are not afraid, whoever it may be; if we are of the Lord’s family, we shall be “*without* fault before the throne of God.”

III. We can only very briefly explain the third part of the subject, which is,

to show where They A RE WHO ARE WITHOUT FAULT: “They are without fault before the throne of God.” “Before the throne of God.” We know what it is to lie *beneath the throne;*for we sometimes sing, —

***“We would no longer lie  
Like slaves beneath the throne.”***

We know what it is, at times, to be *far off from the throne.*Satan stands blocking up the way to the throne. It is as much as we can do to push past him, and get a word from the Master. Have you not sometimes thought that you were *behind the throne,*and that God could not look at you, — that He could look at all His servants, but not at you, for you were behind the throne? The proud infidel wants to get *on the throne,*but even if it were possible for him to be in Heaven, he could not do that, for he would neither be beneath the throne, nor behind the throne, nor on the throne, but he would have to stand *before*it to be condemned.

But the saints of God are all before the throne. Why? Because *they can then always look at God, and God can always look at them.*They stand before the throne. That is all I want here, to stand before the throne of God. If I could always be before it, if I could always see the light of His countenance, always feel the comforting assurance of being safe in Jesus, always taste His love, always receive of His grace, that were enough for me. And if that is’ sweet here, how much sweeter shall it be to bow before the throne hereafter, and “unceasing sing His love”! At times, here, we are so far off the throne, that we can scarcely tell where it is; and if it were not a glorious high throne, being so far off, we should never be able to see it. But it is one that you can see a long way off; yet there “they are” immediately “before the throne,” drinking in bliss with their eyes and ears, with their whole soul lost in Jesus, standing perpetually before the throne! That part of the verse needs so much illustration to explain it, that I am afraid, more briefly, to venture on it. I, therefore, must, for the present, leave it. “They are without fault before the throne of God.” But, beloved, there is one serious question which I shall put to you, and that is, *Shall we be without fault before the throne hereafter?*The answer rests here; are we without fault before the throne of God now, through the justifying blood and righteousness of Christ? Are we able to say, —

***“Jesus, thy blood and righteousness,  
My beauty are, my glorious dress”?***

If so, the Christian cannot change his position in God’s .sight. He is now justified, and shall be so hereafter; there is now no condemnation, and he never can be condemned. “Ah!” says someone, “I cannot say as much as that.” Well, then, are you full of fault in your own eyes? Hath God the Spirit shown you your sin? Next to being shown the righteousness of Christ, one of the best evidences of His working is our being aware of our own sinfulness. Do you, then, see your own sinfulness? Have you been brought down till all that nature has set upon the throne has been cast in the dust, and that garment which you gloried in has been torn away, and you stand naked, and worse than naked; filthy, and worse than filthy; diseased, and worse than diseased; polluted in heart, worse than dead; worse than lying among the slain; like those that go down to the.. pit, those that have been long since dead; — nay, if possible, worse than that? Can you feel as if you have been brought down, down, down, till desperation seized you, and you had nothing to rest in? Can you feel that you have been stripped to the lowest degree, and all that you possessed and gloried in has been scattered to the winds? And can you now say, “Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord”? Well, if you have plenty of faults here, and have known them, and been taught them, and feel that you cannot overcome them of yourself, you shall be “without fault before the throne of God” by-and-by, for the Lord will not bring you to that state of soul-distress, and self-despair, without bringing you also to peace and liberty. O sinner, is not this glorious news to thee? Thou knowest thy sinnership, thou canst understand that thou art a sinner; that is the first thing thou needest to know. We sometimes sing, —

***“All the fitness He requireth,  
Is to feel your need of Him.”***  
But I love the next two lines of the verse, —  
***“This He gives you;  
‘Tis the Spirit’s rising beam.”***

Good old Martin Luther used to say, “The devil comes to me, and says, ‘Martin, thou art an exceeding sinner.’ *....*I know that very well,” said Martin, “*and*I’ll cut off thy head with thine own sword; for Christ died for sinners, and the more I feel I am a sinner, the more evidence I have that Christ died for me.” Oh! to know our sinnership! to recognize it in our inmost soul! — that is blessed! And there is only one more step, and that God shall lead us to, — to put us in Christ Jesus in our own feelings; for we are already in Him in the eternal covenant, if so be we are out of ourselves. Oh! trust Him, *trust Him,*TRUST Him, TRUST HIM! He is a good Christ, and a great Christ. Ah, great sinner! trust thou to His blood and righteousness; and thou, even thou, the filthiest, the vilest, the off-cast, the undeserving, the ill-deserving, and hell-deserving sinner, even thou shalt yet wear a blood-washed robe, spotless and white; even thou shalt sing the perfect song, and be perfect thyself, for thou shalt be “without fault before the throne’, of God.”

CHAPTER 30

LETTERS CONCERNING SETTLEMENT IN LONDON.

I do not know whether all of you can go with me here; but I think you must, in some instance or other, be forced to see that God has indeed ordained your inheritance for you. If you cannot, I can. I can see a thousand chances, as men would call them, all working together, like wheels in a great piece of machinery, to fix me just where I am; and I can look back to a hundred places where, if one of those little wheels had run awry, if one of those little atoms in the great whirlpool of my existence had started aside, I might have been anywhere but here, and occupying a very different position. *If you*cannot say this, I know I can with emphasis; and [ can trace God’s hand back even to the period of my birth. Through every step I have taken, I can feel that indeed God has allotted my inheritance for me. If any of you are so willfully beclouded that you will not see the hand of God in your being, and will insist that all has been done by your own will without the control of Providence, — that you have been left to steer your own course across the ocean of existence, and that you are where you are because your own hand guided the tiller, and your own arm directed the rudder, — all I can say is, my experience, and the experience of many now in this place, would rise in testimony against you, and we should say. “Verily, it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.” “Man proposes, but God disposes;” and the God of Heaven is not unoccupied, but is engaged in over-ruling, arranging, ordering, altering, and working all things according to the good pleasure of His will. — C. H. S.

T HE Church in New Park Street was sadly reduced in numbers, and from the position of its meeting-house there seemed no prospect before it but ultimate dissolution; but there were a few in its midst who never ceased to pray for a gracious revival. The congregation became Smaller and smaller; yet they hoped on, and hoped ever. Let it never be forgotten that, when they were at their worst, the Lord remembered them, and gave to them such a tide of prosperity that they have since had no mourning, or doubting, but many, many years of continued rejoicing.

(‘The following official record shows in what condition the New Park Street Church was at the time that Mr. Spurgeon preached his first sermon in London. Although there had not been any additions during the year, and the total income for 1853 had been less than £300, the members of the church and congregation were so concerned about the spiritual welfare of their neighbors that, without waiting for the election of a new Pastor, they had subscribed the amount needed to secure the services of a city missionary for five years: —

“Monthly church-meeting, 14th Dec., 1853.  
“brother Low presided.  
“The minutes of the last church-meeting were read, and the correctness of the entry confirmed.

“Agreed to grant the use of the chapel to the London Baptist Association for the holding of their annual meeting on Wednesday, the 11th of January, 1854.

“The letter proposed to be sent from this church to that meeting was read, approved, and ordered to be signed by brother Low as presiding deacon. It was as follows: —

To the Ministers and Messengers composing the London Baptist Association, the baptized Church of Christ assembling in New Park Street, Southwark, sendeth Christian salutation.

“Dear Brethren,

“‘We regret that, during the past year, we. have made no additions to our numbers in consequence of our being without a Pastor, and that we have nothing particular to communicate to the Association, except that a friend has presented the sum of one hundred pounds, on condition that our church and congregation would raise the like amount, with the view to securing the services of a missionary in our locality, with the aid of the London City Mission, for five years. We have the pleasure to state that our friends have contributed the full sum required for the carrying out of this important object. We enclose our statistics. ‘ Brethren, pray for us.’

“Signed on behalf of the church, at our church-meeting, 14th Dec., 1853,  
“‘JAMES LOW, Presiding Deacon.’” )

(Mr. Spurgeon wrote two letters to his father, recounting his first experiences in London. A considerable portion of the earlier one is missing, including the first sheet, and also the end of the epistle. Evidently, the young preacher had been relating what the deacons had told him concerning the falling-off in the congregations, for the part of his letter that has been preserved begins as follows: — )

“ ...... me that the people would be back at the first blast of the trumpet which gives a certain sound ...... The people are Calvinistic. and they could not get on with anything else. They raised £100 last week for a city missionary, so that they have the sinews of war. The deacons told me that, if I were there three Sundays, there would be no room anywhere. They say that all the London popular ministers are gospel-men, and are plain, simple, and original. They have had most of the good preachers of our denomination out of the country; but they have never asked one of them twice, for they gave them such philosophical, or dry, learned sermons, that once was enough. I am the only one who has been asked twice, the only one who has been heard with pleasure by all. I told them they did not know what they were doing, nor whether they were in the body or out of the body; they were so starved, that a morsel of gospel was a treat to them. The portraits of Gill and Rippon — large as life — hang in the vestry. Lots of them said I was Rippon over again.

“It is God’s doing. I do not deserve it; — they are mistaken. I only mention facts. I have not exaggerated; nor am I very exalted by it, for to leave my own dear people makes it a painful pleasure. God wills it.

“The only thing which pleases me is, as you will guess, that I am right about College. I told the deacons that I was not a College man, and they said, ‘That is to us a special recommendation, for you would not have: much savor or unction if you came from College.’

“As to a school, or writing to my deacons in case I do not go, I shall feel happiest if left to manage alone, for I am sure that any letter to my deacons would not do any good. A church is free to manage its own affairs. We are in loving unity now, and they will improve. But churches of the Baptist denomination would think it an infringement of their rules and liberties to be touched in the least by persons of other denominations in any matter which is their own concern. I should at once say, and you would not mind my saying so, ‘I *had nothing to do with the hole; I never asked my father to write it; anti the deacons must do as they please about laying’ it before the church.’*

“I feel pleasure in the thought that it will not now be necessary, and I feel that, if it had been, I should have been equally contented. Many other ministers have schools; it is a usual thing. It is not right to say, ‘ If you mean to be a minister;’ for I *am*one, and have been for two years as much a minister as any man in England; and probably very much more so, since in that time I have preached more than 600 times.

“More soon.”  
(The allusions to a school refer to the following advertisement which Mr. Spurgeon had inserted in a Cambridge newspaper: —

“No. 60, Park Street, Cambridge. Mr. C. H. Spurgeon begs to inform his numerous friends that, after Christmas, he intends taking six or seven young gentlemen as day pupils. He will endeavor to the utmost to impart a good commercial Education. The ordinary routine will include Arithmetic, Algebra, Geometry, and Mensuration; Grammar and Composition; Ancient and Modern History; Geography, Natural History, Astronomy, Scripture, and Drawing. Latin and the elements of Greek and French, if required. Terms, £5 per annum.”)

“No. 60, Park Street,  
“Cambridge,  
“December \_\_, 1853.

“My Dear Father,

“I concluded rather abruptly before; — but you are often called out from your writing, and therefore can excuse it in me. I hardly know what I left unsaid. I hope *to*be at home three days. I think of running down from London on Tuesday (January) 3rd, and to go home by Bury on Friday, 6th. I hope it will be a sweet visit although a short one.

“Should I be settled in London, I will come and see you often. I do not anticipate going there with much pleasure. I am contented where I am; but if God has more for me to do, then let me go and trust in Him. The London people are rather higher in Calvinism than I am; but I have succeeded in bringing one church to my own views, and will trust, with Divine assistance, to do the same with another. I am a Calvinist; I love what someone called ‘glorious Calvinism,’ but ‘Hyperism’ is too hot-spiced for my palate.

“I found a relation in London; a daughter of Thomas Spurgeon, at Ballingdon. On the Monday, she came and brought the unmarried sister, who you will remember was at: home when we called last Christmas. I shall have no objection to preach for Mr. Langford on Wednesday, January 4th, if he wishes it.

“I spent the Monday in going about London, climbed to the top of St. Paul’s, and left some money with the booksellers. F20

“My people are very sad; some wept bitterly at the sight of me, although I made no allusion to the subject in the pulpit, as it is too uncertain to speak of publicly. It is Calvinism they want in London, and any Arminian preaching will not be endure, d. Several in the church are far before me in theological acumen; they would not admit that it is so, but they all expressed their belief that my originality, or even eccentricity, was the very thing to draw a London audience. The chapel is one of the finest in the denomination; somewhat in the style of our Cambridge Museum. A Merry Christmas to you all; a Happy New Year; and the blessing of the God of Jacob!

“Yours affectionately,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

(At the laying of the foundation stone of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Mr. Spurgeon’s father made the following interesting reference to the College incident and his son’s coming to London: —  
“My Lord Mayor, I am very happy to meet you to-night. We are Essex men; we come from Colchester. Colchester has something to boast of great men. The chief physician of London comes from Colchester; the Lord Mayor comes from Colchester; and I need not tell you who else. I have never had the headache in my life, friends; but if I ever had it, it would have been to-day. I feel nervous and excited. But I do feel very happy to-day to acknowledge my faults; and when a man confesses his faults, he has done a great deal towards amending them. I always thought my son did wrong in coming to London; now you see that I was wrong. I always thought he was wrong in not going to College; I tried three or four hours with him, one night, with a dear friend who loved him; but it was no use. He said, ‘ No, I will never go to College, except in strict obedience to you as a father.’ There I left the matter; and I see that God has been with him, though I thought it was a wrong step in him to go to London. And I thought it was a wrong step for me to come here to-night; but perhaps I may be mistaken again. I can tell you it is one of the happiest days of my life. I feel beyond myself when I think of the kindness that has been shown to my son when but a youth. I ascribe it all to God’s goodness, and the earnest prayers of His people. He has been exposed to temptation from every source, and even now, my friends, he is not free from it. You have prayed for him, and God has sustained him. Let me entreat you to continue your prayers. Every one here to-night, go home, and pray for your Pastor. A meeting like this is enough to carry a man beyond himself, and fill his heart with pride; but the grace of God is all-sufficient. Several persons said to me — I do not know what their motive was, — ’Your son will never last in London six months; he has no education.’ I said, ‘You are terribly mistaken; he has the best education that can possibly be had; God has been his Teacher, and he has had earthly teachers, too.’ I knew, as far as education went, he could manage London very well. Then they said his health would fail; but it has not failed him yet. He has had enough to shake his constitution, it is true; but God has been very merciful to him. I think, if there is one thing that would crown my happiness to-day, it would have been to see his grandfather here. I should have loved to see him with us. He said, ‘ Boy, don’t ask me to go, I am too old; I am overcome with God’s goodness and mercy to me.’ He is always talking about you,’ Pastor. Old people like to have something to talk about, so he always talks about his grandson. And next to that, I should like, my dear friends, to have seen his Mother here. I believe, under God’s grace, his Mother was the means of leading him to Christ.”)  
In *The Preachers’ Annual*for 1877, in an article by Rev. G. T. Dowling on “Candidating,” I 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 even when 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 my first sermon was preached,. I was 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. I declined his offer, for I thought it too hast),; but I promised to preach on 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 my knowledge, and the resolution inviting me was as nearly unanimous as possible, only one man and four women voting to the contrary, all of these becoming in after time most friendly to me. I 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 friends to be slow in believing anything which they may hear or read about public persons.

(The three Sabbaths on which Mr. Spurgeon agreed to preach in London were January 1st, 15th, and 29th, 1854; but before the last-named date, the church had already taken definite action with a view to securing his services permanently. He had preserved, amongst his most treasured papers, the following letters, which are now published for the first time, together with a correct copy of his reply to the invitation to supply the pulpit at New Park Street Chapel for six months: —

“15, Creed Lane,  
“Ludgate Hill,  
“London,  
“Jan. 25, 1854.

“My Dear Sir,

“It is with pleasure that I write these few lines to you hoping, through Divine grace, you are well and happy.  
“You will remember that I gave you a hint of the intention of the members of the church to request the deacons to call a special church-meeting for the purpose of inviting you to preach for a certain period. That special meeting has taken place this evening, and I am most happy to tell you that, at the private request of Mr. W. Olney, I moved a resolution that you should be invited for six months. Old Mr. Olney was in the chair, — Mr. Low being unwell, but strongly in favor of your coming’. We had a full vestry, and there were only five against you; three out of the five rarely occupy their places with us. It was a happy meeting, and I hope that God, in His tender mercy, will send you to us, and that you will see your way clear to come; and should the Great Shepherd of the flock make you the instrument to revive this ancient church, we shall be glad indeed, and shall give God all the glory. For my own part, since I have been at Park Street, I never saw such a desire on the part of the brethren toward a minister as there is at the present time toward you. We are cast down, but not destroyed. It has been a trying’ time to us; our church is scattered, but there is a goodly remnant filling their places constantly, and a band of young members growing up, requiring the watchful care of a good Pastor. I know you are being persuaded not to come among us; but I will say, ‘come and try us.’ I hope next week to spend half a day with you, if possible, and then I will tell you more than I can write. I should have written before, but I thought I would wait for the result of this evening’s meeting. We don’t want an idle preacher; I know we shall not have *that*in you. As I have said before, we are cast down, but there is room to rise; and I believe God is about to answer our poor prayers, though they have been offered weak in faith. The different societies in connection with the chapel will be revived with an active Pastor as our leader. There may be a few against you, but I assure you it is only on the part of those who are as unstable as water, and seldom are at chapel. You will find a great many faithful friends; and should the Holy Spirit lead you to decide for New Park Street after you have received the request from the deacons, I hope and pray that you will prove a blessing to thousands, — that God will give you a great number of souls for your crown of rejoicing, that, like Rippon, and Cox, Collier, Bennet, and others, you will be a guide to thousands of ignorant travelers to conduct them to the cross of Jesus. I hope I shall soon see you, and if it shall please God that it shall add to His glory for you to come among us, I will thank Him, and do all I can so far as my influence is concerned, for your temporal and spiritual happiness.

“I have enclosed a copy of the resolution which I moved at the meeting, and which Mr. Ward seconded. I conclude with my Christian love to you, hoping you will be wisely directed in all your ways, and believe me to be,

“Your sincere friend and brother in Christ,  
“WILLIAM CUTLER, Superintendent of the Sunday School.” “To The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.”

“Resolved, That the ministry of the Rev. Charles H. Spurgeon having been very generally appreciated, he be invited to supply the pulpit for six months; and that the deacons be requested to communicate this resolution to him, and to make the necessary arrangements with him.”

“Market Street,  
“Bermondsey,  
“London,  
“Jan. 26th, 1854.

“My Dear Sir,

“I cannot refrain from informing you of the very satisfactory result o[ our church-meeting last evening. It was called specially to confer as to giving you a further invitation. There was a very large attendance, and a most cordial and hearty enthusiasm on your behalf. I do trust God will incline your heart to come among us. He has already given both you and us clear indications that there is a great work for you to do among us. There is one consideration that makes me feel very deeply on this subject, and that is, my brother Henry. He has so repeatedly expressed his regard for your ministry, and his desire to attend it, that I do trust there are already some impressions for good on his heart. Oh, that the Holy Spirit may seal these good impressions, and make them abiding, and to end in his conversion to God! May you, my dear friend, be indeed his spiritual teacher, to lead him to Christ! I do most earnestly pray that it may be so. F21 Then, also, there are the young men at my father’s. It is with great difficulty they can be induced to enter any place of worship, yet they will come and hear you, and I believe will continue to do so. I have most earnestly prayed that you may be directed aright in this matter, and I trust already your heart is turned towards us.

“I most heartily promise you sympathy and co-operation; and anything that lies in my power to promote your comfort and usefulness shall be done. This is, I am certain, the general feeling throughout the church; and if you come for six months, will, I believe, be the unanimous one. There is now but one family not prepared to vote for you, and I believe a short acquaintance with you will soon change their minds. Hoping you will have a happy Sabbath with us next Lord’s-day, and give us then your affirmative reply to our invitation,

“I remain,  
“Yours in Christian bonds,  
**“WILLIAM OLNEY.”**  
MR. JOHN T. OLNEY wrote: —

“We had a very delightful church-meeting last evening. We met at 7, and closed at 9 o’clock; and, during the whole evening, not a word was spoken which did not consort with the Heavenly precept, ‘ Walk in love.’ The vestry was well filled, great unanimity prevailed, and a delightful satisfaction beamed in the countenances of all the members. The special church-meeting then held was convened by a memorial requesting the deacons that it might be holden to invite your services for six months, subject to the approval of the majority of the church. The memorial was signed by most of the influential members of the church, so that the deacons cheerfully convened the meeting. There were a great many speeches made, because we were anxious all should speak out most fully and freely their opinions. The resolution may be said to have been carried almost unanimously, — only one hand and four small kid gloves having been held up in answer to the Chairman’s inquiry, ‘Any on the contrary?’ These five friends were quite friendly with the majority, and will continue to fill their places with us. They object to you on the ground that they consider you do not use sufficient reverence in prayer. This was very well answered by Mr. Carr, and some of the other brethren. Apart from this unimportant exception, the members were quite unanimous in giving you a cheerful, cordial, and loving invitation for six months. I never expected we could have been nearly so much united in sentiment respecting any man to occupy the pulpit of a church consisting of many belonging to the old church at Carter Lane under Dr. Rippon, and of many introduced by Dr. Angus and Mr. Smith. I am sure you will find the church render to you all that esteem and affection you will desire, and be ready to sustain you by their prayers and co-operation, and I am equally certain that you will not be lacking in your efforts to supply them with the Bread of Life, and the Good Wine of the Kingdom. I hope and pray that you may be led by what appears to my mind, and I trust will appear to yours also, to be the guiding of Providence, — to accept the invitation of the church. The church, the neighborhood, and the denomination in London, have, I think, need of the talents and order of preaching which God has, for good and gracious purposes, given you to possess.”)

(Mr. Spurgeon’s reply to the official letter from the deacons was. as follows: — )

“No. 60, Park Street,  
“Cambridge,  
“January 27th, 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 whilst 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.

“Now, 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 probation. But I write, after well weighing the matter, to 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 the 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 could, 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 that time (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 in public, they must all earnestly wrestle in prayer to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, 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.”**

(The following letter was written to the Uncle mentioned in Chapter 26. The swift transition from innocent mirth to deep solemnity was characteristic of Mr. Spurgeon to the end of his days.)

“75, Dover Road, “Borough,  
“March 2, 1854. “Dear Uncle,

“I shall be extremely obliged if you will, at the earliest opportunity, forward to my address, as above, by rail or otherwise, the books I purchased of you. I have been expecting them for many months; but thought that, perhaps, you had no means of sending them. Send them to any station, carriage I will pay.

“Of course, I shall not look for an answer to my note; I never shall again expect to see your handwriting to me. ‘ Hope deferred maketh’ — never mind, — let Solomon finish the sentence. I have a birch in pickle for you; and when I come to your house, I shall use it with but little mercy, so you had need have on your very thickest skin. I might say some sharp things about the matter, but I will save them until I sit in your easy chair, or you are seated in mine. When you are in London, you will be in for a sound scolding if you do not come to see me. I do not think you dare come, and I am sure you will not venture to stay away. I promise you a hearty welcome.

“75, Dover Road, “Borough of Southwark, “London.

“Can you see my address? I send my very best respects to your good wife; she is certainly worth more than you, if I am to value her by the number of letters I have received.

“But, to joke no more, you have heard that I am now a Londoner, and a little bit of a celebrity. No College could have put me in a higher situation. Our place is one of the pinnacles of the denomination. But I have a great work to do, and have: need of all the prayers the sons of God can offer for me.

“I shall be glad to hear of your temporal and spiritual prosperity. Do not, for a moment, imagine that I am cold towards you. My Master’s one aim was to spread the spirit of love among His disciples; and I trust little things will never chill my love to the brethren. Permit me, most respectfully and lovingly, to inquire, ‘ How does the cause of God prosper?’ ‘ How does your soul prosper?’ ‘How is your love to the precious name of Jesus?’ I wish for myself and you much soul-prosperity. We cannot afford to live a useless life; the sands of time are too valuable to be allowed to run on unheeded. We have a work before us, and woe be unto us if we are idle or unfaithful servants! Blessed is the man who often talks with his God alone, and comes forth from his closet, like Moses from the mountain top, with a celestial glory on his brow! Let us seek that blessing, and may God be ever with us!

Do not forget the books, and believe me to be —  
“Yours truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
(The following letter was written by Mr. Spurgeon to the ladies with whom he had lodged at Cambridge: — )

“75, Dover Road,  
“Borough,  
“March, 1854.

“To the Misses Blunson,  
“My Dear ‘Friends,

“I have not forgotten you, although I have been silent so long. I have thought of your trials, and have requested of my Master that He would comfort and sustain you. If you have a portion in Him, your troubles will be blessings, and every grief will be turned into a mercy.

“I am very well, and everything goes on even better than I could have hoped. My chapel, though large, is crowded; the aisles are blocked up, and every niche is packed as full as possible. I expect to come and see you in about a month. I hope to be at Waterbeach the fourth Sabbath in April. I get on very well in my present lodgings; — but not better than with you, for that would be impossible. I had nothing to wish for better than I had, for your attention to me was beyond all praise. I cannot but feel very much for you, and only wish that I knew how I could serve you.

“I hope you will not give way to doubts and despondency; but do what you can, and leave the rest to God. Blessed is the man who has the God of Jacob for his Helper; he need not fear either want, or pain, or death. The more you can realize this, the happier will you become; and the only means for so doing is to hold frequent communion with God in prayer. Get alone with Jesus, and He will comfort your hearts, and restore your weary souls. I hope you have let your rooms. I think I shall stop at Mrs. Warricker’s; but I will be sure to come and see you, and leave something to remember me by. Trust in God, and be glad, and —

“Believe me to be,  
“Yours truly,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

The six months’ probation was never fulfilled, for there was no need. The place was filled, the prayer-meetings were full of power, and the work of conversion was going on. A requisition for a special church-meeting, signed by fifty of the male members, was sent in to the deacons on April 12, the meeting was held on April I9, with the result mentioned in the following letter: —

“30, Gracechurch Street,  
“April 20th, 1854.  
“My Dear Young brother,

“I annex a copy of a resolution passed last evening at a  
numerously-attended special church-meeting held at New Park Street Chapel.

“If you feel it your duty to accept the invitation of the Church to become its Pastor, it will be desirable that you should obtain your dismission from the Church at Waterbeach to our Church as early as you can, in order that you may be in a position as a member to attend our church-meetings.

“I remain,  
“My dear young brother,  
“Yours affectionately,

“JAMES LOW, Chairman.”  
“Rev, C. H. Spurgeon.”  
(*Copy of Resolution*.)

“At a special church-meeting, held on Wednesday evening, April 19th, 1854, at New Park Street Chapel, after prayer by two of the brethren, it was resolved unanimously, That while, as members of this Church, we desire to record with devout and fervent gratitude to God our estimation of the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon’s services, during the period of his labors amongst us, we regard the extraordinary increase in the attendance upon the means of grace’, both on Lord’s-days and week-evenings, combined with the manifest fact that his ministry has secured the general approbation of the members, as an encouraging token that our Heavenly Father has directed his way towards us, in answer to the many prayers we have offered up for a suitable Pastor, — and as there are several inquirers desirous of joining our fellowship, we consider it prudent to secure as early as possible his permanent settlement with us; — we, therefore, beg to tender our brother, the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, a most cordial and affectionate invitation forthwith to become Pastor of this Church, and we pray that his services may be owned of God with an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, and a revival of religion in our midst, and that his ministry may be fruitful in the conversion of sinners, and the edification of those that believe.”

(Mr. Spurgeon’s letter, accepting the invitation to the pastorate, was as follows: — )  
“75, Dover Road,  
“Borough,  
“April 28th, 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 should 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 quite unlooked-for, and I trembled at the idea of preaching in London. I could not understand how it had come 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, and pray that these may not hinder my usefulness. I trust also that the remembrance of these will lead you to forgive 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 the 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, saving 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 God, the Triune Jehovah, “I am,  
“Yours to serve in the gospel,

**“**C. H. SPURGEON**.”**

(Professor Everett says, concerning this period in Mr. Spurgeon’s life: — “He gave me prompt intimation of his call to New Park Street Chapel; and soon after his settlement there, I called upon him by appointment. I spent half a day with him, and he poured forth to me, without reserve, the full tale of his successes, telling me of the distinguished men who continually came to hear him, and of the encomiums pronounced on his delivery by elocutionists like Sheridan Knowles.”

Pastor G. H. Davies, of Lisbon, North Dakota, thus records Sheridan Knowles’ remarkable prophecy: —

“I was a student at Stepney, now Regent’s Park College. Sheridan Knowles, the celebrated actor and play-writer, had just been baptized by Dr. Brock, and appointed our tutor in elocution. We had collected funds to give the grand old man a handsome Bible. The presentation was made one Wednesday afternoon. It was an occasion never to be forgotten, not only for the sake of Sheridan Knowles himself, but because of his prophecy concerning one of whom till then we knew nothing.

Immediately on entering, Mr. Knowles exclaimed, ‘Boys, have you heard the Cambridgeshire lad?’ None of us had heard him. ‘Then, boys,’ he continued, ‘go and hear him at once.’ This was after Mr., Spurgeon had been preaching at New Park: Street Chapel two Sundays. ‘ Go and hear him at once if you want to know how to preach. His name is Charles Spurgeon. He is only a boy, but he is the most wonderful preacher in the world. He is absolutely perfect in his oratory; and, beside that, a master in the art of acting. He has nothing to learn from me, or anyone else. He is simply perfect. He knows everything. He can do anything. I was once lessee of Drury Lane Theater; and were I still in that position, I would offer him a fortune to play for one season on the boards of that house. Why, boys, he can do anything he pleases with his audience! He can make them laugh, and cry, and laugh again, in five minutes. His power was never equaled. Now, mark my word, boys, *that young man will live lo be the greatest preacher of this or any other age. He will bring more souls to Christ than any man who ever proclaimed the gospel, not excepting the apostle Paul. His name will be known everywhere, and his Sermons will be translated into many of the languages of the world.’*”

Mr. Sheridan Knowles lived until 1862, and was able, therefore, to witness in great part the fulfillment of his own prophecy. His widow long survived him, and for some years was one of Mr. Spurgeon’s company of faithful friends who gathered at Mentone; and when she also was “called home,” she showed her appreciation of his work by leaving generous legacies to the Pastors’ College and the Stockwell Orphanage.)

CHAPTER 31.

DIVINE AND ORDINATION.

T HERE is good reason for asking, concerning many practices, — Are these Scriptural, or are they only traditions of the fathers? A little Ritualism in one generation may develop into downright Popery in a few years; therefore it is well to take these things as they arise, and crush them in the bud. I do not believe that, among our Nonconformist churches, there is more than a fly or two of the priestly system in the pot of ointment, but even those flies should be purged out. Great evils have small beginnings; the little foxes are to be dreaded among the vines. Where so much is admirable, it is a pity that the specks and spots should be suffered to remain. We have a stern fight before us against Ritualistic Popery, and it is well to clear our decks of all lumber, and go into the controversy with clean hands. It is a tar more popular thing to find fault with other denominations: than to point out follies and failings among ourselves; but this consideration should never occur to the right-minded, except to be repulsed with a “Get thee behind me, Satan.”

Confining myself to one branch of the subject, I ask, — *Whence comes the whole paraphernalia of*“ordination” *as observed among some Dissenters?* Since there is no special gift to bestow, why in any case the laying on of empty hands? Since we cannot pretend to that mystic succession so much vaunted by Ritualists, why are men styled “regularly-ordained ministers”? A man who has preached for years is Mr. Brown; but after his ordination, or recognition, he develops into the Rev. Mr. Brown’ what important’ change has he undergone? This matter comes before me in the form of addresses upon letters, — “Rev. Titus Smith, Mr. Spurgeon’s College, or sometimes, “Rev. Timothy Jones, Spurgeon’s Tabernacle.” Rather odd, this! Here are reverend students of an unreverend preacher, the title being given to one out of courtesy, and withheld from the other for the same reason. The Reverend Titus has met with a church which will insist upon an ordination, and he is ordained; but the President of his College, having; never- undergone such a process, nor even that imitation of it called a *recognition,*remains an unordained, unrecognized person to this day, and has not yet discovered the peculiar loss which he has sustained thereby. I do not object to a recognition of the choice of the church by its neighbors and their ministers; on the contrary, I believe it to be a fraternal act, sanctioned by the very spirit of Christianity; but where it is supposed to be essential, is regarded as a ceremony, and is thought to be *the*crowning feature of the settlement, I demur. “The Reverend Theophilus Robinson offered up *the ordination prayer,*” has a Babylonish sound in my ears, and it is not much improved when it takes the form of “the *recognition prayer.*” Is there, then, a ritual? Are we as much bound by an unwritten extempore liturgy as others by the Book of Common Prayer? Must there always be “usual questions”? And why “usual”? Is there some legendary rule for *the*address to the church, and *the*address to the pastor? I do not object to any one of these things, but I do question the propriety of stereotyping them, and speaking o! the whole affair as if it were a matter robe gone about according to a certain pattern seen in the holy mount, or an order given forth in trust to the saints. I see germs of evil in the usual parlance, and therefore meet it with a *Quo warranto?*Is not the Divine call the real ordination to preach, and the call of the church the only ordination to the pastorate? The church is competent, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, to do her own work; and if she calls in her sister-churches, let her tell them what she has done, in such terms that they ‘will never infer that they are called upon to complete the work. The ordination prayer should be prayed in the church-meeting, and there and then the work should be done; for other churches to recognize the act, is well and fitting, but not if it be viewed as needful to the completion of the act itself. I have noticed many signs of an error in this direction.

(The following letter shows how Mr. Spurgeon regarded the question of an “ordination” or “recognition” service at the beginning of his London pastorate: — )

“75, Dover Road, “Borough,  
“May 2nd, 1854.

“To James Low, Esq., “My Dear Sir,  
“I sit down to communicate to you my thoughts and feelings with regard to a public recognition. I am sure I need not request your notice of my sentiments, for your usual good judgment is to me a rock of reliance. I can trust any matter with you, knowing that your kindness and wisdom will decide rightly.

“I have a decided objection to any public ordination or recognition. I have, scores; of times, most warmly expressed from the pulpit my abhorrence of such things, and have been not a little notorious as the opponent of a custom which has become a kind of iron law in the country. I am willing to retrace my steps if in error; but if I have been right, it will be no very honorable thing to belie my former loud outcries by submitting to it myself.

“ *I object to ordinations and recognitions, as such,*(1.) Because I am a minister, and will never receive authority and commission from man; nor do I like that which has the shadow of such a thing about it. I detest the dogma of apostolic succession, and dislike the revival of the doctrine by delegating power from minister to minister.

“(2.) I believe in the glorious principle of Independency. Every church has a right to choose its own minister; and if so, certainly it needs no assistance from others in appointing him to the office. You, yourselves, have chosen me; and what .matters it if the whole world dislikes the choice? They cannot invalidate it; nor can they give it more force. It seems to me that other ministers have no more to do with me, as your minister, than the crown of Prance has with the crown of Britain. We are allies, but we have no authority in each other’s territories. They are my superiors in piety, and other personal matters; but, *ex officio,*no man is my superior. We have no apostles to send Titus to ordain. Prelatic power is gone. All we are brethren.

“(3.) If there be no authority inferred, what is the meaning of the ceremony? ‘ It is customary.’ Granted; — but we are not all Ecclesiastical Conservatives; and, moreover, I know several instances where there has been none. Rev. W. Robinson, of Cambridge, agrees with me, I believe; and has not: endured it himself. Rev. J. Smith had nothing of it, nor had Rev. Burton, of Cambridge, nor Rev. Wooster, of Sandbeach, etc., etc. “Furthermore, I have seldom heard of an ordination service in which there was not something objectionable. There are dinners, and toasts, and things in that line. There is foolish and needless advice, or, if wise advice, unfit for public mention. I am ready to be advised by anyone, on any subject, in private; but I do not know how I could sit in public to be told, as Mr. C was told by Mr. S\_\_\_\_, that I must not spend more than my income; and (if married), that I must be a good husband, and not let the wife say that, being a minister, had lessened my affection, with all the absurd remarks on family and household matters. I do not know what sort of a homily! should get; but if I am to have it, let it be in my study; or if it be not a very good one, I cannot promise to sit and hear it.

“I trust, my dear sir, that you will not imagine that I write warmly, for I am willing to submit; but it will be *submission.*I shall endure it as a *self-mortification,*in order that you may all be pleased. I would rather’ please you than myself; but, still, I would have it understood by all the church that I endure it as a penance for their sake. I find the friends do not care much about it, and others have, like myself, a decided aversion. I am your servant; and whatever is for the good of the church, let it be done. My knowledge is little; I simply express my feelings, and leave it entirely with you.

“A tea-meeting of members, with handbills, and notices in the papers, will be a real recognition; and if my God will make me useful, I am not afraid of being recognized by all good men. I write now to you as a kind and wise friend. You can use my  
communication as you think best; and believe me to be —

“Yours, with the profoundest respect,  
**“C. H.**SPURGEON**.”**  
(Shortly after writing the above letter, Mr. Spurgeon preached the following sermon at New Park Street Chapel: — )  
**THE MINISTER’S TRUE ORDINATION.**

“Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel’ therefore hear the word at My mouth, and give them warning from Me.” — Ezekiel 3:17.

The office of a gospel minister in some respects resembles that of the ancient prophets. Though we cannot, like Elisha, raise the dead; nor, like Isaiah, pour forth eloquent predictions; nor, as Ezekiel, foretell certain coming and immediate judgments; yet, like them, we are commanded to teach, to warn, and to encourage. So much are we like Ezekiel, that his commission will suit any gospel minister even of our day. Let us consider, —

I. THE MINISTER’S COMMISSION.

Here is a scrap of ancient writing worthy of a place in the museum. It ought to be in every minister’s study. It is the ultimatum of the King of Heaven to us in our doubts as to our calling. It is our Emperor’s protocol to all His legions. It is *the minister’s true ordination*,. a real installation, worth more than a thousand Papal bulls from Rome bearing the mark of the fisherman’s ring; yea, worth more than all the charters of universities, or the appointments of archbishops. notice, —

**1.** *The wording of this ancient commission.*It is worded in the Court language of Heaven, and each letter is Divine. “Son *of man.*” Here is the title by which Ezekiel is addressed; — not Right Reverend, nor the Very Venerable; but he has given to him a graciously-humbling title. Ezekiel is called “son of man” no less than ninety times. This is the name Jesus often took to Himself when He was on earth, and therefore it is a truly glorious one. The gracious and all-wise Father saw that too lofty an eminence might tempt Ezekiel to pride. He therefore styles him son of man, as much as to say, — “Your visions, rank, talents, and office, must not exalt you, for you are, after all, only man. You must not lean on sell:, for you are utter weakness, being only the ‘son of man.’ You must sympathize with each of your fellow-creatures, and deal with him, not as if you were a prince, or a master, but as being, like him, a ‘son of man.’”

“ *I have made thee a watchman.*” Here we read, on this ancient manuscript, a true account of the making of a minister. God alone can do it. Two things are absolutely requisite to make a man a preacher, viz., — (1.) *Special gifts*, — such as perception of truth, simplicity, aptness to impart instruction, some degree of eloquence, and intense earnestness. (2.) *Special call.*Every man who is rightly in the ministry must have been moved thereto of the Holy Ghost. He must feel an irresistible desire to spend his whole life in his Master’s cause. No college, no bishop, no human ordination, can make a man a minister; but he who can feel, as did Bunyan, Whitefield, Berridge, or Rowland Hill, the strugglings of an impassioned longing to win the souls of men, may hear in the air the voice of God saying, “Son of man, I have made *thee*a watchman.”

“ *Unto the house of Israel.*” Ezekiel’s was a limited commission; but ours is not, it is as wide as the earth, and as long as time. The world is our parish. We are not ordered to cast the net alone in the pools of Heshbon, or the streams of Jordan, or the Lake of Gennesaret; but we may cover all seas and rivers with the gospel fishing-boats, — the navy of Jesus. Yet, still, it is for the sake of the true Israel that we go.

“ *Therefore hear the word at My mouth.*” The ancient seers spoke not at random; but they declared what they had been taught of God. Sometimes, in dreams, they heard Heaven’s message; sometimes, by a. voice from on high; but, most commonly, by vision, did the Word of the Lord come unto them. The soul, inspired by God, seems at times to leave the body, and that narrow tube of vision which we call eyesight, and, with its own eagle eye, to pierce the thick cloud, and to mount into that remote region which the ordinary eye cannot see.

The prophets heard the spoken Word, but we have the written Word; and this we must devoutly read. It becomes a minister diligently to study the Scriptures, with all the assistance he can gain from holy men who have gone before, but chiefly from the most excellent of all instructors, the true Interpreter, the Holy Ghost.

“ *And give them warning front Me*.” There are other duties; but as this is the most arduous, it is specially mentioned. We are to warn the Christian if he is found backsliding, or sinning; and to warn the sinner of the consequences of his sin. of the strict justice of God, and of the tearful hell in which the ungodly shall suffer.

**2.** *The high office conferred by this commission.*It is that of “watchman.” Every soldier of the Cross is bound to watch; but the minister is in a double sense a watchman. He is so called because —

(1) The ministry requires great vigilance. We must not sleep: we must watch against false doctrine and false brethren; we must be ready to help benighted travelers, and to give alarm to any who may be in danger. The true minister is to sit like the shepherd in the wilderness by night, or like the whisper-hearing sentinel.  
(2.) The ministry involves toil and trouble. Few think of the watchman who tramps by their door. Hark! there is a scuffle, a fight! Who is sure to be in it? The watchman. How the wind blows! The snow must be a foot deep; pray put

list on the doors, and stir the fire. Surely no one is out of doors to-night, — except the watchman! His bare face is cut by the driving sleet, his fingers are numbed with the cold, his eye-lids are almost frozen. “Well, well,” someone says, “never mind about the watchman and his trials; that’s his work, and he is used to it.” Some of you come here, and sit, and smile, and enjoy the sermon; but there are some who criticize, and find fault, and slander, and calumniate. The minister must bear it all, for he is the watchman. He had need be a very tough veteran, who has swallowed many “Nor-westers” and I know not what to fit him for the task he has in hand.

(3.) The ministry should be arousing. If there be a fire, or a thief, or a door or shutter unfastened, the watchman must not spare, but cry aloud. We must cry out with all our might, — not being afraid to disturb, or alarm, or hurt the feelings of the sleepers. We may as well be asleep as be mumblers, or speak in such a way that none can really make Out what we mean; we must preach the truth in plain, blunt, honest language which none can mistake. Every man, who labors in Word and Doctrine, should ponder over this commission, and wear it next his heart, and on his brow. It is to be feared that many, who profess to preach the gospel, are not alive to a sense of their position; but, having the next presentation to a living, or having purchased a benefice, they rush in where angels if. like them, uncalled, would tear to venture.

II. THE MINISTER’S RESPONSIBILITY.

The watchman holds a responsible office. If the sentinel, by sleeping, causes the death of a single person, he is a murderer. It the prisoner escapes from his charge, he shall be required to answer for his neglect. So, if the ungodly man is not warned, he shall suffer for his own guilt, but my unfaithfulness will lie as a crime on me. If the professing Christian falls, his fall is his own; but if I have not warned him, [ also am guilty. It I do not utter the whole truth, — the threatenings, the promises, and the invitations of God, — I shall be a sleeping sentinel, a careless captain, a negligent railway guard, and I shall be the slaughterer of my fellow creatures, Or if, to the professor, I give wine instead of medicine, a plaster instead of a lancet, or a stone for bread, — I shall be a guilty wretch, and God help me, then, for no one more requires help than an unfaithful minister!

III. THE MINISTER’S COMFORT.

1. The Lord’s call to the office: “Son of man, I have made thee a watchman.”  
2. The promises peculiar to that call, for every call from God hath the strength to perform it enclosed within itself.  
3. The blessed brow-hardening Spirit, who makes us despise alike the frown or the smile of man, and thus keeps us from unfaithfulness. 4. The fact that success is not required of us, — but faithfulness. O my Father, keep me clear of the blood of all men! Amen.

CHAPTER 32.

THE LONG PASTORATE COMMENCED, 1854.

Here and there we meet with one to whom it is given to believe in God with mighty faith. As soon as such a man strikes out a project, or sets about a work which none but men of his mold would venture upon, straightway there arises a clamor: — “The man is over-zealous,” or he will be charged with an innovating spirit, rashness, fanaticism, or absurdity. Should the work go on, the opposers whisper together, “Wait a little while, and you’ll see the end of all this wild-fire.” What said the sober semi-faith of men to Luther? The monk had read in the Scriptures this passage, “We are justified by faith, and not by the works of the law.” He went to a venerable divine to ask him about it, and at the same time he complained of the enormities of Rome. What was the good but weak brother’s reply? “Go thou to thy cell, and pray and study for thyself, and leave these weighty matters alone.” Here it would have ended had the brave Reformer continued to consult with flesh and blood; but his faith enabled him to go forward alone, if none would accompany him. lie nailed up his theses on the church door, and showed that one man at least had faith in the gospel and in its God. Then trouble came, but Luther minded it not, because the Father was with him. We also must be prepared, if God gives us strong faith, to ride far ahead, like spiritual Uhlans, who bravely pioneer the way for the rank and file of the army. It were well if the Church of God had more of the fleet-footed sons of Asahel, — bolder than lions, swifter than eagles, in their Lord’s service, — men who can do and dare alone, till laggards take courage, and follow in their track. These Valiant-for-truths will pursue a solitary path full often, but let: them console themselves with this thought, “Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.” If we can believe in God, He will never be behindhand with us; if we can dare, God will do; if we can trust, God will never suffer us to be confounded, world without end. It is sweet beyond expression to climb where only God can lead, and to plant the standard on the highest towers of the foe. — C. H. S.

W HEN I came to New Park’ Street Chapel, it was but a mere handful Of people to whom I first preached; yet I can never forget how earnestly they prayed. Sometimes, they seemed to plead as though they could really see the Angel of the covenant present with them, and as if they must have a blessing from Him. More than once, we were all so awe-struck with the solemnity of the meeting, that we sat silent for some moments while the Lord’s power appeared to overshadow us; and all I could do on such occasions was to pronounce the Benediction, arid say, “*Dear*friends, we have had the Spirit of God here very manifestly to-night; let us go home, and take care not to lose His gracious influences.” Then down came the blessing; the house was filled with hearers, and many souls were saved. I always give all the glory to God, but I do not forget that He gave me the privilege of ministering from the first to a praying people. We had prayermeetings in New Park Street that moved our very souls. Every man seemed like a crusader besieging the New Jerusalem, each one appeared determined to storm the Celestial City by the might of intercession; and soon the blessing came upon us in such abundance that we had not room to receive it.

There is a confidence in one’s own powers which must ever be of service to those who are called to eminent positions, provided the confidence is well-grounded, seasoned with humility, and attended with that holy gratitude which refers all honor and glory to the Giver of every good and perfect gift. But, at the same time, there is nothing more true than the fact that the self-confident are near a fall, that those who lean on themselves must be overthrown, and that carnal security has but a baseless fabric in which to dwell. When I first became a Pastor in London, my success appalled me; and the thought of the career which it seemed to open up, so far from elating me, cast me into the lowest depth, out of which I uttered my *miserere,*and found no room for a *gloria in excelsis.*Who was I that I should continue to lead so great a multitude? I would betake me to my village obscurity, or emigrate to America, and find a solitary nest in the backwoods, where I might be sufficient for the things which would be demanded of me. It was just then that the curtain was rising upon my lifework, and I dreaded what it might reveal. I hope I was not faithless; but I was timorous, and filled with a sense of my own unfitness. I dreaded the work which a gracious Providence had prepared for me. I felt myself a mere child, and trembled as I heard the voice which said, “Arise, and thresh the mountains, and make them as chaff.” This depression comes over me whenever the Lord is preparing a larger blessing for my ministry; the cloud is black before it breaks, and overshadows before it yields its deluge of mercy. Depression has now become to me as a prophet in rough clothing, a John the Baptist, heralding the nearer coming of my Lord’s richer benison. So have far better men found it. The scouring of the vessel has fitted it for the Master’s use. Immersion in suffering has preceded the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Fasting gives an appetite for the banquet. The Lord is revealed in the backside of the desert, while His servant keepeth the sheep, and waits in solitary awe. The wilderness is the way to Canaan. The low valley leads to the towering mountain.’ Defeat prepares for victory’. The raven is sent forth before the dove. The darkest hour of the night precedes the daydawn. The marine, go down to the depths, but the next wave makes them mount towards the heavens; and their soul is melted because of trouble before the Lord bringeth them to their desired haven.

Not long after I was chosen Pastor at Park Street, I was interviewed by a goodman who had left the church, having been, as he said, “*treated* shamefully.” He mentioned the names of half-a-dozen persons, all prominent members of the church, who had behaved in a very unchristian manner to him, — he, poor innocent sufferer, having been a model of patience and holiness! I learned his character at once from what he said about others (a mode of judging which has never misled me), and I made up my mind how to act. I told him that the Church had been in a sadly unsettled state, and that the only way out of the snarl was for every one to forget the past, and begin again. He said that the lapse of years did not alter facts: and I replied that it would alter a man’s view of them if in that time he had become a wiser and a better man. I added that all the past had gone away with my predecessors, that he must follow them to their new spheres, and settle matters with *them,*for I would not touch the affair with a pair of tongs. He waxed somewhat warm; but I allowed him to radiate until he was cool again, and we shook hands, and parted. He was a good man, but constructed upon an uncomfortable principle, so that, at times, he crossed the path of other people in a very awkward manner; and if I had gone into his case, and taken his side, there would have been no end to the strife. I am quite certain that, for my own success, and for the prosperity of the church, I took the wisest course by applying my blind eye to all disputes which dated previously to my advent. It is the extremity of unwisdom for a young man, fresh from College, or from another charge, to suffer himself to be earwigged by a clique, and to be bribed by kindness and flattery to become a partisan, and so to ruin himself with one-half of his people.

I do not find, at the present time, nearly so much advice being given to young men as when I first came to London. Dear me, what quantities I had! I believe I had as much as that American humorist, who said he found enough advice lying loose round about him to ruin three worlds at least; I am sure I had quite enough to have: done that. But now, instead of advising our young brethren, and hinting at their indiscretions, we rather rejoice in their impetuosity and earnestness. We like to see much freshness and vigor about them: and if they do kick over the traces now and then, we feel that time will moderate their zeal, and probably a very few years will add to them the prudence which they now lack.

I could tell many stories of the remarkable conversions that were wrought in those early days. Once, when I was in the vestry, an Irishman came to see me. Pat began by making a low bow, and saying, “Now, your *Riverence,*I have come to ax you a question.” “Oh!” said I, “Pat, I am not a *Riverence;*it is not a title I care for; but what is your question, and how is it you have not been to your priest about it?” He said, “I have been to him; but I don’t like his answer.” “Well, what is your question?” Said he, “God is just; and if God be just, He must punish my sins. I deserve to be punished. If He is a just God, He ought to punish me; yet you say God is merciful, and will forgive sins. I cannot see how that is right; He has no right to do that. He ought to be just, and punish those who deserve it. Tell me how God can be just, and yet be merciful.” I replied, “That is through the blood of Christ.” “Yes,” said he, “that is what my priest said, you are very much alike there; but he said a good deal besides, that I did not understand; and that short answer does not satisfy me. I want to know how it is that the blood of .Jesus Christ enables God to be just, and yet to be merciful.”

Then I saw what he wanted to know, and explained the plan of salvation thus: — “Now, Pat, suppose you had been killing a man, and the judge had said, ‘That Irishman must be hanged.’” He said quickly, “And I should have richly deserved to be hanged.” “But, Pat, suppose I was very fond of you, can you see any way by which I could save you from being hanged?... No, sir, I cannot.” “Then, suppose I went to the Queen, and said, ‘ Please your Majesty, I am very fond of this Irishman; I think the judge was quite right in saying that he must be hanged; but let me be hanged instead, and you will then carry out the law.’ Now, the Queen could not agree to my proposal; but suppose she could, — and God can, for He has power greater than all kings and queens, — and suppose the Queen should have me hanged instead of you, do you think the policemen would take you up afterwards?” He at once said, “No, I should think not; they would not meddle with me; but if they did, I should say, ‘ What are you doing? Did not that gentleman condescend to be hung for me? Let me alone; shure, you don’t want to hang two people for the same thing, do ye?’” I replied to the Irishman, “Ah, my friend, you have hit it; that is the way whereby we are saved! God must punish sin. Christ said, ‘My Father, punish Me instead of the sinner;’ and His Father did. God laid on His beloved Son, .Jesus Christ, the whole burden of our sins, and all their punishment and chastisement; and now that Christ is punished instead of us, God would not be just if He were to punish any sinner who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ. If thou believest in Jesus Christ, the well-beloved and only-begotten Son of God, thou art saved, and thou mayest go on thy way rejoicing.” “Faith,” said the man, clapping his hands, “that’s the gospel. Pat is safe now; with all his sins about him, he’ll trust in the Man that died for him, and so he shall be saved.”

Another singular conversion, wrought at New Park Street, was that of a man who had been accustomed to go to a gin-palace to fetch in gin for his Sunday evening’s drinking. He saw a crowd round the door of the chapel, so he looked in, and forced his way to the top of the gallery stairs. Just then, I turned in the direction where: he stood; I do not know why I did so, but I remarked that there might be a man in the gallery who had come in with no very good motive, for even then he had a gin-bottle in his pocket. The singularity of the expression struck the man. and being startled because the preacher so exactly described him, he listened attentively to the warnings which followed, the Word reached his heart, the grace of God met with him, he became converted, and soon was walking humbly in the fear of God. On another occasion, a poor harlot found the Savior in the same building. She had determined to go and take her own life on Blackfriars Bridge; but, passing the chapel on a Sunday evening, she thought she would step in, and for the last time hear something that might prepare her to stand before her Maker. She forced her way into the aisle; and being once in, she could not get out even it she had wanted to do so. The text that night was, “Seest thou this woman?” I described the woman in the city who was a notorious public sinner, and pictured her washing her Savior’s feet with her tears, and wiping them with the hair of her head, loving much because she had been forgiven much. While I was preaching, the wretched woman was melted to tears by the thought that her own evil life was being depicted to the congregation. It was, first, my great joy to be the means of saving the poor creature from death by suicide, and, then, to be the instrument of saving her soul from destruction.

Deeds of grace have been wrought in the Tabernacle after the same fashion. Men and women have come in, simply out of curiosity, — a curiosity often created by some unfounded story, or malicious slander of prejudiced minds; yet Jesus Christ has called them, and they have become both *His*disciples and *our*warm-hearted friends. Some of the most unlikely recruits have been, in after days, our most valuable soldiers. They began with aversion, and ended with enthusiasm. They came to scoff, but remained to pray. Such cases are not at all uncommon. They were not unusual in the days of Whitefield and Wesley. They tell us ‘in their Journals of persons who came with stones in their pockets to throw at the Methodists, but whose enmity was slain by a stone from the sling of the Son of David. others came to create disturbances, but a disturbance was created in their hearts which could never be quelled till they came to Jesus Christ, and found peace in Him. The history of the Church of God is studded with the remarkable conversions of persons who did not wish to be converted, who were not looking for grace, but were even opposed to it, and yet, by the interposing arm of eternal mercy, were struck down and transformed into earnest and devoted followers of the Lamb.

Ever since I have been in London, in order to get into the habit of speaking extemporaneously, I have never studied or prepared anything for the Monday evening prayer-meeting. I have all along selected that occasion as the opportunity for off-hand exhortation; but I do not on such occasions select difficult expository topics, or abstruse themes, but restrict myself to simple, homely talk about the elements of our faith. When standing up, on such occasions, my mind makes a review, and inquires, “What subject has already occupied my thought during the day? What have I met with in my reading during the past week? What is most laid upon my heart at this hour? What is suggested by the hymns or the prayers?” It is of no use to rise before an assembly, and hope to be inspired upon subjects of which one knows nothing; if anyone is so unwise, the result will be that, as he knows nothing, he will probably say it, and the people will not be edified. But I do not see why a man cannot speak extemporaneously upon a subject which he fully understands. Any tradesman, well versed in his line of business, could explain it without needing to retire for meditation; and surely I ought to be equally familiar with the first principles of our holy faith; I ought not to feel at a loss when called upon to speak: upon topics which constitute the daily bread of my soul. I do not see what benefit is gained, in such a case, by the mere manual labor of writing before speaking; because, in so doing, a man would write extemporaneously, and extemporaneous writing is likely to be even feebler than extemporaneous speech. The gain of the writing lies in the opportunity of careful revision; but, as thoroughly able writers can express their thoughts correctly at the first, so also may able speakers. The thought of a man who finds himself upon his legs, dilating upon a theme with which he is familiar, may be very far from being his first thought;; it may .be the cream of his meditations warmed by the glow of his heart. He having studied the subject well before, though not at that moment, may deliver himself most powerfully; whereas another man, sitting down to write, may only be penning his first ideas, which may be vague and vapid.

I once had a very singular experience while preaching at New Park Street Chapel. I had passed happily through all the early parts of Divine service on the Sabbath evening, and was giving out the hymn before the sermon. I opened the Bible to find the text, which I had carefully studied as the topic of discourse, when, on the opposite page, another passage of Scripture sprang upon me, like a lion from a thicket, with vastly more power than I had felt when considering the text which I had chosen. The people were singing, and I was sighing. I was in a strait betwixt two, and my mind hung as in the balances. I was naturally desirous to run in the track which I had carefully planned, but the other text would take no refusal, and seemed to tug at my skirts, crying, “No, no, you must preach from me! God would have you follow me.” I deliberated within myself as to my duty, for I would neither be fanatical nor unbelieving, and at last I thought within myself, “Well, I should like to preach the sermon which I have prepared, and it is a great risk to run to strike out a new line of thought; but, still, as this text constrains me, it may be of the Lord, and therefore I will venture upon it, come what may.” I almost always announce my divisions very soon after the exordium; but, on this occasion, contrary to my usual custom, I did not do so, for a very good reason. I passed through the first head with considerable liberty, speaking perfectly extemporaneously both as to thought and word. The second point was dwelt upon with a consciousness of unusual quiet efficient power, but I had no idea what the third would or could be, for the text yielded no more matter just then; nor can I tell even now what I could have done had not an event occurred upon which I had never calculated. I had brought myself into great difficulty by obeying what I thought to be a Divine impulse, and I felt comparatively easy about it, believing that God would help me, and knowing that I could at least close the service should there be nothing more to be said. I had no need to deliberate, for in one moment we: were in total darkness, — the gas had gone out; and, as the aisles were choked with people, and the place was crowded[ everywhere, it was a great peril, but a great blessing. What was I to do then? The people were a little frightened, but I quieted them instantly by telling them not to be at all alarmed, though the gas was out, for it would soon be re-lighted; and as for myself, having no manuscript, I could speak just as well in the dark as in the light, if they would be so good as to sit or stand still, and listen. Had my discourse been ever so elaborate, it would have been absurd to have continued it; and, as my plight was, I was all the less embarrassed. I turned at once mentally to the well-known text which speaks of the child of light walking in darkness, and of the child of darkness walking in the light, and found appropriate remarks, and illustrations pouring in upon me; and when the lamps were again lit, I saw before me an audience as rapt and subdued as ever a man beheld in his life. The odd thing of all was that, some few church-meetings afterwards, two persons came forward to make confession of their faith, who professed to have been converted that evening; but the first owed her conversion to the former part of the discourse, which was on the new text that came to me, and the other traced his awakening to the latter part, which was occasioned by the sudden darkness. Thus, Providence befriended me. I cast myself upon God, and His arrangements quenched the light at the proper time for me. Some may ridicule, but I adore; others may even censure, but I rejoice.

This illustration represents the pulpit stairs used by me at New Park Street Chapel after the enlargement. When that building was sold, I removed them to my garden at Nightingale Lane, and fixed them to a huge willow tree. I remember reading, with some amusement, of Lorenzo Dow, who is reported, many years ago, to have slipped down a tree in the backwoods, in order to illustrate the easiness of backsliding. He had previously pulled himself up, with extreme difficulty, in order to show how hard a thing it is to regain lost ground. I was all the more diverted by (he story because it has so happened that this pretty piece of nonsense has been imputed to myself. I was represented as sliding down the banisters of my pulpit, and that at a time when the pulpit was fixed in the wall, and was entered from behind f I never gave even the remotest occasion for that falsehood; and yet it is daily repeated, and I have even heard of persons who have declared that they were present when I did so, and, with their own eyes, saw me perform the silly trick. F22

It is possible for a person to repeat a falsehood so many that he at length imposes upon himself, and believes that he is stating the truth. When men mean. to say what is untrue and unkind, they are not very careful as to the back upon which they stick the slander. For my own part, I have so long lived under a glass case that, like the bees which I have seen at the Crystal Palace, I go on with my work, and try to be indifferent to spectators; and when my personal habits are truthfully, reported, though they really are not the concern of anybody but myself, I feel utterly indifferent about it, except in times of depression, when I sigh “for a lodge in some vast wilderness, where rumors of newspaper train anti interviewers might never reach me more. I am quite willing to take my lair share of the current criticism allotted to public men; but I cannot help saying that I very seldom read in print any story connected with myself which has a shade of truth in it. Old Joe Millers, anecdotes of Rowland Hill, Sydney Smith, and John Berridge, and tales of remotest and fustiest antiquity, are imputed t9 me as they have been to men who went: before, and will be to men who follow after. Many of the tales told about me, even to this day, are not only without a shadow of truth, but some of them border on blasphemy, or are positively profane. On the whole, I am inclined to believe that the trade in falsehood is rather brisk, or so many untruths would not be manufactured. Why, I actually heard, not long since, of a minister, who said that a certain thing occurred to him, the other day; yet I told the original story twenty years ago! When I related it, I said it had been my experience, the other day, and I believed it was so; but after hearing that this man says that it happened to him, it makes me question whether it really did occur to me at all. I think it is a great pity for a preacher, or any speaker, to try to make a story appear interesting by saying that the incident related happened to him, when it really did not. Scrupulous truthfulness should always characterize everyone who stands up to proclaim the truth of God.  
I mentioned to my New Park Street deacons, several times, my opinion that the upper panes of the iron-framed windows had better be taken out, as the windows were not made to open; yet nothing came of my remarks; but it providentially happened, one Monday, that somebody removed most of those panes in a masterly manner’, almost as well as if they had been taken out by a glazier. There was considerable consternation, and much conjecture, as to who had committed the crime; and I proposed that a reward of five pounds should be offered for the discovery of the offender, who when found should receive, the amount as a present. The reward was not forthcoming, and therefore I have not felt it to be my duty to inform against the individual. I trust none will suspect me ,’ but if they do, I shall have to confess that I have walked with the stick which let the oxygen into that stifling structure. In a very short time after I began to preach in London, the congregation so multiplied as to make the chapel, in the evening, when the gas was burning, like the Black Hole of Calcutta. One night, in 1854, while preaching there, ]] exclaimed, “By faith, the walls of Jericho fell down; and by faith, this wall at the back shall come down, too.” An aged and prudent deacon, in somewhat domineering terms, observed to me, at the close of the sermon, “Let us never hear of that again.” “What do you mean?” I inquired; “you will hear no more about it *when it is done,*and therefore the sooner you set about doing it, the better.” The following extract from the church-book shows that the members did set about doing it in real earnest: —

“Church-meeting, 30th August, 1854.

“Resolved, — That we desire, as a church, to record our devout and grateful acknowledgments to our Heavenly Father for the success that has attended the ministry of our esteemed Pastor, and we consider it important, at as early a period as possible, that increased accommodation should be provided for the numbers that flock to the chapel on Lord’s-days; and we would affectionately request our respected deacons to give the subject their full and careful consideration, and to favor us with their report at the church-meeting in October.”

A considerable, but unavoidable delay, took place, in consequence of the vestry and school-rooms being held on a different Trust from that of the chapel, so that it became necessary to apply to the Charity Commissioners before including those rooms in the main building. After fully investigating the circumstances, they did not interpose any obstacle, so the alterations were commenced, early in 1855, and in due course the chapel was enlarged as proposed, and a new school-room was erected along the side of the chapel, with windows which could be let down, to allow those who were seated in the school to hear the preacher.

CHAPTER 33.

THE CHOLERA YEAR IN LONDON.

*Whether we gather in the harvest or not, there is a reaper who is silently gathering it every hour.*Just now, it is whispered that he is sharpening his sickle. That reaper is DEATH! You may look upon this great city as the harvest-field, and every week the bills of mortality tell us how steadily and how surely the scythe of death moves to and fro, and how a lane is made through our population, and those who were once living men are taken, like sheaves to the garner, carried to the graveyard, and laid aside. You cannot stop their dying; but, oh, that God might help you to stop their being damned! You cannot stop the breath from going out of their bodies; but, oh, that the gospel might stop their souls from going down to destruction! It can do it, and nothing else can take its place. Just now, the cholera has come again. There can be little doubt, I suppose, about it being here already in some considerable force, and probably it may be worse. The Christian need not dread it, for he has nothing to lose, but everything to gain, by death. Still, for the sake of others, he may well pray that God would avert His hand, and not let His anger burn. But, since it is here, I think it ought to be a motive for active exertion. If there ever be a time when the mind is Sensitive, it is when death is abroad. I re collect, when first I came to London, how anxiously people listened to the gospel, for the cholera was raging terribly. There was little scoffing then. All day, and sometimes all night long, I went about from house to house, and. saw men and women dying, and, oh, how glad they were to see my face! When many were afraid to enter their houses lest they should catch the deadly disease, we who had no fear about such things found ourselves most gladly listened to when we spoke of Christ and of things Divine. And now, again, is the minister’s time; and now is the time for all of you who love souls. You may see men more alarmed than they are already; and if they should be, mind that you avail yourselves of the opportunity of doing them good. You have the Balm of Gilead; when their wounds smart, pour it in. You know of Him who died to save; tell them of Him. Lift high the cross before their eyes. Tell them that God became man that man might be lifted to God. Tell them of Calvary, and its groans, and cries, and sweat of blood. Tell them of Jesus hanging on the cross to save sinners. Tell them that —

***“There is life for a look at the Crucified One.”***

Tell them that He is able to save to the uttermost all them that come unto God by Him. Tell them that He is able to save even at the eleventh hour, and to say to the dying thief, “to-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.” — C. H. S., *in Sermon preached at the Metropolitan Tabernacle,*July 29, 1866.

I N 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 bedside of the smitten, and almost every day I was called to visit the grave. At first, 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; but, soon, 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.

I was returning mournfully home from a funeral, when, as God would have it, my curiosity led me to read a paper which was wafered up in a shoemaker’s window in the Great 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 marvelous power, I adore the Lord my God. (In a pamphlet entitled, “The Best Refuge in Times of Trouble,” published about the time of Mr. Spurgeon’s “home-going,” Mr. W. Ford, of 19H, Peabody Buildings, Orchard Street, Westminster, wrote: — “In the year 1854, the first year of Mr. Spurgeon in London, the cholera raged in the locality of his church, and the neighborhood where he resided. The parochial authorities were very thoughtful for the poor, and caused bills to be placed at the corners of the streets, headed CHOLERA, — in large type, — informing the public where advice and medicines would be supplied gratis. At that time, I lived in the Great Dover Road, and Mr. Spurgeon lived a little further towards Greenwich, in Virginia Terrace. Seeing the bills above-named at every turning, I was forcibly impressed that they were very much calculated to terrify the people. With the concurrence of a friend, I procured one, and wrote in the center 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.’ This bill I placed in my shop-window, hundreds read it, and I am not aware of one jeer or improper remark, — so subdued and solemnized were the people by the awful visitation. Among the readers of the bill, was Mr. Spurgeon.”)

During that epidemic of cholera, though I had many engagements in the country, I gave them up that I might remain in London to visit the sick and the dying. I felt that it was my duty to be on the spot in such a time of disease and death and sorrow. One Monday morning, I was awakened, about three o’clock, by a sharp ring of the door-bell. I was urged, without delay, to visit a house not very far from London Bridge. I went; and up two pairs of stairs I was shown into a room, the only occupants of which were a nurse and a dying man. “Oh, sir!” exclaimed the nurse, as I entered, “about half-an-hour ago, Mr. So-and-so begged me to send for you.” “What does he want?” I asked. “He is dying, sir,” she replied. I said, “Yes, I see that he is; what sort of a man was he?” The nurse answered, “He came home from Brighton, last night, sir; he had been out all day. I looked for a Bible, sir, but there is not one in the house; I hope you have brought one with you.” “Oh!” I said, “a Bible would be of no use to him now. If he could understand me, I could tell him the way of salvation in the very words’ of Scripture.” I stood by his side, and spoke to him, but he gave me no answer. I spoke again; but the only consciousness he had was a foreboding of terror, mingled with the stupor of approaching death. Soon, even that was gone, for sense had fled, and I stood there.’, a few minutes, sighing with the poor woman who had watched over him, and altogether hopeless about his soul. Gazing at his face, I perceived that he was dead, and that his soul had departed.

That man, in his lifetime, had been wont to jeer at me. In strong language, he had often denounced me as a hypocrite. Yet he was no sooner smitten by the darts of death than he sought my presence and counsel, no doubt feeling in his heart that I was a servant of God, though he did not care to own it with his lips. There I stood, unable to help him. Promptly as I had responded to his call, what could I do but look at his corpse, and mourn over a lost soul? He had, when in health, wickedly refused Christ, yet in his death-agony he had superstitiously sent for me. Too late, he sighed for the ministry of reconciliation, and sought to enter in at the closed door, but he was not able. There was no space left him then for repentance, for he had wasted the opportunities which God had long granted to him. I went home, and was soon called away again; ‘that time, to see a young woman. She also was in the last extremity, but it was a fair, fair sight. She was singing, — though she knew she was dying, — and talking to those round about her, telling her brothers and sisters to follow her to Heaven, bidding goodbye to her father, and all the while smiling as if it had been her marriage day. She was happy and blessed. I never saw more conspicuously in my life, than I did that morning, the difference there is between one who feareth God and one who feareth Him not.

FOOTNOTES

ft1 The Huguenots: their Settlements, Churches, and Industries in England and Ireland. By SAMUEL SMILES. John Murray.

ft2 Those who heard it sung in the Metropolitan Tabernacle, June 4th, 1889, on the occasion of Mr. Spurgeon’s address on “Old Fugal Tunes,” are never likely to forget the enthusiasm evoked by the beloved Pastor’s solo, which was rapturously encored.

ft3 Extract from The Essex Telegraph, February 8th, 1881: — Interments at Colchester Cemetery for the week ended February 7th, 1881: —

February 2nd. — Emily Florence Norman, St. Mary, 7 weeks. February 2nd. — Ruthford Dickerson, St. Botolph, 4 months. February 3rd. — Elizabeth Bantock, St. Giles, 91 years.

February 5th. — Esther Pearson, (Esther Pearson is the old lady at whose shop I had trust for a farthing. — C. H. S.) St. Leonard, 96 years.

ft4 (Copy of memorial card.)

J OHN SWINDELL,  
Died at Jeffries Road, Clapham,  
18th September, 1882,  
Aged 81 years.  
*This is the person with whom I lived as usher at Newmarket.*

**C. H. SPURGEON.**

ft5 It is remarkable that no less than three persons claimed to have been the preacher on this occasion, but Mr. Spurgeon did not recognize any one of them as the man to whom he then listened.

ft6 It is definitely known that the date of Mr. Spurgeon’s conversion was January 6th, 1850, for preaching at New Park Street Chapel, on Lord’s-day morning, January 6th, 1856, from Isaiah 45:22, he said that, six years before, that very day, and at that very hour, he had been led to look to Christ, by a sermon from that text.  
ft7 On one of the foundation stones of the School-Chapel erected at Bexhillon-Sea in ever-loving memory of Mr. Spurgeon, the following inscription has been cut, in the hope that passers-by may find salvation through reading the passage of Scripture which was blessed to his conversion: —

**HOW C. H. SPURGEON FOUND CHRIST.**

“I looked to Him;  
He looked on me;  
And we were one for ever.” — C. H. S.

“Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.” — Isaiah 45:22.  
Ft15 (Copy of memorial card,)  
IN LOVING REMEMBRANCE  
OF  
ROBERT BROWN,  
BORN, JULY 5TH, 1805; DIED, MARCH 23RD, 1881. Inferred in Newmarket Cemetery.

Mr. Robert Brown was a great friend of mine when I lived at Newmarket. He was superintendent of the Sunday-school, and found me opportunities for speaking. He was a fishmonger in business, and a genuine Christian in his life. — C. H. SPURGEON.

Ft16 See Chapter 22., — ”The Lord’s Hand behind the Maid’s Mistake.”

FT17 Mr. Elven delighted to tell the story of this visit. In his Diary, that evening, he wrote: — ”Have preached to-day at Waterbeach for C. H. Spurgeon. He is a rising star. He will one day make his mark upon the denomination.” Mr. Elven used to say: — ”That day, I preached for Mr. Spurgeon, and he gave out the hynms for me; I should be very glad to give out the hymns for him if he would preach for me.” This service Mr. Spurgeon very cheerfully rendered to Mr. Elven at Bury St. Edmund’s on more than one occasion.

ft18 In Mr. Spurgeon’s second volume of Outlines, there is the following note evidently referring to this day’s services: — ”Three joined the church at Cottenham through the sermons on Sabbath 179.”

FT19 Readers who desire more detailed information concerning the Tabernacle Church, can find it in The Metropolitan Tabernacle: its History and Work. By C. H. SPURGEON. Passmore and Alabaster. 1s. and 2s.

FT20 Mr. Spurgeon’s volume, *Commenting and Commentaries,*explains this allusion: — Among entire commentators of modern date, a high place is usually awarded to THOMAS Scott, and I shall not dispute his right to it. He is the expositor of Evangelical Episcopalians, even as Adam Clarke is the prophet of the Wesleyans; but to me he has seldom given a thought, and I have almost discontinued consulting him. *The very first money I ever received for pulpit services in London was invested in Thomas Scott,*and I neither regretted the investment, nor became exhilarated thereby. His work has always been popular, is very judicious, thoroughly sound and gracious; but for suggestiveness and pith is not comparable to Matthew Henry. I know I am talking heresy; but I cannot help saying that, for a minister’s use, Scott is mere milk and water; — good and trustworthy, but not solid enough in matter for full-grown men. In the family, Scott will hold his place; but in the study, you want condensed thought, and this you must look for elsewhere.

FT21 This wish was in due time happily realized, for Mr. Henry Olney was converted, and joined the church under Mr. Spurgeon’s pastoral charge. In 1854, Mr. William Olney was not a deacon, but he was a very active Christian worker.

FT22 As recently as 1897, a professed minister of the gospel, lecturing in the United States, affirmed that he was present at New Park Street Chapel, and saw Mr. Spurgeon slide down the pulpit banisters! Of course, the lie was contradicted on the highest authority, yet probably he and others will still continue to tell it.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY DIARY, LETTERS, AND RECORDS VOLUME 2

***by His Wife & His Private Secretary***

C. H. SPURGEON’S AUTOBIOGRAPHY

COMPILED FROM

HIS DIARY, LETTERS, AND RECORDS,

**BY  
HIS WIFE,  
AND HIS PRIVATE SECRETARY.**

“The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips; he walked with Me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from *iniquity.” — Malachi*2:6.

VOLUME 2  
1854 — 1860.

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CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY

Charles Haddon Spurgeon, born at Kolvedon, Essex, June 19, 1834. Converted at Colchester, January 6, 1850.  
Admitted to Church membership at Newnmarket, April 4, 1850. Baptized in the river Lark, at Isleham, May 3, 1850.  
Becomes Pastor of Waterbeach Baptist Chapel, 1851.  
First literary effort, No. 1 of Waterbeach Tracts, published 1853.

Preaches at New Park Street Chapel, London, for the first time, December, 1853.

Accepts Pastorate of New Park Street Chapel, April, 1854.  
First sermon in the “New Park Street Pulpit,” published January, 1855. First preaches at Exeter Hall, February, 1855.

Mr. T. W. Medhurst becomes C. H. Spurgeon’s first ministerial student, July, 1855.

Marries Miss Susannah Thompson, January 8, 1856.  
Metropolitan Tabernacle Building Committee formed, June, 1856. Twin sore Thomas and Charles born, September 20, 1856.  
Surrey Gardens Music Hall Disaster, October 19, 1856.  
Services recommenced at the Music Hall, November 23, 1856.

A second student accepted by C. H. Spurgeon and the Pastor’s College practically founded, 1857.  
Preaches to 23,654 persons at the Crystal Palace on Fast Day, October 7, 1857.  
Foundation Stone of the Metropolitan Tabernacle laid, August 16, 1859. Visits Paris and is eulogized in the Roman Catholic Press of that city, February, 1860.  
Preaches in Calvin’s gown and pulpit at Geneva, 1860.  
Metropolitan Tabernacle opened with a great prayer meeting, March 18, 1861.

The famous “Baptismal Regeneration” sermon preached, June 5, 1864. Metropolitan Tabernacle Colportage Association founded, 1866.

Sunday services, each attended by 20,000 persons, held at the Agricultural Hall, Islington, during the renovation of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, March 24 to April 21, 1867.

Stockwell Orphanage (Boys’ side) founded, 1867.  
Foundation Stone of the Pastors’ College Building laid, October 14, 1873. Mrs. Spurgeon’s Book Fund inaugurated, 1875.  
Girls’ Orphanage founded, 1879.

Jubilee Celebrations and presentation of testimonial (£4,500), June 18 and 19, 1884.  
First “Down-grade” paper published in The Sword mad the Trowel,” August, 1887.

Witherawal from the Baptist Union, October, 1887.  
Last sermon at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, June 7, 1891.  
Goes to Mentone for the last time, October 26, 1891.  
Passes away, January 31, 1892.  
Interred at Norwood Cemetery, February 11, 1892.

CHAPTER 34.

LOVE, COURTSHIP, AND MARRIAGE.

BY MRS. C. H. SPURGEON.

T HEN I came to deal with the sacred and delicate task of writing the following chapters, to record the events of the years 1854 and 1855, two courses only seemed to open before me; — the one, to conceal, as gracefully as possible, under conventional phraseology and common-place details, the tender truth and sweetness of our mutual love-story; — the other, to write out of the fulness of my very soul, and suffer my pen to describe the fair visions of the past as, one by one, they grew again before my eyes into living and loving realities. I chose the latter alternative, I felt *compelled*to do so. My hand has but obeyed the dictates; of my heart, and, I trust also, the guidance of the unerring Spirit.

It may be an unusual thing thus to reveal the dearest secrets of one’s past life; but I think, in this case, I am justified in the course I.have taken. My husband once said, “You may write my life across the sky, I have nothing to conceal;” and I cannot withhold the precious testimony which these hitherto sealed pages of his history bear to his singularly holy and blameless character.

So, I have unlocked my heart, and poured out its choicest memories. Some people may blame my prodigality; but I am convinced that the majority of readers will gather up, with reverent hands, the treasures I have thus scattered, and find themselves greatly enriched by their possession.

It has cost me sighs, and multiplied sorrows, as I have mourned over my vanished joys; but, on the other hand, it has drawn me very near to “the God of all consolation,” and taught me to bless Him again and again for having ever given me the priceless privilege of such a husband’s love.

Many years ago, I read a most pathetic story, which is constantly recalled to mind as the duties of this compilation compel me to read the records of past years, and re-peruse the long-closed letters of my beloved, and live over again the happy days when we were all-in-all to each other. I do not remember all the details of the incident which so impressed me, but the chief facts were these. A married couple were crossing one of the great glaciers of Alpine regions, when a fatal accident occurred. The husband fell down one of the huge crevasses which abound on all glaciers, — the rope broke, and the depth of the chasm was so great that no help could be rendered, nor could the body be recovered. Over the wife’s anguish at her loss, we must draw the veil of silence.

Forty years afterwards saw her, with the guide who had accompanied them at the time of the accident, staying at the nearest hotel to the foot of the glacier, waiting for the sea of ice to give up its dead; for, by the wellknown law of glacier-progression, the form of her long-lost husband might be expected to appear, expelled from the mouth of the torrent, about that date. Patiently, and with unfailing constancy, they watched and waited, and their hopes were at last rewarded. One day, the body was released from its prison in the ice, and the wife looked again on the features of him who had been so long parted from her!

But the pathos of the story lay in the fact that she was then an old woman, while the newly-rescued body was that of quite a young and robust man, so faith:fully had the crystal casket preserved the jewel which it held so long. The forty years had left no wrinkles on that marble brow, Time’s withering fingers could not touch him in *that*tomb; and so, for a few brief moments, the aged lady saw the husband of her youth, *as he was in the days which were gone for ever!*

Somewhat similar has been my experience while preparing these chapters. I have stood, as it were, at the foot of the great glacier of Time, and looked with unspeakable tenderness on my beloved as I knew him in the days of his strength, when the dew of his youth was upon him, and the Lord had made him a mighty man among men. True, the cases are not altogether parallel, for I had my beloved with me all the forty years, and we grew old together; but his seven years, in glory seem like half a century to me; and now, with the burden of declining years upon me, I am watching and waiting to see my loved one again, — not as he was forty years or even seven years ago, but as he will be when I am called to rejoin him through the avenue of the grave, or at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints. So I am waiting, and “looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus, Christ.” The first time I saw my future husband, he occupied the pulpit of New Park Street Chapel on the memorable Sunday when he preached his first sermons there. I was no stranger to the place. Many a discourse had I there listened to from Pastor James Smith (afterwards of Cheltenham), — a quaint and rugged preacher, but one well versed in the blessed art of bringing souls to Christ. Often had I seen him administer the ordinance of baptism to the candidates, wondering with a tearful longing whether I should ever be able thus to confess my faith in the Lord Jesus.

I can recall the old-fashioned, dapper figure of the senior deacon, of whom I stood very much in awe. He was a lawyer, and wore the silk stockings and knee-breeches dear to a former generation. When the time came to give out the hymns, he mounted an open desk immediately beneath the pulpit; and from where I sat, I had a side view of him. To the best of my remembrance, he was a short, stout man, and his rotund body, perched on his undraped legs, and clothed in a long-tailed coat, gave him an unmistakable resemblance to a. gigantic robin; and when he chirped out the verses of the hymn in a piping, twittering voice, I thought the likeness was complete!

Well also did I know the curious pulpit without any stairs; it looked like a magnified swallow’s-nest, and was entered from behind through a door in the wall. My childish imagination was always excited by the silent and “creepy” manner in which the minister made his appearance therein. One moment the big box would be empty, — the next, if I had but glanced down at Bible or hymn-boob:, and raised my eyes again, — there was the preacher, comfortably seated, or standing ready to commence the service! I found it very interesting, and though I knew there was a matter-of-fact *door,*through which the good man stepped into his rostrum, this knowledge was not allowed to interfere with, or even explain, the fanciful notions I loved to indulge in concerning that mysterious entrance and exit. It was certainly somewhat singular that, in the very pulpit which had exercised such a charm over me, I should have my first glimpse of the one who was to be the love of my heart, and the light of my earthly life. After Mr. Smith left, there came, with the passing years, a sad time of barrenness and desolation upon the church at New Park Street; the cause languished, and almost died; and none even dreamed of the overwhelming blessing which the Lord had in store for the remnant of faithful people worshipping there.  
From my childhood, I had been a greatly-privileged favorite with Mr. and Mrs. Olney, Senr. (“Father Olney” and his wife), and I was a constant visitor at their homes, both in the Borough and West Croydon, and it ‘was by reason of this mutual love that I found myself in their pew at the dear old chapel on that Sabbath evening, December 18th, 1853. There had been much excitement and anxiety concerning the invitation given to the country lad from Waterbeach to come and preach in the honored, but almost empty sanctuary; it was a risky experiment, so some thought; but I believe that, from the very first sermon he heard him preach, dear old “Father Olney’s” heart was fixed in its faith that God was going to do great things by this young David.

When the family returned from the morning service, varied emotions filled their souls. They had never before heard just such preaching; they were bewildered, and amazed, but they had been fed with royal dainties. They were, however, in much concern for the young preacher himself, who was greatly discouraged by the sight of so many empty pews, and manifestly wished himself back again with his loving people, in his crowded chapel in Cambridgeshire. “What can be done?” good Deacon Olney said; “we must get him a better congregation to-night, or we shall lose him!” So, all that Sabbath afternoon, there ensued a determined looking-up of friends and acquaintances, who, by some means or other, were coaxed into giving a promise that they would be at Park Street in the evening to hear the wonderful boy preacher. “And little Susie must come, too,” dear old Mrs. Olney pleaded. I do not think that “little Susie” particularly cared about being present; her ideas of the dignity and propriety of the ministry were rather shocked and upset by the reports which the morning worshippers had brought back concerning the young man’s unconventional outward appearance! However, to please my dear friends, I went with them, and thus was present at the second sermon which my precious husband preached in London.

Ah! how little I then thought that my eyes looked on him who was to be my life’s beloved; how little I dreamed of the honor God was preparing for me in the near future! It is a mercy that our lives are not left for us to plan, but that our Father chooses for us; else might we sometimes turn away from our best blessings, and put from us the choicest and loveliest gifts of His providence. For, if the whole truth be told, I was not at all fascinated by the young orator’s eloquence, while his countrified manner and speech excited more regret than reverence. Alas, for my vain and foolish heart! I was not spiritually-minded enough to understand his earnest presentation of the gospel, and his powerful pleading with sinners;rebut the huge black satin stock, the long, badly-trimmed hair, and the blue pocket-handkerchief with white spots, which he himself has so graphically described, — these attracted most of my attention, and, I fear, awakened some feelings of amusement. There was only one sentence of the whole sermon which I carried away with me, and that solely on account of its quaintness, for it seemed to me an extraordinary thing for the preacher to speak of the “living stones in the Heavenly Temple perfectly joined together with the vermilion cement of Christ’s blood.”

I do not recollect my first introduction to him; it is probable that he spoke to me, as .to’ many others, on that same Sabbath evening; but when the final arrangement was made for him to Occupy New Park Street pulpit, with a view to the permanent Pastorate, I used to meet him occasionally at the house of our mutual friends, Mr. and Mrs. Olney, and I sometimes went to hear him preach.

I had not at that time made any open profession of religion, though I was brought to see my need of a Saviour under the ministry of the Rev. S. B. Bergne, of the Poultry Chapel, about a year before Mr. Spurgeon came to London. He preached, one Sunday evening, from the text, “The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart” (Romans 10:8), and from that service I date the dawning of the true light in my soul. The Lord said to me, through His. servant, “Give Me thine heart,” and, constrained by His love, that night witnessed my solemn resolution of entire surrender to Himself. But I had since become cold and indifferent to the things of God; seasons of darkness, despondency, and doubt, had passed over me, but I had kept all my religious experiences carefully concealed in my own breast, and perhaps this guilty hesitancy and reserve had much to do with the sickly and sleepy condition of my soul when I was first brought under the ministry of my beloved. None could have more needed the quickening and awakening which I received from the earnest pleadings and warnings of that voice, — soon to be the sweetest in all the world to me.

Gradually I became alarmed at my backsliding state, and then, by a great effort, I sought spiritual help and guidance from Mr. William Olney (“ Father Olney’s” second son, and my cousin by marriage), who was an active worker in the Sunday-school at New Park Street, and a true Mr. Greatheart, and comforter of young pilgrims. He may have told the new Pastor about me, — I cannot say; — but, one day, I was greatly surprised to receive from Mr. Spurgeon an illustrated copy of *The Pilgrim’s Progress,*in which he had written the inscription which is reproduced: —

***~~Miss Thompson  
with desires for her progress  
in the blessed pilgrimage.~~***

***~~From  
C. H. Spurgeon  
Ap 20,1854~~***

I do not think my beloved had, at that time, any other thought concerning me than to help a struggling soul Heavenward; but I was greatly impressed by his concern for me, and the book became very precious as well as helpful. By degrees, though with much trembling, I told him of my state before God; and he. gently led me, by his preaching, and by his conversations, through the power of the Holy Spirit, to the cross of Christ for the peace and pardon my weary soul was longing for.

Thus things went quietly on for a little while;our friendship steadily grew, and I was happier than I had been since the days at the Poultry Chapel; but no bright dream of the future flashed distinctly before my eyes till the day of the opening of the Crystal Palace at Sydenham, on June 10, 1854. a large party of our friends, including Mr. Spurgeon, were present at the inauguration, and we occupied some raised seats at the end of the Palace where the great dock is now’ fixed. As we sat there talking, laughing, and amusing ourselves as best we could, while waiting for the procession to pass by, Mr. Spurgeon handed me a book, into which he had been occasionally dipping, and, pointing to some particular lines, said, “What do you think of the poet’s suggestion in those verses?” The volume was Martin Tupper’s *Proverbial Philosophy,*then recently published, and already beginning to feel the stir of the breezes of adverse criticism, which afterwards gathered into a howling tempest of disparagement and scathing sarcasm. No thought had I for authors and their woes at that moment. The pointing finger guided my eyes to the chapter on “Marriage,” of which the opening sentences ran thus, —

***“Seek a good wife of thy God, for she is the best gift of His providence; Yet ask not in bold confidence that which He hath not promised: Thou knowest not His good will; be thy prayer then submissive thereunto, And leave thy petition to His mercy, assured that He will deal well with thee. If thou art to have a wife of thy youth, she is now living on the earth; Therefore think of her, and pray for her weal.”***

“Do you pray for him who is to be your husband?” said a soft low voice in my ear, — so soft that no one else heard the whisper.

I do not remember that the question received any vocal answer; but my fast-beating heart, which sent a tell-tale flush to my cheeks, and my downcast eyes, which feared to reveal the light which at once dawned in them, may have spoken a language which love understood. From that moment, a very quiet and subdued little maiden sat by the young Pastor’s side, and while the brilliant procession passed round the Palace, I do not think she took so much note of the glittering pageant defiling before her, as of the crowd of newly-awakened emotions which were palpitating within her heart. Neither the book nor its theories were again alluded to, but when the formalities of the opening were over, and the visitors were allowed to leave their seats, the same low voice whispered again, “Will you come and walk round the Palace with me?” How we obtained leave of absence from the rest of the party, I know not; but we wandered together, for a long time, not only in the wonderful building itself, but in the gardens, and even down to the lake, beside which the colossal forms of extinct monsters were being cunningly modelled. During that walk, on that memorable day in June, I believe God Himself united our hearts in indissoluble bonds of true affection, and, though we knew it not, gave us to each other for ever. From that time our friendship grew apace, and quickly ripened into deepest love, — a love which lives in my heart to-day as truly, aye, and more solemnly and strongly than it did in those early days; for, though God has seen fit to call my beloved up to higher service, He has left me the consolation of still loving him with all my heart, and believing that our love shall be perfected when we meet in that blessed land where Love reigns supreme and eternal.

It was not very long (August 2, 1854,) before the sweet secret between us was openly revealed. Loving looks, and tender tones, and clasping hands had all told “the old, old story,” and yet, when the verbal confession of it came, how wonderful it was } Was there ever quite such bliss on earth before? I can see the place where the marvel was wrought, as plainly, at this distance of over forty years, as I saw it then. It was in a little, oldfashioned garden (my grandfather’s), which had high brick walls on three sides, and was laid out with straight, formal gravel paths, and a small lawn, in the midst of which flourished a large and very fruitful pear tree, — the pride of old grandad’s heart. Rather a dreary and unromantic place, one would imagine, for a declaration of love; but people are not particularly careful as to the selection of their surroundings at such a moment, and do not often take pains to secure a delightful background to the picture which will for ever be photographed on their hearts. To this day,’I think of that old garden as a sacred place, a paradise of happiness, since there my beloved sought me for his very own, and told me how much he loved me. Though I thought I knew this already, it was a very different matter to hear him say it, and I trembled and was silent for very joy and gladness. The sweet ceremony of betrothal needs no description; every loving and true heart can fill up the details either from experience or anticipation. To me, it was a time as *solemn*as it was sweet; and, with a great awe in my heart,’I left my beloved, and hastening to the house, and to an upper room, I knelt before God, and praised and thanked Him, with happy tears, for His great mercy in giving me the love of so good a man. If I had known, then, *how* good he was, and how great he would become, I should have been overwhelmed, not so much with the happiness of being his, as; with the responsibility which such a position would entail. But, thank God, throughout all my blessed married life, the perfect love which drew us together never slackened or faltered; and, though I can how see how undeserving I was to be the life companion of so eminent a servant of God, I know *he*did not think this, but looked upon his wife as God’s best earthly gift to him.

In the diary I then kept, I find this brief but joyful entry: — “August 2, 1854. — It is impossible to write down all that occurred this morning. I can only adore in silence the mercy of my God, and praise Him for all His benefits.”

After our engagement, we met pretty constantly; I attended the services at New Park Street Chapel as often as possible, and on February 1, 1855, I was baptized there by my beloved, upon my profession of repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. When I had to “come before the church,” he endeavored to keep the matter as quiet as possible, lest inconvenient curiosity should be aroused; but the fact must have found some small leakage, for we were amused to hear afterwards of the following little incident. An old man, named Johnny Dear, preceded me in the list of candidates; and when he had given in his experience, and been questioned and dismissed, two maiden ladies, sitting at the back of the room, were overheard to say, “What was that man’s name? .... Johnny Dear.” “Oh, well; I suppose it will be ‘ sister dear’ next!” And I am thankful to say her surmise was correct, and that I happily passed through the somewhat severe ordeal.

Mr. Spurgeon had expressed a wish that I should write out my confession of repentance and faith, which I accordingly did. I do not know whether it was read to the officers of the church, or retained solely for his own perusal; but it is preserved among his papers, and in the following words he gave me assurance of his satisfaction with my testimony: —

“75, Dover Road,  
“January 11, 1855.  
“My Dearest,

“The letter is all I can desire. Oh! I could weep for joy (as I certainly am doing now) to think that my beloved can so well testify to a work of grace in her soul. I knew you were *really*a child of God, but I did not think you had been led in such a path. I see my Master has been ploughing deep, and it is the deep-sown seed, struggling with the clods, which now makes your bosom heave with distress. If I know anything of spiritual symptoms, I think I know a cure for you. Your position is not the sphere for earnest labor for Christ. You have done all you could in more ways than one; but you are not brought into actual contact either with the saints, or with the sinful, sick, or miserable, whom you could serve. Active service brings with it warmth, and this tends to remove doubting, for our works thus become evidences of our calling and election.

“I flatter no one, but allow me to say, honestly, that few cases which have come under my notice are so satisfactory as yours. Mark, I write not now as your *admiring friend,*but impartially as your Pastor. If the Lord had intended your destruction, He would not have told you such things as these, nor would He enable you so unreservedly to cast yourself upon His faithful promise. As I hope to stand at the bar of God, clear of the blood of all men, it would ill become me to flatter; and as I love you with the deepest and purest affection, far be it from me to trifle with your immortal interests; but I will say again that my gratitude to God ought to be great, as well on my own behalf as yours, that you have been so deeply schooled in the lessons of the heart, and have so frequently looked into the charnel-house of your own corruption. There are other lessons to come, that you may be thoroughly furnished; but, oh! my dear one, how good to learn the first lesson well! I loved you once, but feared you might not be an heir of Heaven; — God in His mercy showed me that you were indeed *elect.*I then thought I might without sin reveal my affection to you, — but up to the time I saw your note, I could not imagine that you had seen such great sights, and were so thoroughly versed in soul-knowledge. God is good, very good, infinitely good. Oh, how I prize this last gift, because l now know, more than ever, that the Giver loves the gift, and so I may love it, too, but only in subservience to Him. Dear purchase of a Saviour’s blood, you are to me a Saviour’s gift, and my heart is full to overflowing with the thought of such continued goodness. I do not wonder at His goodness, for it is just like Him; but I cannot but lift up the voice of joy at His manifold mercies.

“Whatever befall us, trouble and adversity, sickness or death, we need not fear a final separation, either from each other, or our God. I am glad you are not here just at this moment, for I feel so deeply that I could only throw my arms around you and weep. May the choicest favors be thine, may the Angel of the Covenant be thy companion, may thy supplications be answered, and may thy conversation be with Jesus in Heaven! Farewell; unto my God and my father’s God I commend you.

“Yours, with pure and holy affection, as well as terrestrial love,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

My dear husband used often to write his name and a brief comment in any of his books which he specially valued. His first volume of Calvin’s *Commentaries*contains an inscription which is such a direct confirmation of what I have written on earlier, that it makes a most fitting conclusion to the present chapter: —

***~~The volumes making up a complete set of Calvin were a gift to me from my own most dear tender wife. Blessed may she be among women. How much of comfort and strength she has ministered unto me it is not in my power to estimate. She has been to me God’s best earthly gift and not a little even of heavenly treasure has come to me by her means. She has often been as an angel of God unto me.~~***

***~~C. H. Spurgeon~~***

CHAPTER 35

LOVE, COURTSHIP, AND MARRIGE (*CONTINUED*).

A T this time, the Crystal Palace was a favorite resort with us. It possessed great attractions of its own, and perhaps the associations of the opening day gave it an added grace in our eyes. In common with many of our friends, we had season tickets; and we used them to good purpose, as my beloved found that an hour or two of rest and relaxation in those lovely gardens, and that pure air, braced him for the constant toil of preaching to crowded congregations, and relieved him somewhat from the ill effects of London’s smoky atmosphere. It was so easy for him to run down to Sydenham from London Bridge that, as often as once a week, if possible, we arranged to meet there for a quiet walk and talk. After the close of the Thursday evening service, there would be a whispered word to me in the aisle, “Three o’clock to-morrow,” which meant that, if I would be at the Palace by that hour, “somebody” would meet me at the Crystal Fountain. I was then living at 7, 2St. Ann’s Terrace, Brixton Road, in the house which my parents, Mr. and Mrs. R. B. Thompson, shared with my uncle, H. Kilvington, Esq., and the long walk from there to Sydenham was a pleasant task to me, with such a meeting in view, and such delightful companionship as a reward. We wandered amid the many Courts, which were then chiefly instructive and educational in character; we gazed with almost solemn awe at the reproductions of Egypt, Assyria, and Pompeii, and I think we learned many things beside the tenderness of our own hearts towards each other, as the bright blissful hours sped by.

The young minister had not much time to spare from his duties, but he usually came to see me on a Monday, bringing his sermon with him to revise for the press; and I learned to be quiet, and mind my own business, while this important work was going on. It was good discipline for the Pastor’s intended wife, who needed no inconsiderable amount of training to fit her in any measure for the post she was ordained to occupy. I remember, however, that there was one instance of preparation for future duty, which was by no means agreeable to my feelings, and which, I regret to say, I resented. As a chronicler must be truthful, I tell the story, and to show how, from the very beginning of his public life, my dear husband’s devotion to his sacred work dominated and even absorbed every other passion and purpose of his heart. He was a “called, and chosen, and faithful” servant of Christ in the very highest degree; and during all his life he put God’s service first, and all earthly things second. I have known him to be so abstracted, on a Sabbath morning at the Tabernacle, just before preaching, that if I left his vestry for a few moments, he would, on my return, rise and greet me with a handshake, and a grave “How are you?” as if I were a strange visitor; then, noting the amused look on my face, he would discover his mistake, and laughingly say, “Never mind, wifey dear, I was thinking about my hymns.” This happened not once only, but several times, and when the service was over, and we were driving home, he would make very merry over it.

But I must tell the promised story of the earlier days, though it is not at all to my own credit; yet, even as I write it, I smile at the remembrance of his enjoyment of the tale in later years. If I wanted to amuse him much, or chase some gloom from his dear face, I would remind him of the time when he took his sweetheart to a certain service, and there was so preoccupied with the discourse he was about to deliver, that he forgot all about her, and left her to take care of herself as best she could. As I recalled the incident, which really was to me a very serious one at the time, and might have had an untoward ending, he would laugh at the ludicrous side of it till the tears ran down his cheeks, and then he would lovingly kiss me, and say how glad he was that I had borne with his ill manners, and how much I must have loved him.

This is the story. He was to preach at the large hall of “The Horns,” Kennington, which was not very far from where we then resided. He asked me to accompany him, and dined with us at St. Ann’s Terrace, the service being in the afternoon. We went together, happily enough, in a cab; and I well remember trying to keep close by his side as we mingled with the mass of people thronging up the staircase. But, by the time we had reached the landing, he had forgotten my existence; the burden of the message he had to proclaim to that crowd of immortal souls was upon him, and he turned into the small side door where the officials were awaiting him, without for a moment realizing that I was left to struggle as best I could with the rough and eager throng around me. At first, I was utterly bewildered, and then, I am sorry to have to confess, I was *angry.*I at once returned home, and told my grief to my gentle mother, who tried to soothe my ruffled spirit, and bring me to a better frame of mind. She wisely reasoned that my chosen husband was no ordinary man, that his whole life was absolutely dedicated to God and His service, and that I must never, *never*hinder him by trying to put myself first in his heart. Presently, after much good and loving counsel, my heart grew soft, and I saw I had been very foolish and wilful; and then a cab drew up at the door, and dear Mr. Spurgeon carne running into the house, in great excitement, calling, “Where’s Susie? I have been searching for her everywhere, and cannot find her; has she come back by herself?” My dear mother went to him, took him aside, and told him all the truth; and I think, when he realized the state of things, she had to soothe him also, for he was so innocent at heart of having offended me in any way, that he must have felt I had done him an injustice in thus doubting him. At last, mother came to fetch me to him, and I went downstairs. Quietly he let me tell him how indignant I had felt, and then he repeated mother’s little lesson, assuring me of his deep affection for me, but pointing out that, before all things, he was *God’s servant,*and I must be prepared to yield my claims to His.’

I never forgot the teaching of that day; I had learned my hard lesson *by heart,*for I do not recollect ever again seeking to assert my right to his time and attention when any service for God demanded them. It was ever the settled purpose of my married life that I should never hinder him in his work for the Lord, never try to keep him from fulfilling his engagements, never plead my own ill-health as a reason why he. should remain at home with me. I thank God, now, that He enabled me to carry out this determination, and rejoice that I have no cause to reproach myself with being a drag on the swift wheels of his consecrated life. I do not take any credit to myself for this; it was the Lord’s will concerning me, and He saw to it that I received the necessary training whereby, in after years, I could cheerfully surrender His chosen servant to the incessant demands of his ministry, his literary work, and the multiplied labors of his exceptionally busy life. And now I can bless God for what happened on that memorable afternoon when my beloved preached at “The Horns,” Kennington. What a delightfully cosy tea we three had together that evening, and how sweet was the calm in our hearts after the storm, and how much we both loved and honored mother for her wise counsels and her tender diplomacy!

Some little time afterwards, when Mr. Spurgeon had an engagement at Windsor, I was asked to accompany him, and in forwarding the invitation, he referred to the above incident thus: — ”My Own Darling, — What do you say to this? As you wish me to express my desire, I will say, ‘Go;’ but I should have left it to your own choice if I did not know that my wishes always please you. Possibly, I may be again inattentive to you if you do go; but this will be nice for us both, — that ‘Charles’ may have space for mending, and that ‘Susie’ may exhibit her growth in knowledge of his character, by patiently enduring his failings.” So the end of this little “rift in the lute” was no patched-up peace between us, but a deepening of our confidence in each other, and an increase of that fervent love which can look a misunderstanding in the face till it melts away and vanishes, as a morning cloud before The ardent glances of the sun.

Two tender little notes, written by my husband sixteen years later (1871), will show what an abundant reward of loving approval was bestowed on me for merely doing what it was my duty to do: —

“My Own Dear One, — None know how grateful I am to God for you. In all I have, ever done for Him, you have a large share, for in making me so’ happy you have fitted me for service. not an ounce of power has ever been lost to the good cause through you. I have served the Lord far more, and never less, for your sweet companionship. The Lord God Almighty bless you now and for ever!”

“I have been thinking over my strange history, and musing on eternal love’s great river-head from which such streams of mercy have flowed to me. I dwell devoutly on many points; — the building of the Tabernacle, — what a business it was, and how little it seems now! Do you remember a Miss Thompson who collected for the enlargement of New Park Street Chapel as much as £100? Bless her dear heart! Think of the love which gave me that dear lady for a wife, and made her such a wife; to me, the ideal wife, and, as I believe, without exaggeration or love-flourishing, the precise form in which God would make a woman for such a man as I am, if He designed her to be the greatest of all earthly blessings to him; and in some sense a spiritual blessing, too, for in that also am I richly profited by you, though you would not believe it. I will leave this ‘good matter’ ere the paper is covered; but not till I have sent you as many kisses as there are waves on the sea.”

It was our mutual desire to pay a visit to Colchester, that I might be introduced to Mr. Spurgeon’s parents as their future daughter-in-law; and, after some trouble and disappointment, my father’s consent was obtained, and we set off on our first imporT:ant journey together, with very keen and vivid perceptions of the delightful novelty of our experience. It is not to be wondered at that my memories of the visit are somewhat hazy, although intensely happy. I was welcomed, petted, and entertained most affectionately by all the family, and I remember being taken to see every place and object of interest in and around Colchester; but what I saw, I know not; the joy of being all the day long with my beloved, and this for three or four days together, was enough to fill my heart with gladness, and render me “oblivious of any other pleasure. I think we must have returned on the Friday of our week’s holiday, for, according to our custom, we exchanged letters on the Saturday as usual, and this is what we said to each other: —

“75, Dover Road,  
“April, ‘55.  
“My Own Doubly-dear Susie,

“How much we have enjoyed in each other’s society! It seems almost impossible that I could either have conferred or received so much happiness. I feel now, like you, very low in spirits; but a sweet promise in Ezekiel cheers me, ‘ I will give thee the opening of the mouth in the midst of them.’ (This was in reference to the preparation of sermons for the Sabbath. — S. S.) Surely my God has not forgotten me. Pray for me, my love; and may our united petitions win a blessing through the Saviour’s merit! Let us take heed of putting ourselves too prominently in our own hearts, but let us commit our way unto the Lord. ‘ What I have in my own hand, I usually lose,’ said Luther; ‘ but what I put into God’s hand, is still, and ever will be, in my possession.’ I need not send my love to you, for, though absent in body, my heart is with you still, and I am, your much-loved, and ardently-loving, C. H. S.”

“P.S. — The devil has barked again in *The Essex Standard.*It contains another letter. Never mind; when Satan opens his mouth, he gives me an opportunity of ramming my sword down his throat.”

(MY REPLY.)  
“St. Ann’s Terrace, “April, ‘55.

“My Dearest,  
“I thank you with warm and hearty thanks for the note just received. It is useless for me to attempt to tell you how much happiness I have had during the past week. Words are but cold dishes on which to serve up thoughts and feelings which come warm and glowing from the heart. I should like to express my appreciation of all the tenderness and care you have shown towards me during this happy week; but I fear to pain you by thanks for what I know was a pleasure to you. I expect your thoughts have been busy to-day about ‘the crown jewels.’ (He had talked of preaching on this subject. — S. S.) The gems may differ in size, colour, richness, and beauty, but even the smallest are ‘precious stones’, are they not?

“That *Standard*certainly does not bear ‘ Excelsior’ as its motto; nor can ‘ Good will to men’ be the device of its floating pennon, but it matters not; *we know*that all is under the control of One of whom Asaph said, ‘Surely the wrath of man shall praise Thee; the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain.’ May His blessing rest in an especial manner on you to-night, my dearly-beloved; and on the approaching Sabbath, when you stand before the great congregation, may you be ‘ filled with all the fulness of God’! Good-night. Fondly and faithfully yours, — SUSIE.”

The mention of *The Essex Standard,*in the foregoing letters, points to the fact that, even thus early in his ministerial career, the strife of tongues had commenced again,;t God’s servant, and the cruel arrows of the wicked had sorely wounded him. He had also begun to learn that some of his severest critics were the very men who ought to have been his heartiest friends and warmest sympathizers. The first reference to this persecution is in a letter to me, written January 1, 1855, where he says: — ”I find much stir has been made by ‘Job’s letter’, and hosts of unknown persons have risen up on my behalf. It seems very likely that King James (James Wells) will shake his own throne by lifting his hand against one of the Lord’s little ones.” Then, in May, in one of the Saturday letters, there occur these sentences: — ”I am down in the valley, partly because of two desperate attacks in *The Sheffield Independent,*and *The Empire,*and partly because I cannot find a subject:. Yet faith fails not. I know and believe the promise, and am not afraid to rest upon it. All the scars I receive, are scars of honor; so, faint heart, on to the battle! My love, were you here, how you would comfort me; but since you are not, I shall do what is better still, go upstairs alone, and pour out my griefs into my Saviour’s ear. ‘ Jesus, *Lover*of *my soul, I can*to Thy bosom fly!’“

These were only the first few drops of the terrible storm of detraction, calumny, and malice, which afterward burst upon him with unexampled fury; but which, blessed, be God, he lived through, and lived down. I rio not say more concerning these slanders, as they will be described in detail in later chapters.

When my parents removed to a house in Falcon Square, City, we met much more frequently, and grew to know each other better, while our hearts were knit closer and closer m purest love. A little more “training” also took place, for one day my beloved brought with him an ancient, rusty-looking book, and, to my amazement, ,;aid, “Now, darling, I want you to go carefully through this volume, marking all those paragraphs and sentences that strike you as being particularly sweet, or quaint, or instructive; will you do this for me?” Of course, I at once complied; but he did not know with what a trembling sense of my own inability the promise was given, nor how disqualified I then was to appreciate the spiritual beauty of his favorite Puritan writers. It was the simplest kind of literary work which he asked me to do, but I was such an utter stranger to such service, that it seemed a most important and difficult task to discover in that “dry” old book the bright diamonds and red gold which he evidently reckoned were therein enshrined. Love, however, is a matchless teacher, and I was a willing pupil; and so, with help and suggestion from so dear a tutor, the work went on from day to day till, in due time, a small volume made its appearance, which he called, Smooth*Stones taken from Ancient Brooks.*This title was a pleasant and Puritanic play upon the author’s name, and I think the compilers were well pleased with the results of their happy work together. I believe the little book is out of print now, and copies are very rarely to be met with; but those who possess them may feel an added interest in their perusal, now that they know the sweet love-story which hides between their pages.

As the days went by, my beloved’s preaching engagements multiplied exceedingly, yet he found time to make me very happy by his loving visits and letters; and, on Sunday mornings, I was nearly always allowed by my parents to enjoy his ministry. Yet this pleasure was mingled with much of pain; for, during the early part of the year 1855, he was preaching in Exeter Hall to vast crowds of people, and the strain on his physical power was terrible. Sometimes his voice would almost break and fail as he pleaded with sinners to come to Christ, or magnified the Lord in His sovereignty and righteousness. A glass of Chili vinegar always stood on a shelf under the desk before him, and I knew what to expect when he had recourse to that remedy. Oh, how my heart ached for him! What self-control I had to exercise to appear calm and collected, and keep quietly in my seat up in that little side gallery! How I longed to have the *right*to go and comfort and cheer him when the service was over! But I had to walk away, as other people did, — I, who belonged to him, and was closer to his heart than anyone there! It was severe discipline for a young and loving spirit. I remember, with strange vividness at this long distance of time, the Sunday evening when he preached from the text, “His Name shall endure for ever.” It was a subject in which he revelled, it was his chief delight to exalt his glorious Saviour, and he seemed in that discourse to be pouring out his very soul and life in homage and adoration before his gracious King. But I really thought he would have died there, in face of all those people! At the end of the sermon, he made a mighty effort to recover his voice; but utterance well-nigh tailed, and only in broken accents could the pathetic peroration be heard, — ”Let my name perish, but let Christ’s Name last for ever! 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!” and then he fell back almost fainting in the chair behind him.

In after days, when the Lord had fully perfected for him that silver-toned voice which ravished men’s ears, while it melted their hearts, there was seldom any recurrence of the painful scene I have attempted to describe. On the contrary, he spoke with the utmost ease, in the largest buildings, to assembled thousands, and, as a master musician playing on a priceless instrument, he could at will either charm his audience with notes of dulcet sweetness, or ring forth the clarion tones of warning and alarm.

He used to say, playfully, that his throat had been macadamized; but, as a matter of fact, I believe that the constant and natural use: of his voice, in the delivery of so many sermons and addresses, was the secret of his entire freedom from the serious malady generally known as “clergyman’s sore throat.” During this first visit to Exeter Hall, New Park Street Chapel was enlarged, and when this improvement was completed, he returned to his own pulpit, the services at the hall ceased, and for a short time, at least, my fears for him were silenced.

But his work went on increasing almost daily, and his popularity grew with rapid strides. Many notable services in the open-air were held about this time, and my letters; give a glimpse of two of these occasions. On June 2, 1855, he writes: — ”Last evening, about 500 persons came to the field, and afterwards adjourned to the chapel kindly lent by Mr. Eldridge. My Master gave me power and liberty. I am persuaded souls were saved; and, as for myself, I preached like the chief of sinners, to those who, like me, were chief sinners, too. Many were the tears, and not a few the smiles.”

Then, on the 23rd of the same month, I had a jubilant letter, which commenced thus: — “Yesterday, I climbed to the summit of a minister’s glory. My congregation was enormous, I think 10,000 (this was in a field at Hackney); but certainly twice as many as at Exeter Hall. The Lord was with me, and the profoundest silence was observed; but, oh, the close, — never did mortal man receive a more enthusiastic ovation! I wonder I am alive! After the service, five or six gentlemen endeavored to clear a passage, but I was borne along, amid cheers, and prayers, and shouts, for about a quarter of an hour, — it really seemed more like a week! I was hurried round and round the field without hope of escape until, suddenly seeing a nice open carriage, with two occupants, standing near, I sprang in, and begged them to drive away. This they most kindly did, and I stood up, waving my hat, and crying, ‘ The blessing of God be with you!’ while, from thousands of heads the hats were lifted, and cheer after cheer was given. Surely, amid these plaudits I can hear the low rumblings of an advancing storm of reproaches; but even this I can bear for the Master’s sake.”

This was a true prophecy, for the time did come when the hatred of men to the truths; he preached rose to such a height, that no scorn seemed too bitter, no sneer too contemptuous, to fling at the preacher who boldly declared the gospel of the grace of God, as he had himself learned it at the cross of Christ; but, thank God, he lived to be honored above most men for his uprightness and fidelity, and never, to the last moment of his life, did he change one jot or tittle of his belief, or vary an iota of his whole-hearted testimony to the divinity of the doctrines of free grace.

CHAPTER 36

LOVE, COURTSHIP, AND MARRIAGE

I N July of this to combine a holiday with the fulfilment of many preaching engage a very bad plan this, as he afterwards found, for an overtaxed mind needs absolute repose during resting times, and sermons and spirits both suffer if this reasonable rule be broken. His letters to me during this journey are not altogether joyful ones; I give a few extracts from them, which will serve to outline his first experiences in a form of service into which he so fully entered in after years. On this occasion, he was not happy, or “at home,” and was constantly longing to return. This was, too, his *first*long journey by rail, and it is curious to note what physical pain the inexperienced traveller endured. In those days, there were no Pullman cars, or luxurious saloon carriages, fitted up with all the comforts and appliances of a first class hotel, so our poor voyager fared badly. He writes a note from Carlisle, just to assure: me of his safety, and then, on reaching Glasgow, he gives this account of his ride: — ”At Watford, I went with the guard, and enjoyed some conversation with him, which I hope God will bless to his good. At 10.45, I went inside, — people asleep. I could not manage a wink, but felt very queer. At morning-light, went into a secondclass carriage with another guard, and rejoiced in the splendid view as well as my uncomfortable sensations would allow. Arrived here tired, begrimed with dust, sleepy, not over high in spirits, and with a dreadful cold in my head. Last night, I slept twelve hours without waking, but I still feel as tired as before I slept. I will, I think, never travel so far at once again. I certainly shall not come home in one day; for if I do, my trip will have been an injury instead of a benefit. I am so glad you did not have my *horrid*ride; but if I could spirit you here, I would soon do it. Pray for me, my love.”

The next epistle I will give at length. I have been trying in these pages to leave the “love” out of the letters as much as possible, lest my precious things should appear but platitudes to my readers, but it is a difficult task; for little rills of tenderness run between all the sentences, like the singing, dancing waters among the boulders of a brook, and I cannot still the music altogether. To the end of his beautiful life it was the same, his letters were always those of a devoted lover, as well as of a tender husband; not only did the brook never dry up, but the stream grew deeper and broader, and the rhythm of its song waxed sweeter and stronger.

“Aberfeldy,  
“July 17th, 1855.  
“My Precious Love,

“Your dearly-prized note came safely to hand, and verily it did excel all I have ever read, even from your own loving pen. Well, I am all right now. Last Sabbath, I preached twice; and to sum up all in a word, the services were ‘ glorious.’ In the morning, Dr. Patterson’s place was crammed; and in the evening, Dr. Wardlaw’s Chapel was crowded to suffocation by more than 2,500 people, while persons outside declared that quite as many went away. My reception was enthusiastic; never was greater honor given to mortal man. They were just as delighted as are the people at Park Street. To-day, I have had a fine drive with my host and his daughter. Tomorrow, I am to preach *here.*It is quite impossible for me to be left in quiet. Already, letters come in, begging me to go here, there, and everywhere. Unless I go to the North Pole, I never can get away from my holy labor.

*“Now*to return to you again, I have had day-dreams of you while driving along, I thought you were very near me. It is not long, dearest, before I shall again enjoy your sweet society, if the providence of God permit. I knew I loved you very much before, but now I feel how necessary you are to me; and you will not · lose much by my absence, if you find me, on my return, more attentive to your feelings, as well as equally affectionate. I can now thoroughly sympathize with your tears, because I feel in no little degree that pang of absence which my constant engagements prevented me from noticing when in London. How then must you, with so much leisure, have felt my absence from you, even though you well knew that it was unavoidable on my part! My darling, accept love of the deepest and purest kind from one who is not prone tO exaggerate,-but who feels that here there is no room for hyperbole. Think not that I weary myself by writing; for, dearest, it is my delight to please you, and solace an absence which must be even more dreary to you than to me, since travelling and preaching lead me to forget it. My eyes ache for sleep, but they shall keep open till I have invoked the blessings from above — mercies temporal and eternal — to rest on the head of one whose name is sweet to me, and who equally loves the name of her own, her much-loved, C. H. S.”

The dear traveller seems to have had his Scotch visit interrupted by the necessity of a journey to fulfil preaching engagements at Bradford and Stockton. On his way to these towns, he stayed to see the beauties of Windermere, and sought to enjoy a little relaxation and rest; but he writes very sadly of these experiences. “This is a bad way of spending time,” he says, *“I*had rather be preaching five times a day than be here. Idleness is my labor*.*I long for the traces again, and want to be in the shafts, pulling the old coach. Oh, for the quiet of my own closet! I think, if I have one reason for wishing to return, more cogent than even my vehement desire to see you, it is that I may see *my Lord,*so as I have seen Him in my retirement.”

Of the services at Bradford, he gives this brief record: — “Last Sabbath was a day of even greater triumph than at Glasgow. The hall, which holds more people than Exeter Hall, was crammed to excess at both services, and in the evening the crowds outside who went away were immense, and would have furnished another hall with an audience. At Stockton, I had a full house, and my Master’s smile; I left There this morning at 8 o’clock.”

Returning to Glasgow, *rid*Edinburgh, he preached in that city, and I afterwards had a doleful little note, in which he wrote bitter things against himself, — perhaps without reason. His words, however, show with what tenderness of conscience he served his God, how quick he was to discover in himself anything which might displease his Master, and how worthless was the applause of the people if the face of his Lord were hidden. He says: — ”I preached in Edinburgh, and returned here, full of anguish at my ill-success. Ah! my darling, your beloved behaved like Jonah, and half wished never more to testily against Nineveh. Though it rained, the hall was crowded, and there was I, — *without my God*! It was a sad failure on my part; nevertheless, God can bless my words to poor souls.” (A further reference to this incident will be found in the chapters in which Mr. Spurgeon describes his Scotch tour in fuller detail than I have given.)

A hurried excursion to the Highlands, — a day’s sight-seeing in Glasgow, — another Sabbath of services, when enormous crowds were disappointed, — 20,000 people.being turned away, because admittance was impossible, — and then the Scotch journey — the forerunner of so many similar events, — was a thing of the past, and work at home was recommenced with earnestness and vigor.

Even at this early period of my beloved’s ministry, while he was still so youthful that none need have wondered had he been puffed up by his popularity and success, there was in his heart a deep and sweet humility, which kept him low at the Master’s feet, and fitted him to bear the everincreasing burden of celebrity and fame. This is manifest in so many of these letters of 1855, that I have felt constrained to refer to it, since even now some dare to speak of him as self-confident and arrogant, when, had they known him as his dearest friends knew him, they would have marvelled at his lowliness, and borne witness — as these have often done, — that “the meekness and gentleness of Christ” was one of the many charms of his radiant character. His dear son in the faith, Pastor Hugh D. Brown, of Dublin, speaks truly when he says of· him, in a lately-published eulogy, *“So*wonderful a man, and yet so simple, — with a great childheart; — or rather, so simple because so great,:needing no scaffoldings of pompous mannerism to buttress up an uncertain reputation; but universally esteemed, because he cared nought for human opinion, but only for what was upright, open-hearted, and transparent, both in ministry and life; — we never knew a public man who had less of self about him, for over and above aught else, his sole ambition seemed to be, ‘ How can I most extol my Lord?’“ These thoughtful, discriminating words would have been applicable to him if they had been written in the long-past days, when his marvellous career had but just commenced, and his glorious life-work lay all before him.

The following letter reveals his inmost heart, and it costs me a pang to give it publicity; but it should silence for ever the untrue charges of egotism and self-conceit which have been brought against him by those who ought to have known better: — ”I shall feel deeply indebted to you, if you will pray very earnestly for me. I fear I am not so full of love to God as I used to be. I lament my sad decline in spiritual things. You and others may not have observed it, but I am now conscious of it, and a sense thereof has put bitterness in my cup of joy. Oh! what is it to be popular, to be successful, to have abundance, even to have love so sweet as yours, — if I should be left of God to fall, and to depart from His ways? I tremble at the giddy height on which I stand, and could wish myself unknown, for indeed I am unworthy of all my honors and my fame. I trust 1 shall now commence anew, and wear no longer the linsey-woolsey garment; but I beseech you, blend your hearty prayers with mine, that two of us may be agreed, and thus will you promote the usefulness, and holiness, and happiness of one whom you love.”

Then, some months later, he wrote: — “The Patriot has a glowing account of me, which will tend to make me more popular than ever. MAY GOD PRESERVE ME! I believe all my little troubles have just kept me right. I should have been upset by flattery, had it not been for this long balancing rod.”

Let any impartial reader decide whether these are the words of a vain and self-complacent man!

The year 1855 was now drawing to a close, and we were looking forward, with unutterable joy, to having a home of our own, and being united by the holy ties of a marriage “made in Heaven.” My beloved went to spend Christmas with his parents in Colchester; and after a personal “Good-bye,” wrote again thus: — ”Sweet One, — How I love you! I long to see you; and yet it is but half-an-hour since I left you. Comfort yourself in my absence by the thought that my heart is with you. My own gracious God bless you in all things, — in heart, in feeling, in life, in death, in Heaven! May your virtues be perfected, your prospects realized, your zeal continued, your love to Him increased, and your knowledge of Him rendered deeper, higher, broader, — in fact, may more than even *my heart*can wish, or *my* hope anticipate, be yours for ever! May we be mutual blessings; — wherein I shall err, you will pardon; and wherein you may mistake, I will more than overlook. Yours, till Heaven, *and then*, — C. H. S.”

Ah! my husband, the blessed earthly ties which we welcomed so rapturously are dissolved now, and death has hidden thee from my mortal eyes; but not even death can divide thee from me, or sever the love which united our hearts so closely. I feel it living and growing still, and I believe it will find its full and spiritual development only when we shall meet in the glory-land, and worship *“together*before the throne.”  
There is just one relic of this memorable time. On my desk, as I write this chapter, there is a book bearing the title of *The Pulpit Library;*it is the *first*published volume of my beloved’s sermons, and its fly-leaf has the following inscription: —

***In a few days it will be out of my power to present anything to Miss Thompson. Let this be a remembrance of our happy meetings and sweet conversations. Dec. 22/55  
C. H. Spurgeon***

The wedding-day was fixed for January 8th, 1856; and I think, till it came, and passed, I lived in a dreamland of excitement and emotion, the atmosphere of which was unfriendly to the remembrance of any definite’, incidents. Our feet were on the threshold of the gate which stands at the entry of the new and untrodden pathway of married life; but it was with a deep and tender gladness that the travellers clasped each other’s hand, and then placed them both in that of the Master, and thus set out on their journey, assured that He would be their Guide, “*even unto death.”*

I have been trying to recall in detail the events of the — to me — notable day on which I became the loved and loving wife of the best man on God’s earth; but most of its hours are veiled in a golden mist, through which they look luminous, but indistinct; — only a few things stand out clearly in my memory.

I see a young girl kneeling by her bedside in the early morning; she is awed and deeply moved by a sense of the responsibilities to be taken up that day, yet happy beyond expression that the Lord has so favored her; and there alone with Him she earnestly seeks strength, and blessing, and guidance through the new life opening before her. The tiny upper chamber in Falcon Square was a very sacred place that morning.

Anon, I see a very simply-dressed damsel, sitting by her father’s side, and driving through the City streets to New Park Street Chapel, — vaguely wondering, as the passers-by cast astonished glances at the wedding equipage, whether they all knew what a wonderful bridegroom she was going to meet!

As we neared our destination, it was evident that many hundreds of people *did*know and care about the man who had chosen her to be his bride, for the building was full to overflowing, and crowds ¢f the young preacher’s admirers thronged the streets around the chapel. I do not remember much more. Within the densely-packed place, I can dimly see a large wedding party in the table-pew, dear old Dr. Alexander Fletcher beaming benignly on the bride and bridegroom before him, and the deacons endeavoring to calm and satisfy the excited and eager onlookers.

Then followed the service, which made “us twain most truly one,” and with a solemn joy in our hearts we stood hand in hand, and spake the few brief words which legally bound us to. each other in blessed bonds while life lasted. But the golden circlet then placed on my finger, though worn and thin now, speaks of love beyond the grave, and is the cherished pledge of a spiritual union which shall last throughout eternity.

It would not have been possible for me to describe the marriage ceremony, or recollect the prayers and counsels then offered on our behalf; but, as reporters were present, and I have preserved their notes, I am able to record (in a much-condensed form) some of the Doctor’s kind and earnest words on the memorable occasion. The service was commenced by the congregation singing the hymn, —

**“Salvation, *O the joyful sound!”***

Dr. Fletcher then read the 100th Psalm, and offered the following prayer: — ”Father of mercies, our God and Father in Christ Jesus, we approach Thy throne in the Name of our great Surety, ‘our Intercessor, now pleading for us before Thy face! Glory to God in the highest, that salvation is provided for our ruined race! May it be the happiness of all here, constituting this immense assembly, to be interested in that salvation! Oh, that each individual now present on this joyful occasion may be enabled to say, in the language of appropriating faith, ‘ Salvation, and pardon, and acceptance are mine; Jesus is mine, and I am His!’ Lord, look upon us in mercy in this place! Give us Thy presence, give us Thy countenance and smile! Multitudes of prayers have ascended to Thy throne on behalf of our beloved young friends, now about to be united by the most sacred union existing under the heavens. Oh, let Thy Spirit descend upon them! May they feel that they are now enjoying the light of Thy countenance, and that this important event in their history is under Thy blessed sanction, by Thy blessed direction, and shall be crowned with Thy blessing while they live, to be followed by blessings lasting as eternity, when they are called to their Heavenly home! Thou, Lord Jesus, who wast present at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, be tenderly with us at this time, and fill this house with Thy glory! These, our feeble supplications, we present before Thy mercyseat in the Name of our exalted Advocate, and to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be ascribed the kingdom, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.”

**ADDRESS.**

“Allow me, my respected friends, to address you only for a few moments, previous to that most important event which we have met to celebrate. Marriage is not the invention of man, it is the institution of God. It originated in God’s wisdom and mercy; and, if necessary for man while in a state of innocence, it is much more indispensable for us in our fallen condition. It bears the impress of the Deity, and so important is it that it is presented to us in the Scripture as a figure of the union that is; formed betwixt Christ and His chosen people, — that marriage union which is never to end. Christ has honored this institution by comparing Himself to the Husband of the Church, and by designating the Church as His bride. ‘ I have espoused you,’ says the apostle Paul, when writing to the believing Corinthians, ‘I have espoused you to one Husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.’ Look at the advantages marriage confers upon individuals, and families; on communities, on nations, and on the Church of Christ. The founding of families is an epitome of the organization of nations, without which they could never be properly consolidated. Marriage is the foundation of all those distinguished privileges which are enjoyed by us in this island of the sea. I have referred before to the presence of Christ at the marriage at Cana; what a lovely sight it must have been to see the blessed Jesus in the midst of that little assembly! He blessed the bridegroom, and He blessed the bride; He diffused joy.through the hearts of all around. Your beloved Pastor has many times, in his preaching, alluded to Christ’s smiles; and if He smiled upon little children, whom He took up in His arms and blessed, He must Surely have smiled upon the bride and bridegroom whose marriage feast was graced by His presence. Lord Jesus, Thou art here! Thy humanity is in Heaven, but Thy Deity pervades the universe. With the eyes of our faith we can see Jesus in the midst of us, ready to bless both bride and bridegroom. He has blessed them already, and He has more blessings in reserve for their enjoyment, felicity’, and usefulness; and we trust He will crown them, through life, and through all eternity, with lovingkindness and tender mercy.”

[The ceremony was then performed in the usual manner.]  
A portion of Scripture was read, the congregation joined in singing “the Wedding Hymn,” and Dr. Fletcher again engaged in prayer: —

“Look down, O Lord, with great kindness, complacency, and grace on our beloved young friends who have now entered into this sacred covenant with each other! We praise Thee for that grace which Thou hast given them, an inheritance infinitely more precious than the wealth of empires. We praise Thee for the love to Jesus which Thou hast enkindled in their hearts, and for that mutual affection which they cherish, and by which they are united in the most endearing and sacred ties. Lord, bless them! Bless them with increasing usefulness, increasing happiness, increasing enjoyment of Thy fellowship! Long preserve them! May they live to a good old age, like Zacharias and Elizabeth, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless! May this most interesting relationship be accompanied with innumerable mercies, especially to Thy dear ministering servant, engaged in the most honorable of all employments, and placed by the great Head of the Church in a sphere of usefulness seldom, if ever, equalled in this land of our. nativity! Lord, this is Thy doing; Thou hast provided for him the sphere, and Thou hast fitted him by Thy providence and grace to fill it. May he be preserved in bodily vigor, as well as mental and spiritual strength, to prosecute that glorious work in which he has embarked; and may he long continue to serve Thee, and be as useful at the close of life as he is at the commencement of his career! We now commit him and the beloved partner of his days to Thine everlasting arms; we lay them in the bosom of Thy love. Lord, bless all here present! Vast is the multitude, but it is nothing compared with the plenitude of Thy mercy, or the abundance of Thy grace. We thank Thee for presiding over the assembly, and that no accident has happened to this large concourse of people. All we ask is in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

“May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all, now and for ever! Amen.”

A London newspaper, of January 9th, 1856, contained the following notice of our wedding: —

“Yesterday morning, a curious scene was witnessed in the neighborhood of New Park Street Chapel, Southwark, a large building belonging to the Baptist body of Dissenters, at the rear of the Borough Market. Of this place of worship the minister is the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, a very young man. who, some months since, produced an extraordinary degree of excitement at Exeter Hall, where he preached during the time his chapel was in course of enlargement. Yesterday morning, the popular’ young preacher was married; and although the persons who evinced an interest in the proceedings were not quite of the aristocratic character of those who usually attend West End weddings, in point of numbers and enthusiasm they far outstripped any display which the West End is in the habit of witnessing. Shortly after eight o’clock, although the morning was dark, damp, and cold, as many as five hundred ladies, in light and gay attire, besieged the doors of the chapel, accompanied by many gentlemen, members of the congregation, and personal friends. From that hour, the crowd increased so rapidly, that the thoroughfare was blocked up by vehicles and pedestrians, and a body of the M division of police had to be sent for to prevent accidents. When the chapel doors were opened, there was a terrific rush, and in less than half-an-hour the doors were closed upon many of the eager visitors, who, like the earlier and more fortunate comers, were favored with tickets of admission. The bride was Miss Susannah Thompson, only daughter of Mr. Thompson, of Falcon Square, London; and the ceremony was performed by the Rev. Dr. Alexander Fletcher, of Finsbury Chapel. At the close of the ceremony, the congratulations of the congregation were tendered to the newly-married pair with heartiest goodwill.”

Mr. Spurgeon’s own inscription in our family Bible, recording the marriage, and adding a loving comment eleven years afterwards, is as follows. —

***~~Charles Haddon Spurgeon and Susannah Thompson were by the precious management of Vivine Providence, most happily~~***

***~~married at New Park Street Chapel by Dr. Alexander Fletcher on Tuesday, January 8th 1856.~~***

***~~“And as year wills after year “Each to other still more dear.~~***

CHAPTER 37.

EARLY CRITICISMS AND SLANDERS.

In these days, there is a growing hatred of the pulpit. The pulpit has maintained its ground full many a year, but partially by its becoming inefficient, it is losing its high position. Through a timid abuse of it, instead of a strong stiff use of the pulpit, the world has come to despise it; and now most certainly we are not a priest-ridden people one-half so much as we are a press-ridden people. By the press we are ridden indeed. *Mercuries, Despatches, Journals, Gazettes,*and *Magazines*are now the judges of pulpit eloquence and style. They thrust themselves into the censor’s seat, and censure those whose office it should rather be to censure them. For my own part, I cheerfully accord to all men the liberty of abusing me; but I must protest against the conduct of at least one Editor, who has misquoted in order to pervert my meaning, and who has done even more than that; he has manufactured a “quotation” from his own head, which never did occur in my works or words, — C. H. S., & *sermon preached at the Music Hall, Royal Surrey Gardens, January*25, 1857.

W HILE reading again the letters referred to in the preceding chapters, Mrs. Spurgeon has been reminded that, before her marriage, she made a collection of newspaper cuttings relating to her beloved. As the different articles appeared, Mr. Spurgeon sent them on to her, usually saying with regard to each one, “Here’s another contribution for your museum.” It would not be difficult to fill a volume with reprints of the notices — favorable and otherwise, — of the young preacher’s first years in London; but it is not likely that any useful purpose would be thereby served. It will probably suffice if a selection is given from the contents of this first scrapbook, especially as the papers it contains were published in various parts of the kingdom at considerable intervals during the years 1855 and 1856. They are therefore fairly representative of the press notices of the period, and they will be of greater interest to many readers because they were gathered by the dear preacher himself. The book in which the extracts are preserved bears upon its title-page, in his handwriting, the following inscription: —

**FACTS, FICTION, AND FACETIAE.**

The last word might have been Falsehood, for there is much that is untrue, and very little that can be regarded as facetious in the whole series. Some of the paragraphs are too abusive or too blasphemous to be inserted in this work; and one cannot read them without wondering how any man could have written in such a cruel fashion concerning so young and so earliest a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, who was laboring with all his might to bring sinners to the Saviour. At that early stage of his ministry, he had not become so accustomed as he was in later years to attacks from all quarters, and his letters show that he felt very keenly the aspersions and slanders to which he was subjected. Occasionally, also, he alluded from the pulpit to this form of fiery trial. In a sermon, preached March 15, 1857, he said: — ”I shall never forget the circumstance, when, after I thought I had made a full consecration to Christ, a slanderous report against my character came to my ears, and my heart was broken in agony because I should have to lose that, in preaching Christ’s gospel. I fell on my knees, and said, ‘Master, I will not keep back even my character for Thee. If I must lose that, too, then let it go; it is the dearest thing I have; but it shall go, if, like my Master, they shall say I have a devil, and am mad; or, like Him, I am a drunken man and a wine-bibber.” In after years, he was less affected by the notices which appeared. Perhaps this was all the easier as the tone adopted by most of the writers very greatly improved, while the friendly articles and paragraphs were so much more numerous than the unfavorable ones that they obliterated the memory of any that might have caused sorrow and pain. The habit of preserving newspaper and ,other records of his career was continued by Mr. Spurgeon to the last; and as each caricature, criticism, or commendation came to hand, he would say, “That is one more for my collection,” while the praise or blame it contained would be of less importance in his esteem than his concern to have a conscience void of offence toward God and men. Preaching in the Tabernacle, in 1884, he thus referred to his early experience, and to the change the intervening period had witnessed:—

“‘They compassed me about like bees,’ says David; that is to say, they were very many, and very furious. When bees are excited, they are among the most terrible of assailants; sharp are their stings, and they inject a venom which sets the blood on fire. I read, the other (lay, of a traveller in Africa, who learned this by experience. Certain negroes were pulling his boat up the river, and as the rope trailed along it disturbed a bees’ nest, and in a moment the bees were upon him in his cabin. He said that he was stung in the face, the hands, and the eyes. He was all over a mass of fire, and to escape from his assailants he plunged into the river, but they persecuted him still, attacking his head whenever it emerged from the water. After what he suffered from them, he said he would sooner meet two lions at once, or a whole herd of buffaloes, than ever be attacked by bees again; so that the simile which I)avid gives is a very striking one. A company of mean-spirited, wicked men, who are no bigger than bees, mentally or spiritually, can get: together, and sting a good man ill a thousand places, till he is well-nigh maddened by their scorn, their ridicule, their slander, and their misrepresentation. Their very littleness gives them the power to wound with impunity. Such has been the experience of some of us, especially in days now happily past. For one, I can say, I grew inured to falsehood and spite. The stings at last caused me no more pain than if I had been made of iron; but at first they were galling enough. Do not be surprised, dear friends, if you have the same experience; and if it comes, count it no strange thing, for in this way the saints have been treated in all time. Thank God, the wounds are not fatal, nor of long continuance! Time brings ease, and use creates hardihood. No real harm has come to any of us who have run the gauntlet of abuse; not, even a bruise remains.”

According to chronological order, the first serious attack resulted from the publication, by Rev. Charles Waters Banks, in *The Earthen Vessel,* December, 1854, of an article, the opening.

**“THE PASTORS OF OUR CHURCHES; THE PREACHERS OF OUR DAY.  
“A BRIEF AND IMPARTIAL REVIEW OF MR. SPURGEON’S MINISTRY.**

[“As we have nearly come to the close of another year, we are striking out a new line of mental labor, — it is a glance at ministers as they are. It is not an easy task; but, then, we go to this work with a two-fold determination, — first, knowing that there is some good thing in all good men, we will try to find *out,*and to show, how that good thing is developed in different ways in different men. Secondly, knowing that there are imperfections in all men, we are determined, by help Divine, to have no hand in exhibiting them: ‘We can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth.’] “Mr. C. H. Spurgeon is the present Pastor of New Park Street Chapel, in the Borough of Southwark. He is a young man of very considerable ministerial talent, and his labors have been amazingly successful in raising up the before drooping cause at Park Street to a state of prosperity almost unequalled. We know of no Baptist minister in all the metropolis — with the exception of our highly-favored and long-tried brother, James Wells, of the Surrey Tabernacle, — who has such crowded auditories, and continued overflowing congregations, as Mr. Spurgeon has. But, then, very solemn questions arise. ‘WHAT IS HE DOING?’ ‘WHOSE SERVANT IS HE?’ ‘*What proof does he give that, instrumentally, his is a heart-searching, a Christexalting, a truth-unfolding, a sinner-converting, a church-feeding, a soulsaving ministry?’*This is the point at issue with many whom we know, — a point which we should rejoice to see clearly settled — in the best sense — and demonstrated beyond a doubt in the confidence of all the true churches of Christ in Christendom. In introducing this subject to the notice of our readers, we have no object in view further than a desire to furnish all the material which has been thrown into our hands, — a careful and discriminating examination of which may, to some extent, be edifying and profitable. We wish our present remarks to be considered merely introductory*, not conclusive;*but seeing that the minds of so many are aroused to *enquiry*as to what may be considered the *real position*of this young Samuel in the professing church, we are disposed to search the records now before us, and from thence fetch out all the evidence we can find expressive of a real work of grace in the soul, and a Divine call to publish the tidings of salvation, the mysteries of the cross, and the work of the Holy Spirit, in the hearts of the living in Jerusalem.”

The article contained a kindly reference to Mr. Spurgeon’s spiritual experience, and included the friendly testimony of a recent hearer, whose judgment carried weight with Mr. Banks, though his name was not given; but most of the space was devoted to extracts from the young preacher’s published discourses. In *The Earthen Vessel*for the following month (January, 1855), a long communication was inserted, bearing the signature, “JOB.” Mr. Spurgeon believed that the writer was the redoubtable James Wells (“ King James,”).

The following extracts will show how the veteran wrote concerning the stripling who was destined far to surpass his critic in fame and usefulness: —  
“I have no personal antipathy to Mr. Spurgeon; nor should I have written concerning him, but for your review of his ministry. His ministry is a public matter, and therefore open to public opinion; and as you assure us that the sermon on 1 Corinthians 1:6, — ’The Testimony of Christ Confirmed in You,’ — by Mr. Spurgeon, is *by far*the best, I will, by your permission, lay before you my opinion of the same. But I will first make a few remarks concerning Mr. Spurgeon, to which remarks I think he is entitled.

“It is, then, in the first place, clear that he has been, from his childhood, a very industrious and ardent reader of books, especially those of a theological kind; and that he has united with his theological researches books of classic and of scientific caste, and has thus possessed himself of every kind of information which, by the law of association, he can deal out at pleasure; and these acquirements, by reading, are united, in Mr. Spurgeon, with good speaking gifts· The laws of oratory have been well studied, and he suits the action to his words. This mode of public speaking was, in the theatres of ancient Greece, carried to such an extent that one person had to speak the words, and another had to perform the gestures, and suit, with every variety of face and form, the movement to the subject in hand. Mr. Spurgeon has caught the idea, only with this difference, that he performs both parts himself. Mr. Spurgeon is too well acquainted with Elisha Coles not to see in the Bible the sovereignty of God; and too well acquainted with the writings of Toplady and Tucker not to see in the Bible the doctrine of predestination, and an overruling providence; and too well versed in the subtleties of the late Dr. Chalmers not to philosophize upon rolling planets, and methodically-moving particles of earth and water, each particle having its ordained sphere.

“But, in addition to this, he appears to be a well-disposed person, — kind, benevolent, courteous, full of goodwill to his fellow-creatures, — endearing in his manners, social, — a kind of person whom it would seem almost a cruelty to dislike. The same may be, with equal truth, said both of Dr. Pusey and of Cardinal Wiseman. But, then, it becomes us to be aware, not only of the rough garment of a mock and ‘ arrogant humility’, but also of Amalekite-measured and delicate steps; and also of the soft raiment of refined and studied courtesy (Matthew 11:8), and fascinating smile with, ‘Surely the bitterness of death is past’ (1 Samuel 15:32). But Samuel had too much honesty about him to be thus deceived. We must, then, beware of words that are smoother than butter, and softer than oil (Psalm 55:21). not one of the Reformers appears to have been of this amiable caste; but these creature-refinements pass with thousands for religion; and tens of thousands are deluded thereby. It was by great, very great *politeness*that the serpent beguiled Eve; and, unhappily, her posterity love ‘to have it so; — so true is it that Satan is not only a prince of darkness, but transformed also as ‘an angel of light,’ to deceive, if it were possible, even the very elect.

“And yet further than all this, Mr. Spurgeon was, so says the *Vessel,* brought to know the Lord when he was only fifteen years old. Heaven grant it may prove to be so, — for the young man’s sake, and for that of others also! But I *have — most solemnly have — my doubts*as to the Divine reality of his conversion. I do not say — it is not tof me to say — that he is not a regenerated man; but this I do know, that there are conversions which are not of God; and whatever convictions a man may have, whatever may be the agonies of his mind as to the possibility 6f his salvation, whatever terror anyone may experience, and however sincere they may be, and whatever deliverance they may have by dreams or visions, or by natural conscience, or the letter or even apparent power of the Word, yet, if they cannot stand, in their spirit and ministry, the test of the law of truth, and the testimony of God, there is no *true*light in them; for a person may be intellectually enlightened, he may taste of the Heavenly gift, and be made partaker of the Holy Ghost, *professionally,*and taste of the good Word of God (Hebrews vi.), and yet not be regenerated, and therefore not beyond the danger of falling away, even from that portion of truth which such do hold. Such are never thoroughly convinced of what they are by nature; Psalm xxxviii. and Romans vii. ‘show a path to which they make some approaches, and of which they may eloquently talk, but at the same time give certain proofs that they are not truly walking therein. Mr. Spurgeon tells us, in his sermon on the Ministry of Angels, that he has more angelology about him than most people. Well, perhaps he has;,but then, if a *real*angel from Heaven were to preach another gospel, he is not to be received...

“Concerning Mr. Spurgeon’s ministry, I believe the following things: —

“1st. That it is most awfully deceptive; that it passes by the essentials of the work of the Holy Ghost, and sets people by shoals down for Christians who are not Christians by the quickening and indwelling power of the Holy Ghost. Hence, free-willers, *intellectual*Calvinists, high and low, are delighted with him, together with the philosophic and classic-taste Christian! This is simply deceiving others with the deception wherewith he himself is deceived.

“2nd. That, as he speaks some truth, convictions will in some cases take place under his ministry; such will go into real concern for their salvation; and will, after a time, leave his ministry, for a ministry that can accompany them in their rugged paths of wilderness experience.

“3rd. Though I do not attach the moral worth to such a ministry as I should to the true. ministry of the Spirit, yet it may be morally and socially beneficial to some people, who perhaps would care to hear only such an intellectually, or rather rhetori-cally-gifted man as is Mr. Spurgeon; but then they have this advantage at the cost of *being fatally deluded.*

“4th. My opinion is, and my argument is, and my conclusion is, that no man who knows his own heart, who knows what the daily cross means, and who knows the difference between the form and the power, the name and the life itself, the semblance and the substance, the difference between the sounding brass or the tinkling cymbal and the voice of the turtle, pouring the plaintive, but healing notes of Calvary into the solitary and weary soul; — he who walks in this path, could not hear with profit the ministry of Mr. Spurgeon.

“5th. I believe that Mr. Spurgeon could not have fallen into a line of things more adapted to popularity: his ministry pays its address courteously to all; hence, in this sermon, he graciously receives us all, — such a reception as it is, — he who preaches all doctrine, and he who preaches no doctrine; he who preaches all experience, and ‘he who preaches no experience; and, hence, *intellectually,*High Calvinists of *easy virtue*receive such a ministry into their pulpits, at once showing that the man of sin, the spirit of apostacy, is lurking in their midst. Low Calvinists also receive him, showing that there is enough of their spirit about him to make him their *dear brother;*only his Hyperism does sometimes get a little in their way, but they ]hope *experience*will soon take away this Calvinistic taint, and so make things more agreeable. But in this I believe they will be disappointed; he has chosen his sphere, his orbit may seem to be eccentric, but he will go *intellectually*shining on, throwing out his cometary attractions, crossing the orbits of all the others, seeming friendly with all, yet belonging to none.

“His originality lies not in the materials he uses, but in ranging them into an order that suits his own turn of mind; at this he industriously labors. (In this he is a reproof to some ministers of our own denomination who are not industrious, nor studious, nor diligent, but sluggish, slothful, negligent, empty-headed, and in the pulpit: as well as in the parlor, empty-handed. Preaching then is like sowing the wind, and reaping the whirlwind; and many on this account leave our ministers, and prefer a half-way gospel, ingenuously and enthusiastically preached, to a whole gospel, not half preached, or preached without variety, life, or power. May the Lord stir up His own servants, that they may work while it is day!)

“But, in conclusion, I say, — I would make every allowance for his youth; but while I make this allowance, I am, nevertheless, thoroughly disposed to believe that we have a fair sample of what he will be even unto the end.”

This letter was followed by Editorial comments, and a long  
correspondence, *pro*and *con.*“JOB” wrote again, explaining one expression he had previously used, but making even more definite his assertion concerning what he supposed to be Mr. Spurgeon’s lack of true spiritual life: —

“Dear Mr. Editor, — In one part of my review of Mr. Spurgeon’s sermon, I have said of him, as a *minister,*‘I am thoroughly (it should have been *strongly) disposed to believe that we have a fair sample of what he will be to/he end.’*It is to be regretted that some persons have tried to make the above mean that, as Mr. Spurgeon is in a state of nature now, he will so continue even unto the end; whereas, I neither did, *nor do I mean,*any such thing: all I mean is, that his *ministry,*as it now is, is I am strongly disposed to believe a fair sample of what *it*will be even unto the end. I do not here refer to his personal destiny at all, — though no doubt many would have been glad to have seen me commit myself, by rushing in ‘where angels fear to tread.’…

“I am, Mr. Editor, credibly informed that Mr. Spurgeon *himself intends* taking no notice of what I have written; and if I am to be counted an enemy because I have spoken what I believe to be the truth (Galatians 4:16), I am perfectly willing to bear the reproach thereof; and most happy should I be to have just cause to think differently of his ministry; but I am at present (instead of being shaken,) more than ever *confirmed*in what I have written. I beg therefore to say that anything said upon the subject by Mr. Spurgeon’s friends will be to me as straws thrown against a stone wall (Jeremiah 1:18), and of which I shall take no notice. Only let them beware lest a voice from Him, by whom *actions*are weighed, say unto them, ‘Ye have not spoken of Me the thing that is right, as My servant Job hath’ (Job 42:7.)”

Mr. Wells long continued his spirit of opposition to Mr. Spurgeon, even refusing to fulfil an engagement to preach because his brother-minister was to take one of the services on the same day; but many of his strict Baptist brethren did not sympathize with him in his action, and cordially welcomed the young preacher who held so many truths that were dear also to them.

The Editor of *The Earthen Vessel*(Mr. Banks) published, in later numbers of his Magazine for 1855, three articles from his own pen, in the course of which, reviewing Mr. Spurgeon’s life and ministry up to that time, he wrote: —

“It was a nice word of Richard Sibbes when he said, ‘ *The office of a minister is to be a wooer, to make up the marriage between Christ and Christian souls:’*and we will plainly speak our minds; — we have hoped that C. H. Spurgeon’s work, in the hands of the Holy Ghost, is to woo and to win souls over unto Jesus Christ; and we have an impression, should his life be spared, that, through his instrumentality, all our churches will, byand-by, be increased. God Almighty grant that we may be true prophets; and then, to all our cruel correspondents we will say,’ Fire away; cut up, cast out, and condemn *The Earthen*V*essel*as much as ye may, ye will do us no harm.’... We have no ground for suspecting the genuineness of Mr. Spurgeon’s motives, nor the honesty of his heart. We are bound to believe that his statements respecting his own experience are just and true. We are bound to believe that, in prosecuting his ministry, he is sincerely aiming at three things, — the glory OF *ChriST, — the good of immortal souls, — and the well-being of Zion, — and*that, in all this, the love of Christ constrains him. If, in thoroughly weighing the sermons before us, proof to the contrary appeared, we would not hide it up; but we sincerely trust no evidence of that kind can be produced .... In the course Of Mr. Spurgeon’s ministry, there are frequently to be found such gushings forth of love to God, of ravishing delights in Christ, of the powerful anointings of the Holy Ghost, as compel us to believe that God is in him of a truth. We must confess that is the deep-wrought conviction of our spirit; and we dare not conceal it. Why should we? We may be condemned by many; but, whatever it may cast upon us, — whoever may discard us, — we must acknowledge that, while in these sermons we have met with sentences that perplex us, and with what some might consider contradiction, still, we have found those things which have been powerful demonstrations of the indwelling of THE LIFE AND THE LOVE OF THE TRIUNE GOD in the preacher’s heart.

“In thus giving, without reserve, *an unbiased verdict*respecting the main drift of the sermons contained in *The New Park street Pulpit,*we do not endorse every sentence, nor justify every mode of expression; our first work has been to search for that which, in *every*new *work*that comes to hand, we always search for,-that which we search for in every candidate for church-membership, — that is, LIFE and if we have not found evidences of a Divine life in the ministry at New Park Street Chapel, we are deceived; yea, we are blind; and the powers of spiritual discernment are not with us .... We beseech all Christian people, who long for a revival in the midst of our churches, to pray for this young man, *whom we do earnestly hope*THE LORD HAS SENT AMONGST US. Let us not be found fighting against him, lest unhappily we be found fighting against God. Let us remember, he has not made himself, he has not qualified himself, he: has not sent himself; all that he has, which is good, Godlike, and gracious, the Lord has given him; — all that he: is doing, that is of real benefit to immortal souls, the Lord is doing by him.”

CHAPTER 38

CRITICISMS AND SLANDERS

There are some of us who come in for a very large share of slander. It is seldom that the slander market is much below par; it usually runs up at a rapid rate; and there are persons who will take shares to any amount. If men could dispose of railway stock as they can of slander, those who happen to have any scrip would be rich enough by to-morrow at twelve o’clock. There are some who have a superabundance of that matter; they are continually hearing rumors of this, that, and the other; and there is one fool or another who has not brains enough to write sense, nor honesty sufficient to keep him to the truth, who, therefore, writes the most infamous libels upon some of God’s servants, compared with whom he himself is nothing, and whom for very envy he chooses to depreciate. Well, what matters it?… Young men, are you striving to do good, and do others impute wrong motives to you? Do not be particular about answering them; just go straight on, and your life will be the best refutation of the calumny. David’s brother said that, in his pride and the naughtiness of his heart, he had come to see the battle. *“Ah!*” thought David, *“I*will answer you by-and-by.” Off he went across the valley to fight Goliath; he cut off his head, and then came back to his brother with a glorious answer in his conquering hand. If any man desires to reply to the false assertions of his enemies, he need not say a word; let him go and do good, that will be his answer. I am the subject of detraction, but I can point to hundreds of souls that have been saved by my feeble instrumentality, and my reply to all my enemies is this, “You may say what you like; you may find fault with the matter and manner of my preaching, but God .saves souls by it, and I will hold up that fact, like giant Goliath’s head, to show you that, although my preaching is only like David’s sling and stone, God has thereby gotten the victory.” — C. *H. S., in sermon preached at Exeter Hall, June*15, 1856.

I do not expect to see so many conversions in this place as I had a year ago, when I had far fewer hearers. Do you ask why? Why, a year ago, I was abused by everybody; to mention my name, was to mention the name of the most abominable buffoon that ever lived. The mere utterance of it brought forth oaths and cursed; with many men it was the name of contempt, kicked about the street as a football; but then God gave me souls by hundreds, who were added to my church, and in one year it was my happiness personally to see not less than a thousand who had then been converted. I do not expect that now. My name is somewhat esteemed, and the great ones of the earth think it no dishonor to sit at my feet; but this makes me fear lest my God should forsake me while the world esteems me. I would rather be despised and slandered than aught else. This assembly, that you think so grand and fine, I would readily part with, if by such a loss I could gain a greater blessing .... It is for us to recollect, in all times of popularity, that “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!” follows fast upon the heels of “Hosanna!” and that the crowd of to-day, if dealt with faithfully, may turn into the handful of to-morrow; for men love not plain speaking. We should learn to be despised, learn to be condemned, learn to be slandered, and then we shall learn to be made useful by God. Down on my knees have I often fallen, with the hot sweat rising from my brow, under some fresh slander poured upon me; in an agony of grief, my heart has been well-nigh broken; till at last I learned the art of bearing all, and caring for none. And now my grief runneth in another line, it is just the opposite; I fear lest God :should forsake me, to prove that He is the Author of salvation, that it is not in the preacher, that it is not in the crowd, that it is not in the attention I can attract, but in God, and in God alone. This I hope I can say from my heart, — if to be made as the mire of the streets again, if to be the laughing-stock of fools and the song of the drunkard once more will make me more serviceable to my Master, and more useful to His cause, I will prefer it to all this multitude, or to all the applause that man could give. — *C. H. S, in sermon preached at the Music Hall, Royal Surrey Gardens, May 10*, 1857.

T HE next attack to the one in the previous chapter was of a very different character. It was contained in the following paragraph published by *The Ipswich Express,*February 27, 1855, in a letter from its London correspondent: —

“ *A Clerical Poltroon. — There*is some little excitement in the religious world, created by a young man, a Baptist minister, and whose father, I am told, is an Independent minister of the name of Spurgeon, in Colchester. This youth is fluent, and the consequences are most distressing. As his own chapel is under repair, he preaches in Exeter Hall every Sunday, and the place is crammed to suffocation. All his discourses are redolent of bad taste, are vulgar and theatrical, and yet he is so run after that, unless you go half-an-hour before the time, you will not be able to get in at all. I am told, one leading minister of the Independent denomination, after hearing this precocious youth, said that the exhibition was ‘an insult to God and man.’ Actually, I hear, the other Sunday, the gifted divine had the impudence, before preaching, to say, as there were many young ladies present, that he was engaged, — that his heart it was another’s, he wished them clearly to understand that, — that he might have no presents sent him, no attentions paid him, no worsted slippers worked for him by the young ladies present. I suppose the dear divine has been rendered uncomfortable by the fondness of his female auditors; at any rate, such is the impression he wishes to leave. The only impression, however, he seems to have produced upon the judicious few is one of intense sorrow and regret that such things should be, and that such a man should draw.”

Mr. Spurgeon’s feeling about the matter can be judged by the following letter to his father: —  
“75, Dover Road,  
“4th March, 1855.

“Dear Father,  
“Do not be grieved at the slanderous libel in this week’s Expre*ss ....*

“Of course, it is *all a l/e,*without an atom of foundation; and while the whole of London is talking of me, and thousands are unable to get near the door, the opinion of a penny-a-liner is of little consequence.

“I beseech you not to write; but if you can see Mr. Harvey, or some official, it might do good. A full reply on all points will appear next week.  
“I only fear for you; I do not like you to be grieved. For myself, I will rejoice; the devil is roused, the Church is awakening, and I am now counted worthy to suffer for Christ’s sake... Good ballast, father, good ballast; but, oh! remember what I have said before, and do not check me.

“Last night, I could not sleep till morning light, but now my Master has cheered me; and I ‘hail reproach, and welcome shame.’ “Love to you all, especially to my dearest mother. I mean to come home April 16th. So, amen.  
“Your affectionate son,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**  
On March 6, *The Ipswich Express*contained the following paragraphs: — “THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.

“A gentleman of good position in London complains, as ‘a friend of the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon,’ of the statements respecting that gentleman, last week, in the letter of our London correspondent, which are, he assures us, ‘a tissue of falsehoods.’ That being the case, we lose no time in contradicting them, and at the same time expressing our regret that they should have: appeared in our columns. Of Mr. Spurgeon we know nothing personally, and, of course, can have no desire to say anything which should cause pain to him or his friends. It has been, and will still be, our constant desire in criticizing public men to avoid anything like personalities. We much regret that our London correspondent should have reported mere hearsay (which we are now informed was incorrect:) respecting Mr. Spurgeon, and also that we did not give his letter that revision before its appearance in print which all letters for the press should receive, but which Editors, in the hurry of the day of publication, are too apt to neglect.

“A London publisher also sends us a sermon delivered by Mr. Spurgeon on the 11th ult., at Exeter Hall, stating that we ought to read and review it, in justice to the rev. gentleman. We have received, from an anonymous correspondent in London, another sermon delivered by Mr. Spurgeon last November, accompanied by a like request. It is not our habit to review sermons; but, under the circumstances, we admit the justice of these demands, and shall comply with them. Our correspondent having criticized Mr. Spurgeon’s preaching (harshly, as the friends of the preacher think), we shall consider ourselves bound to take an opportunity of reviewing these discourses. In so doing, the friends of Mr. Spurgeon may be assured we shall bring to the task the best of our ability, and a perfectly unbiased judgment; we shall ‘nothing extenuate, nor set down aught in malice.’”

The Editor published several letters from those who wrote in Mr. Spurgeon’s defence, as well as from others who attacked him, and on April 24 he commenced his promised review of the sermons, as follows: —

“Some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them. We have had, in a measure, the reviewal of Mr. Spurgeon’s sermons thrust upon us, and in the fulfilment of our task we may, perhaps, assist our readers to judge whether that gentleman has achieved any real, permanent greatness, or whether he has had a factitious, fleeting greatness thrust upon him by his ignorant admirers.

“The *Express*of February 27th contained, as usual, a letter from our London correspondent, a gentleman favorably known as a writer on politics and general literature. This letter contained some rather severe criticism on Mr. Spurgeon’s style of preaching, and a line or two respecting a rumor, heard by our correspondent, of some absurd remarks said to have been made on a certain occasion by Mr. Spurgeon previous to preaching. We did not read the letter until it appeared in print .... As soon as we saw the. paragraph, we blamed ourselves for publishing, as well as our correspondent for forwarding, anything of *mere hearsay*which could possibly give annoyance to the preacher in question or his friends. And we have, since lea?ned, on the undoubted authority of his own published effusions, that Mr. Spurgeon really does run into so many extravagancies that to attribute to him any which he has never perpetrated would not only be a wrong, but a ‘wasteful and ridiculous excess.’

“However, in a day or two, we received from several of Mr. Spurgeon’s acquaintances (some of them his intimate friends) a flat contradiction of the absurd story of ‘the slippers.’ For the credit of the ministry we were glad to have it thus authoritatively denied, and lost no time in stating our sincere regret that we had, through an inadvertence, given publicity to an incorrect report. More than this, we published several of the longest letters out of the many we received from Mr. Spurgeon’s friends, — stuffed full of the most glowing eulogia of that gentleman as a minister and a man, — and in compliance with the wishes of some very ardent in his cause, we promised to review Mr. Spurgeon’s sermons. We printed about twenty times as much in his praise as had appeared in his dispraise, — we courteously carried on for some time a considerable correspondence with the London Spurgeonites, — and although we think theology is out of place in a newspaper, we agreed, for once, rather than the least injustice should be committed, to step out of our usual course, and criticize sermons. Could we do more? Indeed, the line we took showed so clearly the absence of any ill-feeling on our part to Mr. Spurgeon, that the gentleman who first (rather angrily) called our attention to the obnoxious paragraph, finished a lengthy correspondence with us by saying, ‘ I am perfectly satisfied With your explanation, and think it does you honor.’“

The “review” was continued on May 1st, and concluded on May 29th. The tone of it may be judged from the dosing paragraphs: — “There is enough foolishness in London to keep up, in flourishing style, Tom Thumb, Charles Kean, the Living Skeleton, C. H. Spurgeon, and many other delusions all at once, and yet to allow a vast mass of sober-minded citizens to go ‘the even tenor of their way,’ quite unaffected by such transient turmoils. Our decided opinion is, that in no other place but London could Mr. Spurgeon have caused the furor that he has excited. It must not be forgotten that in London, or anywhere else, a religious delusion is, of all others, the most easy to inaugurate and carry on. When a man obtains possession of a pull)it, he has credit for meaning well, at any rate, and expressions are thenceforward often listened to from him, without hostile criticism, which would not be tolerated, if enunciated from any other position.

“Mr. Spurgeon’s career is suggestive of various interesting questions. If such a man can obtain, in a short time, the position he now certainly occupies, does that fact say much for the condition of a great portion of the religious world? If Mr. S. be, as is stated, the very best among a large section of preachers, what sort of a man is the very worst of that section? Does the pulpit, upon the whole, keep pace with the age, or does it lag behind? Will not the immense success of such as Spurgeon go far to account for that aversion of men of taste to the public profession of Evangelical Religion complained of long ago by John Foster?” Although the falsehood published in *The Ipswich Express*was promptly contradicted, it was widely copied into other papers. *The Empire* (London), and *The Christian News*(Glasgow), published the paragraph in full, while portions of it were incorporated into articles that appeared in various parts of the kingdom, and the story of “the slippers” was repeated so often that probably many people were foolish enough to believe it, and others were wicked enough to say that they heard Mr. Spurgeon make the statement!

*The Essex Standard,*April 18, 1855,

contained a long letter, signed “I CONOCLAST,” describing a Sunday evening service at Exeter Hall. The writer said: — “The mighty gathering and the ‘religious *furor’*made me think of Demosthenes haranguing the Athenians, Cicero before the Roman senate, Peter the Hermit preaching the Crusade, Wesley on his father’s tomb at Epworth, and Whitefield stirring the breasts of the thousands in Hyde Park; and therefore I scanned somewhat curiously both ‘orator’ and auditors. A young man, in his 21st year, but looking much older, short in stature and thick set; with a broad massive face, a low forehead, an expressionless eye, a wide and sensual mouth, a voice strong but not musical, — suggestive of *Stentor*rather than *Nestor, — the*very reverse of a *beau ideal*of an orator’ without the eye of fire, where was the heart of flame? Orpheus without his lyre *(*flut*e,*Mr. Spurgeon· says), what was the potent charm that was to change the ‘swine of the metropolis’ into men, and convert sinners into saints? We must wait for the thoughts that breathe, and the words that burn. The hymn was sung right lustily, and the preacher proceeded to read and expound the 3rd of Philippians .... It was evident that *exposition*was not his forte. Then followed what his audience called prayer. It was an apostrophe to the

Invisible, containing certain petitions first for himself, then for the elect saints, and then for the outer-court worshippers. It was such an utterance as indicated low views of Deity, and exalted views of self. Indeed, self is never out of sight, and is presented to the listener as a ‘little child’, a ‘babbler’, a ‘baby’, a ‘ battering ram’, ‘*little*David,’ ‘this despised young man,’ ‘ this ranting fellow,’ and ‘an empty ram’s horn.’ If reverence is the greatest mark of respect to an earthly parent, how much more is it due to the Supreme Father of all!... When the painful effect of this most arrogant dictation to Deity allowed me to think, I could not but rejoice in that ‘form of sound words’ by which the devotions of the Church are sustained from Sabbath to Sabbath, and by which, also, such outrageous violations of decorum are rendered impossible. The discourse was from Philippians 3:10: ‘*That I may know Him.’*The various objects of human pursuit being designated and discussed, we had put before us the object, nature, and effects of Paul’s knowledge… Speaking of his study, Mr. Spurgeon said it was his ‘*dukedom’,*where he could talk to Milton and Locke as *s/aves,*and say,’ Come down here.’ Mr. Spurgeon loves controversy, but with the modesty peculiar to himself told us that, nowadays, ‘ he found no foeman worthy of *his*steel.’ His favorite action is that of washing his hands, and then rubbing them dry. He belongs to the peripatetic, or Walker school, perpetually walking up and down as an actor treading the boards of a theatre. His style is that of the vulgar colloquial, varied by rant .... All the most solemn mysteries of our holy religion are by him rudely, roughly, and impiously handled. Mystery is vulgarized, sanctity profaned, common sense outraged, and decency disgusted .... His rantings are interspersed with coarse anecdotes that split the ears of the groundlings; and this is popularity! and this is the ‘ religious *furor’*of London! and this young divine it is that throws Wesley and Whitefield in the shade! and this is the preaching, and this the theology, that five thousand persons from Sabbath to Sabbath hear, receive, and approve, and — profit by it!”

‘The next issue of *The Essex Standard*contained another communication in a similar strain: —

“Mr. Editor, — The letter of Iconoclast’ in your Wednesday’s impression is a faithful delineation of the young preacher who is making so great a stir just now. Had we seen it previously, we should have been kept from taking the trouble to go to Earl’s Colne yesterday, to hear what extremely disgusted us, — a young man of 21 years assuming airs, and adopting a language, which would be scarcely tolerated in the man of grey hairs. In common with many others, though obliged to smile during his performances, we felt more inclined to weep over such a prostitution o! the pulpit and hours devoted to professedly religious worship. His prayer, to us, appeared most profanely familiar; and never were we impressed more with the contrast between this effusion and the beautifully-simple, reverential, and devout language of the Church of England Liturgy, and said, within our hearts, ‘Would that Dissenters would bind down their ministers to use those forms of sound words, rather than allow of these rhapsodies, which, to all persons of taste and true devotion, must have been very offensive!’ It is a matter of deep regret to many that one of the best Dissenting chapels in London should be occupied by a youth of Mr. Spurgeon’s caste and doctrinal sentiments; and they very properly shrink from recognizing him among the regular ministers of the Baptist denomination; and we heard it regretted more than once yesterday that he should have been chosen to represent a Society so respectable as the Baptist Home Missionary Society. If gain were their object, they certainly obtained it, as we understand the collections were large; but we submit no such motive can be tolerated at the cost of so much propriety. I exceedingly regret to write thus of one who, until I heard him yesterday, I thought probably was raised up for usefulness; but a sense of duty to the public leads me to express my opinions and sentiments in this plain, unflinching manner.

“Halstead,  
“April 18th, 1855.”

“I am, Mr. Editor,  
“Yours respectfully,  
“A LOVER OF PROPRIETY.”

The following week, a letter of quite another kind was published in the same paper: —

“Sir, — Your readers have had the opinions of two supporters of the Established Church on the preaching of the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon; and I trust to your well-known fairness to allow a Dissenter an opportunity of expressing the sentiments held by many who have enjoyed the pleasure of listening to the fervid words of that distinguished minister of the gospel.

“Mr. Spurgeon institutes a new era, or more correctly, revives the good old style of Bunyan, Wesley, and Whitefield, — men whose burning eloquence carried conviction to the hearts of their hearers, — men who cared nought for the applause of their fellow-mortals, but did all for God’s glory. In the steps of these apostles does Mr. S. follow, and who could desire more noble leaders?

*“The*pulpit is now too much abused by the mere display of intellect; instead of the indignant burst of a Luther against the iniquities of mankind, we have only the passive disapprobation of the silvery-tongued man of letters. The preachers address their cold, ‘packed-in-ice’ discourses to the educated portion of their audience; and the majority, the uneducated poor, are unable, in these’ scientific’ sermons, to learn the way of holiness, from the simple fact that they are above their comprehension. How unlike these ministers — who appear to consider the gospel so frail that it would lose its power if delivered with unflinching candor, — are to the holy Saviour! His words were always characterized by the greatest simplicity, and by a thorough detestation of those ‘ blind guides who strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel.’

“Mr. Spurgeon goes to the roof of the evil; his discourses are such as a child can understand, and yet filled with the most elevating philosophy and sound religious instruction. Taking the Word as his only guide, and casting aside the writings — however antiquated — of fallible men, he appeals to the *heart, not* to the *head,’*puts the living truth forcibly before the mind, gains the attention, and then, as he himself says, fastens in the bow the messenger shaft, which, by the blessing and direction of the Almighty, strikes home to the heart of the sinner.

“He holds that irreligion is to be fought against, not to be handled with ‘fingers of down,’ and hence Exeter Hall is crammed. It is objected that these are the lowest of the London poor. What of that? They, above all, need religious training. I suppose there are few advocates in this country for the opinion that the aristocracy of the land *alone*have souls; Jehovah has breathed His spirit into the democracy, and Mr. S. is the man for them. In my humble opinion, if there were more C. H. Spurgeons, there would .be fewer Sabbath desecrationists, fewer tendencies to the idol-worship of Rome, and fewer disciples of Holyoake and Paine.

“In conclusion, let me suggest that, even if Mr. Spurgeon were guilty, of all laid to his charge, would it not be better for Christians to gloss over the failings of a brother-worker (for no one doubts the sincerity of the young man’s efforts), than to seek here and there for the dross amongst the pure metal, — making mountains out of molehills, and wantonly refusing the golden ears because mixed with the necessary chaff?

“I am, Sir,  
“Your obedient servant,  
**“VOX POPULI*.*”**

To the Editor of *The Chelmsford Chronicle,*who had published an article of a more friendly character than those in other East Anglian papers, Mr. Spurgeon wrote: —

“75, Dover Road,  
“April 24th, 1855.  
“My Dear Sir,

“I am usually careless of the notices of papers concerning myself, — referring all honor to my Master, and believing that dishonorable articles are but advertisements for me, and bring more under the sound of the gospel. But you, my dear sir (I know not why), have been pleased to speak so favorably of my labors that I think it only right that I should thank you. If I could have done so personally, I would have availed myself of the pleasure’., but the best substitute is by letter. Amid a constant din of abuse, it is pleasant to poor flesh and blood to hear *one favor*able voice. I am far from deserving much that you have said in my praise., but as I am equally undeserving of the coarse censure poured on me by *The EsseN’ Standard, etc*., etc., I will set the one against the other. I am neither eloquent nor learned, but the Head of the Church has given me sympathy with the masse, s, love to the poor, and the means of winning the attention of the ignorant and unenlightened. I never sought popularity, and I cannot tell how it is so many come to hear me; but shall I now change? To please the polite critic, shall I leave ‘ *the people ‘,*who so much require a simple and stirring style? I am, perhaps, ‘vulgar’, and so on, but it is not intentional, save that I *must*and *will*make the people listen. My firm conviction is, that we have quite enough *polite*preachers, and that ‘the many’ require a change. God has owned me to the most degraded and off-cast; let others serve their class: these are mine, and to them I must keep. My sole reason for thus troubling you is one of gratitude to a disinterested friend. You may another time have good cause to censure me; — do so, as I am sure you will, with all heartiness; but my young heart shall not soon forget ‘ a friend.’  
“Believe me,  
“My dear sir,  
“Yours very sincerely,

**“C. H.**SPURGEON**.”**

*The Bucks Chronicle,*April 28, 1855, published an article signed, “A BRITON,” of which the following portion sufficiently indicates the character of the whole:—

**“T HE POPULAR MINISTER.**  
(“*From our London correspondent.)*

“Scarcity produces dearness; rarity, curiosity. Great preachers are as scarce as Queen Anne’s farthings. The market is glutted with mediocrity; — a star is looked upon, in the theological world, as a prize equally with green peas in Covent Garden Market at Christmas. We have been inundated with the slang phrases of the profession until they have acquired the sameness of our milkman’s cry, when he places his pails upon the ground, and, as he gives the bell-handle a spasmodic twitch, utters his well-known ‘ M-i-l-k.’

“We had thought the day for dogmatic, theologic dramatizing, was past, — that we should never more see the massive congregation listening to outrageous manifestations of insanity, — no more hear the fanatical effervescence of ginger-pop sermonizing, or be called upon to wipe away the froth, that the people might see the colour of the stuff. In this we were mistaken. A star has appeared in the misty plain of orthodoxy; and such a star that, were it not for the badge which encircles that part of it called neck, we should, for the more distinguishing characteristic, write comet. It has made its appearance in Exeter Hall; and is to be seen on the first day of the week, by putting a few ‘ browns’ into a basket. The star is a Spurgeon, — not a carp, but much resembling a pike. Thousands flock weekly to see it; and it shines grandiloquently. It is a parson, — a young parson. Merciful goodness! such a parson seldom talks. It is a railway speed of joining sentences, conflaber-gasticated into a discourse. It is now near eleven o’clock a.m. He rises to read; and, as if the Book of Inspiration was not fine enough in its composition, enters into explanations of his own as apt as a coal-heaver would give of Thucidydes *(sic).*Never mind! the great gun of starology in theology has a mission. not to convert the doggerelisms of Timbuctoo into rationalisms, — not to demonstrate the loving-kindness of the great Fatherhood, — not to teach the forgiveness of Jehovah Jirah *(sic)* in His great heart of mercy, — not to proclaim the extension of the kingdom of the Master of assemblies. No! but to teach that, if Jack Scroggins was put down in the black book, before the great curtain of events was unfolded, that the said Jack Scroggins, in spite of all he may do or say, will and must tumble into the limbo of a brimstone hell, to be punished and roasted, without any prospect of cessation, or shrinking into a dried cinder; because Jack Scroggins had done what Jack Scroggins could not help .doing .... It is not pleasant to be frightened into the portal of bliss by the hissing bubbles of the seething cauldron. It is not Christianlike to say, ‘God must wash brains in the Hyper-Calvinism a Spurgeon teaches before man can enter Heaven.’ It does not harmonize with the quiet majesty of the Nazarene. It does not fall like manna for hungry souls; but is like the gush of the pouring rain in a thunderstorm, which makes the flowers to hang their heads, looking up afterwards as if nothing had happened. When the Exeter Hall stripling talks of Deity, let him remember that He is superior to profanity, and that blasphemy from a parson is as great a crime as when the lowest grade of humanity utters the brutal oath at which the virtuous stand aghast.”

In one of Mr. Spurgeon’s discourses delivered in the year 1855, there is the following remarkable paragraph, which shows that the foregoing article entirely misrepresented the usual style of his preaching; careful readers will note that he protested against some of the very expressions that he was charged with uttering: —

“Enthusiastic divines have thought that men were to be brought to virtue by the hissings of the boiling cauldron; they have imagined that, by beating a hell-drum in the ears of men, they should make them believe the gospel; that, by the terrific sights and sounds of Sinai’s mountain, they should drive men to Calvary. They have preached perpetually, ‘ Do this, and thou art damned.’ In their preaching, there preponderates a voice horrible and terrifying; if you listened to them, you might think you sat near the mouth of the pit, and heard the ‘ dismal groans and sullen moans,’ and all the shrieks of the tortured ones in perdition. Men think that by these means sinners will be brought to the Saviour. They, however, in my opinion, think wrongly: men are frightened into hell, but not into Heaven. Men are sometimes driven to Sinai by powerful preaching. Far be it from us to condemn the use of the law, for ‘ the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ;’ but if you want to get a man to Christ, the best way is to bring Christ to the man. It is not by preaching law and terrors that men are made to love God.

***“‘Law and terrors do but harden,  
All the while they work alone;  
But a sense of blood-bought pardon,  
Soon dissolves a heart of stone.’***

“I sometimes preach ‘the terror of the Lord,’ as Paul did when he said,’ Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men;’ but I do it as did the apostle, to bring .them to a sense of their sins. The way to bring men to Jesus, to give them peace, to give them joy, to give them salvation through Christ, is, by God the Spirit’s assistance, to preach Christ, — to preach a full, free, perfect pardon. Oh, how little there is of preaching Jesus Christ! We do not preach enough about His glorious Name. Some preach dry doctrines; but there:, is not the unction of the Holy One revealing the fulness and preciousness of the Lord Jesus. There is plenty of ‘ Do this, and live,’ but not enough of ‘ Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. and thou shalt be saved.’”

*The Sheffield and Rotherham Independent,*April 28, 1855, to which Mr. Spurgeon alludes toearlier, had an article somewhat similar to the one in the Buckinghamshire paper of the same date: —

“Just now, the great lion, star, meteor, or whatever else he may be called, of the Baptists, is the Rev. M. *(sic)*Spurgeon, minister of Park Street Chapel, Southwark. He has created a *perfect furor*in the religious world. Every Sunday, crowds throng to Exeter Hall — where for some weeks past he has been preaching during the enlargement of his own chapel, — as to some great dramatic entertainment. The huge hall is crowded to overflowing, morning and evening, with an excited auditory, whose good fortune in obtaining admission is often envied by the hundreds outside who throng the closed doors. For a parallel to such popularity, we must go back to Dr. Chalmers, Edward Irving, or the earlier days of James Parsons. But I will not dishonor such men by comparison with the Exeter Hall religious demagogue. F1 They preached the gospel with all the fervour of earnest natures. Mr. Spurgeon preaches *himself*He is nothing unless he is an actor, — unless exhibiting that matchless impudence which is his great characteristic, indulging in coarse’, familiarity with holy things, declaiming in a ranting and colloquial style, strutting up and down the platform as though he were at the Surrey Theatre, and boasting of his own intimacy with Heaven with nauseating frequency. His fluency, self-possession, oratorical tricks, and daring utterances, seem to fascinate his lessthoughtful hearers, who love excitement more than devotion .... I have glanced at one’. or two of Mr. Spurgeon’s published sermons, and turned away in disgust from the coarse sentiments, the scholastical expressions, and clap-trap style I have discovered. It would seem that the poor young man’s brain is turned by the notoriety he has acquired and the incense offered at his shrine. From the very pulpit he boasts of the crowds that flock to listen to his rodomontade. Only lately, he told his fair friends to send him no more slippers, as he was already engaged; and on another occasion gloried in the belief that, by the end of the year, not less than 200,000 of his published trashy sermons would be scattered over the length and breadth of the land. This is but a mild picture of the great religious lion of the metropolis. To their credit be it spoken, Mr. Spurgeon receives no countenance or encouragement from the ornaments of his denomination. I don’t think he has been invited to take part in any of their meetings. Nor, indeed, does he seek such fellowship. He glories in his position of lofty isolation, and is intoxicated by the draughts of popularity that have fired his feverish brain. He is a nine days’ wonder, — a comet that has suddenly shot across the religious atmosphere. He has gone up like a rocket, and ere long will come down like a stick. The most melancholy consideration in the case is the diseased craving for excitement which this running after Mr. Spurgeon by the ‘religious world’ indicates. I would charitably conclude that the greater part of the multitude that weekly crowd to his theatrical exhibitions consists of people who are not in the habit of frequenting a place of worship.”

What higher compliment than this could the slanderer have paid the dear young preacher! Mr. Spurgeon’s own testimony, concerning many of his first London hearers, was that they had not been accustomed to attend any house of prayer until they came to New Park Street Chapel, Exeter Hall, or the Surrey Gardens Music Hall. Best of all, many of them became truly converted, and so helped to build up the great church which afterwards worshipped in the Metropolitan Tabernacle. In one of his earliest sermons at the Music Hall, Mr. Spurgeon said:—

“I have many a time had doubts and fears, as most of you have had; and where is the strong believer who has not sometimes wavered? I have said, within myself, ‘ Is this religion true, which, day after day, I incessantly preach to the people? Is it correct that this gospel has an influence upon mankind?’ And I will tell you how I have reassured myself. I have looked upon the hundreds, nay, upon the thousands whom I have around me, who were once the vilest of the vile, — drunkards, swearers, and such like, — and I now see them ‘clothed, and in their right mind,’ walking in holiness and in the fear of God; and I have said within myself, ‘ This must be the truth, then, because I see its marvellous effects. It is true, because it is efficient for purposes which error never could accomplish. It exerts an influence among the lowest order of mortals, and over the most abominable of our race.’… I could a tale unfold, of some who have plunged head-first into the blackest gulfs of sin; it would horrify both you and me, if we could allow them to recount their guilt. I could tell you how they have come into God’s house with their teeth set against the minister, determined that, say what he would, they might listen, but it would be only to scoff. They stayed a moment; some word arrested their attention; they thought within themselves, ‘We will hear that sentence.’ It was some pointed, terse saying, that entered into their souls. They knew not how it was, but they were spell-bound, and stood to listen a little longer; and, byand-by, unconsciously to themselves, the tears began to fall, and when they went away, they had a strange, mysterious feeling about them that led them to their chambers. Down they fell on their knees; the story of their life was all told before God; He gave them peace through the blood of the Lamb, and they came again to His house, many of them, to say, ‘Come, all ye that fear the Lord, and hear what He hath done for our souls.’”

*The Lambeth Gazelle*was a paper published so near to the scene of Mr. Spurgeon’s ministry that it would have been easy for the Editor to ascertain *facts*concerning his life and work; yet its issue for September 1, 1855, contained an article from which the following is an extract: —

“The fact cannot be concealed, mountebankism is, to a certain class of minds, quite as attractive in the pulpit as in the fields of a country town. The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon is now the star of Southwark. Mr. Wells (commonly known by the curious *sobriquet of* ‘Wheelbarrow Wells’), of ‘the Borough Road, has, for some years past, had the run in this line; but he has, at last, got a rival well up in his ‘tip’, and likely to prove the favorite for a long time. He is a very young man, too, and the young ‘sisters’ are dancing mad after him. He has received slippers enough from these lowly-minded damsels to open a shoe shop; and were it not that he recently advertised them that he was ‘engaged’, he would very soon have been able to open a fancy bazaar with the knickknacks that were pouring in upon him. No doubt he is a very good young man, with the best of intentions; but will not this man-worship spoil him? Between the parts of the service, his mannerism in the pulpit is suggestive of affectation and vanity; — it might be only an .overpowering sense of responsibility; yet it would do for either state of feeling. Who can wonder at it?…

“Let it not be supposed that the writer has any wish to cripple the usefulness of the young minister. On the contrary, he would be happy to hear of much good being done.’ What he laments over is the spiritual poverty and want of taste indicated by the crowds who are so eager to feed upon the very ‘ husks ‘ of a discarded style of preaching. Doubtless, the young minister will be the means of breaking up much fallow ground, — would that it were then passed over to a more skilful husbandman! — but it is painful to hear of old Christians turning again to such ‘beggarly elements’, instead of allowing themselves to be ‘ built up and established in the faith.’ May prosperity attend you, Mr. Spurgeon; but try, do try, to instruct as well as amuse your congregation. Do not be satisfied with the ripple that passes over the face of the waters; but stir them, if you can, to their lowest depths.”

*The Bristol Advertiser,*April 12, 1856, thus introduced its report of a sermon by Mr. Spurgeon in that city: —

“It is very easy for public opinion to mistake the signs of greatness; and for individuals to mistake the signs of public opinion. For a time, weakness may command notoriety, — it never can hold fame. We are not among those, therefore, who accept the hasty verdicts of the crowd. We have often seen that audacity, eccentricity, or even stolidity itself can secure the homage which is always paid to genius; but rash and ignorant devotees discover their mistake very soon; and, though their quondam hero continue to make a noise, they, from sheer indifference, cease: to notice him. Indeed, there are quackeries in public as well as in professional life; Dr. Holloways among the vendors of religious doctrine as well as among the vendors of patent medicines. They work wonderful cures. They get advertised everywhere. They have agents all about the country, ready and willing to assist them in pushing the trade. And, unfortunately, there’, is a world of superstitious, curious, and idle people who provide a profitable market for the spurious article. But quacks are always short-lived; and though a Morrison may find a successor, he himself quickly gets bowed out of society.

“:Now, what is there in Mr. Spurgeon to account for the extraordinary sensation he makes everywhere? It is not the doctrine he preaches; for that is ‘orthodox’; that is, it is preached by a thousand other clergymen. It is not his personal appearance, for that is but ordinary: his forehead is low; his eye is small, and though capable of vivid flashes of self-appreciation, not radiant with those ‘heavenly’ rays by which sentimental ladies are usually fascinated; his figure is broad and stumpy; his manners are rude and awkward. In short, we can find no genuine qualities in this gentleman sufficient to explain the unrivalled notoriety he has acquired. If he were simple in his pretensions, and had the serene and sacred dignity of religious earnestness to support him, his destitution of refinement, his evident ignorance, his positive vulgarities of expression and of manner might be forgiven. We should feel that he was doing good in an important direction, and that to follow him with criticism or contempt would be, in a sort, profane. Or if he possessed unusual powers of mind, imagination, or speech, we could understand how many would seek to hear him. But his intellect not only lacks culture, it is evidently of meager grasp. He has fancy, but all his larger illustrations failed, either in fitness or in development. He is fluent; he talks on without stopping; he has certain theatrical attitudes of which he knows how to make the most; his voice is powerful; and his enunciation clear; and thus many of the *mechanical* effects of oratory are under his sway. But his thoughts are commonplace, and his figures false, though striking. He says good things smartly; but his best things are his tritest, and his most striking are his most audacious sentences .... Solemnly do we express our regret that insolence so unblushing, intellect so feeble, flippancy so ostentatious, and manners so rude should, in the name of religion, and in connection with the church, receive the acknowledgment of even a momentary popularity. To our minds, it speaks sad things as to the state of intelligence, and calm, respectful, and dignified piety among a mass of people who call themselves the disciples of Jesus. Where curiosity is stronger than faith, and astonishment easier to excite than reverence to edify, religious life must either be at a very low ebb, or associated with some other deleterious elements.”

*The Daily News,*a paper from which something better might have been expected, had, in its issue of September 9, 1856, a long article on “Popular · Preachers, — The Rev. Mr. Spurgeon,” in which it said: — “We are accustomed to look grave when the old mysteries and miracle-plays are mentioned. We pity the ignorance of those: ancestors of ours who could find food for amusement or helps to devotion in the representation of doggerel dramas, where God the Father, our Saviour, the Holy Spirit, the devil, Adam and Eve, and, in short, all the principal personages, human or supernatural, mentioned in Scripture, were brought on the stage. We are liable to entertain shrewd doubts as to the piety of the writers of these horrible travesties of the sacred narratives, and to lament over the crassness of the. intellect of those who could find entertainment in them. We can see nothing more instructive than in the awful contest between the devil and the baker, which was generally the concluding scene of the ‘galantee show’ performances with which the Christmas of our childhood was enlivened. In protestant countries in general, and in England in particular, we shrink from undue familiarity with holy words and things. We have just as much aversion to see a church turned into a theatre as to see a theatre turned into a church. We hold an opinion, grounded as much on the principles of good taste as of religion, that it is almost as offensive to see a clergyman perform in his pulpit as to hear actors invoke Heaven in a theatre. This opinion, however, is not quite universally entertained. Let any person who wishes to convince himself of the truth ‘of this, take his station opposite to Exeter Hall on Sunday evening at about a few minutes before six o’clock. We say opposite, because, unless he arrives some time before the hour mentioned, there will be no standing-room on the pavement from which the entrance to the hall ascends. At six, the doors open, and a dense mass of human beings pours in. There is no interruption now to the continuous stream until half-past six o’clock, when the whole of the vast hall, with its galleries and platform, will be filled with the closely-packed crowd.

“If the spectator has not taken care to enter before this time, he will have but small chance of finding even standing-room. Suppose him to have entered early enough to have found a seat, he will naturally look around him to scan the features of the scene. They are remarkable enough to excite attention in the minds of the most listless. Stretching far away to the back are thousands of persons evidently eager for the appearance of someone. Towering up the platform, the seats are all crowded. Nearly all the eyes in this multitude are directed to the front of the platform. The breathless suspense is only broken occasionally by the struggle, in the body of the hall, of those who are endeavoring to gain or maintain a position. Suddenly, even this noise is stopped. A short, squarely-built man, with piercing eyes, with thick black hair parted down the middle, with a sallow countenance only redeemed from heaviness by the restlessness of the eyes, advances along the platform towards the seat of honor. A cataract of short coughs, indicative of the relief afforded to the ill-repressed impatience of the assembly, announces to the stranger that the business of the evening has commenced. He will be told with a certain degree of awe by those whom he asks for information, that the person just arrived is the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon. He will perhaps hear, in addition to this, that Mr. Spurgeon is beyond all question the most popular preacher in London; that he is obliged to leave off preaching in the evening at his chapel in New Park Street, Southwark, on account of the want of room to accommodate more than a mere fraction of the thousands who flock to hear him; that Exeter Hall has been taken for the purpose of diminishing in a slight degree the disappointment experienced; but that nothing will be done to afford effectual relief until the new chapel which is in contemplation is built, and which is intended to hold 15,000 persons.” (In a later chapter, it will be seen that Mr. Spurgeon corrected this inaccuracy concerning the accommodation to be provided in the Metropolitan Tabernacle; he never had any intention of building a chapel “to hold 15,000 persons.”)

The article concluded thus: — ”We might fill columns with specimens of this pulpit buffoonery, but we have given enough to show the nature of Mr. Spurgeon’s preaching. We might have brought forward instances of his utter ignorance of any theology except that current among the sect to which he belongs; and of his ludicrous misinterpretations of Scripture, occasioned by his want of even a moderate acquaintance with Oriental customs and forms of language.... A congregation that constantly listens to the spiritual dram-drinking that Mr. Spurgeon encourages, will become not only bigoted, but greedy after stronger closes of excitement. What excited them once, will fall flat upon their palate. The preacher will be obliged to become more and more extravagant as his audience becomes more and more exacting, and the end may be an extensive/development of dangerous fanaticism.”

Th *e Illustrated Times,*October 11, 1856, published a portrait — or rather, a caricature — of Mr. Spurgeon, with a lengthy article containing one of the many prophecies that subsequent events proved to be false. The writer said:  
*“Mr.*Spurgeon’s popularity is unprecedented; at all events, there has been nothing like it since the days of Wesley and Whitefield. Park Street Chapel cannot hold half the people who pant to hear him, and even Exeter Hall is too small. Indeed:, it is reported on good authority that his friends mean to hire the Concert Room at the Surrey Gardens, and firmly believe that he will fill that. Nor is his popularity confined to London; in Scotland, he was very much followed; and, lately, we ourselves saw, on a week-day, in a remote agricultural district, long lines of people all converging to one point, and on enquiring of one of the party where they were going, received for answer, ‘ We’re a go’in’ to hear *Maester Spudgin,*sir.’

**“WILL HIS POPULARITY LAST?**

“We more than doubt it. It stands on no firm basis. Thousands who go now to hear him only go through curiosity. Men are very much like sheep; one goes through a hedge, then another, and another; at last the stream gathers *crescit eundo,*and the whole flock rushes madly forward. This has been a good deal the case with Mr. Spurgeon’s congregation, but the current will soon turn and leave him; and as to those who have gone from a slightly different, if not better, motive, it is hardly likely that he will retain them long. He must bid high if he does, — offering them every Sunday a stronger dram than they had the last.”

**POSTSCRIPT BY MRS. C. H. SPURGEON.**

No defence of my beloved is needed now. God has taken him to Himself, and “there the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest.” The points of these arrows are all blunted, — the stings of these scorpions are all plucked out, — the edge of these sharp swords is rusted away. *“And*where is the fury of the oppressor?”

A strange serenity has brooded over my spirit as these chapters have recalled the heartless attacks made on God’s servant; I have even smiled as I read once again the unjust and cruel words written by his enemies; for he is so safe now, *“with*God eternally shut in;” and I can bless the Lord for the suffering all ended, and the eternity of bliss begun. *“For*Thou hast made him most blessed for ever: Thou hast made him exceeding glad with Thy countenance.”

But, at the time of their publication, what a grievous affliction these slanders were to me! My heart alternately sorrowed over him, and flamed with indignation against his detractors. For a long time, I wondered how I could set continual comfort before his eyes, till, at last, I hit upon the expedient of having the following verses printed in large Old English type, and enclosed in a pretty Oxford frame. (This was before the days of the illuminated mottoes which at present are so conspicuous in our homes, and so often silently speak a message from God to us.)

“Blessed are ye, When men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for My sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in Heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.” — *Matthew* 5:11, 12.

The text was hung up in our own room, and was read over by the dear preacher every morning, — fulfilling its purpose most blessedly, for it strengthened his heart, and enabled him to buckle on the invisible armour, whereby he could calmly walk among men, unruffled by their calumnies, and concerned only for their best and highest interests.

CHAPTER 39.

FIRST LITERARY FRIENDS.

I was reading, some time ago, an article in a newspaper, very much in my praise. It always makes me sad, — so sad that I could cry,- if ever I see anything praising me; it breaks my heart, I feel I do not deserve it; and then I say, “Now I must try and be better, so that I may deserve it.” It the world abuses me, I am a match for that; I begin to like it. It may fire all its big guns at me, I will not return a solitary shot, but just store them up, and grow rich upon the old iron. All the abuse it likes to heap upon me, I can stand; but when a man praises me, I feel it is a poor thing I have done, and that he commends what does not deserve commendation. This crushes me down, and I say to myself, ,’I must set to work and deserve this; I must preach better, I must be more earnest, and more diligent in my Master’s service.” — C. H. S.

A LTHOUGH many assailed Mr. Spurgeon through the press in the first years of his ministry in London, there were always loyal and true hearts ready to come to his help, and write in his defence. This chapter and the next contain the principal favorable articles published during 1855 and 1856; they furnish a marked contrast to the slanders and calumnies which the young preacher had to endure at that time.

One of the earliest encouraging notices appeared appropriately in *The Friend,*and was supplied by a member of the Society of Friends. The writer said:

“An extraordinary sensation has recently been produced in London by the preaching of a young Baptist minister named C. H. Spurgeon. 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. What renders the present case remarkable is, the juvenility of the preacher, — his hold on the public being established before he had attained his twentieth year; and his first appearance in London being that of a country youth, without any of the supposed advantages of a College education or ordinary ministerial training. Early in 1854, he undertook the charge of the congregation assembling in New Park Street Chapel, Southwark. 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 to the task he had assumed. In a few weeks, the pews, which had been so long tenantless, were crowded, every sitting in the chapel was let, and ere many months had elapsed, the eagerness to hear him had become so great, that every standing-place within the Chapel walls was occupied on each succeeding Sabbath, and it became evident that increased accommodation must be provided for the wants of the congregation. It was about this period, in the autumn of 1854, that we first heard C. H. Spurgeon, on the occasion of his preaching to the Young Men’s Christian Association. The preliminary portions of the service were conducted in a manner at once to impress the hearer with a sense of the earnest reverence which the young Pastor felt in his work. He read a portion of Scripture, accompanying it with a few forcible and pointed remarks, — these expository efforts being of peculiar value to the class of hearers of which his congregations are mostly composed. His sermon was a deeply-impressive one. He spoke as a young man to young men, — sympathizing in their tastes, their trials, their temptations, and their wants. He unfolded the plan of salvation, and urged the importance of a manly and decided profession of Christianity.”

One of the first and one of the ablest of Mr. Spurgeon’s champions among literary men was Mr. James Grant, the Editor of *The Morning Advertiser,* which, under his management, a contemporary writer testifies, was raised “to the position of a first-class morning paper, second only to *The Times,* either in circulation or influence.” In its columns, on February 19, 1855, he published an article, the tenor of which may be judged by the following extracts:—

**“THE REV. MR. SPURGEON.**

“A young man, in the twenty-first year of his age, has just appeared, under this name, among our metropolitan preachers, and is creating a great sensation in the religious world. He had only been a few weeks settled as minister of Park Street Chapel, Southwark, before that commodious place was filled to overflowing, while hundreds at each service went away who were unable to effect an entrance. The result was, that it was agreed to enlarge’ the chapel, and that the youthful minister should preach in the large room of Exeter Hall for eight Sundays, until the re-opening of his own place of worship. It will easily be believed how great must be The popularity of this almost boyish preacher, when we mention that, yesterday, both morning and evening, the large hall, capable of containing from 4,000 to 5,000 persons, was filled in every part. Mr. Spurgeon belongs to the Baptist denomination… He is short in stature, and somewhat thickly built, which, with an exceedingly broad, massive face, gives him the appearance of a man twenty-six or twenty-seven years of age instead of twenty-one. His doctrines are of the Hyper-Calvinist school. He is a young man, we are told, of extensive information, especially on theological subjects, and of a highly cultivated mind. There can be no doubt that he possesses superior talents, while, in some of his happier flights, he rises to a high order of pulpit oratory. It is in pathos that he excels, though he does not himself seem to be aware of the fact. But for some sad drawbacks in the young divine, we should anticipate great usefulness from him, because he not only possesses qualities peculiarly adapted to attract and rivet the attention of the masses, but he makes faithful and powerful appeals to the consciences of the unconverted. In the spirit of sincere friendship, we would advise him to study to exhibit an aspect of greater gravity and seriousness. Let us also impress upon him the indispensable necessity of relinquishing those theatrical — we had almost said melo-dramatic — attitudes into which he is in the habit of throwing himself. In Exeter Hall, yesterday, instead of confining himself to the little spot converted into a sort of pulpit for him, he walked about on the platform just as if he had been treading the boards of Drury Lane: Theatre, while performing some exciting tragedy. Altogether, he seems to want the reverence of manner which is essential to the’. success of a minister of the gospel. F2 We hope, however, that in these respects he will improve. It is with that view we give him our friendly counsels. He is quite an original preacher, and therefore will always draw large congregations, and, consequently, may be eminently made. the means of doing great good to classes of persons who might never otherwise be brought within the sound of a faithfully-preached gospel. He has evidently made George Whitefield his model; and, like that unparalleled preacher, that prince of pulpit orators, is very fond of striking apostrophes. Like him, too, he has a powerful voice, which would, at times, be more pleasing, and not less impressive, were it not raised to so high a pitch.”  
Mr. Spurgeon’s own testimony confirms Mr. Grant’s assertion that he had “evidently made George Whitefield his model.” He wrote, in 1879: — ”There is no end to the interest which attaches to such a man as George Whitefield. Often as I have read his life, I am conscious of distinct quickening whenever I turn to it. *lie lived. other* men seem to be only halfalive; but Whitefield was all life, fire, wing, force. My own model, if I may have such a thing in due subordination to my Lord, is George Whitefield; but with unequal footsteps must I follow in his glorious track.”

Mr. Grant’s article was reprinted in the March number of *The Baptist Messenger,*which was originated, and, until his death, edited, by Rev. Jonathan Whittemore, of Eynsford, who had, in the autumn of 1854, availed himself of Mr. Spurgeon’s literary assistance, and so commenced a connection with the Magazine which has continued to the present day. In the meantime, the correspondence referred to in the previous chapter was being published, and consequently the April issue of the *Messenger,*as it was usually termed, contained several of the most friendly letters, together with the following article on “Mr. Spurgeon and his Detractors”: —

“It is not at all a matter of surprise that the extraordinary popularity of this estimable young minister should have evoked censure and commendation of all kinds and degrees. The pulpit and the forum alike invite attention, and challenge critic”ism; and so long as this test is legitimately and truthfully applied, no public character, if right-hearted, will shrink from its decisions. But if the criticism be made the vehicle of calumny, and if the censors of the press — instead of employing their pens in commending excellences, or in censuring and correcting faults, however severely’, if fairly done, — seek by detraction and falsehood to damage the reputation and lessen the usefulness of those whose efforts they decry, then do they degrade an otherwise honorable occupation into that of a dirty and despicable slanderer. Several of Mr. Spurgeon’s critics, we regret to say, have thus disgraced themselves. If they have not originated, they have given a wide circulation to fabrications as grossly absurd as they are totally false. By Mr. S., however, these falsehoods are treated with no other feelings than those of pity for the individuals from whom they emanated. It was thus, a century ago, with the seraph-tongued Whitefield, to whom, by some of his more friendly critics, Mr. Spurgeon has been compared.

“We have been induced to make this reference to those attacks upon Mr.

Spurgeon, not more from the circumstance that we are favored monthly with his valuable contributions to our pages, than from the high and honorable position in which.it has pleased the great Head of the Church to place him, in which it should be the aim of all who love Zion to uphold and encourage this youthful and gifted brother; and also because we have had put into our hands, by a party altogether disinterested, the following correspondence, a portion of which is addressed to a provincial paper, which had been made the medium of circulating slanderous reports concerning Mr. S., to whom it is but fair to state, the Editor of the paper referred to has made most ample and satisfactory apology.”

In the June number of The Bapti *st Messenger,*the Editor wrote: — ”Several articles and extracts from provincial papers, condemnatory of the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, have been forwarded for insertion in the *Messenger,* This, however, we must decline doing. It is, indeed, most pitiful that this excellent and useful servant of Christ cannot go about his Master’s business quietly and unobtrusively — for his popularity is altogether unsought by him, — without exciting unkind and envious remarks.”

In the quotation from Mr. Spurgeon’s letter, given in chapter 36, there is an allusion to a glowing account of his life and work which had been published in *7he Patriot,*on September 21, 1855. The following are some of the writer’s kind expressions concerning the young preacher:—

“Although the name of the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon has been frequently mentioned in the columns of this Journal, we have not introduced him to our readers by any formal description of his preaching. Such, however, is its effect, that curiosity cannot but have been awakened by intelligence of the immense crowds collected to hear him while occupying Exeter Hall from Sunday to Sunday, and also when he returned to his own enlarged chapel in New Park Street, over Southwark Bridge. There must surely be something extraordinary in a mere youth who could command an attendance of from ten to twelve thousand persons in the open field, and who, on visiting the North, though received with cold suspicion at first, soon compelled the fixed and admiring attention of the reluctant Scotch; though, he says, ‘they seemed to be all made of lumps of ice fetched from Wenham Lake.’ Those who go to hear Mr. Spurgeon, enquiring, ‘ What will this babbler say?’ are not long left, in doubt as to either the manner or the matter of his discourses .... We have ourselves heard Mr. Spurgeon but once; and, on that occasion, not having succeeded in gaining an entrance to the chapel, we squeezed ourselves into a side vestry, from which the speaker could be heard, but not seen. We found him,neither extravagant nor extraordinary. His voice is clear and musical; his language is plain; his style flowing, yet 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 this 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.

“Our opinion of Mr. Spurgeon as a preacher has been somewhat modified by a perusal of his published discourses, which, issued in a cheap form, appear to be bought up with great eagerness. These show him to be a more extraordinary person than we supposed, and not to be quite so far from extravagance as at first we thought him. But it is more for the sake of information than with a view to criticism that we refer to the subject. From whatsoever cause it springs, whether from force of native character, or from a vigor superinduced upon that basis by the grace of God, there is that in Mr. Spurgeon’s reported sermons which marks him a superior man.

“Models of different styles of preaching are so numerous, that originality must be of rare occurrence; but he appears to be an original genius. To the pith of Jay, and the plainness of Rowland Hill, he adds much of the familiarity, not to say the coarseness, of the Huntingtonian order of ultraCalvinistic preachers. ‘ It has been my privilege,’ he says, ‘to give more prominence in the religious world to those old doctrines of the gospel.’ But the traits referred to present themselves in shapes and with  
accompaniments which forbid the notion of imitation, and favor the opinion of a peculiar bent. Neither in the style and structure, nor in handling, is there appearance of art, study, or elaboration. Yet, each discourse has a beginning, a middle, and an end; and the subject is duly introduced and stated, divided and discussed, enforced and applied. But all is done without effort, with the ease and freedom of common conversation, and with the artlessness, but also with the force, of spontaneous expression.

“Mr. Spurgeon waits for nothing which requires what we understand by composition, and he rejects nothing by which attention may be arrested, interest sustained, and impression made permanent. The vehicle of his thoughts is constructed of well-seasoned Saxon speech; and they are conveyed to the hearer’s mind in term,; highly pictorial and often vividly dramatic. Great governing principles are freely personified; and religious experience, past, present, and future, appears in life-like action upon the scene. Tried by such tests as the unities, Mr. Spurgeon might sometimes be found wanting; but it is enough for him that, as face answers to face in the glass, so do his words elicit a response in the hearts of those who hear him. This end secured, what cares he for a mixed metaphor or a rhetorical anachronism? Were it his aim to rival the Melvilles and Harrises of the day, he lacks neither the talent nor the taste; and, with these, he has the faculty of gathering what is to be learned from men or from books, and of turning all’ to account. But his single aim is to preach the gospel; and he depends for success, not upon the enticing: words of man’s wisdom, but upon the influence of the Spirit of God, and, with a view to that, the prayers of his people.

“Mr. Spurgeon evinces much aptitude in borrowing illustrations, not only from the pages of antiquity, and from modern life and literature, but also from the most familiar incidents, as well as from public events. Thus, the war suggests to him the idea that even the believer ‘ carries within him a bomb:shell, ready to burst at the slightest spark of temptation.’ In like manner, the fatal exposure of the officers to the sharp-shooting of the enemy, furnishes him with a comparison by which to illustrate the peculiar liability of Christian ministers to hostile attack, though with a great difference in the result. ‘ Some of us,’ he says, ‘are the officers of God’s regiments; and we are the mark of all the riflemen of the enemy. Standing forward, we have to bear all the shots. What a mercy it is, that not one of God’s officers ever falls in battle! God always keeps them.’

“His sermons abound with aphoristic and pointed sayings, which often afford a striking proof of his genius.... Many instances might easily be given of a force and beauty of language indicative of a high degree of eloquence. ‘Bright-eyed cheerfulness and airy-footed love,’ are fine phrases. Winter is described as not killing the flowers, but as ‘coating them with the ermine of its snows.’ Again, the sun is not quenched, but is behind the clouds, ‘brewing up summer; and, when he cometh forth again, he will have made those clouds fit to drop in April showers, all of them mothers of the sweet May flowers.’ God ‘puts our prayers, like rose-leaves, between the pages of His book of remembrance; and when the volume is opened at last, there shall be a precious fragrance springing up therefrom.’ ‘There is one thing,’ the sinner is told, ‘ that doth outstrip the telegraph: “Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.”’ The memory, infected by the Fall, is described as ‘suffering the glorious timbers from the forest of Lebanon to swim down the stream of oblivion; but she stoppeth all the draft that floateth from the foul city of Sodom.’ With quaintness, yet with force and truth, the caste feeling of society is hit off: ‘ In England, a sovereign will not speak to a shilling, a shilling will not notice a sixpence, and a sixpence will sneer at a penny.’ A singular quaintness and vigor may be remarked in Mr. Spurgeon’s diction; as when he speaks of the lightning ‘splitting the clouds, and rending the heavens;’ of ‘the mighty hand wherein the callow comets are brooded by the sun;’ and of ‘ the very spheres stopping their music while God speaks with His wondrous bass voice.’

“The manly tone of Mr. Spurgeon’s mind might be illustrated from the admirable thoughts which he expresses on the connection between the diffusion of the gospel and the increase of civil liberty. His graphic skill in delineating character might be demonstrated from his life-like pictures of the prejudiced Jew and the scoffing Greek of modern times; his unsparing fidelity, from the sarcastic severity with which he rebukes the neglect of the Bible by modern professors; his powers of personification and dramatic presentation, from the scene which he paints between the dying Christian and Death, or between Jesus and Justice and the justified sinner; his refined skill in the treatment of a delicate subject, in the veiled yet impressive description of the trial of Joseph; the use that he can make of a single metaphor by his powerful comparison of the sinner to ‘Mazeppa bound on the wild horse of his lust, galloping on with hell’s wolves behind him,’ till stopped and liberated by a mighty hand. The sermon entitled, ‘The People’s Christ,’ contains a very striking description of the resurrection of our Lord. In that on ‘The Eternal Home,’ the contrast between the dying thief before and after his conversion, is powerfully drawn. The rage of Satan, on the rescue of a sinner from his grasp, forms a picture of terrific grandeur. In the sermon on ‘The Bible,’ the respective characteristics of the holy penmen are sketched with a masterly comprehension o! their peculiarities and command of words .... The beautiful sermon on the words, ‘ So He giveth His beloved sleep,’ exhibits a variety and force which stamp the master.”

CHAPTER 40.

FIRST LITERARY FRIENDS

I have striven, with all my might, to attain the position of complete independence of all men. 1 have found, at times, if I have been much praised, and if my heart has given way a little, and I have taken notice of it, and felt pleased, that the next time I was censured anti abused I felt the censure anti abuse very keenly, for the very fact that I accepted the commendation, rendered me more sensitive to the censure. So that I have tried, especially of late, to take no more notice of man’s praise than of his blame, but to rest simply upon this truth, — I know that I have a pure motive in what I attempt to do, I am conscious that I endeavor to serve God with a single eye to His glory, and therefore it is not: for me to take either praise or censure from man, but to stand independently upon the solid rock of right doing. — C. H. S.

O N February 18, 1856, just a year after his first article, Mr. James Grant wrote as follows in *The Morning Advertiser:* — ”When Mr, Spurgeon was preaching in Exeter Hall to the most densely-crowded audiences that ever assembled within the walls of that spacious place, we called especial attention to his qualities as a preacher and as a theologian. We pointed out freely, but in the spirit of sincere friendship, what we conceived to be his faults both in matter and manner, and expressed not only a hope but a belief that, as he was so young a man, — not having then reached his majority, — he would, with the lapse of time, which generally matures the judgment, as well as mellows the mind, get rid, in a great measure, if not wholly, of what we then specified as defects. It gives us great gratification to say that, having heard him recently in his own chapel, in New Park Street, Southwark, we discern a decided improvement both as regards his matter and manner.

“Not that there is any change in Mr. Spurgeon’s doctrinal views, or in his mode of illustrating, enforcing, and applying them, but that there is less of the pugnacious quality about him when grappling with the views of those from whom he differs. He does not speak so often with asperity of other preachers of the gospel, whom he conceives — and we must say, in the main, rightly, — to be unfaithful to their high calling. There is, too, a marked and gratifying improvement in Mr. Spurgeon as regards the manner of his pulpit appearances. He was always profoundly earnest in his appeals to the consciences of the unconverted; and spoke with an emphasis which showed how deeply he felt, when dwelling on the joys and sorrows, the hopes and the fears of believers. And yet, strange to say, there was at times associated with this a seeming irreverence which, we know, frequently caused much pain to some of his greatest friends and admirers. In this respect also, we are happy to say, we can discern a decided amendment....

“Never, since the days of George Whitefield, has any minister of religion acquired so great a reputation as this Baptist preacher, in so short a time. Here is a mere youth, — a perfect stripling, only twenty-one years of age, — incomparably the most popular preacher of the day. There is no man within her Majesty’s dominions who could draw such immense audiences; and none who, in his happier efforts, can so completely enthrall the attention, and delight the minds of his hearers. Some of his appeals to the conscience, some of his remonstrances with the careless, constitute specimens of a very high order of oratorical power.... When this able and eloquent preacher first made his appearance in the horizon of the religious world, and dazzled the masses in the metropolis by his brilliancy, we were afraid that he might either get intoxicated by the large draughts of popularity which he had daily to drink, or that he would not be able, owing to a want of variety, to sustain the reputation he had so suddenly acquired. Neither result has happened. Whatever may be his defects, either as a man or as a preacher of the gospel, it is due to him to state that he has not been spoiled by popular applause. Constitutionally he has in him no small amount of self-esteem, but so far from its growing with his daily-extending fame, he appears to be more humble and more subdued than when he first burst on our astonished gaze. With regard again to our other fear, that his excellence as a preacher would not be sustained, the event has, we rejoice to say, no less agreeably proved the groundlessness of our apprehensions. There is no falling off whatever. On the contrary, he is, in some respects, improving with the lapse of time. We fancy we can see his striking originality to greater advantage than at first.”

As a specimen of the early friendly notices in the provincial press, the following may be given from *The Western Times,*February 23, 1856: —  
**“ANOTHER EXTRAORDINARY PREACHER.**

“; It is a remarkable fact that, in the Baptist denomination of Christians in this country, there have sprung up, from time to time, ministers of extraordinary Biblical and other learning, and of great talent and pulpit eloquence. We may refer to Dr. Carey, Dr. Gill, Dr. Rippon, the distinguished Robert Hall, of Bristol (whose discourses Brougham and Canning were glad to listen to), and many others, in proof of this peculiarity. It seems that another light has now sprung up among the Baptists, which bids fair to rival, if not to eclipse, the departed luminaries: we mean, the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, who, although but just arrived at twenty-one years of age, seems in the pulpit and the press to have astonished the religious world. This young Baptist minister’s preaching created a great sensation in Bristol, a short time since, and his visits to other places have excited intense interest. In Glasgow and other parts of Scotland, this gifted young minister has also, with marvellous effect, carried home to the hearts of crowded audiences the saving truths of ‘the everlasting gospel.’ There is a singularity also about Mr. Spurgeon, for he is emphatically ‘one of the people;’ and, by the gifts and graces with which he is endowed, he shows to the world that the great Head of the Church of Christ, as He called His apostles from the class of humble fishermen, when He ‘tabernacled on earth in the flesh,’ so now that He is in Heaven, He continues to call laborers into His vineyard from the working-men of polished society.”

It was not easy to decide whether the following paragraphs, from *The Freeman,*February 27, 1856, should be inserted here or be included in Chapter 38.; readers may be able to settle that point to their own satisfaction: —

“Mr. Spurgeon is unquestionably a phenomenon; a star, a meteor, or at all events something strange and dazzling in the horizon of the ‘religious world.’ The old lights have gone down, and since Irving, and Hall, and Chalmers ‘fell asleep,’ there has been no preacher who has created a ‘ sensation’ at all to be compared with the young minister of New Park Street Chapel. But do not let our readers imagine that they have found here a luminary of the same class with those we have just named. Whatever Mr. Spurgeon’s merits may be, — and he has some rare ones,-they are of a very different order from those which distinguished the mighty preachers of the last generation. *They*were all men of gigantic reasoning powers, of refined taste, of profound scholarship, and of vast theological learning. Of all these qualities, Mr. Spurgeon has little enough; nor, to do him justice, does he pretend to any of them, except perhaps in some unlucky moments to the last. But it will:probably be agreed, by all competent judges, that neither Irving, nor Hall, nor eve. n Chalmers, was so well fitted to carry the gospel to the poor and ignorant, as is this modern orator of the pulpit. Their writings will last for many generations, and will be as fresh to the latest as they are to-day; Mr. Spurgeon’s sermons will perhaps f3 soon be forgotten for ever, but they go to the hearts of the multitude; and as he has the good sense to know the direction in which his talent lies, he promises to be incomparably useful in a class of society which preachers too often complain is utterly beyond their reach.

“A lively imagination, sometimes rising to the region of poetry, but more frequently delighting in homely and familiar figures of speech; a free, colloquial manner of address, that goes directly to the understanding of the simplest; and an enthusiastic ardour, that must prove catching to all his hearers, unless they are more than usually insensible, are the chief legitimate attractions of Mr. Spurgeon’s style; and they are qualities so rare in their combination, and are in him so strongly developed, as to stamp him, in our judgment, with the decided impress of genius. We should suppose that it must be impossible to hear him without acquiring for him a sentiment of respect; for if offended by his extravagances, as the thoughtful certainly will he, the offence is so immediately atoned for by some genuine outburst of feeling, that you remember that his extravagances are but the errors of a youth, and that the material on which these excrescences appear is that out of which apostles and martyrs have in every age been fashioned. You pardon his follies, for they are nothing else, for the sake of his unquestionable sincerity and impassioned zeal. You wish it had been possible that a mind so gifted might have received more culture before it was called into its present dangerous position; but finding it as it is, you accept it with gratitude, and pray God, the All-wise, to be its Guide and Protector…. We see in Mr. Spurgeon a soul-loving preacher of Christ’s gospel. Few have his peculiar gifts for arresting the attention of the thoughtless, or inspiring the cold with fervour. These are high endowments; high, but awfully responsible· Of that:responsibility we believe, too, that Mr. Spurgeon has no mean sense. And therefore, we hope, not without confidence, that his usefulness will continually augment, and that whatever detracts from it will gradually disappear.”  
A more favorable notice appeared in *The Christian Weekly News,*March 4, 1856: — ”Great orators, whether pulpit, platform, or senatorial, make many friends and many foes. This is inevitable; but it is not our purpose, just now, to investigate or set forth the reasons for this result. The fact being granted, we are at no loss to account for the applause and contumely which have been heaped upon the young minister whose sermons are before us. His appearance and labors in this metropolis have excited in all religious circles, and even beyond them, attention and surprise, if not admiration. Scarcely more than a youth in years, comparatively untutored, and without a name, he enters the greatest city in the world, and almost simultaneously commands audiences larger than have usually listened to her most favored preachers. Almost daily has he occupied pulpits in various parts of town and country, and everywhere been greeted by overflowing congregations. As might be expected, many who have listened to him have gone away to speak ill of his name; while others, and by far the larger number, have been stimulated by his earnestness, instructed by his arguments, and melted by his appeals. We have seen, among his hearers, ministers of mark of nearly every section of the Christian Church; laymen well known in all circles as the supporters of the benevolent and Evangelical institutions of the day; and citizens of renown, from the chief magistrate down to the parish beadle. That the man who causes such *a furor*must possess some power not commonly found in men of his profession, will only be doubted by his detractors. Whether that power be physical, intellectual, or moral, or a happy blending of them all, is, perhaps, a question not yet fully decided even in the minds of many of his warmest admirers. The sermons before us would, we think, if carefully examined, help them to a decision .... Among the reasons to which, in our opinion, may be attributed the unbounded popularity of our author, we would name his youth, his devotedness, his earnestness, but especially that thrilling eloquence which can at once open the floodgates of the hearts of the thousands forming a Sabbath morning audience within the walls of Exeter Hall. May the Lord continue to hold him as a star in His right hand, and through his instrumentality bring many souls to bow to the scepter of His love and mercy!”

The list of “first literary friends” would not be complete unless it included Rev. Edwin Paxton Hood. His volume, *The Lamps of the Temple*, published in 1856, contained a long and appreciative article on Mr. Spurgeon, in the course of which the writer said: —  
*“It*is not too much to say that this mere lad — this boy preacher — is the most remarkable pulpit celebrity of his day; it must be admitted that, amidst all the popularities, there is no popularity like his .... Among things — remarkable or not remarkable according to the reader’s ideas, — is the treatment of the young preacher by his brethren — shall we say, brethren? — in the ministry. We understand they have pretty generally agreed to regard him as a black sheep. His character is good, — unexceptionable; — his doctrines have no dangerous heresy in them; — still, he is tabooed. The other day, a very eminent minister, whose portrait we have attempted to sketch in this volume, and whom we certainly regarded as incapable of so much meanness when we were sketching it, — perhaps the most eminent of the London Dissenting ministers, — was invited to open a chapel in the country, — at any rate, to take the evening service; but he found that Spurgeon was to take the morning, and he smartly refused to mix in the affair: it was pitiable, and we discharged ourselves, as in duty bound, of an immense quantity of pity upon the head of the poor jealous man, who dreaded lest the shadow of a rival should fall prematurely over his pulpit. No; usually the ministers have not admired this advent; the tens of thousands of persons, who flock to hear the youth preach his strong nervous gospel, do not at all conciliate them, — perhaps rather exasperate them. It would be easy to pick up a thousand criticisms on the preacher; many, not to say most of them, very severe. He is flattered by a hurricane of acrimonious remark and abuse, and perhaps owes his popularity in no small degree to this sweeping condemnation. One thing is certain, — Spurgeon’s back is broad, and his skin is thick; he can, we fancy, bear a good deal, and bear a good deal without wincing. Little more than twentyone years of age, he is the topic and theme of remark now in every part of England; and severe as some of his castigators are, he returns their castigation frequently with a careless, downright, hearty goodwill. Beyond a doubt, the lad is impudent, very impudent; — were he not, he could not, at such an age, be where he is, or what he is ....

*“A*characteristic mark of the fulness of Mr. Spurgeon’s mind, and his entire abandonment to his subject, is his plunging at once into it from the first paragraph of his sermon. He does not often beat about with prepared exordiums, and yet his exordium is frequently not only very beautiful, but perhaps the most beautiful portion of his discourse. ‘Is it not a rule with the rhetoricians, with Dr. Whately and others, that the exordium should be prepared nearly at the close of the oration, when all the powers of the mind and heart are alive with the subject, so that the auditors may have their attention arrested by those passages which will represent the orator’s most inflamed and pathetic state of feeling? We can very well acquit our speaker of any slavish following of this rule; possibly, probably, he may be ignorant Of it, but he is the subject of it. Wrapt and possessed by his topics of thought and feeling, he frequently seems to cast over the people the state of mind induced in him by the last impressions of his text. His words often are more calm, beautiful, suggestive, and subduing in his opening than in any of his following remarks .... We hear that Mr. Spurgeon has models upon which he forms his mind and style. We think it very doubtful; but, at any rate, he does not follow them slavishly; he has in his speech true mental and moral independence. Robert Hall was charged with imitating Robert Robinson, of Cambridge; — in fact, there was not the slightest resemblance between those two minds. Spurgeon is said to imitate Robert Hall and William Jay. No doubt he has read them both, but his style is wholly unlike theirs; he, perhaps, has something of William Jay’s plan and method, and that is all; but to Robert Hall there is not the most remote resemblance. He has not the purity, power, nor speed of that inimitable master; he is not at all qualified to shine in the brilliant intellectual firmament in which he held his place. We should give to him a very different location. He has the unbridled and undisciplined fancy of Hervey, without his elegance; but, instead of that, the drollery of Berridge and the ubiquitous earnestness of Rowland Hill, in his best days. But it is probable that many of us walk far too gingerly in our estimate of public speech. He who determines never to use a word that shall grate harshly on the ears of a refined taste, may be certain that he will never be very extensively useful; the people love the man who will condescend to their idiom, and the greatest preachers — those who have been the great apostles of a nation, — have always condescended to this. Bossuet, Massillon, Hall, Chalmers, McAll, were the Doctors of the pulpit; at their feet sat the refinement, the scholarship, the politeness of their times; but such men as Luther and Latimer, St. Clara and Knox, Whitefield and Christmas Evans — such men have always seized on the prevailing dialect, and made it tell with immense power on their auditors.

“A question repeatedly asked by many persons, when they have either heard, or heard of, this young man is, ‘ Will he last, will he wear?’ To which we have always replied, ‘Why not?’ There is, apparently, no strain in the production of these discourses; they bear every appearance of being, on the whole, spontaneous talkings. The preacher speaks from the full and overflowing spring within him, and speaks, as we have said, many times during the week. Some of his sermons are characterized by great mental poverty; some, and most, by a great mental wealth; so is it with all preachers, even those who consume the midnight oil, and make it their boast that they can only produce one sermon a week .... Our preacher’s fulness and readiness is, to our mind, a guarantee that he will wear, and not wear out. His present amazing popularity will of course subside, but he will still be amazingly followed; and what he is now, we prophesy, he will on the whole remain: for polished diction, we shall not look to him; for the long and stately argument, we shall not look to him; for the original and profound thought, we shall not look to him; for the clear and lucid criticism, we shall not look to him;rebut for bold and convincing statements of Evangelical truth, for a faithful grappling with convictions, for happy and pertinent illustrations, for graphic description, and for searching common sense, we shall look, and we believe we shall seldom look in vain. In a word, he preaches, — not to metaphysicians or logicians, — neither to poets nor to *savants,-to*masters of erudition or masters of rhetoric; he preaches to men.”

This chapter may be fitly closed with extracts from a pamphlet entitled, “Why *so Popular? An Hour with Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.*By a Doctor of Divinity.” It caused a great stir in the religious world when it appeared, and there is a special appropriateness in the poetical conclusion now that the beloved preacher, as a star, has melted into the light of Heaven. The writer, addressing his remarks personally to Mr’. Spurgeon, says: —

‘“Your ministry has attained the dignity of a moral phenomenon; you stand on art eminence which, since the days of Whitefield, no minister — with a single exception, if indeed, there be one, — of any church in this realm has attained. You have access to a larger audience than the magic of any other name can gather; you have raised a church from obscurity to eminence, — perhaps I might add (rumor is my authority) from spiritual indigence to affluence. You entered on a sphere, where — to use the mildest word, — langor ‘held unbroken Sabbath;’ and in less than three short years you have, instrumentally, gathered a large, united, zealous, energetic church, second, in numbers, in burning zeal, and in active effort, to no other church in the metropolis ....  
“Nor has God given you favor with your own people alone. Blessed with a vigorous mind, and with great physical *energy, — mens sana in corpore sano, — you*have consecrated all to your Master’s service, and hence you have become an untiring evangelist. East, West, North, South, — in England, Wales, and Scotland, your preaching is appreciated by the people, and has been blessed of God. No place has been large enough to receive the crowds who flocked to hear ‘ the young Whitefield’; and, on many occasions, you have preached the glorious gospel, the sward of the green earth being the floor on which, and the vault of the blue heaven the canopy under which, you announced, to uncounted thousands, ‘ all the words of this life.’ Your name has thus become ‘ familiar as a household word’ in most of the churches and many of the families of our land; and the young Pastor of Southwark has taken his place among the celebrities of our land, — and, among the ecclesiastical portion of these, he is ‘higher than the highest.’

“On another, and much higher ground, I would offer my congratulations. Usefulness is the law of the moral universe. This, in relation to the Christian ministry, means the moral renovation, the saving conversion of human souls. nothing short of this can satisfy the desires of any ‘godly minister of Christ’s gospel,’ and, therefore, all such will estimate the amount of their success by the number of well-sustained instances of conversion, which are the fruit, under God’s blessing, of their ministerial labors. Subjected to this test, the ministry of him to whom my congratulations are now presented, is placed above all the ministries with which I have any acquaintance, or of which I possess any authentic information. He states — so I am informed, — that more than one thousand souls have been hopefully converted to God, during the past year, by the instrumentality of his ministry; and that, as the result of his metropolitan and provincial labors, during the period of his short but successful Pastorate, several thousands, who had erred from the truth, or never known it, have been raised or restored to holiness, happiness, and God. ‘This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.’ I know something of the state of religion in our British churches, and I do not hesitate to avow my belief that, among the thousands — and, happily, their name is legion — who now proclaim the fundamental verities of the Christian revelation, there is not one who can truthfully say, as you can, that, during three short years, thousands — as the fruit of his ministry — have been added to the fellowship of his own church, and of other churches ....

“I am fully aware that, if I asked yourself the question, ‘Why so popular, and why so useful?’ you would reply, in a self-humbling, God-exalting spirit, ‘ I am nothing: God is all; and to His sovereignty I ascribe all my popularity and all my success.’ While admiring the spirit of this declaration, I decline to accept it as an answer to my question. God *is*a Sovereign; and in His sovereignty — essential to his Godhead, — He has a right to give His Spirit when, where, to whom, and in what proportion He pleases; but He has no caprice, no senseless, reasonless arbitrariness in His administration. He never acts without reason, though, in His sovereign right, He often withholds from Ills creature, man, the reasons which influence the Divine mind. This, and not caprice, is God’s sovereignty.

“If I cannot discover the secret of your popularity in *what*you preach, can I find it in any peculiarity in your mode of preaching? Here is, in my judgment, the explanation of the secret. *You have strong faith, and, as the result,* INTENSE EARNESTNESS. *In this lies,*as in the hair of Samson, *the secret of your power.*Go on, my brother, and may God give you a still larger amount of ministerial success! ‘ Preach the Word,’ the old theology, that ‘glorious gospel of the blessed God’ for which apostles labored and martyrs died. In all your teachings, continue to exhibit the cross of Christ as occupying, in the Christian revelation, like the sun in our  
planetary system, the very centre, and imparting to all their light and heat. Tell the people, that every doctrine, duty, or promise of the Scriptures stands intimately connected with the cross, and from that connection derives its meaning and value to us. Thus exhibiting the whole system of Divine Truth in its harmony and symmetry, — judging even by your own antecedents, — what a glorious prospect of honor, happiness, and usefulness presents itself to your view! A star in the churches, — a star of no mean magnitude, of no ordinary brilliancy,-you may be honored to diffuse, very luminously, the derived glories you possess, and, having run your appointed course, ultimately set — but far distant be the day! — as sets the morning star, —

***“‘Which falls not down behind the darkened West, Nor hides obscured amid the tempests of the sky, But melts away into the light of Heaven!’”***

(N.B. — Mr. Spurgeon’s autobiographical narrative is resumed in the following chapter.)

CHAPTER 41.

“IN LABORS MORE ABUNDANT.”

If Christ should leave the upper world, and come *into*the midst of this hall, this morning, what answer could you give, if, after showing you His wounded hands and feet, and His rent side, He should put this question, *“I*have suffered thus for thee, what hast thou done for Me?” Let me put that question for Him, and in His behalf. You have known His love, some of you fifty years, some of you thirty, twenty, ten, three, one. For you He gave His precious life, and died upon the cross, in agonies most exquisite. What have you done for Him? Turn over your diary. Can you remember the contributions you have given out of your wealth? What do they amount to? Add them up. Think of what you have done for Jesus, how much of your time you have spent in His service. Add that up, turn over another leaf, and then observe how much time you have spent in praying for the progress of His Kingdom. What have you done there? Add that up. I will do so for myself; and I can say, without a boast, that I have zealously served my God, and have been “in labors more abundant;” but when I come to add all up, and set what I have done side by side with what I owe to Christ, it is less than nothing and vanity; I pour contempt upon it all, it is but dust of vanity. And though, from this day forward, I should preach every hour in the day; though I should spend myself and be spent for Christ; though by night I should know no rest, and by day I should never cease from toil, and year should succeed to year till this hair was hoary and this frame exhausted; when I come to render up my account, He might say, *“Well*done;*”*but I should not feel it was so, but should rather say, “I am still an unprofitable servant; I have not done that which it was even my bare duty to do, much less have I done all I would to show the love I owe.” Now, as you think what you have done, dear brother and sister, surely your account must fall short equally with mine. — C. It. S., *in sermon preached at the Music Hall, Royal Surrey Gardens, June*26, 1859.

B EFORE I came to London, I usually preached three times on the Lord’sday, and five nights every week; and after I became Pastor at New Park Street Chapel, that average was fully maintained. Within two or three years, it was considerably exceeded, for it was no uncommon experience for me to preach twelve or thirteen times a week, and to travel hundreds of miles by road or rail. Requests to take services in all parts of the metropolis and the provinces poured in upon me, and being in the full vigor of early manhood, I gladly availed myself of every opportunity of preaching the gospel which had been so greatly blessed to my own soul. In after years, when weakness and pain prevented me from doing; all that I would willingly have done for my dear Lord, I often comforted myself with the thought that I did serve Him with all my might while I could, though even then I always felt that I could never do enough for Him who had loved me, and given Himself for me. Some of my ministerial brethren used to mourn over the heavy burden that rested upon them because they had to deliver their Master’s message twice on the Sabbath, and once on a week-night; but I could not sympathize with them in their complaints, for the more often I preached, the more joy I found in the happy service. I was also specially sustained under the strain of such constant labor by continual tokens of the Lord’s approval. I find that, preaching to my own people at New Park Street, on the last Sabbath of 1855, from Deuteronomy xi. 10 — 12, — ” For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs: but the land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven: a land which the Lord thy God careth for: the eyes of the Lord thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year;” — I was able to bear this testimony to the Divine power that had accompanied the Word: —

“Beloved friends, I can say that, as a minister of the gospel, the eyes of the Lord have been specially upon me all this year. It has been my privilege very frequently to preach His Word; I think, during the past twelve months, I have stood in the pulpit to testify His truth more than four hundred times, and blessed be His Name, whether it has been in the North, in the South, in the East, or in the West, I have never lacked a congregation; nor have I ever gone again to any of the places where I have preached, without hearing of souls converted. I cannot remember a ,;ingle village, or town, that I have visited a second time, without meeting with some who praised the Lord that they heard the Word of truth there from my lips. When I went to Bradford last time, I stated in the pulpit that I had never heard of a soul being converted through my preaching there; and the good pew-opener came to Brother Dowson, and said, ‘Why didn’t you tell Mr. Spurgeon that So-and-so joined the church through hearing him?’ and instantly that dear man of God told me the cheering news.”

It would not be possible for me to make more than a very incomplete list of my multitudinous engagements during those early years; and, indeed, there is no occasion for me to attempt to do so, for the record of them is on high; yet certain circumstances impressed a few of the services so powerfully upon my mind that I can distinctly recall them even after this long interval.

I had promised to give some of my “Personal Reminiscences” at the annual meeting of the Pastors’ College held in the Tabernacle on December I, 188o; and while I sat in my study, that morning, with my two secretaries, Mr. Keys and Mr. Harrald, I said to the former: — ”I recollect an incident, which occurred .during my first year in London, in which you were concerned.” This is the story. Old Mr. Thomas Olney — ” Father Olney,” as he was affectionately called by our Park Street friends, — was very anxious that I should go and preach at Tring, the little Hertfordshire town where he was born, and where his father, Mr. Daniel Olney, was for many years a deacon in one of the three Baptist churches. He found it was not a very easy matter to arrange, .for the people had heard either so much or so little about:me that I could not be allowed to appear in one of the chapels because I was too high in doctrine for the good folk who worshipped there, and permission could not be obtained for the use of another chapel because I was too low in doctrine for the dear Hyper-Calvinist friends who met there, and sang with a meaning good Dr. Watts never intended, —

***“We are a garden wall’d around,  
Chosen and made peculiar ground;  
A little spot, enclosed by grace  
Out of The world’s wide wilderness.”***

But there was a third place, — the West End Chapel, — the minister of which was a Mr. William Skelton, who thought that I was all right in doctrine, so Mr. Olney obtained consent for me to preach there. If I remember rightly, the worthy man’s stipend only amounted to about fifteen shillings a week. He had invited us to tea at his house; but while we sat in his humble home, my conscience rather smote me because my good deacon and I were consuming some of his scanty store of provisions, and I began to think of some plan by which we could repay him for his kindness. I noticed that our friend was wearing an alpaca coat, which was very shiny, and in places was so worn that I could see through it. We went to the chapel, and the service proceeded, and all the while I was pondering in my mind what could be done for the worthy man who had lent us his chapel, and entertained us so generously. During the singing of one of the hymns, Mr. Keys came up to the pulpit, and said to me, *“The Pastor* of this church is a very poor man, the people are able to give him very little; it would be a great kindness, sir, if you could have a collection for him, and get him a new coat.” That was just what I had been thinking, so at the close of the service I said to the congregation: — “Now, dear friends, I have preached to you as well as I could, and you know that our Saviour said to His disciples, ‘Freely ye have received, freely give.’ I don’t want anything from you for myself, but the minister of this chapel looks to me as though he’. would not object to a new suit of clothes.” I pointed down to my worthy deacon, and said, *“Father*Olney, down there, I am sure will start the collection with half a sovereign (he at once nodded his head to confirm my statement); I will gladly give the same amount; and if you will all help as much as you can, our brother will soon have a new suit, and a good one, too.”

The collection was made, it realized a very fair sum, and the minister was in due time provided with suitable garments. I apologized to him, after the service, for my rudeness in calling public attention to his worn coat; but he heartily thanked me for what I had done, and then added, “Ever since I have been in the service of the Lord Jesus Christ, my Master has always found me my livery. I have often wondered where the next suit would come from, and I really was wanting a new one very badly; but now you have provided it for me, and I am very grateful both to the Lord and also to you.” I don’t remember doing quite the same thing on any other occasion, though I may have helped some of the Lord’s poor servants in a different way.

As far as I can remember, this is a true account of what happened at Tring in August, 1854; and I have often related the story. Someone else, however, evidently thought that it was not sufficiently sensational, so it was very considerably altered, and ultimately found its way into *The Glasgow Examiner,*in May, 1861, as a communication from the London correspondent of that paper. It is worth while to compare the “authorized” and “revised” versions of the incident, for the discrepancies in the latter are fairly typical of the inaccuracies in hundreds of other “stories” that have been told of me during my ministry in London. This is what the London correspondent wrote: —

**“REV. C. H. SPURGEON AND THE FARMERS.**

“Apropos of Mr. Spurgeon, I have to chronicle a circumstance which displays the characteristic benevolence of the rev. gentleman in a most amiable light. I had the anecdote from an eye-witness, and hence can vouchsafe *(sic)*for its authenticity. A short time ago, Mr. Spurgeon, while temporarily resident at Tring, received a requisition, signed by the principal inhabitants of that rural locality, begging him to address them. The rev. gentleman having courteously assented, the good people of Tring began to look about them for a building suitable to the occasion. A Nonconformist minister was first applied to for the loan of his chapel, but returned an indignant refusal. An application to the vicar for the use of the parish church met with a similar response. An open-air meeting, in the existing state of the weather, was out of the question; and, there being no room in the village sufficiently large to accommodate a quarter of the expected audience, it began to be feared that the whole affair would drop through, more especially as Mr. Spurgeon had to leave for town by an early train on the following morning.

“In this dilemma, a small farmer in the neighborhood offered the use of a large barn, which was gladly accepted. An extemporaneous pulpit was hastily constructed, and long before the hour appointed every corner of the place was crowded with expectant listeners. On entering the pulpit, Mr. Spurgeon informed his congregation that, although he had only been asked to give one sermon, it was his intention to deliver two. After a long and brilliant discourse in his own peculiarly forcible and impressive style, he paused for a few minutes, and then proceeded: — ’ And now for sermon number two, — a plain, practical sermon. Our friend who gave us the use of this building is a poor man. When I saw him, this morning, he wore a coat all in tatters; his shirt absolutely grinned at me through the holes. Let us show our appreciation of his kindness by buying him a new suit of clothes.’ The suggestion was immediately adopted, and in the course of a few minutes some f10 or f12 was collected. On his return to London, Mr. Spurgeon related the circumstance to some of his congregation, who testified their appreciation of the respect paid to their Pastor by subscribing a further sum of f20 for the benefit of the Hertfordshire farmer.”

I believe the friends at Tring were pleased with the service, for, not long afterwards, I was invited to go there again, to preach the Sunday-school anniversary sermons. This was, I think, at one of the other Baptist chapels in the town. I addressed the children in the afternoon, and preached to the adults in the evening. At the close of the afternoon service, some of the Hyper-Calvinist friends, who had been present, found fault with what they called my unsound teaching. The Holy Spirit had very graciously helped me in speaking to the many young people who were gathered together, and I believe that some of them were brought to the Saviour; but, among’ other things, I had said to them that God had answered my prayers while I was a child, and before I was converted. That was certainly true, for, on many occasions, long before I knew the Lord, I had gone to Him with my childish petitions, and He had given me what I had asked of Him. I told the children that this fact had greatly impressed me while I was a boy, and it led me to believe more firmly in God’s overruling power, and in the efficacy of prayer, and I urged them also to pray to Him. This gave great offence to my critics, so five or six of those grave old men gathered round me, and tried to set me right in their peculiar fashion. Did I not know that the Scripture declared that “the prayer of a sinner is abomination unto the Lord”? That is a sentence which I have never been able to find in my Bible, and I told them so. Then they asked, “How can a dead man pray?” I could:not tell, but I knew that I prayed even while I was “dead in trespasses and sins.” They said that it was impossible; but I was equally positive that it could be done, for I had done it. They still maintained that it was not sound doctrine, and that God did not hear the prayers of sinners. There was quite a little ring formed around me, and I did my best to answer the objections; but, after all, the victory was won, not by Barak, but by Deborah. A very old woman, in a red cloak, managed to squeeze herself into the circle, and turning to my accusers, she said, “What are you battling about with this young man? You say that God does not hear the prayers of unconverted people, that He hears no cry but that of His own children. What do you know about the Scriptures? Your precious passage is not in the Bible at all, but the psalmist did say, ‘He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry’ (Psalm 147:9). Is there any grace in *them?*If God hears the cry of the ravens, don’t you think He will hear the prayers of those who are made in His own image? You don’t know anything at all about the matter, so leave the young man alone, and let him go on with his Master’s work.” After that vigorous speech, my opponents quickly vanished, and I walked away in happy conversation with The dear old soul who had so wisely delivered me from the cavillers.

I had quite a different experience on The occasion when I went to preach at Haverhill, in Suffolk. The congregation that day had the somewhat unusual privilege, or affliction, of listening to two preachers discoursing by turns upon the same text! The passage was that grand declaration of the apostle Paul, “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God” (Ephesians ii. 8). It does not often’ happen to me to be late for service, for I feel that punctuality is one of those little virtues which may prevent great sins. But we have no control over railways and breakdowns; and so it happened that I reached the appointed place considerably behind time. Like sensible people, they had begun their worship, and had proceeded as far as the sermon. As I neared the chapel, I perceived that someone was in the pulpit preaching, and who should the preacher be but my dear and venerable grandfather! He .saw me as I came in at the front door, and made my way up the aisle, and at once he said, “Here comes my grandson! He may preach the gospel better than I can, but he cannot preach a better gospel; can you, Charles?” As I pressed through the throng, I answered, “You can preach better than I can. Pray go on.” But he would not agree to *that.*I must take the sermon, and so I did, going on with the subject there and then, just where he left off. “There,” said he, “I was preaching on ‘ For by grace are ye saved.’ I have been setting forth the source and fountain-head of salvation; and I am now showing them the channel of it, ‘through faith.’ Now, you take it up, and go on.”

I am so much at home with these glorious truths, that I could not feel any difficulty in taking from my grandfather the thread of his discourse, and joining my thread to it, so as to continue without a break. Our agreement in the things of God made it easy for us to be joint-preachers of the same discourse. I went on with “through faith,” and then I proceeded to the next point, “and that not of yourselves.” Upon this, I was explaining the weakness and inability of human nature, and the certainty that salvation could not be of ourselves, when I had my coat-tail pulled, and my wellbeloved grandsire took his turn again. When I spoke of our depraved human nature:, the good old man said, “I know most about that:, dear friends;” so he took up the: parable, and for the next five minutes set forth a solemn and humbling description of our lost estate, the depravity of our nature, and the spiritual death under which we were found. When he had said his say in a very gracious manner, his grandson was allowed to go on again, to the dear old man’s great delight; for now and then he would say, in a gentle tone, “Good! Good!” Once he said, “Tell them that again, Charles,” and of course I did tell them *that*again. It was a happy exercise to me to’ take my share in bearing witness to truths of such vital importance, which are so deeply impressed upon my heart. Whenever I read this text, I seem to hear that dear voice, which has been so long lost to earth, saying to me, *“‘Tell*them that agaIN.” I aim not contradicting the testimony of forefathers who are now with God. If my grandfather could return to earth, he would find me where he left me, steadfast in the faith, and true to that form of doctrine which was once for all delivered to the saints. I preach the doctrines of grace because I believe them to be true; because I see them in the Scriptures; because my experience endears them to me; and because I see the holy result of them in the lives of believers. I confess they are none the less dear to me because the advanced school despises them: their censures are to me a commendation. I confess also that I should never think the better of a doctrine because it was said to be “new.” Those truths which have enlightened so many ages appear to me to be ordained to remain throughout eternity. The doctrine which I preach is that of the Puritans: it is the doctrine of Calvin, the doctrine of Augustine, the doctrine of Paul, the doctrine of the Holy Ghost. The Author and Finisher of our faith Himself taught most blessed truth which well agreed with Paul’s declaration, “By grace are ye saved.” The doctrine of grace is the substance of the testimony of Jesus.

Some of the special services it was my privilege to conduct in London, in those long-past days, remain in my memory with great vividness. The first time I was asked to preach at one of the representative gatherings of the denomination was on January 10, 1855, when the annual meetings of the London Association of Baptist Churches were held at New Park Street Chapel, which was crowded both afternoon and evening, to the manifest astonishment of the grave and venerable ministers and delegates who had usually met on such occasions in much smaller numbers. My subject was, “The Holy War,” the text being 2 Cor. x. 4: “For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds.” Rev. Thomas Binney, of the Weigh House Chapel, near the Monument, was in the congregation that afternoon, and as he walked away, one of our friends heard him say, concerning the service, *“It*is an insult to God and man; I never heard such things in my life before.” Our brother was so indignant that he turned to him, and said, *“The*man who can speak like that of a young minister of Jesus Christ is one of whom I shall be ashamed as long as I live, unless he repents having uttered such unkind remarks.” I know this story is true, for I had it from the lips of the good man himself. Many years afterwards, he was again in Mr. Binney’s company, so he reminded him of the incident; and our friend told me that no one could have spoken of me with more intense and hearty esteem than did the venerable man at that time. “But,” he added, “you know, my dear sir, that your minister has greatly improved since those early days. I very soon found out my mistake, and you may depend upon it that my sentiments with regard to Mr. Spurgeon are completely changed. I did not at all blame you for rebuking me as you did; I only wish I had as many friends to stick to me, and speak up for me, as your minister has always had. If I ever said anything against him, I might just as well have pulled down a skep of bees about my head; but now I have no feeling towards him but that of the utmost regard and affection.” I also know that, long before this confession,

Mr. Binney, while addressing the students of one of the Congregational Colleges, had said, in reply to some disparaging remarks concerning me which he had overheard: — ”I have enjoyed some amount of popularity, I have always been able to draw together a congregation; but, in the person of Mr. Spurgeon, we see a young man, be he who he may, and come whence he will, who at twenty-four hours’ notice can command a congregation of twenty thousand people. Now, I have never been able to do that, and I never knew of anyone else who could do it.”

*The Freeman*thus reported the meetings of the day: —

“L ONDON BAPTIST ASSOCIATION. — Whatever reason may be assigned for the fact, it is certain that an Association meeting in London is very different from one in the country. Perhaps the ministers and members of the several churches meet so often that an annual gathering is no novelty; perhaps the walk through London streets, or the jolt: in an omnibus or cab, has fewer attractions than the Whitsuntide jaunt by railroad or pleasant country lane; or perhaps the thing has escaped due attention amid the throng of metropolitan claims; — but certain it is, that the London Particular Baptist Association, holding, as it does, from a sense of duty, a meeting every year, has only given generally the impression of being a somewhat dull affair. Indeed, it is not enlivening either to preacher or hearer to find one’s self in New Park Street Chapel with a congregation of seventy people, on a January week-day afternoon!

“‘This year, we are bound to say, all was different. The popularity of the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, the recently-settled Pastor at New Park Street, attracted a crowded audience on the afternoon of the 10th instant. The metropolitan churches of the denomination appeared for the most part well represented, the only noticeable exception being the absence of several leading ministers, owing, as was explained, to the Quarterly Mission Committee being holden, by some mischance which will probably not occur again, upon the same day. The preacher treated with much earnestness on the ‘ strongholds ‘ of the evil one that we are called to subdue, and on ‘ the weapons of our warfare,’ which are ‘mighty through God’ to the task. The vigor and originality of the sermon, we cannot forbear remarking, sufficiently accounted to us for the popularity of the youthful preacher, and indicated powers which, with due culture, may by the Divine blessing greatly and usefully serve the Church in days to come: A very large company remained in the chapel to tea, and in the evening the place was thronged to overflowing for the public meeting, — which, however, was not distinguished by any feature worthy of remark, save the delivery of two or three brief, simple, Evangelical addresses. It appears that many churches in London are not connected with the Association, and of those which are, several sent no reports. No complete statistics, therefore, could be presented. Of those churches from which letters were read, most seemed stationary, — some were prosperous. The accounts, perhaps, on the whole, were quite equal to the average”

CHAPTER 42

“IN LABORS MORE ABUNDANT” (CONTINUED)*.*

O UR first sojourn at Exeter Hall, from February 11 to Max 27, 1855, like the later assemblies in that historic building, was one long series of “special services, which gave the church at New Park Street a position it had not previously attained The simple record in our church-book scarcely conveys an adequate idea of the importance of the “forward movement” that was about to be inaugurated: —

“Our Pastor announced from the pulpit that our place of worship would be closed for enlargement for the eight following Lord’s-days, during which period the church and congregation would worship in the large room at Exeter Hall, Strand, on Lord’s-days, morning and evening, and that accommodation had also been provided for the usual week-evening services to be held at Maze Pond Chapel.”

The following paragraph, published in *The Globe,*March 22, was extensively copied into other papers; and the comments upon it, both favorable and otherwise, helped still further to attract public attention to our services: —

“The circumstances under which the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon has recently come before the public are curious, and demand a passing notice. Some months since, he became minister of New Park Street Chapel; and it was soon found that the building, capacious as it was, was far too small to accommodate the crowds of persons who flocked to hear the young and eloquent divine. In this state of affairs, there was no alternative but to enlarge the chapel; and while this process was going on, Exeter Hall was engaged for him. For some weeks past, he has been preaching there ,-=very Sunday morning and evening; but he has filled the great hall, just as easily as he filled New Park Street Chapel. A traveller along the Strand, about six o’clock on a Sunday evening, would wonder what could be the meaning of a crowd which literally stopped the progress of public vehicles, and sent unhappy pedestrians round the by-streets, in utter hopelessness of getting along the wider thoroughfare. Since the days of Wesley and Whitefield, — whose honored names seem to be in danger of being thrown into the shade by this new candidate for public honors, — so thorough a religious *furor* has never existed. Mr. Spurgeon is likely to become a great preacher; at present, his fervid and impassioned eloquence sometimes leads him a little astray, and sometimes there is a want of solemnity, which mars the beauty of his singularly happy style.”

Before we had completed the two months for which we had engaged Exeter Hall, we found that it was advisable to continue there for eight more Sabbaths (making sixteen in all). Our return to our own chapel is thus recorded in the church-book: —

“The meeting-house in New Park Street was re-opened, after the enlargement, on Thursday, May 3ISt, 1855, when two sermons were preached, that in the forenoon by the Rev. James Sherman, of Blackheath, and that in the evening by our Pastor.”

It was a very wet day, and, although I am not a believer in omens, I told the people that I regarded it as a prognostication of the *“showers*of blessing” we hoped to receive in the enlarged building; and that, as it had rained literally at the re-opening services, I prayed that we might have the rain spiritually as long as we worshipped there. To the glory of God, I am grateful to testify that it was so. I also quoted to the crowded congregation Malachi iii. 10, — ”Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in Mine house, and prove Me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it;” — and reminded the friends that, if they wished to have the promised blessing, they must comply with the condition attached to it. This they were quite ready to do, and from the time of our return to our much-loved sanctuary until the day when we finally left it, we never had “room enough to receive” the blessings which the Lord so copiously poured out for us.

There were two evenings — June *22,*and September 4, 1855, — when I preached in the open air in a field in King Edward’s Road, Hackney. On the first occasion, f4 I had the largest congregation I had ever addressed up to that time, but at the next service the crowd was still greater. F5 By careful calculation, it was estimated that from twelve to fourteen thousand persons were present. I think I shall never forget the impression I received when, before we separated, that vast multitude joined in singing —

***“Praise God from whom all blessings flow.”***

That night, I could understand better than ever before why the apostle John, in the Revelation, compared the “new song” in Heaven to “the voice of many waters.” In that glorious hallelujah, the mighty waves of praise seemed to roll up towards the sky, in. majestic grandeur, even as the billows of old ocean break upon the beach.

Among the notable gatherings in various provincial towns, my visit to Trow-bridge has a special interest because of the singularity of an extra service that was crowded into my programme. I had promised to preach in one place of worship in the afternoon and evening of Monday, April 7, 1856, and in another chapel the following morning. At both the services on the Monday, the building was densely packed, and hundreds had to go away, unable to gain admission, so I offered to preach again at ten o’clock at night if the friends could make it known, and 15ring in a fresh congregation. Many remained after the first evening service, and before the appointed hour others came in such numbers that the place was again crowded.

That was a memorable night, but it was quite eclipsed by another, which I spent in a meeting-house not far from the place which was the scene of the terrible explosion in the Risca colliery in December, 186o. That charming spot in South Wales has frequently yielded me a quiet and delightful retreat. Beautiful for situation, surrounded by lofty mountains, pierced by romantic valleys, the breathing of its air refreshes the body, and the sight of the eyes makes glad the heart. I have climbed its hills, I have seen the everwidening landscape, the mountains of Wales, the plains of England, and the sea sparkling afar. I have mingled with its godly men and women, and worshipped God in their assemblies. I have been:fired with the glorious enthusiasm of the people when they have listened to the Word; but that night I shall never forget in time or in eternity, when, crowded together in the place of worship, hearty Welsh miners responded to every word I uttered, with their “Gogoniants” encouraging me to preach the gospel, and crying “Glory to God!” while the message was proclaimed. They kept me well-nigh to midnight, preaching three sermons, one after another, almost without a break, for they loved to listen to the gospel. God was present with us, and many a time has the baptismal pool been stirred since then by the fruit of that night’s labor.  
Nor shall I ever forget when, standing in the open air beneath God’s blue sky, I addressed a mighty gathering within a short distance of that same place, when the Spirit of God was poured upon us, and men and women were swayed to and fro under the Heavenly message, as the corn is moved in waves by the summer winds. Great was our joy that day when the people met together in thousands, and with songs and praises separated to their homes, talking of what they had heard.

I must mention the visit I paid to Stambourne, on May *27,*1856, when I preached, at my dear grandfather’s request, in commemoration of his ministerial jubilee. He had then been Pastor of the Congregational Church at Stambourne for forty-six years, and he had previously been minister at Clare, in Suffolk, for four years. I suppose such a service is almost unique; certainly, I have no recollection of any other instance in which a grandson has had the privilege of preaching for his grandfather under similar circumstances, and I bless God that this was my happy lot. On the previous Sabbath morning, at New Park Street Chapel, I delivered substantially The same discourse from Isaiah xlvi. 4, and it was published under the title, “The God of the Aged” (Nos. 81-2). Some fifteen hundred or two thousand persons assembled at Stambourne for the celebration; and to accommodate them, a large covered space was extemporized by the use of a barn, and tents, and tarpaulins. The proceedings were, naturally, full of interest. My venerable friend, Rev. Benjamin Beddow, who assisted me in the compilation of *Memories of Stambourne,*has recorded the following incident which, otherwise, I might .have forgotten:—

“In the afternoon, Mr. C. H. Spurgeon made some allusions to Thomas Binney’s volume, *How to make the best of both worlds,*and expressed his opinion that no man could serve two masters, or live for more than one world. The ardent spirit of a Congregationalist minister was aroused, and he interrupted the speaker. This was a mistake; but though it raised discussion, it produced no result upon the evening congregation, which was as thronged and as enthusiastic as that which preceded it. We only refer to it for the sake of the sequel to the anecdote. Years after, the gentleman who interrupted had such an opinion of C. H. Spurgeon that, in a very kind and genial letter, he reminded him of the incident, and asking for a sermon from him, pressed the request by quoting the old saying about Cranmer, ‘ It you do my Lord of Canterbury an ill turn, he will be your friend all the days of your life.’ At that time it was not in the power of C. H. Spurgeon to grant the request, for the season had long been promised to others; but he felt that he would right gladly have done so had it been within the region of the possible.

“Great were the crowds of that day’ very busy were: all the ladies of the region in making tea, and very liberal were the gifts. The venerable old man, whose ministerial jubilee was thus celebrated, seemed to feel rather the weight of the years than any special exhilaration because of their having reached to fifty. Within himself he held a quiet jubilee of rest, which the world could neither give nor take away.”

My experiences in those early years were very varied, and some of them were so singular that I cannot easily forget them. At one place, I was preaching to a great crowd of people, and during the sermon many in the congregation were visibly affected. I felt that the power of the Lord was working there very manifestly; one poor creature absolutely shrieked out because of the wrath of God against sin.

On another occasion, I had scarcely finished my discourse, when a Christian woman, who had been listening to it, dropped dead in her pew. That was at a village!in Kent. not very long afterwards, I went to Tollesbury, in Essex, to preach on a week-day afternoon on behalf of the Sunday-school at my father’s chapel. There was a large assembly of friends from the surrounding district; and at the close of the service, tea was provided for them in a tent. Before they had finished, the wife of one of the deacons was seized with a fit, and died in a few minutes. I had not arranged to preach in the evening; but, under the circumstances, I did so, taking for my text Paul’s words, “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

An old countryman once came to me, after a service:, and said, “Ah! young man, you have had too deep a text; you handled it well enough, but that is an old man’s text, and I felt afraid to hear you announce it.” I replied, “Is God’s truth dependent on age? If the thing is true, it is just as well to hear it from me as from anyone else; but if you can hear it better anywhere else, you have the opportunity.”

I recollect one hearer that I had of quite ‘a different sort. Preaching about in the country, I had often noticed, in a certain county, a man in a smock frock who was a regular follower. He seemed to be amazingly attentive to the service, and thinking that he looked an extremely poor man, I one day gave him five shillings. When I preached twenty miles off, there he was again, and I gave him some more help fancying that he was a tried child of God. When I was preaching in another place in the same county, there he was again; and the thought suddenly occurred to me, “That man finds something more attractive in the palms of my hands than in the words of my lips,” — so I gave him no more. The next time I saw him, he put himself in my way, but I avoided him;.and then, at last, being again in the same county, he came up, and asked me to give him something. “No,” I said, “you will have no more from me; 1 see why you have come; you have followed me, pretending to delight in the Word, and to be profited by it, whereas it is profit you get out of me, not profit from the gospel.”

In another part of the country, I was preaching once to people who kept continually looking round, and I adopted the expedient of saying, “Now, friends, as it is so very interesting to you to know who comes in, and it disturbs me so very much for you to look round, I will, if you like, describe each one as he comes in, so that you may sit and look at me, and keep up at least a show of decency.” I described one gentleman who came in, who happened to be a friend whom I could depict without offence, as *“a*very respectable gentleman who had just taken his hat off,” and so on; and after that one attempt I found it was not necessary to describe any more, because they felt shocked at what I was doing, and I assured them that I was much more shocked that they should render it necessary for me to reduce their conduct to such an absurdity. It cured them for the time being, and I hope for ever, much to their Pastor’s joy.

On one of my many early journeys by the Eastern Counties Railway, — as the G.E.R. was then called, — I had a singular adventure, upon which I have often looked back with pleasurable recollections.’ I had been into the country to preach, and was returning to London. All at once, I discovered that my ticket was gone; and a gentleman — the only other occupant of the compartment, — noticing that I was fumbling about in my pockets as though in search of something I could not find, said to me, “I hope you have not lost anything, sir?” I thanked him, and told him that it was my ticket that was missing, and that, by a remarkable coincidence, I had neither watch nor money with me. I seldom wear a watch, and probably the brother whom I had gone to help had seemed to me in need of any coin that I might have had in my possession before I started on my homeward journey. “But,” I added, “I am not at all troubled, for I have been on my Master’s business, and I am quite sure all will be well. I have had so many interpositions of Divine providence, in small matters as well as great ones, that I feel as if, whatever happens to me, I am bound to fall on my feet, like the man on the Manx penny.” The gentleman seemed interested, and said that no doubt it would be all right, and we had a very pleasant, and, I hope, profitable conversation until the train had nearly reached Bishopsgate Station, and the collectors came for the tickets. As the official opened the door of our compartment, he touched his hat to my travelling companion, who simply said, “All right, William!” whereupon the man again saluted, and retired. After he had gone, I said to the gentleman, “It is very strange that the collector did not ask for my ticket.” “No, Mr. Spurgeon,” he replied, — calling me by my name for the first time, — ”it is only another illustration of what you told me about the providence of God watching over you even in little things; I am the General Manager of this line, and it was no doubt Divinely arranged that I should happen to be your companion just when I could be of service to you. I knew you we;re all right, and it has been a great pleasure to meet you under such happy circumstances.”

A somewhat similar instance of the presence of “a friend in need” occurred at a later period of my life, but it follows so appropriately upon the previous one that it may as well be related here. I was going to preach somewhere in the North of London; and to reach my destination, I had to pass through the City. When I was in Princes Street, near the Bank, my horse fell, some of the harness gave way, and one of the shafts of the carriage was broken. Almost at the instant that the accident happened, a hand was thrust in at the window, and the owner of it gave me his card, and said, *“I*know where you are going, Mr. Spurgeon; you have no time to lose in getting to the chapel. Take a cab, and go on about your Master’s business; I’ll stay with the coachman, and see what can be done with the horse and carriage.” I did as the gentleman suggested, and after I had preached, and was ready to return, there was the carriage at the chapel door, ready for me, and the coachman gave me the message that there was *“nothing*to pay.” I wrote to thank the generous friend for his timely and welcome help and gift, and in his reply he said, *“I*only hope that, next time your horse goes down, I may be close at hand, or that somebody else may be there who will feel it as great a pleasure to be of service to you as I have done. You do not know me, but I am well acquainted with one of your deacons, and through him I have heard a good deal about you.” So he took care of me for my deacon’s sake, and still more for my Lord’s sake; and many and many a time have I had kindnesses shown to me by those who, until then, had been complete strangers to me. other people may not think much of such incidents; but to me they are intensely interesting, and they fill me with adoring gratitude to God.

(The following letters, written by Mr. Spurgeon to his very intimate friend, Mr. J. S. Watts, Regent Street, Cambridge, — to whom reference was made in Vol. 1., Chapter 22., of the A*utobiography, — have*been most kindly placed at Mrs. Spurgeon’s disposal by Miss Watts; they record the young Pastor’s experiences during the period now under review, and throw a vivid light on many of the notable incidents which occurred in 1854 — 1856: — )

“75, Dover Road,  
“August 25, 1854.  
“My Very Dear Friend,

*“I*am astonished to find that fame has become so inveterate a fabricator of untruths, for I assure you that I had no more idea of coming to Cambridge on Wednesday than of being dead last week.

“I have been, this week, to Tring, in Hertfordshire, on the border of Bucks. I have climbed the goodly hills, and seen the fair vale of Aylesbury below. In the morning, I startled the hare from her form, and at eve talked with the countless stars. I love the glades and dells, the hills and vales, and I have had my fill of them. The week before, I was preaching at Ramsgate, and then tarried awhile at Margate, and came home by boat. Kent is indeed made to rejoice in her God, for in the parts I traversed the harvest was luxuriant and all seemed thankful.

“The Crystal Palace is likewise a favorite haunt of mine; I shall rejoice to take your arm one day, and survey its beauties with you.

*“Now*for the cause at New Park Street. We are getting on too fast. Our harvest is too rich for the barn. We have had one meeting to consider an enlargement, — quite unanimous; — meet again on Wednesday, and then a committee will be chosen immediately to provide larger accommodation. On Thursday evenings, people can scarcely find a vacant seat, — I should think not a dozen in the whole chapel. On Sabbath days, the crowd is immense, and seatholders cannot get into their seats; half-an-hour before time, the aisles are a solid block, and many stand through the whole service, wedged in by their fellows, and prevented from escaping by the crowd outside, who seal up the doors, and fill the yard in front, and stand in throngs as far as the sound can reach. I refer mainly to the evening, although the morning is nearly the same.

*“Souls*are being saved. I have more enquirers than I can attend to. From six to seven o’clock on Monday and Thursday evenings, I spend in my vestry; I give but brief interviews then, and have to send many away without being able to see them. The Lord is wondrous in praises. A friend has, in a letter, expressed his hope that my initials may be prophetic, —

**“C. H. S.  
“COMFORT. HAPPINESS. SATISFACTION.**

“I can truly say they are, for I have *comfort*in my soul, *happiness* in my work, and *satisfaction*with my glorious Lord. I am deeply in debt for your offer of hospitality; many thanks to you. My kindest regards to all my friends, and yours, especially your sons and daughters. I am sure it gives me delight to be remembered by them, and I hope it will not be long before I run down to see them. Hoping you will be *blessed*in going out, and coming in,

“I am,  
“Yours truly,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**  
“75, Dover Road,  
“Saturday [Oct. or Nov., 1854].  
“My Dear Friend,

“I do ‘not think I can by any means manage to see you. There is just a bare possibility that I may be down by the half-past-one train on Monday morning; but do not prepare for me, or expect me. I can only write very briefly to-day, as it is Saturday. Congregations as crowded as ever. Twenty-five added to the: church last month; twelve proposed this month. Enlargement of chapel to be commenced speedily. £1,000 required. Only one meeting held, last Friday evening, £700 or £800 already raised; we shall have more than enough. I gave £100 myself to start the people off. Friends firm. Enemies alarmed. Devil angry. Sinners saved. Christ exalted. Self not well. Enlargement to comprise 300 seats to let, and 300 free sittings; 200 more to be decided on. I have received anonymously in one month for distribution, £18 5s., and have given it to poor Christians and sick persons.

“Love to you all. Excuse haste. forgot to say, — Prayer-meeting, 500 in regular attendance.  
Glory to the Master!  
“‘Yours in Jesus,  
**“C. H. Spurgeon.”**  
“75, Dover Road,  
“March 23, 1855.  
“My Dear Friend and Brother,

“Often have I looked for a note from you, but I have not reproached you, for I, too, have been negligent. Really, I never seem to have an hour to call my own. I am always at it, and the people are teasing me almost to death to get me to let them hear my voice. It is strange that such a power should be in one small body to crowd Exeter Hall to suffocation, and block up the Strand, so that pedestrians have to turn down by-ways, and all other traffic is at a standstill.

“The *Globe,*of last evening, says that, never since the days of Whitefield was there such a religious *furor,*and that the glories of Wesley and Whitefield seem in danger of being thrown into the shade. Well, the press has *kicked*me quite long enough, now they are beginning to *lick*me; but one is as good as the other so long as it helps to fill our place of worship. I believe I could secure a crowded audience at dead of night in a deep snow.  
“On Fast-day, all Falcon Square was full, — police active, women shrieking, — and at the sight of me the rush was fearful .... Strange to say, nine-tenths of my hearers are *men;*but one reason is, that *women*cannot endure the awful pressure, the reding of clothes, etc., etc. I have heard of parties coming to the hall, from ten or twelve miles distance, being there half-an-hour before time, and then never getting so much as near the door.

“Dear me, how little satisfies the crowd! What on earth are other preachers up to, when, with ten times the talent, they are snoring along with prosy sermons, and sending the world away? The reason is, I believe, they do not know what *the gospel*is; they are afraid of *real gospel Calvinism,*and therefore the Lord does not own them.

“And now for spiritual matters. I have had knocking about enough to kill a dozen, but the Lord has kept me. Somewhere in *nubibus* there lies a vast mass of *nebulae*made of advice given to me by friends, — most of it about humility. Now, my Master is the only one who can humble me. My pride is so infernal that there is not a man on earth who can hold it in, and all their silly attempts are futile; but then my Master can do it, and He will. Sometimes, I get such a view of my own insignificance that I call myself all the fools in the world for even letting pride pass my door without frowning at him. I am now, as ever, able to join with Paul in saying, ‘ Having nothing, and yet possessing all things.’

“Souls are being converted, and flying like doves to their windows. The saints are more zealous, and more earnest in prayer. “Many of the man-made parsons are mad, and revile me; but many others are putting the steam on, for this is not the time to sleep in.

“The Lord is abroad. The enemy trembles. Mark how the devil roars; — see *Era,*last week, a theatrical paper, where you can read about ‘EXETER HALL Theatre’ linked with Drury Lane, Princess’s, etc. Read the slander in *Ipswich Express*and the London *Empire.* The two latter have made an apology.

“What a fool the devil is! If he had not vilified me, I should not have had so many precious souls as my hearers.  
“I long to come and throw one of my *bombs*into Cambridge; you are a sleepy set, and want an explosion to wake you. (Here omit a gentleman whose initials are J. S.W.) I am coming on Good Friday; is your house still the Bishop’s Hostel? Of course it is. Now, Do write me; I love you as much as ever, and owe you a vast debt. Why not come and see me? I know you pray for me.

“With Christian love to you, and kind remembrances to all your family,  
“I am,  
“Yours ever truly,  
“C. H. Spurgeon.”  
“75, Dover Road,  
“Tuesday [April, 1855].  
“Dear Friend and Brother,

“(D.V.) Thursday, I shall be with you at 1.30 by the mail train. 1 shall be glad to preach in St. Andrew’s Street Chapel, but shall disappoint you all. The people are silly to follow me so much. It now gets worse. *Crowds awful*on Sunday last. Collected f90 morning and evening at the hall. At Shoreditch, on Tuesday, there were eight or nine hundred where only six hundred should have been admitted; upon *personally*appealing to the throng outside, disappointed at not getting; in, most of them dispersed, and allowed the rest of us .to worship as well as we could with windows open to let those hear who remained outside.

“Joseph is still shot at by the archers, and sorely grieved; (see *Baptist Reporter, United Presbyterian Magazine, Critic, Christian News, et*c., with a lot of small fry;) but his bow abides in strength, neither does he tremble. Oh, my dear brother, envy has vexed me sorely; — scarcely a Baptist minister of standing will own me! I am sick of *man;*but when I find a good one, I love him all the better because of the contrast to others.

“I have just received a handsome silver inkstand, bearing this inscription: — ’ Presented to Mr. C. H. Spurgeon by J. and S. Alldis, as a token of sincere gratitude to him as the instrument, under Almighty God, of turning them from darkness to light, March 30, 1855.’ The devil may look at *that*as often as he pleases.; it will afford him sorry comfort.

“And now, farewell.  
Christian love to you and yours, from —  
“Yours deeply in debt,

**“C. H.**SPURGEON**.”**  
“New Kent Road,  
“Southwark,

“Feb. 23, 1856.  
“My Dear Brother,

*“A*wearied soldier finds one moment of leisure to write a despatch to his brother in arms. Eleven times this week have I gone forth to battle, and at least thirteen services are announced for next week. Additions to the church, last year, *282;* received this year, in three months, more than 80; — 3o more proposed for next month, — hundreds, who are equally sincere, are asking for admission; but time will-not allow us to take in more. Congregation more than immense, — even *The Times*has noticed it. Everywhere, at all hours, places are crammed to the doors. The devil is wide awake, but so, too, is the Master.

“The Lord Mayor, though a Jew, has been to our chapel; he came up to my vestry to thank me. I am to go and see him at the Mansion House. The Chief Commissioner of Police also came, and paid me a visit in the vestry; but, better still, some thieves, thimbleriggers, harlots, etc., have come, and some are now in the church, as also a right honorable hot-potato man, who is prominently known as ‘a hot Spurgeonite.’

“The sale of sermons is going up, — some have sold 15,000. *Wife,*firstrate; beloved by all my people, we have good reason mutually to rejoice.

“I write mere heads, for you can fill up details.  
“I have been this week to Leighton Buzzard, Foots Cray, and Chatham; everywhere, no room for the crowd. Next week, I am to be thus occupied: —

*“Sabbath,*  
Monday,

Tuesday,  
Wednesday, Thursday, Friday,

Morning and evening, New Park Street. Afternoon, to address the schools.  
Morning, at Howard Hinton’s Chapel. Afternoon, New Park Street. Evening New Park Street.

Afternoon, Leighton Evening, Leighton  
Morning, Zion Chapel, Whitechapel. Evening, Zion Chapel, Whitechapel Morning, Dalston. Evening, New Park Street. Morning, Dr. Fletcher’s Chapel. Evening, Mr. Rogers’ Chapel, Brixton.

“With best love, “Yours in haste, **“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

CHAPTER 43.

FIRST VISIT TO SCOTLAND.

(At one of the services in Glasgow, during the tour described in the following chapter, Mr. Spurgeon referred to some ministers “who apologize for not preaching so often or so vigorously as they once did, because they are now fifty-seven years of age;” and then added, *“Fiftyseven!* only fifty-seven! What a happiness to preach till one is fifty-seven I *wish I could preach till I was fifty-seven;*how many souls I might be the means of converting by that time I” Mr. Spurgeon *did*preach till he was fifty-seven; and only the Lord knows how many souls had been up to that date brought to the Saviour through his ministry, nor how great will be the ultimate number saved through his printed sermons and other works.)

M Y first visit to Scotland was paid in July, 1855, and for many reasons it left lasting impressions on my memory. It began with some discomfort, for I journeyed from London to Glasgow by night, and travelling at that time was accomplished under conditions very different from those of the present day. On my arrival in the morning, I found my esteemed friend, Mr. John Anderson, ready to receive me, and to conduct me to his hospitable mansion. (This good brother must not be confounded with his namesake, Rev. John Anderson, of Helensburgh, whose acquaintance I did not make until several months later, but who, from our first meeting, became my lifelong champion and friend.) On the Sabbath, July 15, I preached in the morning at Hope Street Baptist Chapel (Dr. Patterson’s), and in the evening in West George Street Chapel, where the eminent Dr. Wardlaw had formerly ministered with great acceptance. It was a glorious sight to see the people crowding both places of worship, but it also increased my own sense of responsibility. I believe that we had the presence of God at each of the services, and that much good was done. Various newspapers gave reports, characterized by more or less truthfulness and kindly feeling; but in the case of one, the contrast to its. contemporaries, was all the more marked from the fact that it bore in its title the sacred name of *Christian,* while others were looked upon as secular papers.

*The Daily Bulletin,*July I6, contained the following article: —  
**“VISIT TO GLASGOW OF THE REV. MR. SPURGEON, OF LONDON.**

“The visit to Glasgow of this gentleman, when announced a few clays ago, was looked forward to with great pleasure by those who knew anything of his. extraordinary gifts and powers. He preached twice yesterday; in the forenoon, in Hope Street Baptist Chapel; in the evening, in West George Street Church. There was, on the first occasion, a full audience; on the second, many hundreds had to turn away, while every available inch within the church, and without it as far as the speaker’s magnificent voice could reach, was occupied. Mr. Spurgeon owes his celebrity to the possession of first-class oratorical gifts, which seem to have attained maturity of development at a very early age, so that he has established a reputation at a period of life earlier than that at which ordinary men enter upon a profession. His appearance indicates him somewhat beyond his actual age; and like his great model, Whitefield, he seems blessed with ‘no constitution,’ that is, he is endowed with a voice strong, clear, bell-like, which could be heard by an audience of very many thousands; and with a physical frame equal to a vast amount of hard work. In contour of face, he reminds us somewhat of the Rev. John Caird, and his eye has the lustrous light of genius in it. You cannot listen for a few minutes to the bright-eyed boy, whether he be preaching, or pleading in prayer, without feeling that no mere clap-trap rhetorician is before you. There is a force and massiveness about his thoughts and language, a touching, compelling sincerity, which give us the best idea we have ever had of the great early preachers. Like some of these, or like Rowland Hill or Whitefield, of later times, he descends to a homeliness of illustration, to anecdotage, even to mimicry, — a dangerous style, for great taste must be always exercised along with it; but in the ability to pass from the homely or the grotesque to the dizzy heights of imagination, the real power of the orator is seen. The impression is too vivid to permit of our entering on any critical review of the discourses of yesterday; — the subject of the one was, ‘ The Saviour on the Tree;’ and of the other, ‘ The Lamb upon the Throne.’ Suffice it to say that, as most brilliant and thrilling pulpit appeals, we have rarely heard them equalled; certainly, in some points of effect, never surpassed.”

Th*e Glasgow Examiner,*which had previously displayed a very friendly feeling, thus reported, in its issue of July e I, the first Sabbath’s services:—  
**“THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.**

“It having been for some time generally understood that this distinguished divine, for and against whom so much has been written and said, would visit Glasgow, the curiosity of the church-going people was thoroughly roused. So many and varied were the opinions of his critics that we believe many of the crowd assembled ‘in Hope Street Baptist-Chapel, last Sunday morning, expected to see a nondescript who, instead of elevating their thoughts to the throne of the Most High, would merely endeavor to excite laughter. But when the first tones of the speaker’s clear, full voice fell upon their ears, invoking, in language most sublime and beautiful, the presence and blessing of God, they must indeed have felt that truth had been said when he was compared to George Whitefield, the prince of preachers. After singing, he read a chapter in the New Testament, expounding as he went along, — a method which it is to be regretted our ministers do not more often adopt, as it affords such an excellent opportunity of dispelling the difficulties which so often arise in reading the Scriptures. The subject of discourse was from Matthew 27:36: ‘And sitting down, they watched Him there.’ Seldom has a discourse, so thrillingly eloquent, been delivered in Glasgow. The arrangement was exceedingly neat, the ideas original, while the whole breathed a spirit of most genuine piety. One thing in particular we noticed, Mr. Spurgeon follows the example of the great Teacher of Christianity in illustrating his meaning from external objects, — a mode which cannot be too highly recommended, it so much aids the retention of the discourse upon the memory.

“In the evening, West George Street Chapel was filled in every part, and, long before: the appointed hour, many were unable to gain admittance. The text was from Rev. xiv. I. Many parts of the sermon were distinguished by exceeding pathos and strength of imagination, and the preacher’s allusions to the Covenant and martyrs of Scotland showed that he had discovered the nearest way to the strong brave hearts of the Scottish people. One incident proved that he had completely thawed their hearts. On coming out of the chapel, every one, to whom it was possible, rushed forward to shake hands with him, so that it was with considerable difficulty he entered the carriage which stood in waiting.

“When Mr. S. again preaches in Glasgow, we hope’ that it will be in a larger chapel, as doubtless many more will wish to hear him from the report carried away by those who had that privilege yesterday.” *The Christian News,*July 21, published an article in quite another strain: —

**“C. H. SPURGEON.**

‘Heralded by certain paragraphs, for which those who know how to ‘sound a trumpet before them’ are able, by some occult influences, to find a place in not a few of the newspapers (albeit they are occasionally extinguished by the *avant-coureur,*‘Advertisement,’ or snubbed by the dogged and dogging ‘ Communicated ‘), the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon made his *debut*in this city on Sunday last. In the morning, he .amused, or disgusted, a respectable audience in Hope Street Baptist Chapel; and in the evening, he flung out platitudes and stale anti-Arminianisms to a large audience in West George Street Chapel, where was *(sic)wont*to be heard the silver tones of the classic Wardlaw. We did not form part of the morning audience; but, from credible reports, we have not ceased, since till now, congratulating ourselves that we neither witnessed the buffoonery of that exhibition, nor listened to the commonplace denunciation of bigotry (repeated, by the way, in the evening) which Mr. S. *consistently*hedged round by’ doctrines or dogmas of the most rampant exclusiveness. The evening’s exhibition was, we are informed, a little., quieter than the morning one. Perhaps the preacher had heard, in the interval, that Scotland is not so thoroughly Calvinistic as he in his dreams had fancied[; and it may have been hinted to him that the pulpit in which, by some unaccountable oversight, we may not say manoeuvring, he was to be permitted to stand, had been consecrated to the *intelligent*proclamation of doctrines certainly, even in their deficiencies, more heart and mind satisfying than the mire and dirt with which he has himself become muddled, and by casting forth which he seeks to muddle the minds of others .... We must also remind those who play lackey to Mr. S., that their strength or weakness is apt to be known from the company *they*keep, so that, striking hands with bigots and buffoons, they may be suspected of a fellowship therewith, notwithstanding any halfhearted disclaimers they may put forth. If you can’t alone fight Arminianism, do engage one for the contest who knows what Arminianism is, and do not bring disgrace upon yourselves and your creed by endeavoring to screen both behind the mask of the down. In compassion, too, upon the boy who has fallen into your hands, remember the mischief you may bring upon him, if it be not already brought, and against which Paul guards in 1 Tim. iii. 6. There may be occasion to deal a blow to the mask; — if so, let the masker look to himself.”  
As I had gone to the North partly for a holiday, during the week I journeyed on to the Highlands, where I revelled in the grand scenery of the country of which Sir Walter Scott wrote: —

***“Caledonia! stern and wild,  
Meet nurse for a poetic child!  
Land of brown heath and shaggy wood;  
Land of the mountain and the flood.”***

There was one place where my friend Anderson was particularly anxious for me to preach; that was Aberfeldy, an obscure and curious village. There was an Independent Chapel there, and the usual kirk, but nobody appeared even to have heard the name of Spurgeon, so there was some difficulty in knowing how to draw the people together to hear the Word. However, early in the morning, Mr. Anderson knocked at my door, and said, “I have thought of a plan for getting you a congregation to-night.” I answered, “I am not very particular about the plan, so you try it if you think it will succeed.” He sent round the crier at nine, and twelve, and three o’clock, with a notice to this effect: — ”Your auld acquaintance, Johnny Anderson, who used to live here in Aberfeldy, has arrived, and has brought with him his adopted son Timothy, who is going to preach to-night.” Then followed an account of my labors and successes in London, and an earnest invitation to all to be present. As the appointed hour drew nigh, the *“brither*Scots” began to assemble, and by the time for beginning the service, the chapel was well filled. The good minister gave out one of the Psalms, which was sung in a very devout style, but not with that heartiness to which I had been accustomed among my own warm-hearted friends. I then read and expounded a portion of Scripture, and was much pleased to see nearly’ every one following me most attentively, and very devoutly listening to the simple exposition which it is my custom to offer. After prayer and singing I began to preach; but there were no eyes of fire, and no beaming countenances, to cheer me while proclaiming the gospel message. The greater part of the congregation sat in. apparent indifference; they seemed made of lumps of ice fetched from Wenham Lake. I tried all means to move them, but in vain. At one time,’ a racy remark provoked a smile from two or three; but the rest, deeming it profane to laugh, sat like those two eminent Egyptian gentlemen in the Crystal Palace, looking at me with majestic, but affected solemnity. Then I advanced to more pathetic themes, and although I myself wept, not a tear came from the eyes of my audience, with but one or two exceptions. I felt like the Welshman who could make Welshmen jump, but could not move the English. I thought within myself, “Surely your blood is very cold here, for everywhere else I should have seen signs of emotion while: preaching Christ and Him crucified.” Certainly, some did appear impressed; but, on the whole, I never saw so cold an assembly in my life. The sermon over, and the concluding prayer offered, a rush was made for the door; and before I could descend the pulpit stairs, the chapel was deserted, and the whole flock scattered abroad. Never did I see so hasty an evacuation, and I am certain that, if the village were ever threatened by the Russians, the inhabitants would be able to escape “over the hills and far away” at an hour’s notice, if they used the same expedition.

Feeling rather sad at our singular service, I went into the street, and was delighted to find that, although cold as marble in the building, they were now hearty and full of feeling. I will not limit the Holy One of Israel. I trust some secret work was done’ the earnest thanks for my trouble, and the eager request that I would come again, showed that there had been some appreciation of the service, despite that formality which their training had engendered. I retired to rest with the conviction that the last day would prove that the seed was not lost; and I confidently expect to see in glory some soul plucked from the burning by the arm of the Holy Spirit, through the message delivered by me to the people of Aberfeldy.

On my way back to Glasgow, I had an adventure which was somewhat unpleasant, and which might have had more serious consequences. The accounts of it were considerably exaggerated; my friends in London were told that I had been thrown into the water, and dragged out by the hair of my head. It was not so, though’ there certainly was some danger, as my letter, published in the N*orth British Daily Mail,*July 20, plainly shows: —

**“N ARROW ESCAPE AT GOVAN FERRY.** “To the Editor of the *North British Daily Mail,*  
“Sir,

“The value of the press as the corrector of abuses is incalculable. Will you allow me to avail myself of your columns to expose an individual who ought to suffer some more severe penalty for his folly? On returning, on Wednesday evening, from a tour in the Highlands, I requested to be set on shore at Govan Ferry. A boat was brought alongside, into which I entered, and was not a little distressed to find that strong drink had been doing mischief with the brains of the boatman. We were propelled, much to the dismay of the ladies on board, upon the track which a steamer then approaching was certain to take. The boat was, however, after some remonstrance, guided safely to the side of the other steamer, and then the manager of the boat, who was ‘as drunk as a lord,’ filled it until we stood so thickly together that we could not move, and the slightest motion must have sent us all to the bottom.

“Now, sir, I have not the honor to be a Scotchman, but I may ask, — Are there no authorities who can prevent boats from being overcrowded, and call a man to account who was so drunk as to be incapable of anything except the lowest abuse and swearing? Should an important ferry be in the hands of a man who has not sufficient respect for himself to avoid drunkenness, and is so careless of the lives of others that he can so foolishly expose them? We were safely landed, but not until one gentleman had been over his knees in the water; but should another time be less propitious, some life must be lost. I have written, not for myself, but top the other four-and-twenty who were placed in so perilous a situation.

“Yours, etc.,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

(The following letter, written by Mr. Spurgeon to his .father, at this date, has been preserved: he had it copied, and laid aside with other material for his *Autobiography* .’ — )

“Fairfield,  
“Near Glasgow,  
“My Dear Father, “July 19, 1855.

“During the past week, I have been among the noble mountains in the Highlands; and you will rejoice to hear how much better I feel. Last Sabbath, I preached twice in Glasgow to immense crowds.

“There is as much stir about me here as there is in London, and I hope souls are really being saved. I am sure you will excuse my being brief, since I have so many letters to answer, and I do not want to keep indoors, but to have all the air I can.

“Oh, what must God be, if such are His works! I suppose Mother is back; kiss her for me, and give my love to all. I am happy, but had rather be home again; — you will guess the reason. I only want that one person to make the trip a very fine one; — but patience, Charles.

“Best love to you, my very dear Father,  
“From your affectionate son,  
“CHARLES.”

I had promised to preach at Bradford, the following Sabbath (July 22); and on my way to Yorkshire, I made a short stay at Lake Windermere, round which I sailed, and greatly enjoyed the beauties of its scenery. On reaching Bradford, I found that the friends had engaged the Music Hall, which, they said, held a thousand persons more than Exeter Hall; but it was not large enough to contain the crowds that came. On the Sunday morning, almost as many had to go away as were accommodated in the building; in the evening, the streets presented a solid block of living men and women. The place was crammed to excess, and I had scarcely room to move about to deliver what I had to say to the people. At the end of the day, I was delighted to find that, not only had thousands of persons heard the Word, but they had given f144 towards the Sabbath-schools in connection with which the services had been held. From Bradford, I went to Stockton-onTees, and there again I preached to a very large congregation.

Journeying back again to Scotland, I conducted a service in Queen Street Hall, Edinburgh, on Wednesday evening, July 25. notwithstanding pouring rain, a great crowd of people again assembled. I was very delighted, after the sermon, to meet with a military officer who grasped my hand, and said, “For twenty years I have served her Majesty, yet never had I heard the Word of God to my soul’s profit until I stepped into Dr. Wardlaw’s Chapel, at Glasgow, a week ago last Sabbath. But now I am enlisted in the army of the King of kings. The Lord God of hosts bless you! The King of kings be with you! The God of Jacob help you everywhere!” I blessed the dear man, and retired to rest, conscious that, if I had done nothing else, yet, through my instrumentality, one of the heroes of the Crimea, who had not turned his back in the day of battle, was found numbered among the good soldiers of Jesus Christ,

*The Christian News,*July 28, thus described this service: —  
**“THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON IN EDINBURGH.**

“According to announcement in the newspapers and by placards, this reverend gentleman, whose appearances have created such an interest in Exeter Hall, London, preached a sermon in Queen Street Hall, Edinburgh, on Wednesday evening, 25th in,;t. favored with a seat which commanded an admirable prospect of the platform, we waited for three-quarters of an hour, in company with a multitude of sight-seers, who had been drawn together by the fame or notoriety of the preacher, and, as the sequel proved, were but rather sparingly rewarded for our pains .... Mr. Spurgeon’s oratory was unequal and clumsy in the extreme, — the Spirit having deserted him, according to his own confession. Might not this be a punishment for his non-preparation? for he glories that he never prepares, which in our ears, particularly from a minister, sounds very much like glorying in his shame, though he informed his audience that, at times, his eloquence is like the mountain torrent, and rolls along like a winged chariot. We were sorry for Mr. Spurgeon, more sorry for his friends, and most sorry for the audience, many of whom were competent persons, and had evidently come to listen to something extraordinary in the use of the pulpit. That Mr. Spurgeon should have become an idol in London, we do not wonder, for we remember Mr. Jay, of Bath, saying ‘ that the London public is the most gullible public on the face of the earth, and that any man who should vociferate standing on his head would gather immense congregations around him, whatever his vulgarity and insolence.’ Mr. S., in our estimation, is just a spoiled boy, with abilities not more than mediocre, and will for certain, if he do not retrace his steps, share the fate of the ‘early gooseberry’ or the ‘monster cucumber’, that appear almost annually in the columns of the newspapers, — sink into obscurity, leaving only the memorial of his career, that he was, and that he has descended to that nihility from which, by puffing and blustering, he originally and unworthily sprang.”

The reference, in the above paragraph, to desertion by the Spirit of God was a gross perversion of fact, for I had not neglected preparation for the service. The incident was very vividly impressed.upon my mind and heart, but I think the true lesson to be learned from it was the one I tried to teach my own people after I returned to London. I said to them: — ”Once, while preaching in Scotland, the Spirit of God was pleased to desert me; I could not speak as usually I have done. I was obliged to tell the people that the chariot wheels were taken off, and that the chariot dragged along very heavily. I have felt the benefit of that experience ever since. It humbled me bitterly; and if I could, I would have hidden myself in any obscure corner of the earth. I felt as if I should speak no more in the Name of the Lord; and then the thought came, ‘Oh, thou art an ungrateful creature! Hath not God spoken by thee hundreds of times? And this once, when He would not do so, wilt thou upbraid Him for it? Nay, rather thank Him that He hath so long stood by thee; and if once He hath forsaken thee, admire His goodness, that thus He would keep thee humble.’ Some may imagine that want of study brought me into that condition, but I can honestly affirm that it was not so. I think that I am bound to give myself unto reading, and not to tempt the Spirit by unthought-of effusions. I always deem it a duty to seek my sermons from my Master, and implore Him to impress them on my mind; but, on that occasion, I think I had prepared even more carefully than I ordinarily do, so that unpreparedness was not the reason for the lack of force I then mourned. The simple fact is this, ‘ The wind bloweth where it listeth;’ and, sometimes, the winds themselves are still. Therefore, if I rest on the Spirit, I cannot expect that I should always feel His power alike. What could I do without His celestial influence? To that, I owe everything. other servants of the Lord have had experiences similar to mine. In the Life of Whitefield we read that, sometimes, under one of his sermons, two thousand persons would profess to be saved, and many of them were really so; at other times, he preached just as powerfully, and no conversions were recorded. Why was that? Simply, because:, in the one case, the Holy Spirit went with the Word; and in the other case, He did not. All the Heavenly result of preaching is owing to the Divine Spirit sent from above.”

On the next Sabbath (July 29), I preached twice more in Glasgow. The morning service was at West Nile Street Chapel (Rev. A. Fraser’s), and there again I found the necessity for a much larger building to hold all the people who wanted to be present. In the evening, I preached in Greyfriars’ Church (Dr. King’s), and that spacious house of prayer was crowded to its utmost capacity, while I was afterwards assured by the Editor of one of the papers that 2o, oo0 persons went away, unable to obtain admission. Once more I received the help of my gracious Master as I proclaimed His truth to the eager crowd that came to hear it.

John Smith, Esq., M.A., the Editor of *The Glasgow Examiner,*inserted in his paper an account of these two services, with a lengthy critique upon my ministry, commencing thus: — ”The way moth-eaten routine generally settles off anyone who dares to break away from its old, time-worn tracks is, by pronouncing him an empiric. Galileo, Columbus, Luther, Knox, the apostle Paul, and even the Author of Christianity Himself, were, by the accredited orthodoxy of their day, stigmatized as empirics; and so will it be with anyone who ventures to do or say otherwise than according to the existing modes and fashions .... Routine in religious services is extremely liable to beget a listless, lukewarm compliance with its prescribed forms, while the spirit or *animus*gradually subsides. The preacher speaks his usual time; the people sit patiently enough, perhaps; a few may even listen; the usual number of verses is sung, and the business of the day is over; there is generally no more about it. No one can deny that this is more or less than a simple statement of the real state of matters in the majority of our churches at the present day. Should the minister during his discourse sharpen his intellects with a sprinkling of snuff, let fall his handkerchief on the Psalmbook, or give one thump louder than usual with the fist ecclesiastic, that will be noted, remembered, and commented on, while there is all but total oblivion of the subject and the nature of the discussion. To break up this deadening process, to shake the dry bones and make them live, ought to be the great aim of the preacher at the present day; but it is not everyone who can do it. Affectation of manner or style won’t do it; talent — we may say, genius — of a peculiar nature is required; and we have no hesitation in saying that Mr. Spurgeon possesses the requisites in an unusual degree. No doubt many respectable and sensible men, when hearing of the odd, and to them, uncanonical expressions of this young preacher, would be very apt to find the word ‘empiric’ or ‘quack’ upon their tongue’s end.

“We must ourselves plead guilty to some such expression when we first heard of his youth, unsystematic training, and official boldness. We, in common with our fellow-citizens, had seen and heard so much of boypreaching, lay-preaching, and bold preaching, that there was nothing uncharitable in entertaining some doubts of his intrinsic excellence; still, that large London audiences daily waited on his ministry, was a fact that could not be stifled with a sneer. It could not be any novelty in the theme itself, as there were thousands of preachers, and millions of books and tracts, dilating on it before Mr. Spurgeon made his appearance; it could not be any new doctrine, for this was the same as John Calvin preached centuries ago, and circumstantially the same as that preached by the Evangelical denominations around him; neither could it be his youth, as there are in the churches of Britain scores of preachers as young as he is; neither could it be the few *outre*sentences that were scattered through his discourses, for there are many in London who say stranger and odder things than any that he has yet uttered. But what was the Character of these crowds that went to hear him? Were they the profane, the ignorant and illiterate, the light-hearted and frivolous young people of the metropolis? There might have been some of these among the many; but, as far as we can learn, they were fair examples of the respectable churchgoing community, perfectly capable, of judging rationally on all subjects that engross public attention. We maintain that no man could have sustained such excitement, and kept together such crowds of people for two or three years, unless he was possessed of more than ordinary gifts. But we do not now require to judge him by the effects of his preaching upon a metropolitan crowd. He has appeared amongst us, and the London verdict has been fully confirmed by immense audiences, that have been equally spell-bound by his oratory. According to reports, he indulged somewhat freely in the out-of-the-way expressions on the first Sabbath of his sojourn in this city; but such was not the case last Sabbath, and his discourses on that occasion were still more fascinating and attractive. In the first place, there is about him that hearty, open, English frankness, which has no hesitation in giving full and free utterance to its opinions, loves, and dislikes. Then there is the ready, acute perception which never fails to bring out fresh and striking illustrations from any text on which the.’ attention is directed. Again, there is an extensive acquaintance with literature, which, by the aid of a retentive memory, can a: a moment’s notice furnish the speaker with choice and appropriate material. And lastly, there is a power of voice, and volubility of utterance, which /maNe him to speak with great ease, and at the same time to give powerful effect to his sentiments. We may have -heard many preachers who could reason more correctly and profoundly, who displayed more classical elegance and polish, but we have not heard one who can more powerfully arrest the attention and carry the sympathies of an audience along with him ....

“Though it has been extensively circulated that his prayers are irreverent, presumptuous, and blasphemous, there was nothing in them on Sabbath last which could with truth be so characterized. On the contrary, they were correct, appropriate, and beautiful. He certainly has not followed the usual pulpit style, but has opened his eyes on the state of society in all its forms and phases, and adapted his confessions, and petitions, and thanksgivings. He confesses the peculiar sins of the times, as well as the inherent and changeless depravity of man’s nature; the sins of the parlor, the countinghouse, and the public assembly; the sins of individuals, families, and nations. He offers petitions for various classes of characters, — for the profligate and careless, for the old, the young, and for little children; petitions for churches, for nations, for the world, all in a somewhat novel manner. While he gives thanks for special blessings, and employs language which none but the genuine believer can appropriate, and which even he must sometimes acknowledge with hesitancy, he forgets not the common benefits which all share, and the common blessings with which all are crowned. We have heard much of undue familiarities and daring impieties, but we witnessed none of them. There was an earnestness, an unction, a fluency, and an urgency, which are but too seldom imitated. His reading and exposition of the Word of God, we reckon exceedingly good. Every word receives its proper emphasis and tone, and his remarks are generally terse, original, and instructive.”

On the following Thursday, my kind host, Mr. Anderson, invited about a hundred friends to meet me at his mansion, that I might bid them farewell. I gave them an account of the way the Lord had led me into the ministry, and of the blessing He had already bestowed upon my service; and, at their urgent request, I promised to go and see them once a year, if possible. I told them that they had treated me far better than I deserved, — surely, it was for my Master’s sake. I don’t know how it is that people are so good to me, — I have never sought the applause of men, — however, if God has given me any favor in the eyes of the people, it is for me to use that favor to His glory; not to be exalted by it, but to thank Him for it, and to employ it all in His service.

Though it belongs to the following year, part of the letter from Rev. John Anderson, of Helensburgh, which was published in *The S*cotti*sh Guardian,* April 18, 1856, may be appropriately inserted here:

“Sir, — When Mr. Spurgeon was in Glasgow, last summer, the fame of his eloquence had reached me in my seclusion here, by the shores of the sounding sea, the noise of whose waves delights me more than the ‘ din of cities’ or the tumult of the people. I had heard him ‘spoken against’ by some, but spoken of by others as a preacher of remarkable, and, since the days of Whitefield himself, of unprecedented popularity. But being one of those who judge for themselves in the matter of preaching, and whose opinions as to what constitutes good preaching are somewhat peculiar, I did not attach much, I may almost say, any, importance whatever to what I heard of Mr. Spurgeon and his popularity in Glasgow. One of his printed sermons, however, having fallen in my way, I had no sooner read a few paragraphs of it than I said, ‘Here at last is a preacher to my mind, — one whom not only I, but whom Paul himself, I am persuaded, were he on earth, would hear, approve, and own.’ I forget what was the subject of the discourse; but I remember well saying to myself, ‘ I would rather have been the author of that sermon than of all the sermons, or volumes of sermons, published in my day.’ I had lately before this been reading Guthrie and Caird, but here was something entirely different, and, to my mind, in all that constitutes a genuine and a good gospel sermon, infinitely superior.

“For some time after this, I heard little, and thought little, about Mr. Spurgeon. Having been, however, in London, on the last Sabbath of March, and having been unexpectedly released from an engagement to preach, I thought I could not do better than go and hear for myself the preacher of whom I had heard so much in my own country .... Though, from the crowd which choked the doors and passages, we did not see the preacher very well, we — and this was what we wanted, — heard him distinctly. When we entered, he was expounding, as is his custom, a portion of the Scriptures. The passage expounded was Exodus, x4th chapter, which contains an account of the Israelites at. the Red Sea, — a passage of Scripture peculiarly interesting to me, having stood on its shore, and sailed on the very spot where the waters were so wondrously divided. The remarks of the preacher on each of the verses were very much in the style of Henry, and were rich and racy. His text was from the Io6th Psalm, and the subject of the discourse was the same with that of the chapter he had just expounded,= — ’ The Israelites at the Red Sea.’...

“Such was the method of one of the richest and ripest sermons, as regards Christian experience, I ever heard, — all the more wonderful as being the sermon of so young a man. It was a sermon far in advance of the experience of many of his hearer:;; and the preacher evidently felt this. But, notwithstanding this, such was the simplicity of his style, the richness and quaintness of his illustrations, his intense earnestness, and the absolute and admirable naturalness of his delivery, it told upon his audience generally, and told powerfully. Many, indeed most of them, were of ‘ the common people,’ and when I looked on their plebeian faces, their hands brown with labor, and, in many cases, their faded attire, I could not help remembering Him of whom it is said,’ the common people heard Him gladly.’ Yes, Mr. Spurgeon is the minister of ‘ the common people;’ I am told he considers himself to be such, and well he may. Happy London people, if they but knew their happiness, to have such a minister! . . . Mr. Spurgeon is equally great in the tender and the terrible. Nor is he without humour. Here, many will refuse him their sympathy, and think him censurable. I scarcely think he is. others will think, and do think differently. His taste, according to others, is bad. It is, I admit, often so. But then, think of the immaturity of his years. I was told he was conceited. I saw no proofs of it; and if I had, was I on that account to think less of his sermons? I do not say I will not eat good bread, because the maker of it is conceited. His conceit may be a bad tiling for himself; — his bread is very good for me. I am far from thinking Mr. Spurgeon perfect. In this respect he is not like Whitefield, who from the first was as perfect as an orator as he was at the last. In respect of his power over an audience, and a London one in particular, I should say he is not inferior to Whitefield himself. Mr. Spurgeon is a Calvinist, which few of the Dissenting ministers in London now are. He preaches salvation, not of man’s *free will,*but of the Lord’s *good will,* which few in London, it is to be feared, now do. On all these accounts, we hail the appearance of Mr. Spurgeon with no ordinary delight, and anticipate for him a career of no ordinary usefulness. ‘ Happy are they which stand continually before him, and hear his words of wisdom.’ As for myself, I shall long remember with delight the day on which I stood among them, and recommend such of my countrymen as may have a Lord’s-day to spend in London, to spend it, as I did, in New Park Street Chapel, in hearing Mr. Spurgeon.”

CHAPTER 44

MARVELOUS INCREASE. — FACTS AND FIGURES.

Any man, who has his eyes open to the world at large, will acknowledge that there are many clouds brooding over England, and over the world. I received lately a letter from a gentleman at Hull, in which he tells me that he sympathizes with my views concerning The condition of the Church at large. I do not know whether Christendom was ever worse off than it is now. At any rate, I pray God it never may be. Read The account of the condition of the Suffolk churches, where the gospel is somewhat flourishing, and you will be surprised to learn that they have had hardly any increase at all in The year. So you may go from church to church, and find scarcely any that are growing. Here and there, a chapel is filled with people; here and there, you see an earnest minister; here and there, an increasing church; here and there, a good prayer-meeting; but these are only like green spots in a great desert. Wherever I have gone through England, I have always been grieved to see how the Church of Christ is under a cloud, — how “the precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold. are esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter.” It is not for me to set myself up as universal censor of the Church; but I must be honest, and say that spiritual life, and fire, and zeal, and piety seem to be absent in ten thousand instances. We have abundance of agencies, we have good mechanism, but the Church, nowadays, is very much like a large steam engine without any fire, and, therefore, without any steam. There is everything but steam, everything but life. England is veiled in clouds; — not clouds of infidelity; I care not one fig for all the infidels in England, and I do not think it is worth Mr. Grant’s trouble to go after them. Nor am I afraid of Popery for old England; I do not think she will go back to that, nay, I am sure she never will; but I *am*afraid of this deadness, this sloth, this indifference, that has come over our churches. The Church wants shaking, like the man on the mountain-top does when the cold benumbs him into a deadly slumber. The churches are gone to sleep for want of zeal, for want of fire. Even those that hold sound doctrine are beginning to slumber. Oh, may God stir the Church up I One great black cloud, only broken here and there by a few rays of sunlight, seems to be hanging over the entire area of this our happy island. But, beloved, there is this comfort, “the clouds are the dust of His feet.” God can scatter them in a moment. He can raise up His chosen servants, who have only to put their mouth to the trumpet, and one blast shall awake the sleeping sentinels, and startle the slumbering camp. God has only to send out again some earnest evangelist, like Wesley or Whitefield, and the churches shall start up once more; and she, who has been clothed in sackcloth, shall doff her robes of mourning, and put on the garment of praise. The day is coming, I hope, when Zion shall sit, not without her diadem; but, with her crown on her head, she shall grasp her banner, take her shield, and, like that heroic maiden of old who roused a whole nation, shall go forth conquering and to conquer. — C. H. S., *in sermon preached at New Park Street Chapel, August*19, *1855.*

W HATEVER may be the present condition of the Church of Christ in general, and of the Baptist denomination in particular, it is certain that, at the time Mr. Spurgeon began his ministry in London, the state of affairs was far from satisfactory. Mr. Horace Mann’s report on the attendance at places set apart for public worship proved that, even in the mere external observances of religion, there was at that period much to be desired; he wrote: — ”Comparing the number of actual attendants with the number of persons *able*to attend, we find that, of 10,398,013 (58 percent. of the whole population) who would be at liberty to worship at one period of the day’, there were actually worshipping but 4,647,482 in the morning, 3,184,135 in the afternoon, and 3,064,449 in the evening. So that, taking any one service of the day, there were actually attending public worship less than half the number who, as far as physical impediments prevented, *might*have been attending. In the morning there were absent, without physical hindrance, 5,750,531; in the afternoon, 7,2x3,878; in the evening, 7,333,564. There exist no data for determining how many persons attended twice, and how many three times, on the Sunday, nor, consequently, for deciding how many attended altogether on *some*service of the day; but if we suppose that half of those attending service in the afternoon had not been present in the morning, and that a third of those attending service in the evening had not been present at either of the previous services, we should obtain a total of 7,261,032 separate persons, who attended service either once or oftener upon the Census Sunday. But, as the number who would be able to attend at *some*time of the day is. more than 58 per cent. (which is the estimated number able to be present *at one and the same time),*probably reaching 70 per cent., it is with this latter number (12,549,326) that this 7,261,032 must be compared; and the result of such comparison would lead to the conclusion that, upon the Census Sunday, 5,288,294 persons, able to attend religious worship once at least, neglected to do so.”

This was sufficiently sad; but to those who looked below the surface, to see the true spiritual condition of the people, the revelation was still more depressing. At the re-opening of New Park Street Chapel, after the enlargement, good Mr. Sherman said, in the course of his sermon: — ”It is only here and there that God is pouring out His Spirit; but most of the churches are lying like barges at Blackfriars Bridge when the tide is down, — right in the mud, — and all the king’s horses and all the king’s men cannot pull them off; they need the tide to turn, and the water to flow, and set them all afloat.”

Our own denomination was not at all in a flourishing condition. At the Baptist Union session, in 1854, the following resolution was passed: — ”That the Union learn, with unfeigned regret, that the rate of increase in the churches, as shown by the Association Returns of 1853, is smaller than in preceding years, and smaller than it has been in any year since 1834, — the limit of the Union records, — it being only at an average of x½ per church per annum; — that, while the impression made by this numerical statement might be somewhat modified by a regard to the temporary causes — such as emigration, for example, — which have operated to the diminution of the churches (and the statement cannot alone be taken as a satisfactory basis on which to form an estimate of the spiritual state of the churches), in the judgment of the Union it presents at once an occasion for humiliation and a loud call to united activity and prayer; the former in every department of the work of the Lord, the latter for the gracious outpouring of His Holy Spirit.”  
In London, the interest in denominational affairs had sunk so low that *The Baptist Messenger,*in reporting the meeting of the London Association of Baptist Churches, held at the Mission House, October 17, 1855, said that “the number in attendance, representing thirty-three metropolitan churches, consisted of NINE PERSONS, — six ministers, and three lay-brethren. Alas! ‘how is the gold become dim {‘ Who can wonder at the low state of the churches, when the princes among the people are thus negligent and supine?”

Three months later, the same Magazine was able to give a somewhat more cheering account of the proceedings in connection with the Association: —

“The annual meetings were held on January 9. In the afternoon, the Rev. James; Harcourt, of Regent Street, Lambeth, preached from Acts 1:8. In the evening, a public meeting was held, at which letters from the churches were read, and addresses delivered by the chairman, the Rev. C. Stovel, the Rev. Joshua Russell, and the Rev. Jonathan George. The letters, which were encouraging, reported a clear increase, during the year, of 207 members, principally owing to the extraordinary success attending the labors of the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.”

The truth of the last sentence is confirmed by the remarks of the young Pastor when preaching at New Park Street Chapel on the last Lord’s-day morning in 1855; he said: — “Ought we to let this year pass without rehearsing the works of the Lord? Hath He not been with us, and prospered us exceeding abundantly?… We shall not soon forget our sojourn in Exeter Hall, — shall we? During those months, the Lord brought in many of His own elect, and multitudes, who had been up to that time unsaved, were called by Divine mercy, and brought into the fold. How God protected us there! What peace and prosperity hath Fie given to us! How hath He enlarged our borders, and multiplied our numbers, so that we are not few; and increased us, so that we are not weak! I do think we were not thankful enough for the goodness of the Lord which carried us there, and gave us so many who have now become useful to us in our church.... Some old writer has said, ‘ Every hour that a Christian remains a Christian, is an hour of miracle.’ ‘It is true; and every year that the church is kept a united church, is a year of miracle. This has been a year of miracles. Tell it to the wide, wide world; tell it everywhere: ‘ The eyes of the Lord ‘have been upon us, ‘ from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year.’ Two hundred and ten persons f6 have this year united with us in church-fellowship; — about enough to have formed a church. One half the churches in London cannot number so many in their entire body; yet the Lord has brought so many into our midst. And still they come; whenever I have an opportunity of seeing those who are converted to God, they come in such numbers that many have to be sent away; and I am well assured that I have as many still in this congregation who will, during the next year, come forward to put on the Lord Jesus Christ.”

(N.B. — In the next paragraph, the autobiographical narrative is resumed.)

Great numbers of the converts of those early days came as the direct result of the slanders with which I was so mercilessly assailed. My name was so often reviled in the public press that it became the common talk of The street, and many a man, going by the door of our house of prayer, has said, “I’ll go in, and hear old Spurgeon.” He came in to make merriment of the preacher (and very little that troubled *him);*but the man stood there until the Word went home to his heart, and he who was wont to beat his wife, and to make his home a hell, has before long been to see:me, and has given me a grip of the hand, and said, *“God*Almighty bless you, sir; there is something in true religion! *....*Well, let me hear your tale.” I have heard it, and very delightful has it been in hundreds of instances I have said to the man, *“Send*your wife to me, that I may hear what she says about you.” The woman has come, and I have asked her, *“What*do you think of your husband now, ma’am?” *“Oh, sir, such a change*I never saw in my life! He is so kind to us; he is like an angel now, and he seemed like a fiend before. Oh, that cursed drink, sir! Everything went to the public-house; and then, if I came up to the house of God, he did nothing but abuse me. Oh! to think that now he comes with me on Sunday; and the shop is shut up, sir; and the children, who used to be running about without a bit of shoe or stocking, he takes them on his knee, and prays with them so sweetly. Oh, there is such a change!”

One Sabbath evening, two brothers were brought to the Lord at New Park Street Chapel the very first time they met with us. These were the circumstances of the case. A widowed mother had two sons, who had nearly come to man’s estate. They had been excellent children in their boyhood, but they began to be headstrong, as too many young people are prone to be, and they would not brook maternal control; they would spend their Sunday as they pleased, and sometimes in places where they should not have been seen. Their mother determined that she would never give up praying for them, and one night she thought she would stop at home from the house of God, shut herself up in her room, and pray for her sons’ conversion.

The very night she had thus set apart for prayer on their behalf, the elder son said to her, *“I*am going to hear the minister that preaches down Southwark way; I am told he is an odd man, and I want to hear him preach.” The mother herself did not think much of that minister, but she was so glad that her boy was going anywhere within the sound of the Word, that she said, “Go, my son.” He added, “My brother is going with me.” Those two young men came to the house of God, and that odd minister was blessed to the conversion of both of them.

When the mother opened the door, on their return home, the elder son fell upon her neck, weeping as if his heart would break. “Mother,” he said, “I have found the Saviour; I am a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ.” She looked at him a moment, and then said, “I knew it, my son; to-night I have had power in prayer, and I felt that I had prevailed.” “But,” said the younger brother, “oh, mother! I, too, have been cut to the heart, and I also have given myself to the Lord Jesus Christ.” Happy was that mother, and I was happy, too, when she came to me, and said, “You have been the means of the conversion of my two sons; I have never thought of baptism before, but I see it now to be the Lord’s own ordinance, so I will be baptized with my children.” It was my great joy to lead the whole three down into the water, and to baptize them “into the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

Not only were many converted who had been indifferent or careless about their souls, but I had peculiar joy in receiving not a few, who had themselves been numbered amongst the slanderers and blasphemers who seemed as if they could not say anything cruel and wicked enough concerning me, even though they had never been to hear me. Many a man has come to me, when he was about to be added to the church, and his first speech has been, “Will you ever forgive me, sir?” I have said, ‘“Forgive you for what? .... Why, because,” he has answered, “there was no word in the English language that was bad enough for me to say of you; and yet I had never seen you in my life, and I had no reason for speaking like that. I have cursed God’s people, and said all manner of evil of them; will you forgive me?” My reply has been, “I have nothing to forgive; if you have sinned against the Lord’s people, I am heartily glad that you are ready to confess the sin to God; but as far as I was concerned, there was no offence given, and none taken.” How glad I have been when the man has said that his heart was broken, that he had repented of his sins, that Christ had put away all his iniquities, and that he wished to follow the Lord, and make confession of his faith! I think there is only one joy I have had greater than this; that has been when those converted through my instrumentality have been the means of the conversion of others. Constantly has this happened during my ministry, until I have not only been surrounded by those who look upon me as their father in Christ, but I have had quite a numerous company of spiritual grandchildren, whom my sons and daughters in the faith have led to the Saviour.

The love that exists between a Pastor and his converts is of a very special character, and I am sure that mine was so from the very beginning of my ministry. The bond that united me to the members at New Park Street was probably all the stronger because of the opposition and calumny that, for a time at least, they had to share with me. The attacks of our adversaries only united us more closely to one another; and, with whole-hearted devotion, the people willingly followed wherever I led them. I have never brought any project before them, or asked them to aid me in any holy enterprise, but they have been ready to respond to the call, no matter what amount of self-sacrifice might be required. Truly I may say, without the slightest flattery, that I never met with any people, on the face of the earth, who lived more truly up to this doctrine — that, chosen of God, and loved by Him with special love, they should do extraordinary things for Him, — than those among whom it has been my privilege to minister. I have often gone on my knees before God to thank Him for the wondrous deeds I have seen done by some of the Christians with whom I have been so long and so happily associated. In service, they have gone beyond anything I could have asked. I should think they would have considered me unreasonable if I had requested it; but they have done it without request. At the risk of everything, they have served their Master,’ and not only spent all that they could spare, but have even spared what they could ill afford to devote to the service of Jesus. Often have I brushed the tears from my eyes when I have received from some of them offerings for the Lord’s work which utterly surpassed all my ideas of giving. The consecration of their substance has been truly apostolic. I have known some who have, even in their poverty, given all that they had; and when I have even hinted at their exceeding the bounds of prudence, they have seemed hurt, and pressed the gift again for some other work of the Master whom they love. A man once said to me, “If you want a subscription from me, sir, you must get at my heart, and then you will get at my purse.” “Yes,” I answered, “I have no doubt I shall, for I believe that is where your purse lies.” But that was not the case with the great bulk of my dear friends at New Park Street; their hearts were in the Lord’s work, and therefore they generously gave of their substance for the advancement of their Saviour’s Kingdom.

(Perhaps the consecration and liberality of the members can be accounted for, at least i[n part, by the example set before them from the very first by their young minister. At the great meeting, held in the Metropolitan Tabernacle, on Tuesday evening, May 20, 1879, to commemorate the completion of Mr. Spurgeon’s twenty-fifth year as Pastor of the church, Mr. William Olney, in presenting the testimonial of f6,233, said, among many other kind things: — ”After the very able paper of Mr. Cart, it will not be necessary for me to say much about our Pastor. But one point demands most explicit utterance to-night, — a point upon which he has been greatly misunderstood. The generosity of our Pastor, his selfabnegation, and his self-denial, I will speak of from a deacon’s point of view. I should like it to be clearly understood, — for I know the words I utter will be heard beyond this place, and beyond the audience now listening, — I should like it to be understood that, after twenty-five years’ intimate fellowship with him on money matters, I can testify to this one thing, — whilst the world says, concerning him, that he has made a good thing of it by becoming the minister of this Tabernacle, I can say it is *we* that have made a good thing of it, and not*he.*The interests of this church have always been first with him, and personal interests have always been second. Now, facts are stubborn things. Let me give you a few of them. When he first came, at the invitation of the church, we were a few feeble folk; the sittings at Park Street had for some years gone a-begging; the minister’s salary was exceedingly small, and the difficulty we had in keeping the doors open was very great. Incidental and other expenses of one sort and another were a heavy burden upon the people. When Mr. Spurgeon came, the arrangement between him and the deacons was that, whatever the seat-rents produced, should be his. Those seat-rents had been supplemented in the case of all former Pastorates by a great number of collections, and the hat had to go round frequently, a few having to give at the end of the year to keep matters straight. When Mr. Spurgeon came, the seats went begging no longer. The seat-rents, as they came in, all belonged to him. Did he keep them? No! The first thing he did, at the close of three months, was to say, ‘ Now we will have no more collections for incidental expenses,! will pay for the cleaning and lighting myself;’ and from that time till now he has done so. There has never been a collection for the current incidental expenses in this Tabernacle, and I believe there never will be as long as he lives; — I hope not until the end of time. Now for another important fact. There was what we might fairly call an interregnum between the time that this church was worshipping in New Park Street, and its removal here. During those three years, we were wandering, in some senses of the word. At one part of the time, we worshipped in Exeter Hall, and also in the Surrey Music Hall. During the whole of that time, the crowds collected to hear our Pastor were so great that certain charges were made for admission to the several buildings. Tickets, called preference tickets, were issued in large numbers for the privilege of early admission to hear Mr. Spurgeon, and the whole of the proceeds legitimately belonged to him. Did he take them? not one farthing. I speak from the book, mind; and such · facts ought to be made known on such nights as these. During those three years, Mr. Spurgeon paid over to the treasury of this church, for the building of this Tabernacle, just upon f5,000, all of which belonged to himself, for he was fairly and clearly entitled to it. F7 That is what we have received at the hand of our Pastor.

“Now listen again. Our Pastor says, ‘ That will do;’ but it will not do for me, and I do not believe that it will do for you. I want this to be heard outside this Tabernacle. The report of this great meeting will be in the newspapers, and be read by many who do not understand Mr. Spurgeon, and who do not understand us; and I wish all the world, reporters and everybody else, clearly to know that I am speaking facts which can be demonstrated and proved. For many years, the most generous helper of all the institutions connected with this place of worship has been Mr. Spurgeon. He has set us an example of giving. He has not stood to preach to us here for what he has got by preaching, but he has set an example to every one of us, to show that every institution here must be maintained in full vigor and strength. The repairs in connection with this place of worship, the maintenance of it, the management of all its institutions, and of everything connected with the building, and the property, and everything else,mall has been under his fostering care.

Not only so, but the proceeds to which he was fully entitled have never been taken by him from the first day until now, and he does not take them at the present moment. But, instead of that, I will tell you what he does. He told you, at our public meeting, and if he had not told it then, it deserves to be told a dozen times over, he has expended upon the Lord’s work so much of what he has received for preaching in the Tabernacle that he has, during some of the years, returned as much as he received. This does not represent all we owe to him, and it is putting our obligation to him on a very low scale indeed. What we owe to him, as a church, God only knows. Why, sir, there are hearts here that love you with an intense affection, — an affection which only eternity will fully reveal to you. We shall have to tell you, when time is no more, of the benefits and blessings conferred on our souls within these walls, and conferred on us as a church and congregation, for words are wanting to express such obligations as these.

“I have now to perform an exceedingly pleasant duty, and I will do it without troubling you any more, though this is a theme on which one might go on for a long time yet. But I will turn at once away from this matter which you will read a great deal more about, I daresay, in the paper that is to be published; and I will, as your representative, speak to our Pastor, and beg, in your name, that he will accept the testimonial which it has been our privilege and pleasure to raise for him, and to put at his absolute disposal, to commemorate the very happy event which has gathered us together in this Tabernacle to-night. Let it go forth to the world, — I know that I am anticipating what Mr. Spurgeon himself is going to say, but I cannot help it,-he told us last night, and it is too good to let him speak of it alone; in the matter of this testimonial, he says, ‘ not one farthing for me; you may give it to me for myself, if you like, but I will not keep it. It shall all be the Lord’s, and all shall belong to the Lord’s cause.’ Many of you know how it is going to be appropriated, or our Pastor will tell you presently as to that point; but, still, it has been raised by you as an expression of your love for him, and I have to hand it over to him, in the name of the deacons, and in the name of the committee, to be at his absolute disposal, as a gift without conditions, and as an expression of our great attachment to him and love for him.”

As intimated by Mr. William Olney, the Pastor had stated, on the previous evening, that he would not accept any part of the testimonial for himself; on that occasion, Mr. Spurgeon said: — ”I shall simply make a remark about the testimonial. My dear brethren, the deacons, said from the very first that there ought to be a testimonial to me p*ersonally;* I mean, for my own use. But I said that it was God who had wrought so graciously with us, and therefore I would have nothing to do with a testimonial to me unless it could be used in His service. We thought of the almswomen, whose support has drawn so heavily upon our funds, and I felt that it would be of the utmost service to the church if we could raise an endowment for the suppo:rt of our poor sisters. We have built rooms, but have not provided the weekly pensions, and I thought that it would be a good thing to put this matter out of hand. £5,000 was suggested as the amount, and to this object £5,000 will go. But you have contributed £6,200, and I have been considerably scolded by several friends, who have declared that they would have given much more if some personal benefit had accrued to me. ‘I am, however; obstinate in this matter, and it shall be even as I said at: the first, that the whole of your generous offering shall go to the carrying on of the work of the Lord among you. It is to God that the honor belongs, and to God shall the whole of your offerings go, — with this exception, that I wish to raise a memorial in the Almshouses to Dr. Rippon, the founder, and to add to it the record of the way in which the Almshouses were extended and endowed: and, in addition, there is this much for myself, I said that I should like to have in my house a piece of bronze, which should be a memorial of your abiding love. This dock, with candelabra as side ornaments, will stand in my home, and will gladden me, as it calls you to remembrance. This I shall greatly treasure, and I do not doubt that one or other of my sons will treasure it after me: they are so nearly of an age, and so equal in all respects, that either of them is worthy to be heir to his father’s valuables.

“‘The rest of the money shall be devoted to various purposes, some of which I shall name to-morrow; but I shall leave the amount in the hands of Mr. Thomas Olney and Mr. Greenwood, who are the treasurers, and they will see that it is so used; so that all may know and be assured that not a penny comes to me, but I shall draw it from them for the different objects as it is wanted. I shall have the credit of having received this large sum, and I shall have a corresponding number of begging letters to get it out of me, and that will be my personal gain. I daresay you have all heard that’Spurgeon makes a good thing of this Tabernacle.’ Well, whenever anybody hints that to you, you may on my authority assure them that I do. I should not like anybody to think that my Master does not pay His servants well. He loadeth us with benefits, and I-am perfectly satisfied with His wages: but if any persons assert that, by my preaching in this place, I have made a purse for myself, I can refer them to those who know me, and my way of life among you. ‘Ah, but!’ they say, ‘ he has had a testimonial of £6,000 presented to him.’ Yes, he has had it, and he thanks everybody for it. Perhaps there are some other persons who would like a similar testimonial, and I wish they may get it, and do the same with it as I have done.

“Legacies left to me and sums subscribed for the Orphanage and College and so on are spoken of as if I had some private interest in them, whereas I have: neither a direct nor indirect pecuniary interest in any of these works to the amount of a penny a year. With regard to all things else, from the first day until now, I have acted on no other principle but that of perfect ctmsecration to the work whereunto I am called. 1 have no riches. I sometimes wish that I had, for I could use money in an abundance of profitable ways. What have I gained of late years ill my ministry here? I have received all that I wished by way of salary, but I have for years expended almost all of it in the cause of God, and in some years even more t~han all. As far as my Pastoral office is concerned, the net income for myself, after giving my share to all holy service, is not so much that any man need envy me. Yet this is not your fault, or anyone’s fault, it is my joy and delight to have it so. The Lord is a good and a gracious Paymaster; and inasmuch as men say,’ doth Spurgeon serve God for nought?’ Spurgeon replies, ‘No, he is paid a thousand times over, and finds it a splendid thing to be in the service of the Lord Jesus.’ If anyone will serve the Lord Jesus Christ after the same or a better fashion, he too will make the same splendid thing of it; he shall have splendid opportunities for working from morning till night, and far into the night on many an occasion; splendid openings for giving away as much as he can earn;splendid opportunities of finding happiness in making other people happy, and easing the sorrows of others by entering into hearty sympathy with them.”

After the presentation, Mr. Spurgeon said: — ”Dear friends, I thank you very, very, very heartily for this testimonial, and I hope that you will not consider that I do not take it to myself, and use it personally, because I hand it over to works of charity, for my Lord’s work is dear to me, and to use it for Him, and for His poor, is the sweetest way of using it for myself. I said, at the very first, that, if a testimonial could be made the means of providing for our aged sisters in th~ Almshouses, I would be doubly glad to receive it; and when friends urged that they had rather give *lo me,*I begged them to let me have my own way, for surely a man may have his way on his silver-wedding day, if at no other time. The matter was commenced on that footing, but I never dreamed that you would give anything like this right royal amount. Our communion fund has been so heavily drawn upon for the support: of the almswomen that we have been embarrassed in providing for the very large number of poor persons, who, I am thankful to say, belong to this church. I hope we shall always have a large number of the Lord’s poor among us, for thus we are able to show kindness unto our Lord Himself. We erected more almsrooms than we had money for, and I felt it to b,e wrong to leave the church in future years with these unendowed houses; for times might come when this extra burden could not be borne, since in these days of our strength we find it a load. For such an object, I heartily approved of an endowmene. Endowments for the support of ministers are confessedly a great evil, since they enable a man to keep among a people long after his usefulness is over; but no such evil can arise in the present instance. £5,ooo was considered by our dear friend Mr. Greenwood, who is my invaluable guide in such matters, to be about sufficient for our object. Therefore £5,ooo of this noble testimonial is hereby devoted to that end; and I have told you that all the rest of the money will be given to the Lord’s work.

“Mr. William Olney said more than enough about what I have done in money matters: I will only add that I serve a good Master, and am so sure that He will provide for me that I never thought it worth my while to ke scraping and hoarding for myself. When I gave myself up at first to be His minister, I never expected anything beyond food and raiment; and when my income was £45 a year, I was heartily content, and never thought of a need without having it supplied. It is with me much the same now: ‘I have all, and abound.’ I have only one grievance, and that is, being asked for loans and gifts of money when I have none to spare. Under the impression that I am a very rich man, many hunt me perpetually; but I wish these borrowers and beggars to know that I am not rich. They argue that a man must be rich if he gives away large sums; but, in my case, this is just the reason why I am not rich. When I have a spare £5, the College, or Orphanage, or Colportage, or something else, requires it, and away it goes. I could very comfortably do with much more. Oh, that I could do more for Christ, and more for the poor! For these, I have turned beggar before now, and shall not be ashamed to beg again. The outside world cannot understand that a man should be moved by ally motive except that of personal gain; but, if they knew the power of love to Jesus, they would understand that, to the lover of the Saviour, greed of wealth is vile a.s the dust beneath his feet.”

On June 19, 1884, when Mr. Spurgeon’s Jubilee was celebrated, a further testimonial of £4,500 was presented to him, and he speedily gave this amount to the Lord’s work as he had given the previous £6,233.)

In the year 1865, *The JVonconform£st*newspaper did good service to all sections of the Christian Church by the issue of a statistical statement as to the religious condition of London. At the census of 1861, the Government did not collect religious statistics in the same fashion as ten years before, so *The Nonconformist*did well in supplying the deficiency. notwithstanding all that had been done to meet the needs of the ever-increasing population, the destitution of the metropolis was still appalling. There were some cheering, signs, and Baptists especially had good cause to take heart, and gird themselves for the battle still before them. I quofe with pleasure the annexed tabular statement, and the note appended to it, giving glory to God that, during the greater part of the period referred to, He had enabled us to make some small discernible mark upon the mass of ignorance and sin around us:—

RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION. 1851 1865 SITTINGS. SITTINGS.

Church of England 409,834 512,067  
Congregationalists 100,436 130,611  
Baptists 54,234 87,559  
Wesleyans 44,162 52,454  
United Methodist Free Churches 4,858 13,422  
Methodist New Connection 984 6,667  
Primitive Methodists 3,380 9,230  
Church of Scotland 3,886 5,116  
English Presbyterians 10,065 I2,952  
United Presbyterians 4,280 4,860  
Roman Catholics 18,230 31,100

“This table speaks for itself, and affords gratifying proof of the Christian activity of the principal Free Churches, though that satisfaction is somewhat diminished by the increase being spread over fourteen years. The large stride taken by the Baptists, rounder which designation every section of that denomination is included, — is unquestionably due, in the main, to the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon and his missionary operations in various parts of the metropolis.”

Another table gave the statistics for our own district of N EWINGTON, where Dissent had been up to that time singularly strengthened; the Baptists especially, during the fourteen years from 1851 to 1865, having increased far more than all the other denominations put together, — the one place marked in the list as Free Church of England being virtually Baptist, and thus still further increasing our total gain: —

CHAPTER 45.

SEEKING THE SOUL OF MEN.

I am occnpied, in my small way, as Mr. Great-heart was employed in Bunyan’s day. I do not compare myself’with that champion, but I am in the same line of business. I am engaged in personallyconducted tours to Heaven; and I have with me, at the present time, dear Old Father Honest: I am glad he is still alive and active. And there is Christiana, and there are her children. It is my business, as best I can, to kill dragons, and cut off giants’ heads, and lead on the timid and trembling. I am often afraid of losing some of the weaklings. I have the heart-ache for them; but, by God’s grace, anti your kind and generous help in looking after one another, I hope we shall all travel safely to the riwer’s edge. Oh, how many have I had to part with there! I have stood on the brink, and I have heard them singing in the midst of the stream, and I have almost seen the shining ones lead them up the hill, and through the gates, into the Celestial City. — C. H. S.

I O FTEN envy those of my brethren who can go up to individuals, and talk to them with freedom about their souls. I do not always find myself able to do so, though, when I have been Divinely aided in such service, I have had a large reward. When a Christian can get hold of a man, and talk thus personally to him, it is like one of the old British men-of-war lying alongside a French ship, and giving her a broadside, making every timber shiver, and at last sending her to the boftom.

How many precious souls have been brought to Christ by the loving personal exhortations of Christian people who have learned this holy art! It is wonderful how God blesses very little efforts to serve Him. One night, many years ago, after preaching, I had been driven home by a cabman, and after I had alighted, and given him the fare, he took a little Testament out of his pocket, and showing it to me, said, “It is about fifteen years since you gave me that, and spoke a word to me about my soul. I have never forgotten your words, and I have not let a day pass since without reading the Book you gave me.” I felt glad that, in that instance, the seed had, apparently, fallen into good ground.

Having promised to preach, one evening, at a certain river-side town, I went to the place early in the day, as I thought I should like to have a little time in a boat on the’ river. So, hailing a waterman, I made arrangements with him to take me, and, whilst sitting in the boat, wishing to talk with him about religious matters, I began the conversation by asking him about his family. He told me that the cholera had visited his home, and that he had lost no less than thirteen of his relatives, one a~~er another, by death. My question, and the man’s answer, prepared the way for a dialogue somewhat in this fashion: —

*Spurgeon.* — Have you, my friend, a good hope of Heaven if you should

die?

*Waterman.* — Well, sir, I think as how I have. *Spurgeon.* — Pray tell me, then, what your hope is; for no man need

ever be ashamed of a good hope.

*Waterman.* — Well, sir, I have been on this here river for five-and

twenty or thirty years, and I don’t know that anybody ever saw me drunk.

*Spurgeon.* — Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Is that all you have to trust to? *Waterman.* — Well, sir, when the cholera was about, and my poor

neighbors were bad, I went for the Doctor for ‘em, and was up a good many nights; and I do think as how I am as good as most folk that I know.

Of course, I told him that I was very glad to hear that he had sympathy for the suffering, and that I considered it far better to be charitable than to be churlish; but I did:not see how his good conduct could carry him to Heaven. Then he said: —

“Well, sir, perhaps it can’t; but I think, when I get a little older, I shall give up the boat, and take to going to church, and then I hope that all will be right, — won’t it, sir?”

“No,” I answered, “certainly not; your going to church won’t change your heart, or take away your sins. Begin to go to church as soon as possible; but you will not be all inch nearer Heaven if you think that, by attending the sanctuary, you will be saved.”  
The poor man seemed perfectly asfounded, while I went on knocking down his hopes one after another. So I resumed the dialogue by putting another question to him: —

*Spurgeon.* — You have sometimes sinned in your life, have you not? *Waterman.* — Yes, sir, that I have, many a time. *Spurgeon.* — On what ground, then, do you think that your sills will be

forgiven?

*Waterman.* — Well, sir, I have been sorry about them, and I think they

are all gone;-they don’t trouble, me now.

*Spurgeon.* — Now, my friend, suppose you were to go and get illtO debt

with the grocer where you deal, and you should say to her, “Look here, missus, you have a long score against me, I am sorry to say that I cannot pay you for all those goods that I have: had; but f’11 tell you what I will do, I’ll never get illtO your debt any more.” She would very soon tell you that was not her style of doing business; and do you suppose that is the way in which you can treat the great God? Do you imagine that I-]~e is going to strike out your past sins because you say you will not go on sinning against Him?

*Waterman.* — Well, sir, I should like to know how my sins are to be

forgiven. Are you a parson?

*Spurgeon.* — I preach the gospel, I hope, but I do not go by the name of

a parson; I am only a Dissenting minister.

Then I told him, as plainly as I could, how the Lord Jesus Christ had taken the place of sinners, and how those who trusted in Him, and rested in His blood and righteousness, would find pardon and peace. The man was delighted with the simple story of the cross; he said that he wished he had heard it years before, and then he added, “To tell the truth, master, I did not feel quite easy, after all, when I saw those poor creatures taken away to the graveyard;jI did think there was something I wanted, but I did not know what it was.”

I cannot say what was the final result of our conversation; but I had the satisfaction of knowing that I had at least set before him God’s way of salvation in language that he could easily understand.  
Sometimes, I have found it less easy, than it might otherwise have been, to influence certain persons for good, because of the neglect of those who ought to have done the work before me. I was trying to say a word for my Master to a coachman, one day, when he said to me, “Do you know the Rev. Mr. So-and-so? Yes,” I replied, “I know him very well; what have you to say about him? Well,” said the man, “he’s the sort of minister I like, and I like his religion very much.” “What sort of a religion is it?” I asked. “Why!” he answered, “he has ridden on this box-seat every day for six months, and he has never said anything about religion all the while; that is the kind of minister I like.” It seemed to me a very doubtful compliment for a man who professed to be a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.

At other times, the difficulty in dealing With individuals has arisen from their ignorance of the plan of salvation. When I have spoken of my own hope in Christ to two or three people in a railway carriage, I have often found myself telling my listeners perfect novelties. I have seen the look of astonishment upon the face of many an intelligevt Englishman when I have explained the doctrine of the sub-stitutionary sacrifice of Christ; I have even met with persons who had attended their parish church from their youth up, yet who were totally ignorant of the simple truth oF justification by faith; ay, and some who have been to Dissenting places of worship do not seem to have laid hold of the fundamental truth that no man is saved by his own doings, but that salvation is procured by faith in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. This nation is steeped up to the throat in self-righteousness, and the: protestantism of Martin Luther is very generally unknown. The truth is held by as many as God’s grace has called, but the great outlying masses still talk of doing their best, and then hoping in God’s mercy, and I know not what besides of legal self-confidence; while the master-doctrine, that he who believes in Jesus is saved by His finished work, is sneered at as the utterance of misguided enthusiasm, or attacked as leading to licentiousness. Luther talked of beating the heads of the Wittenbergers with the Bible, so as to get the great doctrine of justification by faith into their brains. But beating is of no use; we must have much patience with those we are trying to teach, and we must be willing to repeat over, and over, and over again the elements of truth. Someone asked a mother once, “Why do you teach your child the same thing twenty times?” She answered, very wisely, “Because I find that nineteen times are not sufficient;” and it will often be the same with those who need to be taught the A B C of the gospel.  
Though this is a protestant land, it is beyond all question that there are in it people who are Popish enough to perform great religious acts. by way of merit. What a goodly row of almshouses was erected by that miserly old grinder of the poor as an atonement for his hoarding pr6pensitiesf What a splendid legacy somebody else left to that hospital! That was a very proper thing, but the man who left it never gave a farthing to a beggar in his life, and he would not have given anything when he died only he could not take his money with him, so he left it to a charity as an atonement for his sin.

C;ometimes, persons are so foolish as to think that the doing of some profes;sedly religious act will take them to Heaven; attending church prayers twice a day, fasting in Lent, decorating the altar with needlework, putting stained glass in the window, or giving a new organ; at the suggestion of their priest, they do many such things; and thus they go on working like blind asses in a mill, from morning to night, and making no more real progress than the poor donkeys do. Many who are nominally Christians appear to me to believe in a sort of sincere-obedience covenant, in which, if a man does as much as he can, Christ will do the rest, and so the sinner will be saved; but it is not so. ‘God will never accept any composition from the man who is in debt to Divine justice; there is no Heavenly Court: of Bankruptcy where so much ill the pound may be accepted, and the debfor then be discharged. It must be all or nothing; he: who would pay his debt must bring all, even to the uttermost farthing; and that can never be, for God’s Word declares that ‘! by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight.” Some people have a notion that going to church and chapel, taking the sacrament, and doing certain good deeds that appertain to a respectable profession of religion, are the way to Heaven. If they are put in the place of Christ, they are rather the way to hell; although it is strewn with clean gravel, and there be grassy paths on either side, it is not the road to Heaven, but the way to everlasting death.

Strange as it may seem at the first glance, yet the veryfact that a person has been brought up in a system of error will, sometimes, by force of contrast, make it all the easier to bring home the truth to the heart and conscience. I can bear personal witness that the simple statement of the gospel has often proved, in God’s hand, enough to lead a soul into immediate peace. ‘I once met with a lady who held sentiments of almost undiluted Popery; and in conversing with her, I was delighted to see. how interesting and attractive a thing the gospel was to her. She complained that she enjoyed no peace of mind as the result of her religion, and never seemed to have done enough to bring her any rest of soul. She had a high idea of priestly absolution, but it had evidently been quite unable to yield repose to her spirit. Death was feared, God was terrible, even Christ was an object of awe rather than of love. When I told her that whosoever believeth on Jesus is perfectly forgiven, and that ~.[ knew I was forgiven, — that I was as sure of it as of my own existence, that I lea:red neither to live nor to die, for all would be well with me in either case, because God had given to me eternal life in His Son, — I saw that a new set of thoughts had begun to astonish her mind. She said, “If I could believe as you do, I should be the happiest person in the world.” I did not deny the inference, but claimed to have proved its truth, and I have reason to think that the little simple talk we had has not been forgotten, or unprofitable.

One advantage of dealing personally with souls is, that it is not so easy for them to turn aside the message as when they are spoken to in the mass. I have often marvelled when I have been preaching. I have thought that I have exactly described certain people; I have marked in them special sins, and as Christ’s faithful servant, I have not shunned to picture their case in the pulpit, that they might receive a well-deserved rebuke; but I have wondered when I have spoken to them afterwards, that they have thanked me for what I have said, because they thought it so applicable to another person in the assembly. I had intended it wholly for them, and had, as I thought, made the description so accurate, and brought out all their peculiar points, that it must have been received by them. But, on at least one occasion, a direct word to one of my hearers was not only taken by him in a sense I did not mean, but it was resented in a fashion which I did not anticipate. I felt constrained to say that I hoped the gentleman who was reporting my discourse would not do it as a mere matter of business routine, but that he would take the W’ord as addressed to himself as well as to the rest of the audience. I certainly did not think The. re was anything offensive in the remark, and I was astonished to see the reporter fling down his pen in anger, as though resolved not to take down anything more that I might say. Before long, however, his better judgment prevailed, he went on with his work, and the sermon duly appeared in *The New Park Street Pulpit,. — under*the circumstances, of course, with the omission of the personal reference which had unintentionally caused offence. F8

Whatever may have been the feelings of my hearers, I can honestly say that scores, and, indeed, hundreds of times I have gone from my pulpit groaning because I could not preach as I wished; but this has been my comfort, “Well, I did desire to glorify Christ; I did try to clear my conscience of the blood of all men; I did seek to tell them the whole truth, whether they liked it or not.” It will be an awful thing for any man, Who has been professedly a minister of Christ, and yet has not preached the gospel, to go before the bar of God, and to answer for the souls committed to him. That ancient message still needs to be heard: “If the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman’s hand.” This it is that makes our work so weighty that our knees sometimes knock together when we are thinking of going up to our pulpit again. It is no child’s play, if there is to be a judgment, and we are to answer for our faithfulness or unfaithfulness. What must be our account if we are not true to God and to man? I have prayed, many a time, that I might be able, at the end of my ministry, to say what George Fox, the Quaker, said when he was dying, “I am clear, I am clear.”

It has often been a marvel to me how some old ministers have continued to labor:for twenty, or thirty, or even forty years in one place without gathering any fruit from all their toil. I will not judge them,wto their own Master they stand or fall; but if I had been in such a position, although I should not have dared to leave the vineyard in which my Lord bade me work while I was yet a youth, I should have concluded that He had need of me in some other part of His field where my efforts might be more productive of blessing. I thank God that I have not had[ to labor in vain, or to spend my strength for nought. He has given me a long period of happy and successful service, for which, with all my heart, I praise and magnify His holy Name. There has been a greater increase sometimes, or a little diminution now and then; but, for the most part, the unbroken stream of blessing has run on at much the same rate all the while. It has ever been my desire, not to *“compass*sea and land to make proselytes” from other denominations; but to gather into our ranks those who have not been previously connected with any body of believers, or, indeed, who have attended any house of prayer. Of course, many persons have joined us from other communities, when it has seemed to them a wise and right step; but I should reckon it to be a burning disgrace if it could be truthfully said, “The large church under that man’s Pastoral care is composed of members whom he has stolen away from other Christian churches;” but I value beyond all price the godless and the careless, who have been brought out from the world into communion with Christ. These are true prizes, — not stealthily removed from fi’iendly shores, but captured at the edge of the sword from the enemy’s dominions. We welcome brethren from other churches if, in the providence of God, they are drifted into our midst; but we would never hang out the wrecker’s beacon, to dash other churches in pieces in order to enrich ourselves with the wreckage. Far rather would we be busy, looking after perishing souls, than cajoling unstable ones from their present place of worship. To recruit one regiment from another, is no real strengthening of the army; to bring in fresh men, should be the aim of all.

From the very early days of my ministry in London, the Lord gave such an abundant blessing upon the proclamation of His truth that, whenever I was able to appoint a time for seeing converts and enquirers, it was seldom, if ever, that I waited in vain; and, usually, so many came, that I was quite overwhelmed with gratitude and thanksgiving to God. On one occasion, I had a very singular experience, which enabled me to realize the meaning of our Lord’s answer to His disciples’ question at the well of Sychar, “Hath any man brought Him aught to eat? Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me, and to finish His work.” Leaving home early in the morning, I went to the chapel, and sat there all day long seeing those who had been brought to Christ through the preaching of the Word. Their sfories were so interesting to me that the hours flew by without my noticing how fitst they were going. I may have seen some thirty or more persons during the day, one after the other; and I was so delighted with the tales of mercy they had to tell me, and the wonders of grace God had wrought in them, that I did not know anything about how the time passed. At seven o’clock, we had our prayer-meeting; I went in, and prayed with the brethren. After that, came the church-meeting. A little before ten o’clock, I felt faint; and I began to think at what hour I had:my dinner, and I then for the first time remembered that I had not had any I I never Lhought of it, I never even felt hungry, because God had made me so glad, and so satisfied with the Divine manna, the Heavenly food of success in winning souls.

I am not sure that I ever had another day quite like that; but I had much to interest me, and sometimes a good deal to humble me, in the different cases with which I had to deal. I have seen very much of my own stupidity while in conversation with seeking souls. I have been baffled by a poor lad while trying to bring him to the Saviour; I thought I had him fast, but he has eluded me again and again with perverse ingenuity of unbelief. Sometimes, enquirers, who are really anxious, surprise me with their singular skill in battling against hope; their arguments are endless, and their difficulties countless. They have put me to a nonplus again and again. The grace of God has at last enabled me to bring them to the light, but not until I have seen my own inefficiency, and realized that, without the Holy Spirit’s aid, I should be utterly powerless to lead them into the liberty of the gospel. Occasionally, I have met with a poor troubled soul who has refused to be comforted. There was one good Christian man who, through feebleness of mind, had fallen into the deepest despair; I have hardly ever met with a person in such an awful condition as he was, and it puzzled me to give him any sort of comfort; indeed, I fear that I failed to do so after all. He said, “I’m too big a sinner to be saved.” So I told hi[m that God’s Word says, *“the*blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from *dl*sin.” *“Ay!*” he replied, *“but*you must remember the context, which is, ‘ If we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.’ Now, I do not walk in the light; I walk in the dark, and I have no fellowship with the people of God now, and therefore that passage does not apply to me.” *“Well,”*I rejoined, *“but*Christ is able to save to the uttermost all them that come unto God by Him.” *“That*is the only text,” he admitted, “I never can get over, for it says ‘to the uttermost,’ and I know I cannot have gone beyond that; yet it does not yield me any comfort.” I said, *“But*God asks nothing of you but that you will believe Him; and you know, if you have ever so teeble a faith, you are like a child, — the feeble hand of a child can receive, and that is the mark of a Christian: ‘ of His fulness have all we received,’ and if you only receive with your hand, that is enough.” *“Ay!”* said he, *“but*I have not the hand of faith.” “Very well,” I answered, *“but* you have the mouth of desire; you can ask with your lips if you cannot receive with your hand.” “No,” said he, *“I*do not pray, and I cannot pray; I have not the mouth of desire.” “Then,” I pleaded, “all that is wanted is an empty place, a vacuum, so that God can put the grace in.” “Ah, sir l” said he, “you have me there; I have a vacuum; I have an aching void; if there was ever an empty sinner in this world, I am one.” *“Well,”*I exclaimed, “Christ will fill that vacuum; there is a full Christ for empty sinners,” and there I had to leave the matter.  
Very often, when enquirers have come to me to relate the story of their spiritual history, they hake told their little tale with an air of the greatest possible wonder, and asked me, as soon as they have finished it; whether it is not extremely unusual. One has said, *“Do*you know, sir, I used to be so happy in the things of the world, but conviction entered into my heart, and I began to seek the Saviour; and for a long time, when I was under concern of soul, I was so miserable that I could not bear myself. Surely, sir, this is a strange thing?” And when I have looked the friend in the face, and said, “No, it is not at all strange; I have had a dozen people here to-night, and they have all told me the same tale; that is the way almost all God’s people go to Heaven,” — he has stared at me, as if he did not think I would tell an untruth, but as if he thought it the queerest thi. ng in the world that anybody else should have felt as he had done.

“Now, sit down,” I say sometimes, when I am seeing an enquirer or a candidate for church-membership, “and I will tell you what were my feelings when I first sought and found the Saviour.” “Why, sir!” he exclaims, “that is just how I have felt; but I did not think anyone else had ever gone over the same path that I have trodden.” It is no wonder that, when we have little acquaintance with each other’s spiritual experience, our way should seem to be a solitary one; but he who knows much of the dealings of God with poor seeking sinners, is well aware that their experiences are, in the main, very much alike.

Sometimes, a desperate case requires a desperate remedy. I had once to deal with a man who assented to everything I said. When I talked about the evil of sin, he agreed with me, and said that I was very faithful. When I set before him the way of salvation, he assented to it, but it was evident that his heart was not affected by the’. truth. I could almost have wished that he had flatly denied what I said, for that would have given me the opportunity of arguing the matter with him, and pressing him to come to a decision. At last, I felt that it was quite hopeless to talk to hint any longer, so I said, “The fact is, one of these days you will die, and be damned,” — and I walked away without saying another word. As I expected, it was not ve. ry long before he sent for me, and when I went to him, he begged me to tell him why I had said such a dreadful thing to him. I answered, “It seems quite useless for me to talk to you about the salvation of your soul, for you never appear to feel the force of anything that I say. I might almost as well pour oil down a slab of marble as expect you to be impressed by the truth that I set before you, an.d my solid conviction is that you will be damned.” He was quite angry with me for speak!ing so plainly; and I went away again, leaving him very cross. Before many hours were over, he was in all awful state of mind; the Holy Spirit had convinced him of his state as a sinner, and he was in an agony of soul. That sharp sentence of mine was like the hook in a fish’s gills, but that fish was landed all right. The man was brought to repentance and faith; he was baptized, joined the church, and a few years ago went home to Heaven.

CHAPTER 46.

A NEW SCHOOL OF THE PROPHETS

At the close of his sermon on 1 Corintians 9:16, — “For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the  
gospel!”mdelivered :Ln New Park Street Chapel, on Lord’s-day morning, August 5, 1855, Mr. Spurgeon said: — “Now, my :lear hearers, one word with you. There are some persons in this audience who are verily guilty in the sight of God because they do not preach the gospel. I cannot think, out of the fifteen hundred or two thousand persons now present within the reach of my voice, there are none beside myself who are qualified to preach the gospel. I have not so bad an opinion of you as to imagine myself to be superior to one-half of you in intellect, or in the power of preaching God’s Word; and even supposing I should be, I cannot believe that I have such a congregation that there are not among you many who have gifts and talents that qualify you to preach the Word .... I cannot conceive but that there are some here, this morning, who are flowers ‘wasting their sweetness on the desert air,’ ‘gems of purest ray serene’ lying in the dark caverns of ocean’s oblivion. This is a very serious question. If there be any talent :in the church at Park Street, let it be developed. If there are any preachers in my congregation, let them preach. Many ministers make it a point to check young men in this respect. There is my hand, such as it is, to help any one of you if you think you can —

**“‘*Tell to sinners round,  
What a dear Saviour you have found.’***

I would like to find scores of preachers among you. ‘W’ould God that all the Lord’s people were prophets!’ There are some here who ought to be prophets, only they are half afraid; — well, we must devise some scheme for getting rid of their bashfulness. I cannot bear to think that, while the devil sets all his servants to work, there should be one servant of Jesus Christ asleep. Young man, go home and examine thyself; see what thy capabilities are, and if thou findest that thou hast ability, then try in some humble room to tell to a dozen poor people what they must do to be saved. You need not aspire to become absolutely and solely dependent upon the ministry; but if it should please God, desire even that high honor. ‘ If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.’ At any rate, seek in some way to proclaim the gospel of God. I have preached this sermon especially because I long to commence a movement from this place which shall reach others. I want to find some in my church, if it be possible, who will preach the gospel. And mark you, if you have talent and power, woe is unto you, if you preach not the gospel!”

I T was most appropriate that the Institution, which was destined to be used by God as a means of training many hundreds of soul-winners, should itself have been brought into existence as the direct result of Mr. Spurgeon’s successful effort to win the soul of one young and earnest enquirer. Happily, that early convert, — now Pastor T. W. Medhurst, — after serving in the ministry of the gospel for more than forty years in England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales, is still spared to labor for the Lord at Hope Baptist Chapel, Canton, Cardiff; and he has kindly written for this work a fuller and more accurate account of the events that led to the founding of the Pastors’ College than has ever before appeared in print. Mr. Medhurst says: —

“I first saw and heard dear Mr. Spurgeon before he was really elected to the Pastoram of the New Park Street Church; it was in the early part of 1854, at Maze Pond (3hapel, at a Sunday-school anniversary meeting. I was very much struck with theaddress he delivered on that occasion. F9 I was, at that time, a seat-holder at the old Surrey Tabernacle, where James Wells was Pastor. The first sermon I heard Mr. Spurgeon preach was from Hosea 6:3: ‘Then shall we know, *if*we follow on to know the Lord.’ Well do I remember the opening sentence of the discourse: — ’You observe, dear friends, that the “if” is in italics; it is not in the original, so we will substitute “as” in its place. There is no “if” in the matter; once begin “to know the Lord,” and it is certain that you will “follow on” to know Him.’ That sermon convinced me of sin.

“I continued to listen to Mr. Spurgeon, and, after a while, in soul-trouble, I wrote to him the following letter: —

“Mr. Porter’s Rope Factory,  
“Blue Anchor Road,  
“Rotherhithe,  
“Sunday, July 2nd, 1854.

“Dear Sir,

“Will you be kind enough candidly to inform me whether I have any room for hope that I belong to the elect family of God, whether Jesus Christ His Son has died for me, while my affections are in the world? I try to pray, but cannot. I make resolutions only to break them. I from time to time listen to you when you speak of the glory set apart for the saints, when you describe their joys and their feelings, but I feel myself as having nothing to do with them. O sir, that Sunday morning when you spoke of the hypocrite, I felt that you described me! I go to chapel to hear the Word preached, I return home, and make resolutions; I go to work, then out into the world, and forget all until the time for preaching comes again. I read the Bible, but do not feel interested; it seems no more to me than a book I have before read, — dry and insipid. Christ has said that, of all who come to Him, He will not send any away. How am I to come? I feel that I cannot come. I would if I could, but I cannot. At times, I think that I will give it all up, that I will not go to chapel any more; yet when the time comes, I cannot stay away, but feel compelled to go again once more. Do, dear sir, tell me, how am I to find Jesus? How am I to know that He died for me, and that I belong to His family? Dear sir, tell me, am I a hypocrite?

“I remain,  
“Dear sir,  
“Yours to serve in anxiety,

“T. W. MEDHURST.”  
“In reply, I received from Mr. Spurgeon this letter, which greatly helped me at the time, and which I still prize more than I can tell: —

“75, Dove;’ Road,  
“Borough,  
“July I4th, 1854.

“Dear Sir,  
“I am glad that you have been able to write to me and state your feelings. ‘Though my hands are always full, it will ever give me joy to receive such notes as yours.

“You ask me a very important question, *Are you one of Gods elect?*Now, this is a question neither you nor I can answer at present, and therefore let it drop. I will ask you an e. asier one, ‘*Are you a sinner?’*Can you say, ‘YES’? All say, ‘Yes’; but then they do not know what the word ‘*sinner’*means.

“A sinner is a creature who has broken all his Maker’s commands, despised His Name, and run into rebellion against the Most High. A sinner deserves hell, yea, the hottest place in hell; and if he be saved, it must be entirely by unmerited mercy. Now, if you are such a sinner, I am glad to be able to tell you the only way of salvation,’ Believe on the Lord Jesus.’

“I think you have not yet really understood what believing means. You are, I trust, really awakened, but you do not see the door yet. I advise you seriously to be much alone, I mean as much as you can; let your groans go up if you cannot pray; attend as many services as possible; and if you go with an earnest desire for a blessing, it will come very soon. But why not believe now? You have only to believe that Jesus is able and willing to save, and then trust yourself to Him.

“Harbour not that dark suggestion to forsake the house of God; remember you turn your back on Heaven, and your face to hell, the moment you do that. I pray God that He will keep you. If the Lord had meant to destroy you, He would not have showed you such things as these. If you are but as smoking flax, there is hope. Touch the hem of His garment; look to the brazen serpent.

“My dear fellow-sinner, slight not this season of awakening. Up, and be in earnest. It is your soul, your OWN soul, your eternal welfare, your Heaven or your hell, that is at stake.

“There is the cross, and a bleeding God-man upon it; look to Him, and be saved f There is the Holy Spirit able to give you every grace. Look, in prayer, to the Sacred Three-one God, and then you will be delivered.  
*“I*am,  
*“Your*anxious friend, *“Write*again.”

*“C.*H. SPURGEON.”

“I was set at liberty under a Thursday evening sermon from the text John 6:37: ‘ All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in:no wise cast out;’ and then I did ‘ write again,’ telling Mr. Spurgeon of my conversion, and of my desire to be baptized, and to join the church. This was ~his reply to my letter: —

“75, Dover Road,  
“August 7th, 1854.  
“My Dear Sir,

“Your letters have given me great joy. I trust I see in you the marks of a sort of God, and I earnestly pray that you may have the evidence within that you are born of God.

“There is no reason why you should not be baptized. ‘ If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest.’ Think very seriously of it, for it is a solemn matter. Count the cost. You are now about to be buried to the world, and you may well say, ‘ What manner Of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness.’ The friends who were with you in the days of your carnal pleasure will strive to entice you from Christ; but I pray that the grace of God may be mightily manifest in you, keeping you steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

“I should like to see you on Thursday evening, after six o’clock, in the vestry.  
“I am,  
“Yours faithfully,

“C. H. S PURGEON.”  
(Of this interview, Mr. Spurgeon preserved the following record in the book containing his notes concerning applicants for baptism and churchmembership: —

“Thomas William Medhurst.

A very promising young man, — his letters to me evince various degrees of progress in the pilgrims’ road. He has been very anxious, but has now, I trust, found refuge in the Rock of ages.”)

“On September 28, 1854, the beloved Pastor baptized me at New Park Street Chapel, and in due course I was received into the church. I at once began to preach in the open air and elsewhere, though I had not then any idea of entering the ministry. Two persons, who became members at New Park Street through my preaching, led Mr. Spurgeon to suggest that I should seek to prepare myself for Pastoral work. I was just then out of my apprenticeship, and not quite twenty-one years of age, so I gladly consented to the proposal, and arrangements were made, in July, 1855, for me to go to reside with Rev. C. H. Hosken, who was Pastor of the BaptisTL Church at Crayford, but who lived at the Mill Road Collegiate School, Bexley Heath, Kent.

“Once a week, I had the privilege of spending several hours with Mr. Spurgeon at his lodgings in the Dover Road, Southwark, that I ,night study theology under his direction. A letter that he wrote to me, during that period, shows that’he had already anticipated a further addition to [he ranks of the ministry after my course of training was completed: —

“London,  
“September 22nd, 1855.  
“My Dear Brother,

“Since your departure, I have been meditating upon the pleasure of being the means of sending you to so excellent a scene of preparation for the ministry, and in prayer to God I have sought every blessing upon you, for I love you very much. Oh, how I desire to see you a holy and successful minister of Jesus! I need not bid you work at your studies: I am sure you will; but be sure to live near to God, and hold very much intercourse with Jesus.  
“I have been thinking that, when you are gone out into the vineyard, I must find another to be my dearly-beloved Timofhy, just as you are.

“Now I find it no easy task to get money, and I have been thinking I must get friends to give me a good set of books, which I shall not *give*you, but keep for those who ,nay come after; so that, by degrees, I shall get together a good Theological Library for young students in years to come.

“If I were rich, I would give you all; but, as I have to bear all the brunt of the battle, and am alone responsible, I think I must get the books to be always used in future. Those you will purchase to-day are yours to keep; Mr. Bagster’s books must be mine; and I have just written to a friend to buy me *]gallhew Henry,*which shall sdon be at your disposal, and be mine in the same way. You see, I am looking forward.

“Believe me,  
“Ever your very loving friend,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

“After Mr. Spurgeon’s marriage, I continued regularly to study with him, once a week, in the New Kent Road, and afterwards at Nightingale Lane, Clapham Common. Towards the latter part of 1856, I preachedat Kingston-on-Thames, and before long received a unanimous invitation to the Pastorate of the Baptist Church there. Acting on Mr. Spurgeon’s advice, that invitation was accepted temporarily until two years of study had expired. Mr. Spurgeon himself made arrangements with tl~e church that, in addition to the amount they were giving me for my services, they were to repay him the amount he was expending for my tuition at Bexley Heath. At the expiration of the first quarter, he handed me a cheque, saying, ‘That is yours; the deacons would not have given that extra if I had not put it in the way I have done.’ On my refusing to accept the cheque, he at once said that, as he had given the money to the Lord for two years, he must take a second student. In that way, *the Pastors’ College was commenced.*

“I went to reside with Rev. George Rogers, at Albany Road, Camberwell, on March 2I, 1857, and in the course of that year, the second student (Mr. E. J. Silverton) was received.”

(Mr. Spurgeon’s own account of the origin of the College begins near the point where Mr. Medhurst’s narration ends; he does not mention the preliminary period of training at Bexley Heath — )

When, in early days, God’s Holy Spirit had gone forth with my ministry at New Park Street, several zealous young men were brought to a knowledge of the truth; and among them some whose preaching in the street was blessed of God to the conver,;ion of souls. Knowing that these men had capacities for usefulness, but labored under the serious disadvantage of having no education, and were, moreover, in such circumstances that they would not be likely to obtain admission into any of our Colleges, it entered into my heart to provide them with a course of elementary instruction, which might, at least, correct their inaccuracies of speech, and put them in the way of obtaining further information by reading. One young man, of especial promise, seemed to be thrust in my way by Providence, so that I must commence with him at once, and, not long after, the very man of all others the most suitable to assist in carrying out my design was brought before me. The Rev. George Rogers, of Camberwell, had been waiting and ripening for the office and work of a tutor; and while the idea of educating young men was simmering in hay brain, he was on the look-out for some such service. We met, and entered into a fellowship which every succeeding year has strengthened.

With a solitary student, our labor of love commenced. Funds were forthcoming for the support of this one brother; but, at the time, it seemed to me to be a very weighty enterprise and a great responsibility. With a limited income, it was no easy thing for a young minister to guarantee £50 a year. This, however, was a small matter ere: long, for other brethren, who required the same aid, and were equal]y worthy, came forward to ask for similar instruction, and we could not deny them. The single student, in 1856, grew into eight ere long; and then into twenty; and, anon, the number rose to nearly one hundred men. Faith trembled when tried with the weight of the support of one man; but the Lord has strengthened her by exercise, so that she has rejoiced under the load when multiplied a hundred-fold.  
The work did not begin with any scheme,reit grew out of necessity. It was no choice with him who first moved in it, he simply acted because he was acted upon by a higher power. He had no idea whereunto the matter would grow, nor did he contemplate the institution of any far-reaching and widespread agency. To meet the present need, and follow the immediate movement of Providence, was all that was intended, and no idea of the future presented itself at the commencement. It seems to be God’s plan that works of usefulness should develop themselves in Obedience to a living force within, rather than by scheme and plan from without.

When the Pastors’ College was fairly moulded into shape, we had before us but one object, and that was, the glory of God, by the preaching of the gospel. To preach with acceptance, men, lacking in education, need to be instructed; and therefore bur Institution set itself further to instruct *those whom God had evidently called to/reach the gospel,*but who labored under early disadvantages. We never dreamLed of making men preachers, but we desired to help those whom God had already called to be such. Hence, we laid down, as a basis, the condition that a man must, during about two years, have been engaged in preaching, and must have had some seals to his ministry, before we could entertain his application. No matter how talented or promising he might appear to be, the College could not act upon mere hopes, but must have evident marks of a Divine call, so far as human judgment can discover them. This became a main point with us, for we wanted, not men whom our tutors could make into scholars, but men whom the Lord had ordained to be preachers.

Firmly fixing this landmark, we proceeded to sweep away every hindrance to the admission of fit men. We determined never to refuse a man on account of absolute poverty, but rather to provide him with needful lodging, board, and raiment, that he might not be hindered on that account. We also placed the literary qualifications of admission so low that even brethren who could not read have been able to enter, and have been among the most useful of our students in after d~.ys. A man of real ability as a speaker, of deep piety, and genuine faith, may be, by force of birth and circumstances, deprived of educational advantages, and yet, when helped a little, he may develop into a mighty worker for Christ; it would be a serious loss to the Church to deny such a man instruction because it was his misfortune to miss it in his youth. Our College began by inviting men of God to her bosom, whether they were poor and illiterate, or wealthy and educated. We sought for earnest preachers, not for readers of sermons, or makers of philosophical essays. “Have you won souls for Jesus?” was and is our leading enquiry of all applicants. “If so, come thou with us, and we will do thee good.” If the brother has any pecuniary means, we feel that he should bear his own charges, and many have done so; but if he cannot contribute a sixpence, he is equally welcome, and is received upon the same footing in all respects. If we can but find men who love Jesus, and love: the people, and will seek to bring Jesus and the people together, the College will receive two hundred of such as readily as one, and trust in God for their food; but if men of learning and wealth should come, the College will not accept them ‘unless they prove their calling by power to deliver the truth, and by the blessing of God upon their labors. Our men seek no Collegiate degrees, or classical honors, — though many of them could readily attain them; but to preach efficiently, to get at the hearts of the masses, to evangel![ze the poor, mthis is the College ambition, this and nothing else.

We: endeavor to teach the Scriptures, but, as everybody else claims to do the same, and we wish to be known and read of all men, we say distinctly that the theology of the Pastors’ College is Puritanic. We know nothing of the new *ologies;*we stand by the old ways. The improvements brought forth by what is called “modern thought” we regard with suspicion, and believe them to be, at best, dilutions of the ‘truth, and most of them old, rusted heresies, tinkered up again, and sent abroad ‘with a new face put upon them, to repeat the mischief which they wrought in ages past. We are old-fashioned enough to prefer Manton to Maurice, Charnock to Robertson, and Owen to Voysey. both our experience and our reading of the Scriptures confirm us in the belief of the unfashionable doctrines of grace; and among us, upon those grand fundamentals, there is no uncertain sound. Young minds are not to be cast into one rigid mould, neither can maturity of doctrine be expected of beginners in the ministry; but, as a rule, our men have not only gone out from us clear and sound in the faith; but, with very few exceptions, they have continued so. Some few have ascended into Hyper-Calvinism, and, on the other hand, one or two have wandered into Arminian sentiments; but even these have remained earnestly Evangelical, while the bulk of the brethren abide in the faith in which their Alma Mater nourished them. The general acceptance of our students in Scotland is one remarkable proof that they stand by the old Calvinistic, Evangelical doctrines. The Presbyterian Churches of Rofterdam and Amsterdam, which are frequently supplied by our students, and are resolutely orthodox, have again and again sent us pleasing testimony that our men carry to them the old theology of the Westminster Assembly’s Confession. Let wiseacres say what they will, there is more truth in that venerable Confession than could be found in ten thousand volumes of the school of affected culture and pretentious thoughtfulness. Want of knowing what the old theology is, is in most cases the reason for ridiculing it. Believing that the Puritanic school embodied more of gospel truth in it than any other’ since the days of the apostles, we continue in the same line of things; and, by God’s help, hope to have a share in that revival of Evangelical doctrine which is as sure to come as the Lord Himself. Those who think otherwise can go elsewhere; but, l:or our o~vn part, we shall never consent to leave the doctrinal teaching of the Institution vague and undefined, after the manner of the bigoted liberalism of the prese, nt day. This is our College motto: —

**ET TENEO ET TENEOR  
“I HOLD AND AM HELD.”**

We labor to hold forth the cross of Christ with a bold hand among the sons of me.n, because that cross holds us fiast by its attractive power. Our desire is, that every man may hold the truth, and be held by it; especially the truth of Christ crucitied.

There were many interesting incidents associated with the earliest days of the Pastors’ College, or which occurred even belbre it was actually in existence. When Mr. Iviedhurst began to preach in the street, some of the very precise friends, who were at that time members at New Park Street, were greatly shocked at his want of education, so they complained to me about it, and said that I ought to stop him; for, if I did not, disgrace would be brought upon the cause. Accordingly, I had a talk with t~he earnest young brother; and, while he did not deny that his English was imperfect, and that he might have made mistakes in other respects, yet he said, “I must preach, sir; and I shall preach unless you cut off my head.” I went to our friends, and told them what he had said, and they took it in all seriousness. “Oh!” they exclaimed, “you can’t cut off Mr. Medhurst’s head, so you must let him go on preaching.” I quite agreed with them, and I added, “As our young brother is evidently bent on serving the Lord with all his might, I must do what I can to get him art education that will fit him for the ministry.”  
The next one to come to me in trouble was Mr. Medhurst himsell. One day, with a very sad countenance, he said to me, “I have been preaching for three months, and I don’t know of a single soul having been converted.” Meaning to catch him by guile, and at the same time to teach him a lesson he would never forget, I asked, “Do you expect the Lord to save souls every time you open your mouth?” “Oh, no, sir I” he replied. “Then,’ I said, “that is just the reason why you have not had conversions: ‘ According to your faith be it unto you.’”

During the time Mr. Medhurst was studying at Bexley Heath, he used to conduct services in the open air. On one occasion, when I went there to preach, I was much amused, after the service, by overhearing the remarks of two good souls who were manifestly very much attached to the young student. “Well,” enquired the first, *“how*did you like Mr. Spurgeon?” *“Oh!”*answered her companion, “very .well; but *I should have enjoyed the service more if he hadn’t imitated our dear Mr. Medhurst so much.”*

There was another explanation, which did not seem to have occurred to the old lady; and, in after days, when relating the story to other students, I pointed out how serious the consequences might be if any of them imitated me!

At a later date, when I visited Kingston-on-Thames, after Mr. Medhurst had become Pastor of the church there, I wanted to find out what the people thought of him, so I spoke of him with apparent coolness to an estimable lady of his congregation. In a very few moments, she began to speak quite warmly in his favor. She said, “You must not say anything against him, sir; if you do, it is because you do not know him.” “Oh!” I replied, “I knew him long before you did; he is not much, is he? .... Well,” she answered, “I must speak well of him, for he has been a blessing to my family and servants.” I went out into the street, and saw some men and women standing about; so I said to them, “I must take your minister away.” “If you do,” they exclaimed, “we will follow you all over the world to get him back; you surely will not be so unkind as to take away a man who has done so much good to our souls?” After collecting the testimony of fifteen or sixteen persons, I said, “If the man gets such witnesses as these to the power of his ministry, I will gladly let him go on where he is; for it is clear that the Lord has called him into His service.”

Mir. Medhurst himself told me of an incident that occurred to him in connection with one young man whom I had accepted for training, because I could see that he might do good service after proper tuition. So extraordinarily ignorant was he of his Bible that, upon hearing Mr. Medhurst mention the story of Nebuchadnezzar’s being driven out from men, until his nails grew like birds’ claws, and his hair like eagles’ feathers, he said to the preacher, at the close of the sermon, “That was a queer story you tom the people, certainly; where did you fish that up? .... Why!” replied our friend, “have you never read your Bible? Can you not find it in the Book of Daniel?” The young man had read a great many other books, but he had never read his Bible through, yet he was going to be a teacher of it! I fear that such ignorance is very current in many persons; they do not know what is in the Bible: they could tell you what is in *The Churchman’s Magazine,*or *The Wesleyan Magazine,*or *The Bafitist Magazine,*or *The Evangelical Magazine;*but there is one old magazine, a magazine of arms, a magazine of wealth, that they have forgotten to read, mthat old-fashioned Book called the Bible. I remember saying, of a later student, that if he had been as well acquainted with his Bible as he was with *The Bafitist Handbook,*he would have made a good minister; and he was not the only one to whom such a remark might have been applied.

There was one of the early students, who gave me great cause to fear concerning his future, when he began his petition at the Monday night prayer-meeting thus:~” O Thou that art encinctured with an auriferous zodiac Z” This was, of course, a grandiloquent paraphrase of Revelation i. 13. Alas! my fears proved to be only too well founded; after he left the College, he went from the Baptists to the Congregationalists, then became a play-writer and play-actor; and where he is now, I do not know. For many ),ears I had the sad privilege of helping to support his godly wife, whom he had deserted. I thank God that, among so many hundreds of men, so few have caused me such sorrow of heart as he did.

CHAPTER 47

FIRST PRINTED WORKS. — AUTHOR, PUBLISHERS, AND READERS.

How many souls may be converted by what some men are privileged to *write and print!*There is, JFor instance, Dr. Doddridge’s *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Saul*Though I decidedly object to sorae things in it, I could wish that everybody had read that book, so many have been the conversions it has; produced. I think it more honor to have composed Watts’s *Psalms amt Hymns*than Milton’s *Paradise Zost;*and more glory to have written old Thomas Wilcocks’ book, .4 *Choice Drop of Hono, from the Rock Christ,*or the booklet that God has used so much, *The Sintler’s Friend,*than all the works of Homer. I value books for the good they may do to men’s souls. Much as I respect the genius of Pope, or Dryden, or Bu:ms, give me the simple lines of Cowper, that God has owned in bringing souls to Him. Oh, to think that I may write and print books which shall reach poor sinners’ hearts! The other day, my soul was gladdened exceedingly by an invitation from a pious woman to go and see her.’ She told me she had been ten years on her bed, and had not been able to stir from it. “Nine years,” she said, “I was dark, anti blind, and unthinking; but my husband brought me one of your sermons. I read it, and God blessed it to the opening of my eyes. He converted my soul by it; and now, all glory to Him, I love His Name!Each Sabbath morning,” she added, “I wait for your sermon. I live on it all the week, it is marrow and fatness to my spirit.” Ah! thought I, there is something to cheer the printers, and all of us who labor in that good work. A country friend wrote to me, this week, “Brother Spurgeon, keep your courage up; you are lmown in multitudes of the households of England, and you are loved, too; theugh we cannot hear you, or see your living form, yet throughout our villages your sermons are scattered; and I know oi cases of conversion from them, more than I can tell you.” Another friend mentioned to me an instance of a clergyman of the Church of England, a canon of a cathedral, who frequently preaches the sermons on the Sabbath, — whether in the cathedral or not, I cannot say, but I hope he does. Oh! who can tell, when these words are printed, what hearts they may reach, or what good they may effect? — C. H. S., *in sermon preached at New Park Street Chapel, October*7, 1855.

T HE first product of my pen which found its way into print was No. 1 of a short series of *Waterbeach Tracts,*which bore upon its front page the announcement, “PUBLISHED BY’ REQUEST OF NUMEROUS FRIENDS.” This was issued in 1853, and in the same year I sent to *The Barilist Reriorler*an account of the conversation I had with the clergyman at Maidstone which was the means of leading me to search the Scriptures, and to find out the teaching of the New Testament concerning believers’ baptism. F10 My letter was printed, although I only gave, for publication, initials for my name and sphere of labor. Soon after I was settled in London, the Editor of *The Barilist Messenger,*then recently started, asked me to write some articles for his Magazine, so I wrote a brief Exposition of Psalm lxxxiv. 6, which was published in September, 1854, under the title, “The Valley of Weeping.” The following month, the next verse furnished me with a sequel, which appeared in the October number under the heading, *“Onward*and Heavenward.” Month by month, I continued to contribute short meditations to the pages of the *Messenger*until my other work absorbed all my time and strength, and from then up to the present, one of my sermons has regularly occupied the first page of each issue of the little Magazine.

On August 20, 1854, I preached at New Park Street Chapel from the words in x Samuel xii. 17 ‘ “Is it not wheat harvest to-day?” The sermon was published by Mr. James Paul, as No. 2,234 in his *Penny Pulpit,*under the title,” Harvest Time.” and was, I believe, the first of my discourses to appear in print. Before I ever entered a pulpit, the thought had occurred to me that I should one day preach sermons which would be printed. While reading the penny sermons of Joseph Irons, which were great favorites with me, I conceived in my heart the idea that, some time or other, I should have a “Penny Pulpit” of my own. In due course, the dream became an accomplished fact. There was so good a demand for the discourses as they appeared in the *Penny Pulpit*and *Baptist Messenger,*that the notion of occasional publication was indulged, but with no idea of continuance week by week for a lengthened period; *lhal*came to pass as a development and a growth. With much fear and trembling, my consent was given to the proposal of my present worthy publishers to commence the regular weekly publication of a sermon. We began with the one preached at New Park Street Chapel, on Lord’s-day morning, January 7, 1855, upon the text, “I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed” (Malachi 3:6); and now, after all these years, it is a glad thing to be able to say, “Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great.” How many “Penny Pulpits” have been ,;el up and pulled down in the course of these years, it would be hard to tell; certainly, very many attempts have been made to publish weekly the sermons of most eminent men, and they have all run to their end with more or less rapidity, in some cases through the preacher’s ill-health or death, but in several others, to my knowledge, from an insufficient sale. Perhaps the discourses were too good: the public evidently did not think them too interesting. Those who know what dull reading sermons are usually supposed to be, will count that man happy who has for over thirty years f11 been favored with a circle of willing supporters, who not only purchase but actually *read*his discourses. I am more astonished at the fact than any other man can possibly be, and I see no other reason for it but this,rathe sermons contain the gospel, preached in plain language, and this is precisely what multitades need beyond anything else. The gospel, ever fresh and ever new, has held my vast congregation together these many long years, and the same power has kept around me a host of readers. A French farmer, when accused of witchcraft by his neighbors, because his crops were so large, exhibited his industrious sons, his laboriotas ox, his spade, and his plough, as the only witchcraft which he had used; and, under the Divine blessing, I can only ascribe the continued acceptableness of the sermons to the gospel which they contain, and the plainness of the speech in which that gospel is uttered.

When the time arrived for issuing Vol. 1. of *The New Park Street Pulpit*, I wrote in the Preface: — ”Little can be said in praise of these sermons, and nothing can be:said against them more bitter than has been already spoken. Happily, the author ~has heard abuse exhaust itself; he has seen its vocabulary used up, and its utmost venom entirely spent; and yet, the printed discourses have for that very reason found a readier sale, and more have been led to peruse them with deep attention.  
“One thing alone places this book above contempt, — and that accomplishes the deed so triumphantly, that the preacher defies the opinion of man, — it is the fact that, to his certain knowledge, there is scarcely a sermon here which has not been stamped by the hand of the Almighty, by the conversion of a soul. Some single sermons, here brought into the society of their brethren, have been, under God, the means of the salvation of not less than twenty souls; at least, that number has come under l:he preacher’s notice from one sermon only; and, doubtless, more shall be discovered at the last day. This, together with the fact that hundreds of the children of God have been made to leap for joy by their message, makes their author invulnerable either to criticism or abuse.

“The reader will, perhaps, remark considerable progress in some of the sentiments here made public, particularly in the case of the doctrine of the Second Coming of our Lord; but he will remember that he who is learning truth will learn it by degrees, and if he teaches as he learns, it is to be expected that his lessons will become fuller every day.

“There are also many expressions which may provoke a smile; but let it be remembered that every man has his moments when his lighter feelings indulge themselves, and the preacher must be allowed to have the same passions as his fellow-men; and since he lives in the pulpit more than anywhere else, it is but natural that his whole man should be there developed; besides, he is not quite sure about a smile being a sin, and, at any rate, he thinks it less a crime to cause a momen, tary laughter than a half-hour’s profound slumber.

“With all faults, the purchaser has bought this book; and, as it was not warranted to be perfect, if he’ thinks ill of it, he must make the best of his bargain, — which can be done, either by asking a blessing on its reading to himself, or entreating greater light for his friend the preacher.”

The first seven volumes were printed in small type, and each discourse formed only eight pages; but the abolition of the paper duty enabled the publishers to give a more readable type and twelve pages of matter. This has been better in every way, and marks an epoch in the history of the sermons, for their name was at about the same period changed from *The New Park Street Pulpit*to *The Alelropolilan Tabernacle Pulpit,*and their sale was largely increased. Constant habit enables me generally to give the same amount of matter on each occasion, the very slight variation almost surprises myself; from forty to forty-five minutes’ speaking exactly fills the available space, and saves the labor of additions, and the still more difficult task of cutting down. The earlier sermons, owing to. my constant wanderings abroad, received scarcely any revision, and consequently they abound in collo-quialis;ms, and other offences, very venial in extempore discourse, but scarcely tolerable in print; the later specimens are more carefully corrected, and the work of revision has been a very useful exercise to me, supplying in great measure that training in correct language which is obtained by those who write their productions before they deliver them. The labor has been far greater than some suppose, and has usually occupied the best hours of Monday, and involved the burning of no inconsiderable portion of midnight oil. Feeling that I had a constituency well deserving my best efforts, I have never grudged the hours, though often the brain has been wearied, and the pleasure has hardened into a task.

I have commenced revising the small-type sermons in preparation for their re-issue in type similar to that used for the rest of the series. There were mistakes in orthography and typography, which needed to be corrected; but I was happy to find that I had no occasion to alter any of the doctrines which I preached in those early days of my ministry. I might, here and there, slightly modify the expressions used thirty or five-and-thirty years ago; but, as to the truths themselves, I stand just where I did when the Lord first revealed them to me by His unerring Spirit.

Before the first volume of my sermons was completed, Mr. W. H. Coilingridge had published for me, under the title of Smooth*Stones taken from Ancient Brooks,*a small volume containing “a collection of sentences, illustrations, and quaint sayings, from the works of that renowned Puritan, Thomas Brooks.” In the same ,Tear (1855), Mr. James Paul issued Vol. 1. of *The Pulpit Library,*which contained ten of my sermons. (See page 27.) Being printed in clear, leaded type, and bound in doth, the volume was much appreciated, and had a large sale, although half-a-crown was charged for it.

It contained, amongst other discourses, the one preached the night before I came of *age,*f12*— “*Pictures of Life, and Birtheay Reflections;”manother delivered on the Sabbath following the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Henry Olney, and in the midst of the terrible visitation of cholera, — “The House of Mourning and the House of Feasting;” — and a third, preached from Isaiah 54:17, on November 5, 1854 (at: the very moment when the battle of Inkermann was being fought), in which I urged the importance of Christians and protestants remembering the day which had been made memorable in English history by the discovery of the Guy Fawkes’ plof on November 5, I6o5, and by the landing at forbay of William III., on November 5, I688. The title of the discourse was, *“The*Saints’ Heritage and Watchword.” The volume also included my first printed *sermon,m”* Harvest Time;” and another entitled, *“A*Promise for the Blind,” preached at the Baptist Chapel, Church Street, Blackfriars Road, on behalf of the Christian Blind Relief Society, in the course of which I referred to three institutions in the neighborhood which represented the three classes of blind people: — ”The physically blind, the mentally blind, and the spiritually blind .... In the London Road, you will find the School fbr the blind, — the physically blind. Just before you is the Roman Catholic Cathedral, — there you have the spiritually blind. And further on is the Bethlehem Hospital (‘Bedlam’*),*where you have the mentally blind.”

In 1855, — partly as an answer to the slanders and calumnies by which I was assailed, and partly that my own people might be furnished with a plain statement of “the faith once for all delivered to the saints,” — Messrs. Alabaster and Passmore brought out, under my direction, a new edition of *“The Baptist Confession of Faith,*with Scripture proofs, adopted by the ministers and messengers of the General Assembly which met in London in July, 1689;” amongst whom were such notable men as Hanserd Knollys, William Kiffin, Andrew Gifford, and my own illustrious predecessor, Benjamin Keach.

In two Prefafory notes, one to Christians in general, and the other to my own people, I wrote as follows: —  
“TO ALL THE HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH, WHO REJOICE IN THE GLORIOUS DOCTRINES OF FREE GRACE, —  
“Dearly-beloved,

“I have thought it meet to reprint in a cheap form this most excellent list of doctrines, which was subscribed unto by the Baptist ministers in the year I689.

“We need a banner, because of the truth; it may be that this small volume may aid the cause of the glorious gospel, by testifying plainly what are its leading doctrines. Known unto many of you by face in the flesh, I trust we are also kindred in spirit, and are striving together for the glory of our Three-one God. May the Lord soon restore unto His Zion a pure language, and may the watchmen see eye to eye!

“He who has preserved this faith among us, will doubtless bless our gospel evermore.  
“So prays your brother in the gospel of Jesus,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
“To The Church In New Park Street, Among Whom It Is My Delight To Minister, —  
“Dearly-beloved,

“This ancient document is a most excellent epitome of the things most surely believed among us. By the preserving hand of the Triune Jehovah, we have been kept faithful to the great points of our glorious gospel, and we feel more resolved perpetually to abide by them.

“This little volume is not issued as an authoritative rule, or code of faith, whereby you are to be lettered, but as an assistance to you in controversy, a confirmation in faith, and a means of edification ill righteousness. Here, the younger members of our church will have a Body of Divinity in small compass, and by means of the Scriptural proofs, will be ready to give a reason for the hope that is in them.

“Be not ashamed of your faith; remember it is the ancient gospel of martyrs, confessors, Reformers, and saints. Above all, it is *the truth of God,*against which the gates of hell cannot prevail.

“Let your lives adorn your faith, let your example recommend your creed. Above all, live in Christ Jesus, and walk in Him, giving credence to no teaching but that which is manifestly approved of Him, and owned by the Holy Spirit. Cleave fast to the Word of God, which is here mapped out to you. May our Father, who is in Heaven, smile on us as ever! Brethren, pray for —

*“Your*affectionate Minister,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

I have never seen any reason to alter what I then wrote, and I would, at the present time, just as earnestly commend to my fellow-Christians the prayerful study of *The Baptist Confession of Faith*as I did in the early years of my ministry in London, for I believe it would greatly tend to the strengthening of their faith.

I have already stated that, as soon as the publication of the sermons was commenced, the Lord set His seal upon them in the conversion of sinners, the resforation of backsliders, and the edification of believers; and, to His praise, I rejoice to write that, ever since, it has been the same. For many years, seldom has a day passed, and certainly never a week, without letters reaching me from all sorts of places, even at the utmost ends of the earth, telling me of the salvation of souls by means of one or other of the sermons. There are, in the long series, discourses of which I may say, without exaggeration, that the Holy Spirit has blessed them to hundreds of precious souls; and long after their delivery, fresh instances of their usefulness have come to light. For this, to God be all the glory!

There were certain remarkable cases of blessing through the reading of some of the very earliest of the sermons; I mention these, not merely because Qf the interesof naturally attaching to them, but because they are representative of many similar miracles of mercy that have been wrought by the Holy Ghost all through the years ‘which have followed. On June 8, 1856, I preached in Exeter Hall from Hebrews 7:25: *“Wherefore*He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.” The sermon was published under the title, *“Salvation*to the Uttermost;” and, more than thirty years afterwards, I received the joyful tidings that a murderer in South America had been brought to the Saviour through reading it. A friend, living not far from the Tabernacle, had been in the city of Para, in Brazil. There he heard of an Englishman in prison, who had, in a state of drunkenness, committed a murder, for which he was confined for life. Our friend went to see him, and found him deeply penitent, but quietly restful, and happy in the Lord. He had felt the terrible wound of blood-guiltiness in his soul, but it had been healed, and he was enjoying the bliss of pardon.

Here is the story of the poor fellow’s conversion as told in his own words:*—*“*A*young man, who had just completed his contract at the gasworks, was returning to England; but, before doing so, he called to see me, and brought with him a parcel of books. When I opened it, I found that they were novels; but, being able to read, I was thankful for anything. After I had read several of the books, I found one of Mr. Spurgeon’s sermons (No. 84), in which he referred to Palmer, who was then lying under sentence of death in Stafford Gaol, and in order to bring home the truth of his text to his hearers, he said that, if Palmer had committed many other murders, if he repented, and sought God’s pardoning love in Christ, even he would be forgiven! I then felt that, if Palmer could be forgiven, so might I. I sought the Saviour, and, blessed be God, I found Him; and now I am pardoned, I am fi:ee; I am a sinner saved by grace. Though a murderer, I have not yet sinned beyond ‘the uttermost,’ blessed be His holy Name!”

It made me very happy when I heard the glad news that a poor condemned murderer had thus been converted, and I am thankful to know that he is not the only one who, although he had committed the awful crime of murder, had, through the Spirit’s blessing upon the printed sermons, been brought to repentance, and to faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. There was another man, who had lived a life o! drunkenness and unchastity, and who had even shed human blood with his bowie knife and his revolver, yet he, too, found the Saviour, and became a new man; and when he was dying, he charged someone who was with him to tell me that one of my discourses had brought him to Christ. *“I*shall never see Mr. Spurgeon on earth,” he said, *“but*I shall tell the Lord Jesus Christ about him when I get to Heaven.” It was a sermon, read far away in the backwoods, that, through sovereign grace:, was the means of the salvation of this great sinner.

One Saturday morning in November, 1856, when my mind and heart were occupied with preparation for the great congregation I expected to address the next day at the Surrey Gardens Music Hall, I received a long letter from Norwich, from a man who had been one of the leaders of an infidel society in that city. It was most cheering to me, amid the opposition and slander I was then enduring, to read what he wrote: —

“I purchased one of the pamphlets entitled, ‘Who is this Spurgeon?’ and also your portrait (or a portrait sold as yours) for 3d. I brought these home, and exhibited them in my shop-window. I was induced to do so from a feeling of derisive pleasure. The title of the pamphlet is, naturally, suggestive of caricature, and J t was especially to convey that impression that I attached it to your portrait, and placed it in my window. But I also had another object in view, I thought by its attraction to improve my trade. I am not at all in the book or paper business, which rendered its exposure and my motive the more conspicuous. 1 have taken it down now: *I am taken down, too*.... I had bought one of your sermons of an infidel a day or two previously. In that sermon I read these words, ‘They go on; that step is safe, — they take it; the next is apparently safe, — they take that; their foot hangs over a gulf of darkness.’ I read on, but the word darkness staggered me; it was all dark with me. I said to myself, ‘True, the way has been safe so far, but I am lost in bewilderment; I cannot go on as I have been going. No, no, no; I will not risk it.’ I left the apartment in which I had been musing, and as I did so, the three words, ‘ Who can tell?’ seemed to be whispered to my heart. I determined not to let another Sunday pass without visiting a place of worship. How soon my’ soul might be required of me, I knew not; but I felt that it would be mean, base, cowardly, not to give it a chance of salvation. ‘Ay!’ I thought, ‘my associates may laugh, scoff, deride, and call me coward and turncoat, I will do an act of justice to my soul.’ I went to chapel; I was just stupefied with awe. What could i want there? The doorkeeper opened his eyes wide, and involuntarily asked, ‘It’s Mr. — -, isn’t it?’ ‘Yes,’ I said, ‘it is.’ He conducted me to a seat, and afterwards brought me a hymn-book. I was fit to burst with anguish. ‘Now,’ I thought:, ‘ I am here, if it be the house of God, Heaven grant me an audience, and I will make a full surrender. O God, show me some token by which I may know that Thou art, and that Thou wilt in no wise cast out the vile deserter who has ventured to seek Thy face and Thy pardoning mercy!’ I opened the hymn-book to divert my mind from the feelings that were rending me, and the first words that caught my eyes were —

***“‘Dark, dark indeed the grave would be  
Had we no light, 0 God, from Thee*I’”**

After mentioning some things which he looked upon as evidences that he was a true convert, the man closed up by saying, *“O*sir, tell this to the poor wretch whose pride, like mine, has made him league himself with hell; tell it to the hesitating and the timid; tell it to the desponding Christian, that God is a very present help to all that are: in need!… Think of the poor sinner who may never look upon you in this world, but who will live to bless and pray for you here, and long to meet you in the world exempt from sinful doubts, from human pride, and backsliding hearts.”

After that letter, I heard again and again from the good brother; and I rejoiced to learn that, the following Christmas-day, he went into the market-place at Norwich, and there made a public recantation of his errors, and a profession of his faith in Christ. Then, taking up all the infidel books he had written, or that he had in his possession, he burned them in the sight of all the people. I blessed God with my whole heart.for such a wonder of grace as that man was, and I afterwards had the joy of learning from his own lips what the Lord had done for his soul, and together we praised and magnified Him for His marvellous mercy.

Many singular things have happened in connection with the publication of the sermons. One brother, whose name I must not mention, purchased and gave away no less than 250,000 copies. He had volumes bound in the best style, and presented to every crowned head in Europe. He gave copies, each containing twelve or more sermons, to all the students of the Universities, f13 and to all the members of the two Houses of Parliament, and he even commenced the work of distributing volumes to the principal householders in the towns of Ireland. May the good results of his laborious seed-sowing be seen many days hence! The self-denial with which this brother saved the expense from a very limited income, and worked personally in the distribution, was beyond all commendation; but praise was evaded and observation dreaded by him; the work was done without his left hand knowing what his right hand did.

In the first days of our publishing, a city merchant advertised the sermons in all sorts of papers, offering to supply them from his own office. He thus sold large quantities to persons who might otherwise never have heard of them. He was not a Baptist, but held the views of the Society of Friends. It was very.long before I knew who he was, and I trust he will pardon me for thus calling attention to a deed for which I shall ever feel grateful to him. By my permission, the sermons were printed *as advertisements*in several of the Australian papers, one gentleman spending week by week a sum which I scarcely dare to mention, lest it should not be believed. By this means, they were read far away in the Bush, and never were results more manifest, for numbers of letters were received — in answer to the enquiry as to whether the advertisements should be continued, — all bearing testimony to the good accomplished by their being inserted in the newspapers. A selection of these letters was sent to me, and made my heart leap for joy, for they detailed conversions marvellous indeed. Beside these, many epistles of like. character came direct to me, showing that the rough dwellers in the wilds were glad to find in their secular paper the best of all news, the story of pardon bought with blood.  
(Some particulars of these conversions will be given in a later volume, together with information concerning the numerous translations into foreign languages.)

In America, the sale of the first volume reached 20,000 in a very short time; and, many years ago, it was calculated that half a million volumes had been sold there. Beside this, dozens of religious papers in the United States, and Canada, and elsewhere, appropriate the sermons bodily, and therefore it is’quite impossible to tell where they go, or rather, where they do not go. For all these opportunities of speaking to so large a portion of the human race, I cannot but be thankful to God, neither can I refrain from asking the prayers of God’s people that the gospel thus widely scattered may not be in vain.

Brethren in the ministry will be best able to judge the mental wear and tear involved in printing’ one sermon a week, and they will most sympathize in the overflowing gratitude which reviews between thirty and forty years of sermons, and magnifies the God of grace for help so long continued. The quarry of Holy Scripture is inexhaustible, I seem hardly to have begun to labor in it; but the selection of the next block, and the consideration as to how to work it into form, are matters not so easy as some think. Those who count preaching and its needful preparations to be slight matters, have never occupied a pulpit continuously month after month, or they would know better. Chief of all is the responsibility .which the preaching of the Word involves: I do not wish to feel this less heavily, rather would I feel it more; but it enters largely into the account of a minister’s life-work, and tells upon him more than any other part of his mission. Let those preach lightly who dare do so; to me, it is “the burden of the Lord,” — joyfully carried as grace is given; ‘but, still, a burden which at times crushes my whole manhood into the dust of humiliation, and occasionally, when illhealth unites with the mental st/’ain, into depression and anguish of heart.

However, let no man mistake me. I would sooner have my work to do than any other under the sun. Preaching Jesus Christ is sweet work, joyful work, Heavenly work. Whitefield used to call his pulpit his throne, and those who know the bliss of forgetting everything beside the glorious, all-absorbing topic of Christ crucified, will bear witness that the term was aptly used. It is a bath in the waters of Paradise to preach with the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven. Scarcely is it possible: for a man, this side the grave, to be nearer Heaven than is a preacher when his Master’s presence bears him right away from every care and thought, save the one business in hand, and that the greatest that ever occupied a creature’s mind and heart. No tongue can tell the amount of happiness which I have enjoyed in delivering these sermons, and so, gentle reader, forgive me if I have wearied you with this grateful record, for I could not refrain from inviting others to aid me in praising’ my gracious Master. *“Bless*the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, ble,;s His holy Name.”

In my early experience as an author, I made one milstake which I have never repeated. For my volume, *The Saint and his Saviour,*which contained 480 small octavo pages, I accepted from Mr. James S. Virtue the sum of £50. At the time I entered into the agreement, mwithin about a year of my coming to London,~~the amount seemed to me large; but in comparison with what the book must have brought to the publisher, it was ridiculously small; and as he never deemed it wise to add anything to it, I took good care not to put any other of my works into his hands, but entrusted them to publishers who knew how to treat me more generously. After the volume had been on sale for more than thirty years, the copyright was offered to me for considerably more than I had originally received for it l Neither my publishers nor I myself thought it was worth while to buy it back under the circumstances, so it passed into the possession of my good friends, Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton.

(The book was issued in the United States soon after it was published in England, and it had a large sale there. In a letter to Mr. Spurgeon, dated “New York, Sept. *17, 1857,”*Messrs. Sheldon, Blakeman, & Co., who for many years republished his works on mutually advantageous terms, wrote: — ”Messrs. Virtue and Son sold to D. Appleton & Co. the advance sheets of *The Saint and his Saw’our,*and they have sold them to us. We have the’book stereofyped as far as we have received the sheets; we expect the rest from London by next steamer, and shall then immediately issue the book. We are delighted with it, and think it will take well with our people.”)

My own experiences in the production of the work are faithfully described in the Preface: —

“Never was a book written amid more incessant toil. Only the fragments of time could be allofted to it, and intense mental and bodily exertions have often rendered me incapable of turning even those fragments to advantage. Writing is, to me, the work of a slave. It is a delight, a joy, a rapture, to talk out my thoughts in words that flash upon the mind at the instant when they are required; but it is poor drudgery to sit still, and groan for thoughts and words without succeeding in obtaining them. Well may a man’s books be called his ‘ works’, for, if every mind were constituted as mine is, it would be work indeed to produce a quarto volume. nothing but a sense of duty has impelled me to finish this little book, Which has been more than two years on hand. Yet have I, at times, so enjoyed the meditation which my writing has induced, that I would not discontinue the labor were it ten times more irksome; and, moreover, I have some hopes that it may yet be a pleasure to me to serve God with the pen as well as the lip.”

Those who are familiar with my literary career know how abundantly those “hopes” have been realized; yet, at the time, my faithful friend, Dr. John Campbell, doubtless expressed what many beside himself felt when he wrote:*— “*Such hopes are innocent, and, should they never be realized, the disappointment will not be viewed as a calamity. We think it will be wise in Mr. Spurgeon, however, to moderate his expectations in this quarter. The number of those who, either in past or present times, have attained to eminence both with tongue and pen, is small. The Greeks produced none, and the Romans only one; and Great Britain has hardly been more successful. Charles Fox, not satisfied with peerless eminence in the House of Commons, aspired to honor in the field of history. Thomas Erskine, without an equal at the Bar, also thirsted for literary renown. Each made the attempt, and gave to the world a fragment, presenting not the slightest impress of their towering genius as orators, and otherwise adding nothing to their fame. These illustrious men, however, were perfectly capable, had they foresworn eloquence, and given themselves to letters, in early life, to have taken a foremost place in the ranks of literature; and so is Mr. Spurgeon; but they were early ensnared by their rhetorical successes; and so is he. By incessant speaking, they developed to the full, and cultivated to the highest extent, oral eloquence; and so has he. After this, they could not endure the drudgery necessary to cultivate the habit of composition till it became a pleasure and a luxury; and neither can he. Their indisposition to use the pen increased with time, and so will his; and to such a length did their self-created incapacity grow on them, that they became almost incapable of correspondence; and so will he. We believe he is well-nigh so now!

“If we might use the liberty, we would say, it is Mr. Spurgeon’s wisdom to know his place, and be satisfied to occupy it. Let him rejoice in his glorious mission, and continue to fulfil, as he now does, its exalted obligations. It is surely enough to satisfy all the ambition for which there is room in the bosom of a Christian man, to remain supreme in the realm of sacred eloquence, — an instrument, beyond all others, intended to promote the salvation of sinners .... The volume throughout bears the stamp of a rhetorical genius, and indicates a practised speaker rather than writer, and breathes a most intense concern for the souls of men. This is everywhere the prominent idea, to the utter exclusion of everything that savours of display. We dismiss the work with the most cordial wish for its success in furtherance of the great object with which it was prepared, and doubt not that, however tame and gentle as compared with the powerful stream of life and fire which pervades the sermons, it will, in its own way, amply contribute to the same grand result, — the turning of men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.”

In the long interval which necessarily elapsed betwecn my undertaking to write *The Saint and his Saviour*and the date of the publication of the volume, I had become so attached to my friends, Mr. Joseph Passmore and Mr. James Alabaster, that I had no wish to have any other publishers as long as I lived. Our relationship has been one of the closest intimacy, and I think they would join with me in saying that it has been of mutual benefit; and our business arrangements have been such as Christian men would desire to make so that in all things God might be glorified. The young partners began in a very humble fashion in Wilson Street, Finsbury, and they we:re afterwards able to tell a wonderful story of how the Lord prospered and blessed them there. The very speedy and unprecedented success of the publications made ‘it: difficult at times to cope with the extraordinary rush of orders; but, by setting themselves manfully to the task, and using all the help available, they were able to lay a solid foundation for the future well-being of the firm, which afterwards migrated to Little Britain, and then to Fann Street, ADdersgate Street. (See illustration on page x74.) I have often asked Mr. Passmore the question whether I write for him, or he prints for. me;wwhether he is my employer, or I am his. He says t~hat I am “the Governor,” so perhaps that settles the point.

(The following selection from the hundreds of letters written by Mr. Spurgeon to Mr. or Mrs. Passmore, during their long and intimate association, will afford just a glimpse of the happy friendship which existed between them, and also of the business relationship which remained throughout one of unbroken harmony.

This letter was written bv Mr. Spurgeon at the close of one of the many Continental tours on which Mr. Passmore had been his companion: — “Boulogne,  
“Dec. 23.  
“My Dear Mrs. Passmore,

*“Your*noble husband is sitting before the fire on one chair, with his legs up on another, and as it seemed to be a pity to disturb His Royal Highness, I offered to write to you for him, and he accepted the offer. I am happy to say that our mutually respected and beloved Joseph is much better, and will, I hope, arrive at Park Lodge in first-rate condition about 7 or 8 o’clock on Friday. The sea is in an excited condition, and I fear none of us will need an emetic when crossing to-morrow’ but it will be better arranged than if we had the management of it, no doubt.

“I am very much obliged to you for lending me your worser half so kindly. He is a dear, kind, generous soul, and worth his weight in angels any day. I hope all the young folk are quite well. My dear wife says you are bonnie, which is vastly better than being bony.

“My kindest regards are always with you and yours. Pray accept my love, and I claresay His Royal Highness, the King of Little Britain, f14 would send his also; but he is so much engrossed in reading *The Standard,*that I have not asked about it.

“Yours ever truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

The two next letters need scarcely any explanation; yet it would be interesting to know whether *all*authors write in as genial a spirit when promised *“proofs”*do not arrive at the appointed time, and whether *all* publishers possess such grateful acknowledgments of amounts paid to them by the writers whose works they have printed: —

“Dear Mr. Passmore,  
“Have you retired from business? For, if not, I should be glad of proofs for the month of November of a book entitled *Mlorning by Morning*which, unless my memory fails me, you began to print. I was to have had some matter on Monday; and it is now Wednesday. Please jog the friend who has taken your business, and tell him that you always were the very soul of punctuality, and that he must imitate you.

“I send a piece for October 31, for I can’t find any proof for that date. Please let the gentleman who has taken your business have it soon.

*“Yours*ever truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

“P.S. — Has Mr. Alabaster retired, too? I congratulate you both, and hope the new firm will do as well. What is the name? I’ll make a guess, — MESSRS. QUICK AND SPEEDY.”

“My Dear Mr. Passmore,

“As you have to-day paid to me the largest amount I have ever received from your firm at one time, I seize the opportunity of saying, what I am sure you know’ already, that I am most sincerely thankful to God for putting me into your hands in my publishing matters. My connection with you has been one of unmingled satisfaction and pleasure. Your liberality has been as great as it has been spontaneous. Had I derived no personal benefit, it would have delighted me to see you prosper, for my interest in you is as deep as if you were my own brother, as indeed in thebest sense you are. From you and your partner, I have received nothing but kindness, courtesy, and generosity. My share of profits has always exceeded my expectations, and the way it has been given has been even more valuable than the money {tselfi God bless you both in your business and your famiEes l May your health be recruited, and as long as we live, may we be on as near and dear terms as we ever have been! I am afraid I sometimes tease you when I grumble in my peculiar way; but I never intend anything but to let you know where a screw may be loose with your workmen, and not because I really have anything to complain of. Your growing welfare lies very near my heart, and nothing gives me more pleasure than to see you advance in prosperity.

“I need not add my Christian love to you as my friend and deacon. “Yours ever truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

Although the following letter is of much later date than the preceding ones, it {s inserted here to show that Mr. Spurgeon had as much consideration for the welfare of a little messenger-boy as he had for the principals of the firm: —

“Westwood,  
“Beulah Hill,  
“Upper Norwood,  
“March 11th, 1891.

“Dear Mr. Passmore,

“When that good little lad came here on Monday with the sermon, late at night, it was needful. But please blow somebody up for sending the poor little creature here, late to-night, in all this snow, with a parcel much heavier than he ought to carry. He could not get home till eleven, I fear; and I feel like a cruel brute ill being the innocent cause of having a poor lad out at such an hour on such a night. There was no need at all for it. Do kick somebody for me, so that it may not happen again.

“Yours ever heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

During his later years, Mr. Spurgeon inserted in *The Sword and the Trowel* portraits and sketches of his deacons and friends whom he afterwards intended to include in his *Autobiography.*This chapter may, therefore, be appropriately closed with the paragraph relating to Mr. Passmore which was published in the Magazine for April, 1891, — almost the last number that Mr. Spurgeon personally edited: —

“Fifty-eight years ago, Joseph Passmore was the first boy to be enrolled in the Sunday-school of the new chapel in New Park Street. He was a nephew of Dr. Rippon, who was then the venerable Pastor. March Ist, 184o, he joined the church by baptism, and in the January of 1862 he was elected deacon. He and his esteemed wife have been among the most faithful members of the church all these long years, and their chilclren have followed in their footsteps. Mr. Joseph Passmore, Junr., of ‘ The Row,’ has long been a valued member of the church, and Mr. James Passmore is a deacon. On the first Sunday evening of our visiting London, Mr. Passmore walked home with us to our lodgings in Queen’s Square, and from that day to this our friendship has been of the most intimate character. With some trembling, the weekly publication of the sermons was commenced, but it has not been intermitted these six-and-thirty years; neither has there been a jarring note in all our fellowship through the printing-press. Mr. Passmore has usually shared our journeys and our holidays, and we trust he will yet do so for many years. His partner, Mr. Alabaster, though a member of another denomination, is a brother in the Lord, whom we highly esteem; but it is a great comfort to find in Mr. Passmore at once a deacon, publisher, and friend. Mr. Passmore has thus seen, in the Pastorate of our church, Dr. Rippon, Dr. Angus, James Smith, Mr. Walters, and ourselves. He has taken his share in the building and conduct of the Tabernacle, College, Almshouses, and Orphanage; and all in so quiet and unobtrusive a manner that he has been always more useful than prominent, more felt than heard. God grant that such helpers may long be spared to us!”

Mr. Passmore was spared to his beloved Pastor, and was one of the sincerest and deepest mourners when Mr. Spurgeon was “called home” on January 31, 1892. In the: following November, his partner and close personal friend for forty years, Mr. Alabaster, also received the summons, “Come up higher;” on August x, 1895, the message came for Mr. Passmore; and on January 31, 1896, Mrs. Passmore rejoined the loved ones in the presence of the King.

It was Mr. Spurgeon’s intention to include in his *Autobio£’raphy* illustrations of the: buildings in which his works were printed and published. Accordingly, the accompanying view has been prepared. For several years, the printing was done in the premises represented on the right-hand side of the picture; but this year — 1898 — the firm has erected new buildings in Whitecross Street. The publishing and sale of the works were for many years carried on at 23, and 18, Paternoster Row, and now that portion of the business has its head. quarters at 4, Paternoster Buildings, which is represented on the left-hand side of the illustration.)

CHAPTER 48.

EARLY WEDDED LIFE

BY MRS. C. H. SPURGEON.

Matrimony came from Paradise, and leads to it. I never was half so happy, oefore I was a married man, as I am now. When you are married, your bliss begins. Let the husband love his wife as he loves himself, and a little better, for she is his better halfi 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 thirty-five years, he is more sure of it than ever. There is not a better woman on the surface of The globe than his own, very own beloved. —*John Ploughman.*

A GAIN the res onslble task lies before me of interweavin m own dearest pesr opnal me m oreis wthi *my beloved’s Autobiography,* that the picture of his life’s history may glow with the fair colours and present some of the finishing’touches which are needed to render it as complete as possible Alas, that his dear hand is powerless to furnish them! Every line I write fills me with regret that I cannot better set forth the remembrance of his worth and goodness.

Someone wrote to me, lately, saying that it was impossible for a man’s nearest friends to give a true and impartial idea of him; they ]ired in too close proximity to him, their vision was interrupted by their admiration, they could not see many things that others, looking on from a remoter and broader coign of vantage, could distinctly discern. This seems to me a great mistake, except indeed in cases where “distance lends enchantment to the view;” for who could so reasonably be supposed to understand and recognize the inner qualities and disposition of an individual’s character as the one who lived in constant and familiar intercourse with him, and to whom his heart was as a clear, calm lake, reflecting Heaven’s own light and beauty? Those who knew my husband best, can testify that intimate knowledge of his character, and close companionship with him, did but more clearly reveal how very near, t)y God’s grace, he had “come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” not*in his own estimation,*be it well understood;~he never spoke of himself as “having apprehended;”— he was always “a poor sinner, and nothing at all.” So pre-eminently and gloriously was “Jesus Christ his All-in-all” that his gracious, gentle, lovely life testified daily to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in his heart, and the exceeding power of God which kept him through faith, and enabled him to “walk: worthy of the vocation wherewith he was called.” Robert Murray M’Cheyne used to pray:m,, O God, make me as holy as a pardoned sinner can be made!” and, to judge by my husband’s *life,*a similar petition must have been constantly in his heart if not on his lips.

Our brief wedding trip was spent in Paris; and, as I had made many previous visits to the fair city, beside spending some months in the Christian household of Pastor Audebez, in order to acquire the language, I felt quite at home there, and had the intense gratification of introducing my husband to all the places and sights which were worthy of arousing his interest and admiration. We had a cosy suite of rooms (by special favor) in the *entresol*of the H6tel Meurice, and every day we explored some fresh *musge,*or church, or picture-gallery, or drove to some place of hisfor!ic fame, all the charms of Paris seeming ten times more charming in my eyes than ‘they had ever been before, because of those other loving eyes which now looked upon them with me.

The city was then in the days of her luxury and prosperity; no Communistic fires had scorched and blackened her streets, no turbulent mobs had despoiled her temples and palaces, and laid her glories in the dust; she was triumphant and radiant, and in the pride of her heart was saying, “I sit a queen .... and shall see no sorrow.” Alas! there were days of calamity and tribulation in store for her, when war, and bloodshed, and fire, and famine ravaged her beauty, and laid waste her choice., habitations. But no forecast of such terrible visitations troubled our hearts; the halo of the present illumined all the future. We went to Versailles, to S~vres, to the Louvre, the Madeleine, the Jardin des Plantes, the Luxembourg, the H6tel de Cluny; in fact, to every place we could find time for, where Christian people might go, and yet bring away with them a clear conscience. A peep at the Bourse interested us very much. What a scene of strife it was! What a deafening noise the men made! My husband quaintly depicted the excitement in a few words: — ”The pof boiled more and more furiously as the hour of three approached, and then the brokers, like the foam on the top, ran over, and all the black contents followed by degrees!” Anyone acquainted with the place and its customs will recognize the accuracy and humour of this graphic description.

Naturally, the interiors of the churches attracted much of our attention; we alway,; found something to admire, though, alas! there was also much to deplore. When we visited the Cathedral of notre Dame, I was able to interest my companion by telling him that I had seen it in full gala dress on the occasion of the marriage of the Emperor Napoleon III. to his charming Empress Eugenie, and how glittering and gorgeous it then looked, with its abundant draperies of imperial purple velvet, embroidered all over with golden bees! All the wealth and riches of the great sanctuary were then pressed into service, and the result was magnificent. Without such adornments, the church has a simple and solemn grandeur of its own, very soofhing to the mind; and’ at the time of which I am writing, its sanctity was enhanced — in the opinion of its Roman Catholic worshippers, — by its possession of such ,;acred relics as part of the true cross, and the crown of thorns! These were shown to visitors on payment of an extra fee, as was also an amazing number of splendid vestments encrusted with gold and jewels, and worth a prince’s ransom. I believe that, at the time of the Commune, much of this treasure was carried away, or ruthlessly destroyed.

The beauty of the Sainte Chapelle specially delighted us, and we went there more than once. “It is a little heaven of stained glass,” was my beloved’s verdict; and, truly, its loveliness looked almost celestial, as we stood enwrapped in its radiance, the light of the sinking sun glorifying its matchless windows into a very dream of dazzling grace and harmony of colour.

Then there were St. Roch, St. Sulpice, Ste. Clotilde, and hosts of other churches, not forgetting St. Etienne du Mont, a grand edifice, containing the sumptuous shrine of Ste. Genevieve, — in its way, a perfect gem; — nor St. Germsin l’Auxerrois, with its ancient rose windows, and its pathetic memories of the betrayed Huguenots.

The Panth6on, too, once a temple, now a church, received a share of our interested attention. So far as I can remember, the building itself was almost empty, except for some statues ranged around it;but we descended to the cr3/pt, which contains the tombs of Rousseau, Voltaire, and other notable or noforious men, and we listened, with something like fear, to the thunderous echo which lurks there, and attracts visitors to these subterranean vaults. It is very loud and terrible, like a cannon fired off, and it gives one quite an uncanny feeling to heat such a deafening roar down in the bowels of the earth. After this experience, we were very glad to get into the fresh air again.

Of course, we went to St. cloud (now, alas[ in ruins). There is — or was — a lone]Ly, lovely walk through the Park to the summit of an eminence crowned by the lantern of Diogenes. From there, the view was glorious. The Seine flowed far below, the suburbs of the city lay beyond; Mont Va16rien on the right, Paris straight before one’s eyes, with the gilded dome of the Invalides shining in the clear air; St. Sulpice, and the Pantheon, and countless spires and towers forming landmarks in the great sea of houses and streets, the twin heights of Montmartre and P~re la Chaise in the background; all these grouped together, and viewed from the hill, formed an indescribably charming picture.

I tried to be a good cicerone, and I think I fairly succeeded, for my companion was greatly delighted, and, in after years, in his frequent visits to the French capital with friends and fellow-voyagers, he took upon himself the *rSle*of conducfor, with the happiest and most satisfactory results. He was never at a loss where to go, or how to spend the time in the most pleasant and profitable manner. A little note, written from Paris, twenty years after our wedding trip, contains the following sentences: — ”My heart flies to you, as I remember my first visit to this city under your deal guidance. I love you now as then, only multiplied many times.”

Ahl “tender grace of a day that is dead,” thy joy is not lessened by distance, nor lost by separation; rather is it stored both in Heaven and in my heart’s deepest chambers, and some day, when that casket is broken, it will “come back to me,” not here, but in that happy land where the days die not, where “the touch of a vanished hand” shall be felt again, and “the sound of a voice that is still” shall again make music in my ravished ears!

‘Twas a brief, bright season, this wedding trip of ours, lasting about ten days, for my husband could not leave his sacred work for a longer time, and we were both eager to return that we might discover the delights of having a home of our own, and enjoy the new sensation of feeling ourselves master and mistress of all we surveyed l What a pure unsullied joy was that home-coming! How we thanked and praised the Lord for His exceeding goodness to us in bringing us there, and how earnestly and tenderly my husband prayed that God’s blessing might rest upon us then and evermore! How we admired everything in the house, and thought there never was quite such a delightful home before, will be best understood by those who have lived in Love-land, and are well acquainted with the felicity of setting up house-keeping there. On the table, in the little sitting-room, lay a small parcel, which, when opened, proved to be a dainty card-case as a wedding present from Mr. W. Poole Balfem, accompanied by the following lines, which I have transcribed and recorded here since they were truly our first “Welcome Home,” and, in a sense, prophetic of our future lives: —

***“A Nuptial Wish.***

***~~“Dear friends, I scarce know what to say  
On this important nuptial day.  
I wish you joy; and while you live,  
Such gifts as only God can give.  
Whether life be short or long,  
Dark with grief, or bright with song,  
Whether sorrowful or glad,  
Whether prosperous or sad,  
Oh, that you, through Christ, may be  
Heirs of immortality; —  
Heirs of righteousness and peace,  
Heirs of life that ne’er shall cease,  
Heirs of glories yet to come,  
Heirs of the Eternal Home!  
In the valley, on the height,  
In the darkness, in the light;  
Still possessed of living grace,  
Pressing on with eager pace;  
Ever keeping Christ in view,  
Meek and humble, just and true;  
Helpers of each other’s faith,  
One in Him, in life and death;  
By His Spirit taught and led,  
By His grace and mercy fed,  
Blessed and guarded by His love,  
Till with Him you meet above.”~~***

I think the circumstances under which my beloved and Mr. Balfern met, are also worthy of a passing notice. One Saturday, the time for sermonpreparation had arrived, and the dear preacher had shut himself up in his study, when a ministerial visitor was announced. He would not give his name, but said, *“Tell*Mr. Spurgeon that a servant of tJh~ Lord wishes to see him.” To this my husband replied, “Tell the gentleman that I am so busy with his Master, that I cannot attend to the servant.” Then word was sent that W. Poole Balfern was the visitor, and no sooner did Mr. Spurgeon hear the name, than he ran out to him, clasped his hand in both his own, and exclaimed, *“W.*Poole Balfem! The man who wrote *Glimfises of Jesus!*Come in, thou blessed of the Lord!” Describing that interview, long afterwards, Mr. Balfern said, “I learned then that the secret of Mr. Spurgeon’s success was, that he was *cradled in the Holy Ghost.”*It was a very remarkable expression, which I do not remember to have met with anywhere else; but it was as true as it was striking.

So many memories cling about our first home, and so many notable events of early married life transpired within its walls, that I must ask my readers kindly to refer to the view given in Vol. 1, that they may the more readily understand the description which follows. On the ground floor, the single windowmnow almost hidden by a tree, planted since the days of which I write, — marks the little front parlor or “living-room”, in old-fashioned parlance, where the greater part of the home-life was spent; above this, and boasting two windows, was a very fair-sized room, the best in the house, and, therefore, devoted to the best of uses, — the master’s study; and the two windows immediately over this belonged to a bedchamber of the same size, where afterwards our twin-boys first saw the light of day. It may not be out of place to say here that, in all the houses we have lived in, — four in all, — we never encumbered ourselves with what a modern writer calls, “the drawback of a drawing-room;” perhaps for the good reason that we were such homely, busy people that we had no need of so useless a place; — but more especially, I think, because the “best room” was always felt to belong by right to the one who “labored much in the Lord.”

Never have I regretted this early decision; it is a wise arrangement for a minister’s house, if ‘not for any other. When we first carne to: “Westwood,”, Where there is a fine room for society purposes,-there was much merry discussion as to how it should be furnished. Already, the large billiard-room was converted into a study, and filled with books from the floor to the arch of the ceiling; but more space was needed for my husband’s precious volumes, and his heart was set on”seeing the grand room turned into an equally grand library. I proposed, with great glee, that we should go on the “Boffin’s Bower” plan;— “She keeps up her part of the room in her way;~ I keeps up my part of-the room in mine;” and with shouts Of laughter we would amuse ourselves by imagining the big room fitted up for half its length as “my lady’s padour,” the-other half being devoted to literary pursuits~ and so arranged that “Silas Wegg” could come and “drop into poetry” whenever it so pleasted him! In time, the question settled itselfi It was quite twelvemonths before the huge bookshelves, which were to line the-room, were completed, and put in place, and then, it looked so fine a *library,*that none could doubt its right or ~:laim to this honorable appellation. But this is a digression.

We began housekeeping on a very modest:scale, and even then had to practise rigid economy in all things, for my dear husband earnestly longed to help young men to preach the gospel, and from our slender resources we had to contribute somewhat largely to the support and education of Mr. T. W. Medhurst, who was the first to receive training for the work. From so small a beginning sprang the present Pastors’ College, with its splendid record of service both done and doing, of which fuller account will be given in future chapters. I rejoice to remember how I shared my beloved’s joy when he founded the Institution, and that, together, we planned and pinched in order to carry out the purpose of his loving heart; it gave me quite a motherly interest in the College, and *“our*own men.” The chief difficulty, with regard to money matters in those days, was to “make both ends meet;” we never had enough left over to *“tie*a bow and ends;” but I ctm see now that this was God’s way of preparing us to sympathize with and help poor Pastors in the years which were to come.

One of these good men, when recounting to me the griefs of his poverty, once said, *“You*can scarcely understand, for you have never been in the same position;” but my thoughts flew back to this early time, and I could truly say, *“I*may not have been in such depths of need as seem now likely to swallow you up; but I well remember when we lived on the ‘do without’ system, and only ‘ God’s providence was our inheritance,’ and when He often stretched forth His hand, and wrought signal deliverances for us, when our means were sorely straitened, and the coffers of both College and household were well-nigh empty.” I recall a special time of need, supplied by great and unexpected mercy. Some demand came in for payment, — I think it must have been a tax or rate, for I never had bills owing to tradesmen,-and we had nothing wherewith to meet it. What a distressing condition of- excitement seized us! “Wifey,” said my beloved, “what can we do? I must give up hiring the horse, and walk to New Park Street every time I preach!” “Impossible,” I replied, “with so many services, you simply could not do it.” Long and anxiously we pondered over ways and means, and laid our burden before the Lord, entreating Him to come to our aid. And, of course, He heard and answered, for He is a faithful God. That night, or the next day, I am not sure which, a letter was received, containing £20 for our own use, and we never knew who sent it, save that it came in answer to prayer! This was our first united and personal home experience of special necessity provided for by our Heavenly Father, and our hearts felt a very solemn awe and gladness as we realized that He knew what things we had need of; before we asked Him. As the years rolled by, such eventful passages in our history were graciously multiplied, and even excelled; but perhaps this first blessed deliverance was the foundation stone of my husband’s strong and mighty faith, for I do not remember ever afterwards seeing him painfully anxious concerning supplies for any of his great works; he depended wholly on the Lord, his trust was perfect, and he lacked nothing.

CHAPTER 49.

EARLY WEDDED LIFE (CONTINUED)

Sometimes we have seen a model marriage, founded on pure love, and cemented in mutual esteem. Therein, the husband acts as a tender head; and the wife, as a true spouse, realizes the model marriage-relation, and sets forth what our oneness with the Lord ought to be. She delights in her husband, in his person, his character, his affection; to her, he is not only the chief and foremost of mankind, but in her eyes he is all-in-all; her heart’s love belongs to him, and to him only. She finds sweetest content and solace in his company, his fellowship, his fondness; he is her little world, her Paradise, her choice treasure. At any time, she would gladly lay aside her own pleasure to find it doubled in gratifying him. She is glad to sink her individuality in his. She seeks no renown for herself; his honor is reflected upon her, and she rejoices in it. She would defend his name with her dying breath; safe enough is he where she can speak for him. The domestic circle is her kingdom; that she may there create happiness and comfort, is her life-work; and his smiling gratitude is all the reward she seeks. Even in her dress, she thinks of him; without constraint she consults his taste, and considers nothing beautiful which is distasteful to him. A tear from his eye, because of any unkindness on her part, would grievously forment her. She asks not how her behaviour may please a stranger, or how another’s judgment may approve her conduct; let her beloved be content, and she is glad. He has many objects in life, some of which she does not quite understand; but she believes in them all, and anything that she can do to promote them, she delights to perform. He lavishes love on her, and, in return, she lavishes love on him. Their object in life is common. There are points where their affections so intimately unite that none could tell which is first and which is second. To watch their children growing up in health and strength, to see them holding posts of usefulness and honor, is their mutual concern; in this and other matters, they are fully one. Their wishes blend, their hearts are indivisible. By degrees, they come to think very much the same thoughts. Intimate association creates conformity; I have known this to become so complete that, at the same moment, the same utterance has leaped to both their lips.

Happy woman and happy man I If Heaven be found on earth, they have it t At last, the two are so blended, so engrafted on one stem, that their old age presents a lovely attachment, a common sympathy, by which its infirmities are greatly alleviated, and its burdens are transformed *into*fresh bonds of love. So happy a union of will, sentiment, thought, and heart exists between them, that the two streams of their life have washed away the dividing bank, and run on as one broad current of united existence till their common joy falls into the ocean of eternal felicity. — C. H. S.

T HERE are one or two little pictures which memory has retained of events in that little front parlor whose window looks into the road. I will try to reproduce them, though the colours are somewhat faded, and the backgrounds blurred with age.

It is the Sabbath, and the day’s work is done. The dear preacher has had a light repast, and now rests in his easy chair by a bright fire, while, on a low cushion at his feet, sits his wife, eager to minister in some way to her beloved’s comfort. “Shall I read to you to-night, dear?” she says; for the excitement and labor of the Sabbath services sorely try him, and his mind needs some calm and soofhing influence to set it at rest. “Will you have a page or two of good George Herbert? Yes, that will be very refreshing, wifey; I shall like that.” So the book is procured, and he chooses a portion which I read slowly and with many pauses, that he may interpret to me the sweet mysteries hidden within the gracious words. Perhaps his enjoyment of the book is all the greater that he has thus to explain and open out to me the precious truths enwrapped in Herbert’s quaint verse; — anyhow, the time is delightfully spent. I read on and on for an hour or more, till the peace of Heaven flows into our souls, and the tired servant of the King of kings loses his sense of fatigue, and rejoices after his toil.

Another Sabbath night, and the scene is somewhat changed in character. The dear Pastor is not only weary, but sorely depressed in spirit. “Oh, darling!” he says, “I fear I have not been as faithful in my preaching to-day as I should have been; I have not been as much in earnest after poor souls as God would have me be. O Lord, pardon Thy servant!” “Go, dear,” he continues, “to the study, and fetch down Baxter’s *Reformed Pastor,*and read some of it to me; perhaps that will quicken my sluggish heart.” So I bring the book, and with deep sighs he turns the pages till he finds some such passage as the following: — ”Oh, what a charge have we undertaken! And shall we be unfaithful? Have we the stewardship of God’s own f~tmily, and shall we neglect it? Have we the conduct of those saints who must live for ever with God in glory, and shall we be unconcerned for them? God forbid l: I beseech you, brethren, let this thought awaken the negligent! You that draw back from painful, displeasing, suffering duties, and will put off men’s souls with ineffectual formalities; do you think this is an honorable usage of Christ’s Spouse? Are the souls of men thought meet by God to see His face, and live for ever in His glory, and are they not worthy of your utmost cost and labor? Do you think so basely of the Church of God, as if it deserved not the best of your care and help? Were you the keepers of sheep or swine, you might better let them go, and say, ‘They be not worth the looking after;’ and yet you would scarcely do so, if they were your own. But dare you say so by the souls of men?”

I read page after page of such solemn pleadings, interrupted now and again by his stifled heart-sobs, till my voice fails from emotion and sympathy, my eyes grow dim, and my tears mingle with his as we weep together, — he, from the smitings of a very tender conscience towards God, and I, simply and only because I love him, and want to share his grief. not for a moment do I believe there is any real cause for his self-upbraidings; but as that is a matter between himself and his God, I can only comfort him by my quiet sympathy. “The burden of the Lord” is upon his heart, and He lets him feel the awful weight of it for a time, that “the excellency of the power may be of God,” and not of man. “Who teacheth like Him?”

In the same small room occurred also a touching little scene which I have described in *Ten Years After!*but which cannot be left out of this history, for it has a right to a place here, revealing, as it does, the tenaerness of my beloved’s heart, while he still consistently put “first things first.” He was constantly away from home fulfilling preaching engagements of long or short duration, and these frequent absences were a trial to me, though I kept faithfully to my purpose of never hindering him in his work. But I remember how, while waiting for his return, late at night, from some distant place, I would tire of the cramped space of the tiny parlou~r, and pace up and down the narrow passage,edignified by the name of a “hall,” — watching and listening for the dear footstep I knew so well, and praying,m oh, how fervently f — that the Lord would care for his precious life, and avert all’ danger from him as he travelled back by road or rail. I can even now recall the thrill of joy and thankfulness with which I opened the door, and welcomed him home.

One morning, after breakfast, when he was preparing to go out on one of his long journeys, the room looked so bright and cosy that a sudden depression seized me at the thought of its emptiness when he was gone, and the many anxious hours that must pass before I should see him again. Some tears would trickle down my cheeks, in spite of my efforts to restrain them. Seeing me look so sad, he said, very gently, “Wifey, do you think that, when any of the children of Israel brought a lamb to the Lord’s altar as an offering to Him, they stood and wept over it when they had seen it laid there?” “Why, no!” I replied, startled by his strange question, “certainly not; the Lord would not have been pleased with an offering reluctantly given.” “Well,” said he, tenderly, “don’t you see, you are giving me to God, in letting me go to preach the gospel to poor sinners, and do you think He likes to see you cry over your sacrifice?” Could ever a rebuke have been more sweetly and graciously given? It sank deep into my heart, carrying comfort with it; and, thenceforward, when I parted with him, the tears were scarcely ever allowed to show themselves, or if a stray one or two dared to run over the boundaries, he would say, “What I crying over your lamb, wifey l” and this reminder would quickly dry them up, and bring a smile in their place.

Ah, sweetheart I was there ever one like thee? These were the days of early married life, it is true, when love was young, and temper tranquil, and forbearance an easy task; but “the wife of thy youth” can testify that, with thee, these lovely things of good report strengthened rather than diminished as time went on, and that, during all the forty years she knew and loved thee, thou wert the most tender, gracious, and indulgent of husbands, ruling with perfect love and gentleness, maintaining the Divinelyordained position of “the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church,” yet permitting her heart and hand to influence and share in every good word and work.

lind now that I am parted from thee, not for a few days only, as in that long-ago time, but “until the day break, and the shadows flee away,” I think I hear again thy loving voice saying, “Don’t cry over your lamb, wifey,” as I try to give thee up ungrudgingly to God, — not without tears, — ah, no! that is not possible, but with that full surrender of the heart which makes the sacrifice acceptable in His sight.

Sin extraordinary incident occurred in this early period of our history. One Saturclay evening, my dear husband was deeply perplexed by the difficulties presented by a text on which he desired to preach the next morning. It was in Psalm. 110:3: “Thy people shall be willing in the day of Thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: Thou hast the dew of Thy youth;” and, with his usual painstaking preparation, he consulted all the Commentaries he then possessed, seeking light from the Holy Spirit upon their words and his own thoughts; but, as it seemed, in vain. I was as much distressed as he was, but I could not help him in such an emergency. At least, I thought I could not; but the Lord had a great favor in store for me, and used me to deliver His servant out of his serious embarrassment. He sat up very late, and was utterly worn out and dispirited, for all his efforts to get at the heart of the text were unavailing. I advised him to retire to rest, and soothed him by suggesting that, if he would try to sleep then, he would probably in the morning feel quite refreshed, and able to study to better purpose. “If I go to sleep now, wifey, will you wake me very early, so that I may have plenty of time to prepare?” With my loving assurance that I would watch the time for him, and call him soon enough, he was satisfied; and, like a trusting, tired child, he laid his head upon the pillow, and slept soundly and sweetly at once.

By-and-by, a wonderful thing happened. During the first dawning hours of the Sabbath, I heard him talking in his sleep, and roused myself to listen attentively. Soon, I realized that he was going over the subject of the verse which had been so obscure to him, and was giving a clear and distinct exposition of its meaning, with much force and freshness. I set myselfi with almost trembling joy, to understand and follow all that he was saying, for I knew that, if I could but seize and remember the salient: points of the discourse, he would have no difficulty in developing and enlarging upon them. Never preacher had a more eager and anxious hearer! What if I should let the precious words slip? I had no means at hand of “taking notes,” so, like Nehemiah, “I prayed to the God of Heaven,” and asked that I might receive and retain the thoughts which He had given to His servant in his sleep, and which were so singularly entrusted to my keeping. As I lay, repeating over and over again the chief points I wished to remember, my happiness was very great in anticipation of his surprise and delight on awaking; but I had kept vigil so long, cherishing my .joy, that I must have been overcome with slumber just when the usual time for rising came, for he awoke with a frightened start, and seeing the tell-tale dock, said, *“Oh,*wiley, you said you would wake me very early, and now see the time! Oh, why did you let me sleep? What shall I do? What shall I do? *....* Listen, beloved,” I answered; and I told him all I had heard. *“Why!* that’s just what I wanted,” he exclaimed; “that is the true explanation of the whole verse! And you say I preached it in my sleep? *....*It is wonderful,” he repeated again and again, and we both praised the Lord for so remarkable a manifestation of His power and love. Joyfully my dear one went down to his study, and prepared this God-given sermon, and it was delivered that same morning, April 13, 1856, at New Park Street Chapel. It can be found and react in Vol. 2. of the sermons (No. 74), and its opening paragraph gives the dear preacher’s own account of the difficulty he experienced in dealing with the text. Naturally, he refrained from telling the congregation the specia.1 details which I have here recorded; but, many years after, he told the tale to his students at one of their ever-to-be-remembered Friday afternoon gatherings, and some of them still keep it fresh in their memories.

About this time I recall a visit to Stambourne which I paid with my dear husband. I saw, and loved at first sight, the dear old grandfather, so proud of *“the*child” who had grown into a great and gracious preacher. How kindly he received his grandson’s wife! With what tender, old-fashioned courtesy he cared for her! Everything about the place was then exactly as my beloved has described it in the first volume of this work; nothing had been altered. The old Manse was still standing, though not as upright as in its youth; the ivy grew inside the parlor, the old flowered chintz curtains still hung in their places, and the floor of the best bedchamber where we slept was as “anxious to go out of the window” as ever; indeed, a watchful balancing of one’s self was required to avoid a stumble or a fall. It was all very quaint, but very delightful, because of so many precious memories to him who had lived there. The occasion of our visit was the anniversary, either of the meeting-house, or the revered Pastor’s ministry, and the house was crowded with visitors, and unremitting hospitality seemed the order of the day. How delighted and interested the home folks and neighbors all were, and how much loving fuss was made over the young Pastor and his wife! It was charming to see him in the midst of his own people. He was just *“the*child” again, the joy of the old man’s heart; but when he preached, and the power of God’s Spirit burned in his words, and he fed the people to the full, the grandfather’s bliss must have been a foretaste of the joys of Heaven.

For my part, I had a considerable share of petting and kind attention, and but one black drop in my cup of pleasure. This I mean literally; I was enjoying a large cup of tea, and thinking how good and refreshing it was on a hot day, when, as the boftom of the cup was becoming visible, I saw, to my horror, a great spider, — my special detestation, — dead, of course, his black body swollen to a huge size, and his long legs describing a wheel-like circle in the remaining fluid. And I had been drinking the boiled juice of this monster! Oh, the disgust of it! Alas! that we can remember the evil, and let go the good! My beloved’s *sermon*is forgotten; but the spider.has the power to make me feel *“creepy*“even at this moment!

I make a passing reference to the birth of our twin-boys, in order to contradict emphatically a story, supposed to be very witty, which was circulated extensively, and believed in universally, not only at the time it was told, but through all the following years. It was said that my dear husband received the news of the addition to his household while he was preaching, and that he immediately communicated the fact to his congregation, adding in a serio-comic way, —

***“Not more than others I deserve,  
But God has given me more.”***  
I am sorry to say there are persons, still living, who declare that they were present at the service, and heard him say it!

Now the truth is, that the boys were born on *Saturday*morning’, September eo, z856, and my dear husband never left the house that day; nor, so far as I know, did he ever preach on the seventh day at any time, so the statement at once falls to the ground disproved. But I think I have discovered how the legend was manufactured. Looking through the sermons preached near to this date, I find that, on Thursday evening, September 25,mfive days after the event referred to, — Mr. Spurgeon delivered a discourse on behalf of the Aged Pilgrims’ Friend Society, and in the course of it made the following remarks:*~”*When we take our walks abroad, and see the poor, he must be a very thankless Christian who does not lift up his eyes to Heaven, and praise his God thus, —

***“‘Not more than others I deserve,  
But God has given me more.’***

“If we: were all made rich alike, if God had given us all abundance, we should never know the value of His mercies; but He puts the poor side by side with us, to make their trials, like a dark shadow, set forth the brightness which He is pleased to give to ofhe. rs in temporal matters.”

I have no doubt that some facetious individual, present at this Thursday evening: service, and being aware of the babies’ advent, on hearing these lines repeated, pounced upon them as the nucleus .of an attractive story, linked the two facts in his own mind, and then proclaimed them to the world as an undivided verity! Most of the sfories told of my dear husband’s jocoseness in *the pulpit*were “sfories” in the severe sense of the word; or possessed just so small a modicum of truth internally that the narrafors were able, by weaving a network of exaggeration and romance around them, to make a very presentable and alluring fiction. It was one of the penalties of his unique position and gifts that, all through his life, he had to bear the cross of cruel misrepresentation and injustice. Thank God, that is all left behind for ever!

Though I am quite certain that the lines in question were not quofed by my beloved, in public in reference to the double blessing God gave to us, I should scarcely be surprised if he made use of them when speaking to friends in private. If his heart were full of joy and gratitude, it would be sure to bubble over in some child-like and natural fashion. I have quite recently received a letter from a lady in the country, telling me of her visit to an old man, — an ex-policeman, nanled Coleman, — who, though bedridden, never tires of relating his memories of Mr. Spurgeon in those early days. He was stationed at New Park Street Chapel, on special duty, when the crowds came to hear “the boy-preacher,” and he delights to tell ~how, after a short while, the street became so blocked that the chapelgates had to be closed, and the people admitted a hundred at a time. “Ah!” said he, “he was a dear, good young man, he did not make *himself* anything; he would shake hands with anyone, he would give me such a grip, and leave half-a-crown in my hand; he knew that we policemen had a rub to get along on our pay. I know there were many he helped with their rent. *He did look pleased, that Sunday mornino~, when he said, ‘ Coleman, what do you think? God has blessed me with two sons!*’ I used to go in’and sit just inside the door, and get a feast for my soul from his discourses. I shall see him again soon, I hope.”  
Of course, this little story lacks the piquancy and sparkle of the former one; but it has the advantage of being *true.*

There was one other notable time in the front parlor. It recurs to me, at this moment, as the first falling of that black shadow of sorrow which the Lord saw fit to cast over our young and happy lives. It was again a Sabbath evening. I lay on a couch under the window, thinking of my dear one who had gone to preach his first sermon at the Surrey Music Hall, and praying that the Lord would bless his message to the assembled thousands. It was just a month since our children were born, and I was dreaming of all sorts of lovely possibilities and pleasures, when I heard a carriage stop at the gate. It was far too early for my husband to come home, and I wondered who my unexpected visitor could be. Presently, one of the deacons was ushered into the room, and I saw at once, from his manner, that somel:hing unusual had happened. I besought him to tell me all quickly, and he did so, kindly, and with much sympathy; and he kneeled by the couch, and prayed that we might have grace and strength to bear the terrible trial which had so suddenly come upon us. But how thankful I was when he went away! I wanted to be alone,, that I might cry to God in this hour of darkness and death! When my beloved was brought home, he looked a wreck of his former self, man hour’s agony of mind had changed his whole appearance and bearing. The night that ensued was one of weeping, and wailing, and indescribable sorrow. He refused to be comforted. I thought the morning would never break; and when it did come, it brought no relief.

The Lord has mercifully blofted out from my mind most of the details of the time of grief which followed, when my beloved’s anguish was so deep and violent that reason seemed to tofter on her throne, and we sometimes feared he would never preach again. It was truly ‘!the valley of the shadow of death” through which we then walked; and, like poor Christian, we here “sighed bitterly,” for the pathway was so dark “that, ofttimes, when we lifted up our foot to set forward, we knew not where or upon what we should set it next!”

It was in the garden of a house belonging to one of the deacons, in the suburbs of Croydon, whither my beloved had been taken in hope that the change and quiet would be beneficial, that the Lord was pleased to restore his mental equilibrium, and unloose the bars which had kept his spirit in darkness. We had been walking together, as usual; — he, restless and anguished; I, sorrowful and amazed, wondering what the end of these things would be;rowhen, at the foot of the steps which gave access to the house, he stopped suddenly, and turned to me, and with the old sweet light in his eyes, (ah I how grievous had been its absence l) he said, *“Dearest,* how foolish I have been! Why I what does it matter what becomes of me, if the Lord shall but be glorified?” — and he repeated, with eagerness and intense emphasis, Philippians ii. 9all: “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name; that at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” *“If*Christ be exalted,” he said, — and his face glowed with holy *fervour, m”*let Him do as He pleases with me; my one prayer shall be, that I may die to self, and live wholly for Him and for His honor. Oh, wiley, I see it all now f Praise the Lord with me!”

In that moment, his fetters were broken, the captive came forth from his dungeon, and rejoiced in the light of the Lord. The Sun of righteousness arose once more upon him, with healing ill His wings. But he carried the scars of that conflict to his dying day, and never afterwards had he the physical vigor and strength which he possessed before passing through that fierce trial. Verily, it was a thorn): path by which the Lord led him. Human love would have profected him at any cost from an ordeal so terrible, and suffering so acute; but God’s love saw The end from the beginning, and “He never makes a mistake.” Though we may not, at the time, see His purpose in the afflictions which He sends us, it will be plainly::evealed when the light of eternity falls upon the road along which we have journeyed.

While staying at Mr. Winsor’s hospitable home, where he so kindly received and sheltered us in the time of our trouble, it was decided that the babies should be there dedicated to the Lord, and His service. So, when our dear patient seemed sufficiently recovered to take part in the observance, a goodly number of friends gathered together, and we had a happy meeting for prayel’ and praise. Full details I am unable to give; the only photograph which my memory retains is that of the two little creatures being carried round the large room,~after the dedicafory prayers were ofiered, — to be admired, and kissed, and blessed. What choice mercies, what special favors, their dear father asked for them then, I do not remember; but the Lord has never forgotten that prayer, and the many petitions which followed it. He not only heard, but has been answering all through the years of their lives, and with the most abounding blessing since He saw fit to make them fatherless! No ceremoaial was observed, no drops of “holy water” fell on the children’s brows; but in that room, that evening, as truly as in the house, “by the farther side of Jordan,” in the days gone by, our infants were brought to Christ the Lord “that He would touch them;” and ‘it is not now a matter of faith, so much as of sight, that “He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them.”

Ah, me! it is not so many years ago, since the elder of those twin boys brought his firstborn son to “Westwood,” and my beloved, in one of those tender outpourings of the heart which were so natural to him, gave the child to God;~and, not many months *afterwards,~God answered lhe ibrayer, and took hhn to Himself!*One of the brightest, bonniest babies ever seen, he was the delight and expectation of our hearts; but the gift was claimed suddenly, and the child, who was to have done,’ according to our ideas, so much service on earth, went to sing God’s praises with the angels! I wonder, sometimes, whether the little ransomed spirit met and welcomed his warrior grandfather on the shores of the Glory-land!

CHAPTER 50

THE GREAT CATASTROPHE AT THE SURREY GARDENS MUSIC HALL.

Here the reader must pardon the writer if he introduces a personal narrative, which is tO him a most memorable proof of the lovingkindness of the Lord. Such an opportunity of recording my Lord’s goodness may never again occur to me; and therefore now, while my soul is warm with gratitude for so recent a deliverance, let me lay aside the language of an author, and speak for myself, as I should tell the story to my friends in conversation. It may be egotism to weave one’s own sorrows into the warp and woof of this meditation; but if the heart prompts the act, and the motions of the Holy Spirit are not contrary thereto, I think I may venture for this once to raise an Ebenezer in public, and rehearse the praise of Jesus at the setting up thereof. Egotism is not such an evil thing as ungrateful silence; certainly, it is not more contemptible than mock humility. Right or wrong, here followeth my story.

On a night which time will never erase from my memory, large numbers of my congregation were scattered, many of them wounded and some killed, by the malicious act of wicked men. Strong amid danger, I battled against the storm; nor did my spirit yield to the overwhelming pressure while my courage could reassure the wavering, or confirm the bold; but when, like a whirlwind, the destruction was overpast, when the whole of its devastation was visible to my eye, who can conceive the anguish of my sad spirit? I refused to be comforted; tears were my meat by day, and dreams my terror by night.

I felt as I had never felt before. “My thoughts were all a case of knives,” cutting my heart in pieces, until a kind of stupor of grief ministered a mournful medicine to me. I could have truly said, “I am not mad, but surely I have had enough to madden me, if I should indulge iu meditation on it.” I sought and found a solitude which seemed congenial to me. I could tell my griefs to the flowers, and the dews could weep with me. Here my mind lay, like a wreck upon the sand incapable of its usual motion. I was in a strange land, and a stranger in it. My Bible, once my daily food, was bnta hand to lift the sluices of my woe. Prayer yielded no bahn to me; in fact, my soul was like an infant’s soul, and I could uot rise to the dignity of supplication. “Broken-in pieces all asunder,” my thoughts, which had been to me a cup of delights, were like pieces of broken glass, the piercing and cutting miseries of my pilgrimage. I could adopt the words of Dr. Watts, and say, —

***~~The tumult of my thoughts,  
Doth but enlarge my woe;  
My spirit lauguishes, my heart  
Is desolate and love.~~***

***~~“With every morning-light  
My sorrow new begins:  
Look on my anguish and my pain,  
And pardon all my sins.”~~***

Then came “the slander of many,” — barefaced fabrications, libellous insinuations, and barbarous accusations. These alone might have scooped out the last drop of consolation from my cup of happiness; but the worst had come to the worst, and the utmost malice of the enemy could do no more. Lower they cannot sink who are already in the nethermost depths. Misery itself is the guardian of the miserable. All things combined to keep me, for a season, in the darkness where neither sun nor moon appeared. I had hoped for a gradual return to peaceful consciousness, and patiently did I wait for the dawning light. But it came not as I had desired; for He who doeth for us exceeding abundantly above All that we ask or think, sent me a happier answer to my requests. I had striven to think of the unmeasurable love of Jehovah, as displayed in the sacrifice of Calvary; I had endeavored to muse upon the glorious character of the exalted Jesus; but I found it impossible to collect my thoughts in the quiver of meditation, or, indeed, to place them anywhere but with their points in my wounded spirit, or else at my feet, trodden down in an almost childish thoughtlessness. On a sudden, like a flash of lightning from the sky, my soul returned unto me. The burning lava of my brain cooled in an instant. The throbbings of my brow were still; the cool wind of comfort fanned my cheek, which had been scorched in the furnace. I was free, the iron letter was broken in pieces, my prison door was open, and I leaped for joy of heart. On wings of a dove, my spirit mounted to the stars, — yea, beyond them. Whither did it wing its flight, and where did it sing its song of gratitude? It was at the feet of Jesus, whose Name had charmed its fears, and placed an end to its: mourning. The Name-the precious Name of Jesus, was like Ithuriel’s spear, bringing back my soul to its own right and happy state. I was a man again, and what is more, a believer. The garden in which I stood became an Eden to me, and the spot was then most solemnly consecrated in my restored consciousness. Happy hour! Thrice-blessed Lord, who thus in an instant delivered me from the rock of my despair, and slew the vulture of my grief! Before I told to others the glad news of my recovery, my heart was melodious with song, and my tongue endeavoured tardily to express the music. Then did I give to my Well-beloved a song touching my Well-beloved; and, oh! with what rapture did my-soul flash forth, its praises! But all-all were to the honour of Him, the First and the Last, the Brother born for adversity, the Deliverer of the captive, the Breaker of my fetters, the Restorer of my soul. Then did I cast my burden upon the Lord; I left my ashes, and arrayed myself in the garments of praise, while He anointed me with fresh oil. I could have riven the very firmament to get at Him, to cast myself at His feet, and lie there bathed in the tears of joy and love. Never since the day of my conversion had I known so much of His infinite excellence, never had my spirit leaped with such unutterable delight. Scorn, tumult, and woe seemed less than nothing for His sake. I girded up my loins to run before His chariot, I began to shout forth His glory, for my soul was absorbed in the one idea of His glorious exaltation and Divine compassion.

After a declaration of the exceeding grace of God towards me, made to my dearest kindred and friends, I essayed again to preach. The task which I had dreaded to perform was another means of comfort, and I can truly declare that the words of that morning were as much the utterance of my inner man as if I had been standing before the bar of God. The text selected was in Philippians 2:9-11. (See *The New Park Street Pulpit,*No. 101, “The Exaltation of Christ.”) May I trouble the reader with some of the utterances of the morning for they were the unveilings of my own experience?

“When the mind is intensely set upon one object, however much it may, by divers calamities, be tossed to and fro, it invariably returns to the place which it had chosen to be its dwellingplace, You have noticed this in the case of David. When the battle had been won by his warriors, they returned flushed with victory. David’s mind had doubtless suffered much perturbation in the meantime; he had dreaded alike the effects of victory and of defeat; but have you not noticed how his thoughts, in one moment, returned to the darling object of his affections? ‘ Is the young man Absalom safe?’ said he, as if it mattered not what else had occurred if his favorite son Were but secure. So, beloved, is it with the Christian. In the midst of calamities, whether they be the wreck of nations, the crash of empires, the heaving of revolutions, or the scourge of war, the great question which he asks himself, and asks of others, too, is this, — ’ Is Christ’s Kingdom safe?’ In his own personal afflictions, his chief anxiety is, — Will God be glorified, and will His honor be increased by them? ‘ If it be so,’ says he, ‘although I be but as smoking flax, yet if the sun is not dimmed, I will rejoice; and though I be a bruised reed, if the pillars of the temple are unbroken, what matters it if I am bruised?’ He finds it to be sufficient consolation, in the midst of all the breaking in pieces which he endures, to think that Christ’s throne stands fast and firm, and that, though the earth hath reeled beneath his feet, yet Christ standeth on a rock which never can be moved. Some of these feelings, I think, have crossed our minds. Amidst much tumult, and divers rushings to and fro of troublous thoughts, our souls have returned to the dearest object of our desires, and we have found it no small consolation, after all, to say, ‘It matters not what shall become of us; God hath highly exalted *Him,*and given *Him*a Name which is above every name; that at the Name *of Jesus every*knee should bow.’”

Thus is the thought of the love of Jesus, in His delivering grace, most indelibly impressed upon my memory; and the fact that this experience is to me the most memorable crisis of my life, must be my apology for narrating it. — C. H. S., in “*The Saint and his Saviou*r,”*published in*1857.

M ANY of my friends are unacquainted with the transactions of the early years of my ministry in London, for a whole generation ‘has it passed away since then, and the mass of those who are with me now know little of “the brave days of old.” Hence the necessity of telling the story, that later sympathizers and fellow-laborers may learn by what a wonderful way the Lord has led us. To return to New Park Street Chapel, greatly enlarged as it was during the time of our first sojourn at Exeter Hall, resembled the attempt to put the sea into a tea-pof. We were more inconvenienced than ever. T¢ turn many hundreds away from the doors, was the general if not the universal necessity; and those who gained admission were but little better off, for the packing was dense in the extreme, and the heat something terrible even to remember. My enemies continued to make my name more and more widely known, by means of pamphlets, caricatures,’ f15 and letters in the papers, which all tended to swell the crowd. Matters reached a crisis in the Spring of 1856, and at a church-meeting, held on May 26 in that year, two resolutions were passed, the first intended to meet the immediately pressing need of a larger meeting-place for our great congregation, and the second looking further ahead, and providing for the requirements of the future. The official record is as follows: —

“Resolved, — That arrangements be made, as early as possible, for this church to worship at Exeter Hall on the Sabbath evenings during the Summer months.

“Resolved, — That the male members of this church be called together, as speedily as possible, to consult as to the best means of providing better accommodation for the vast crowds who are anxious to hear the gospel in connection with the ministry of our Pastor.”

Accordingly, services were held at New Park Street Chapel on the Sabbath mornings from June 8 to August 24, and in the evenings at Exeter Hall, but this plan was very inconvenient; and, therefore, in August, a fund was commenced to provide for the erection of a larger house of prayer, the first meeting in aid of that object being held at the house of *“Father*Olney.” Meanwhile, the proprietors of Exeter Hall intimated that they were unable to let that building continuously to one congregation. Although we paid for the use of it, it was but natural that others should think that the Baptists were monopolizing a hall which pertained to all denominations. I felt this to be just, and began to look about for another shelter. It was an anxious time, for friends feared that it would be long before we could build a house of our own; but the Lord had prepared for us a place where we sojourned for three years, — the Music Hall of the Royal Surrey Gardens.

Very curious is the story of the Surrey Gardens. Everybody has heard of the elephant and other animals which were to be seen at Exeter Change, near Waterloo Bridge. Mr. Cross, the proprietor of that exhibition, removed his menagerie, in 1831, to the Surrey Gardens. There were fountains, and caves, and summerhouses, a lake of three and a half acres, pleasant walks and lawns, and all the usual paraphernalia of public gardens. In Dr. Montgomery’s *History of Kennington,*we read: — “Perhaps the most remarkable fact, for temperance folk, is that the proprietors of the Gardens never made application for a license to sell drink. It was started and made a success without the sale of intoxicants. This is a noteworthy fact. I do not know what happened in later years; but during the time of Mr. Cross, up to 1844, no license was ever applied for. The hours kept were early. At the latest, in the middle of Summer, the Gardens closed at 10 p.m., and in the Autumn at 7 p.m. Our Queen, when she was quite a little girl, came here with the Duchess of Kent, and was shown over the Gardens by Mr. Warwick.”

When I first came to London, the Zoological Gardens were a very respectable and quiet resort; but few persons availed themselves of them. The age which could be content with quiet amusements, free from loose associations, was passing away, and giving place to a generation which looked for more flavour in its recreation. The Gardens were kept up in part by subscription from families in the neighborhood, and partly by displays of fireworks. The affair did not pay in that form, so a company was formed to continue the zoological collection, and add thereto the far greater attraction of the popular concerts of M. Jullien. A very fine hall was erected, which had three galleries, and would accommodate from six to ten thousand people. I cannot speak exactly as to numbers, nor correct my estimate by personal inspection, for no vestige of the hall is now remaining. I recollect going with Mr. William Olney to see the place; and though we felt it to be a venturesome experiment to attempt to preach in so large a building, we had faith in God, and dared to hope that He would bless an earnest attempt to proclaim the gospel to the multitude. One or two of our good members thought it wrong to go to what they persisted in calling *“the*devil’s house.” I did not agree with their hard names, but encouraged them to stop away, and not to violate their consciences. At the same time, I bade them not to discourage either their brethren or me, for we were willing to go even into “the devil!s house” to win souls for Christ. We did not go to the Music Hall because we thought that it was a good thing to worship in a building usually devoted to amusement, but because we had no other place to go to.

On October 6, a special church-meeting was held, for the purpose which is thus recorded in our Minutes: — ”This meeting was convened to consider the propriety of engaging the use of the large hall in the Royal Surrey Gardens for our Sabbath evening worship, the direcfors of Exeter Hall having refused the church the further use of that place. After several of the brethren had expressed their concurrence, it was resolved that the Music Hall of the Royal Surrey Gardens be engaged for one month, commencing the third Sabbath in October.”

When the appointed day arrived, our anticipations ran high, but none of us dreamed of that which lay before us. Much prayer was offered, and I looked forward hopefully, but yet felt overweighted with a sense of responsibility, and filled with a mysterious premonition of some great trial shortly to befall me. In the Preface to Vol. 2. of *The Pulpit Library,*I wrote: — “The first sermon in this volume — ‘Prove Me now,’ Malachi 3:10, — was preached at New Park Street Chapel in the morning of that Lord’s-day on which the fatal accident occurred at the Surrey Gardens Music Hall. By many readers it will now be perused with curiosity, but the preacher himself reviews each sentence with thrilling emotion. Its subject was entirely suggested by the enlarged sphere of labor he was about to occupy, and the *then*unprecedented number of souls he was expecting ere nightfall to address. If any passage seems to forestall the calamity, he can only say it is genuine, — a transcript from the reporter’s notes. The Christian reader can understand many sore conflicts between the heart’s feelings and its faith; yet no one *can*know, as the author’s own soul, how, amidst rightings without and fears within, he was enabled to proclaim the strongest confidence in God. He has made that proof, which he counselled others to make, of the Divine faithfulness; and as to the result (notwithstanding a parenthesis of grievous tribulation), he dares to speak with abundant gratitude.”

The sermon itself contained the following almost prophetic passage: — “Perhaps I may be called to stand where the thunder-clouds brew, where the lightnings play, and tempestuous winds are howling on the mountaintop. Well, then, I am born to prove the power and majesty of our God; amidst dangers, He will inspire me with courage; amidst toils, He will make me strong.... This old Bible speaks to me to-day. This Sword of the Spirit hath been thrust into many of your hearts; and though they were hard as adamant, it has split them in sunder. I have wielded it in your midst as God’s soldier; and some of you have had sturdy spirits broken pieces by this good old Jerusalem blade. But we shall be gathered together, to-night, where an unprecedented mass of people will assemble, perhaps from idle curiosity, to hear the Word of God; and His voice cries in my ears, ‘Prove Me now.’ Many a man has come, during my ministrations, armed to his very teeth, and having on a coat of mail, yet hath this tried weapon cleft him in twain, and pierced to the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow. ‘ Prove Me now,’ says God, ‘go and prove Me before blasphemers; go and prove Me before reprobates, before the vilest of the vile, and the filthiest of the filthy; go and “prove Me now.” Lift up that life-giving cross, and let it again be exhibited; into the regions of *death,*go and proclaim the Word of life; into the most plague-smitten parts of the city, go and carry the waving censer of the incense of a Savior’s merits, and prove now whether He is not able to stay the plague, and remove the disease.’

“But what does God say to the church? ‘You have proved Me aforetime, you have attempted great things; though some of you were faint-hearted, and said,” should not have ventured,” others of you had faith, and proved Me. I say again, “Prove Me now.”’ See what God can do, *just when a cloud is falling on the head of him whom God has raised up to preach to you,*go and prove Him now; and see if He will not pour you out such a blessing as ye had not even dreamed of see if will not give you a Pentecostal blessing. ‘Prove Me now.’ Why should we be unbelieving? Have we one thing to make us so? We are weak; what of that Are we not strongest in our God when we are weakest in ourselves? We are fools, it is said, and so we are, we know it; but He maketh fools to confound the wise. We are base, but God hath chosen the base things of the world. We are unlearned, —

***“‘We know no schoolman’s subtle arts,’***

yet we glory ill infirmity when Christ’s power doth rest upon us. *Let them represent us as worse than we are;*let them give us the most odious character that hath ever been given to man, we will bless them, and wish them well. What though the weapon be a stone, or even the jawbone of an ass, if the Lord direct it? ‘Do you not know,’ say some, ‘what wise men say?’ Yes, we do; but we can read their oracles backwards. Their words are the offspring of their wishes. We know *who* has instructed them, and we know he was a liar from the beginning. O fools, and stow of heart! do ye shrink from the truth, or do ye shrink from obloquy and disgrace? In either case, ye have not the love to your Master that ye should have. If ye be brave men and true, go on and conquer. *Fear not, ye shall yet win the day;*God’s holy gospel shall yet shake the earth once more. The banner is lifted up, and multitudes are flocking to it; the Pharisees have taken counsel together, — the learned stand confounded, — the sages are baffled, they know not what to do. The little one, God has made great; and He that was despised, is exalted. Let us trust Him, then. He will be with us even to the end, for He has said, ‘Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.’”

I can never forget that terrible night. Having preserved all the pamphlets and papers connected with “the great catastrophe,” I have just: now perused them in order to write this memorial. I have thereby revived within myself much that is painful; but much more that causes me to praise the name of the Lord. When I was nearing the house in Manor Street, which was the office of the company, and was to serve me as a private entrance, I was exceedingly surprised to find the streets thronged for a long distance. With difficulty I reached the door. There was a long private road from the entrance of the Gardens to the Music Hall itself, and this appeared to be filled up with a solid block of people, who were unable to get into the building. I felt overawed, and was taken with that faintness which was, in my youth, the usual forerunner of every sermon. Still, I rallied, and was duly escorted to my pulpit in the midst of a dense throng. Here I was to pass through the greatest ordeal of my life.

But I will now give way to Dr. Campbell, then the Editor of *The British Banner;*for his is the description of an eye-witness, and of an impartial, self-possessed critic. He wrote: — ”Ecclesiastically viewed, Sunday last (October 19th) was one of the most eventful nights that have descended upon our metropolis for generations. On that occasion, the largest, most commodious, and most beautiful building erected for public amusement in this mighty city was taken possession of for the purpose of proclaiming the gospel of salvation. There, where, for a long period, wild beasts had been exhibited, and wilder men had been accustomed to congregate, in countless multitudes, for idle pastime, was gathered together the largest audience that ever met in any edifice in these isles, to listen to the voice of a Nonconformist minister. The spectacle, of its kind, was one of the most imposing, magnificent, and awful ever presented to the human eye. No adequate idea of it can be conveyed by description; to be understood, it must have been seen; and they who beheld it received an impression which no time will ever obliterate. The sight of 10,000 or 12,000 people, more or fewer, assembled to listen to the Word of the living God, in such a place, at such a time, and addressed by a man with a voice of such power and compass that the remotest might hear with ease and pleasure, was sufficient to excite intense joy in the hearts of all good men who witnessed it; nor is it extravagant to say, that it was enough to wake the attention of the angelic world!

“But, in proportion to the joy and the hope thus inspired, were the sorrow and disappointment arising from the terrible catastrophe by which the very first service was attended and cut short! At the most solemn moment of the occasion, the wicked rose in their strength, like a whirlwind, sin entered, followed by terror, flight, disorder, and death! The entire city has been filled with astonishment! From the cellar to the palace, the events of that dreadful night have been the theme of eager discourse. In the squares, the streets, the lanes, and alleys, as well as in the workshops and countinghouses, and all the chief places of concourse, it has been, through each successive day, the one great object of thought and converse.

“Imagination, as usual, has been active in the work of exaggeration, and malice in that of mendacity. At one time, the beautiful building has been wrapped in flames, and reduced to ashes! At another, the roof has fallen in, and entombed 10,000 people! The human mind, voracious of the tragical and the marvellous, has greedily devoured even the most preposterous accounts. The more horrible, the more credible and the more welcome; and the public press, as is its wont, has not been backward to pander to the morbid appetite of the excited millions. It has lied as well as exaggerated, most fearfully! Fancy pictures have been drawn, suited to ‘the chamber of horrors.’ Having ourselves not only witnessed the spectacle, but been in the very vortex, we are able to speak from observation touching the various points which the public are mainly concerned to know, and every way able to distinguish between truth and error. We, therefore, feel in duty bound to clear away the bewildering mist and darkness which have gathered around the character and conduct of honourable men. We were among the very first to enter the building, where we took up a position before the pulpit, which had been erected in front of the orchestra, so that we had a perfect command of the entire house, hearing and seeing everything of importance to be either heard or seen. The simple statement of facts as they occurred will form the best antidote to the flood of misrepresentation and falsehood which has welled forth from a portion of the metropolitan press.

“The house, considering its magnitude, might be said to be very speedily filled, leaving, it is supposed, an equal number outside unable to gain admission. The process of packing the hall, as may be presumed, was gone about in a somewhat tumultuous manner. The people were deeply excited by the violent struggle which had to be encountered and overcome at the doors to obtain an entrance, which naturally led, after admission, to rapid movements in every direction where there seemed a probability of gaining a seat, or, at least, standing-room. The aspect of the hall during this period was, of course, anything but like that which obtains in places of regular worship, and somewhat fitted to do violence to the sober spirit of orderly people; but, certainly, it would have borne a very favorable comparison with the gatherings of the huge religious anniversary meetings at Exeter Hall, or any other vast place of general concourse. It was, ‘ Every man for himself;’ and, as compared with the monster meetings of Whitefield on Kennington Common or Moorfields, in the High Churchyard, Glasgow, and the Orphan House Park, Edinburgh, so far as history has testified, there was nothing to complain of on the score of tumultuous levity.

“The hall having been filled in every part, things began to assume a perfectly settled aspect. The commotion ceased, and the air of the assembly was every whit as tranquil as that of our great philanthropic or even worshipping assemblies. The hall being thus gorged, Mr. Spurgeon considerately and wisely commenced the service about ten minutes before the appointed time, surrounded by a large number of most respectable people, composed of his officers and flock, who led the psalmody. After a few words of a highly pertinent character, he briefly offered prayer, and then gave out a thoroughly Evangelical hymn, with a force, a feeling, and an unction seldom witnessed in a worshipping assembly, and which threw an air of deep solemnity over the immense multitude by whom it was sung as with the voice of many waters. That hymn itself was an important proclamation of the gospel. The reading of the Sacred Scriptures immediately followed, with a running comment, as is the preacher’s custom. The Scripture was well chosen, and the exposition admirably appropriate, and such as was well fitted to impress even the most frivolous. There was no dry disquisition, no curious criticism; but an address directed to the hearts of the hearers, showing, from the first, that the speaker came strongly intent upon most important business, and that nothing was to be regarded short of its accomplishment.

“The general prayer next followed; and here, too, the same pertinent and peculiar air was manifested. The one great mofive which animated the preacher was, most obviously, the salvation of men .... This was; the moment chosen by the emissaries of darkness to spring the mine of mischief, which, in effect, resulted in manifold murder! To have made the attempt while the high praises of God were being sung, would have been certain failure. To have done so while a stream of eloquence was rolling on in the sermon, and all eyes open, would have been attended with no better success. Yes; and the inhuman miscreants — cunning as they were impious and cruel, — knew it. They were obviously adepts in iniquity. They understood their business thoroughly. Their plans were skilfully formed, and executed with the precision of military science opening a masked battery. Just as the minds of the devout: portion of the assembly were collected around the throne of the Great Eternal, far away from earth and its grovellings, abstracted, absorbed, prostrate, suppliant, and adoring, the fiendish conspiracy broke forth with the rapidity of lightning and the fury of a tempest! The effect was such as was anticipated and desired. To say it began with one or two cries of ‘Fire!’ as we view the matter, is wholly to misrepresent it. For our own part, we heard no such cries. Such, however, there doubtless were; but they were only signals. The thing bore the impress of a plan to which some hundreds of persons at least appeared to be parties. The mere cry of ‘ Fire! ‘ would have produced more or less of a general commotion extending to all parts of the house, which was but slightly moved; whereas, the indescribable and terrible outbreak was limited to a large portion of people in a given locality surrounding the great entrance. The outbreak could be likened to nothing but the sudden bursting forth of an immense body of trained singers, or a vast reservoir of water, whose sluices were opened, or whose banks had given way. It is impossible that any cries of two or three individuals could ever have produced so sudden, so simultaneous, and so sustained a display of fear, horror, and consternation. We are strongly impressed with the conviction that the thing, from the adroitness of the performance, must have been well practised beforehand. So far as we could judge from appearances, the parties, or a portion of them, who led in the terrific uproar, also led in the rush, which appeared as an especial part of their infernal arrangement. Mr. Spurgeon, who instantly recovered from the horrible surprise with which he was overwhelmed, in the very act of prayer, of course saw in a moment that the alarm was false. There was no appearance whatever of fire; and the noble structure in no place gave any symptoms of fracture or rupture. His quick eye perceived in an instant the true origin of the movement, and he acted accordingly, adopting every method that seemed calculated to calm the tumult, and to reassure the assembly.”

It may put the matter still more vividly before the reader, if I quote from a statement appended to a sermon, preached soon after the catastrophe, by the venerable Dr. Alexander Fletcher: — “As early as five o’clock, thousands of persons were filling up the approaches to the Surrey Gardens. By five minutes after six, the hall was filled to overflow; it is supposed that not fewer than 12,000 persons were present, and many thousands were on the outside, and still as many more were unable to gain admittance even to the Gardens. While the service was being conducted in Mr. Spurgeon’s usual way, during the second prayer, all of a sudden there were cries simultaneously, doubtless preconcerted, from all parts of the building, of ‘Fire!’ ‘The galleries are giving way!’ ‘ The place is falling! ‘ the effect of which on the audience it is impossible to describe. Many hundreds of persons rushed towards the place of exit, at the risk of their own lives, and sacrificing those of their fellow-creatures. In vain did Mr. Spurgeon, with his stentorian voice and self-possession, assure the alarmed multitude that it was a *ruse*on the part of thieves and pickpockets; the people in the galleries rushed down, precipitating themselves almost headlong over, or breaking down the balustrade of the stairs, killing some and fearfully wounding others. Those who fell through force, or fainting, were trampled under foot, and several lives were lost in the melee. To make ‘ confusion worse confounded,’ it is also said that, as fast as one portion of the multitude made their exit, others from without entered. Mr. Spurgeon, who was ignorant of any of these fatal consequences, after a temporary lull, was persuaded to make an effort to preach; but, after one or two attempts, he found it impossible to proceed, owing to the noises which the swellmobsmen continued to make. Wishing to get the people gradually out of the hall, he gave out a hymn, requesting the congregation to withdraw While it was being sung. He then pronounced the Benediction, and, at length, overcome by emotion, which he had long striven to repress, he was led from the platform in a state of apparent insensibility.’ The results of this dreadful panic are most calamitous and distressing. Seven lives have been sacrificed, and serious bodily injury inflicted upon a great number of persons.”

(Mr. Spurgeon felt that it was impossible, under the circumstances, to say what he had prepared, but, notwithstanding the tumult, the people clamored for him to go on preaching’, so he spoke as follows: —

“My friends, you bid me preach, but what shall I preach about? I am ready to do all I can; but, in the midst of all this confusion, what shall be my subject? May God’s Holy Spirit give me a theme suited to this solemn occasion! My friends, there is a terrible day coming, when the terror and alarm of this evening shall be as nothing. That will be a time when the thunder and lightning and blackest darkness shall have their fullest power, when the earth shall reel to and fro beneath us, and when the arches of the solid heavens shall tofter to their centre. The day is coming when the clouds shall reveal their wonders and portents, and Christ shall sit upon those clouds in glory, and shall call you to judgment. Many have gone away to-night, in the midst of this terrible confusion, and so shall it be on that great day. I can, however, believe that the results of that time of testing will show that there will be many — not a less proportion than those who now remain to those who have left — who will stand the ordeal even of that day. The alarm which has just arisen has been produced, in some measure, by that instinct which teaches us to seek self-preservation; but in the more numerous of the cases, it is not so much the dread of death which has influenced them, as ‘the dread of something after death, — the undiscovered country, from whose bourn no traveller returns.’ ‘Tis conscience that has made cowards of them. Many were afraid to stop here, because they thought, if they stayed, they might die, and then they would be damned. They were aware — and many of you are aware — that, if you were hurried before your Maker to-night, you would be brought there unshriven, unpardoned, and condemned. But what are your fears now to what they will be on that terrible day of reckoning of the Almighty, when the heavens shall shrink above you, and hell shall open her mouth beneath you? But know you not, my friends, that grace, sovereign grace, can yet save you? Have you never heard the welcome news that Jesus came into the world to save sinners? Even if you are the chief of sinners, believe that Christ died for you, and you shall be saved. Do you not know that you are lost and ruined, and that none but Jesus can do helpless sinners good? You are sick-and diseased, but Jesus can heal you; and He will if you only trust Him. I thought of preaching to-night from the third chapter of Proverbs, at the 33rd verse: ‘The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked: but He blesseth the habitation of the just.’ I feel that, after what has happened, I cannot preach as I could have wished to do; I fear that you will have another alarm, and I would rather that some of you would seek to retire gradually, in order that no harm may be done to anyone.”

Here there was a fresh disturbance; but after singing part of a hymn, comparative silence was obtained, and the preacher again attempted to begin his discourse *: — “*Although, my hearers, you may suppose that there are fifty different classes of persons in the world, there are, in the eyes of God, but two. God knows nothing of any save the righteous and the unrighteous, the wicked and the just.”

In the confusion that again ensued it was useless to try to preach, so Mr. Spurgeon said : — “ My brain is in a whirl, and I scarcely know where I am, so great are my apprehensions that many persons must have been injured by rushing out. I would rather that you retired gradually, and may God Almighty dismiss you with His blessing, and carry you in safety to your homes! If our friends will go out by the central doors, we will sing while they go, and pray that some good may, after all, come out of this great evil. Do not, however, be in a hurry. Let those nearest the door go first.”)

All that I can remember of that awful night is the sight of a tumult, which I was then quite unable to understand. Even now it remains a mystery to me. I hope there was no concerted wickedness at the bottom of the sad event; though there may have been a love of mischief aiding at the first. We were all fresh to the place, and all more or less excited. I did my utmost to be calm, and to quiet the people, and I succeeded with the great mass of them; but away at the end of the building there was a something going on which I did not understand, while around the seated part of the hall there were rushes made by excited people again and again, for reasons quite incomprehensible to me. One can understand, now, that those who had seen the accident on the staircase may have been trying to call attend:ion to it, thinking it a strange thing that the service: should have been continued after persons had been killed. Of this dread calamity I was unaware till, as I was led down faint from the pulpit, I heard a whisper of it. I know no more, for I lost almost all consciousness, and, amid the weeping and cries of many, I was carried by a private garden into the street, and taken home more dead than alive. There were seven corpses lying on the grass, and many have since told me how grievous was the sight. This I never saw; but what I had seen might have been sufficient to shatter my reason. It might well seem that the ministry which promised to be so largely influential was silenced for ever. There were persons who said so exultingly; but they knew not what they said. I was taken away to the house of a friend, early the following morning, and as I was assisted out of the carriage at Croydon, a working-man caught sight of me, and, in a frightened fashion, stammered out, “Why, sir! — it’s Mr. Spurgeon, isn’t it?” I answered, “Yes.” “Then,” he rejoined, “it must be his ghost; for, last night, I saw him carried out dead from the Surrey Gardens Music Hall!” I was not dead, thank God; but the bystanders might well have imagined that the terrible shock had killed me.

Of course there was an inquest; — verdict, accidental death; — on the whole, the only safe conclusion to arrive at. A fund was raised for the sufferers, and all was done that lay in the power of our people to help the injured. Our friends were crushed in spirit, but not driven from their faith or love, nor divided from their youthful minister. I was, for a short time, incapable of any mental effort. Who would not be? How great a trial to have a number of one’s hearers killed or maimed! A word about the calamity, and even the sight of the Bible, brought from me a flood of tears, and utter distraction of mind.

During that time, I was not aware of the ferocious assaults which were made upon me by the punk press; indeed, I heard no word of them until I wats sufficiently recovered to bear them without injury. As we read of David, that they spake of stoning him, so was it with me. Here is a specimen of what was said by a popular daily paper, which I will not name, for it has long been of quite another mind, and most friendly to me: —

“Mr. Spurgeon is a preacher who hurls damnation at the heads of his sinful hearers. Some men there are who, taking their precepts from Holy Writ, would beckon erring souls to a rightful path with fair words and gentle admonition; Mr. Spurgeon would take them by the nose, and bully them into religion. Let us set up a barrier to the encroachments and blasphemies of men like Spurgeon, saying to them, ‘ Thus far shalt thou come, but no further;’ let us devise some powerful means which shall tell to the thousands who now stand in need of enlightenment, — This man, in his own opinion, is a righteous Christian; but in ours, nothing more than a ranting charlatan. We are neither strait-laced nor Sabbatarian in our sentiments; but we would keep apart, widely apart, the theatre and the church; — above all, would we place in the hand of every right-thinking man, a whip to scourge from society the authors of such vile blasphemies as, on Sunday night, above the cries of the dead and the dying, and louder than the wails of misery from the maimed and suffering, resounded from the mouth of Spurgeon in the Music Hall of the Surrey Gardens.”

Many other utterances were equally cruel and libellous, A gentleman applied to the magistrate at Lambeth, seeking an investigation by his worship into the circumstances connected with the catastrophe, and into the necessity for a license to use the Music Hall as a place of worship. He was not aware that, on the previous Saturday, the building had been licensed as a place for Dissenting worship. He stated that persons collecting money in an unlicensed place were liable to be treated as rogues and vagabonds; and went on to add that a further question might arise, as to whether the parties causing large congregations to assemble were not liable to a still graver charge. This liberal-minded person represented the mind of a considerable section whose thoughts of the preacher were bitterness itself. The magistrate, however, assured the applicant that the law permitted public buildings to be used as places of worship for temporary purposes.

The following article appeared in *The Saturday Review,*October 25, 1856: —  
**“MR. SPURGEON AT THE SURREY GARDENS.**

“If it be true, as has been said, that notables represent, rather than create, public: opinion, Mr. Spurgeon and his doings are worth a more serious consideration

than their intrinsic value would justify. The manners of an age or people do not follow its literature, — they produce it. Crebillon or Shaftesbury did not form the taste or principles of their contemporaries; — Voltaire did not so much educate as embody his times; — and, in like manner, Mr. Spurgeon does not create the state of feeling tO which he owes his popularity. It is a melancholy reflection that such a personage is a notable at all. It is no new thing that there should be popular delusions; but we had flattered ourselves that we had outlived the days of religious, or so-called religious, epidemics. Yet the age of spirit-rapping and of Mr. Spurgeon, — the times in which Dr. Cumming is an authority, and Joe Smith and Mr. Prince are prophets, — cannot cast stones at any ‘dark ages.’ Whatever legitimate weapons, be they of argument or ridicule, can be employed to arrest the progress of mere imposture, we hold to be justifiable. We should not deem Mr. Spurgeon entitled to the place which he at this moment occupies in public attention, — and certainly we should not trouble ourselves with any reference to his proceedings, — did we not consider him rather as a sign and a result than an original. His success is simply of the vulgarest and most commonplace type. Given a person of some natural talents, with matchless powers of acquired impudence, and a daring defiance of good taste, and often of common decency, — and he will always produce an effect. Anybody who will give himself out as some great one, will find followers enough to accept his leadership. A charlatan will never be without dupes. The crowds who flock to the various Spurgeon conventicles are only of the class who would follow the bottle conjuror, or anyone who chose to advertise that he would fly from the Monument to the dome of St. Paul’s. Mr. Spurgeon is perfectly aware that human nature is much the same now as it was five hundred years ago, and it is with humiliation that we concur in his estimate. His crowded congregations are part of his stock-in-trade. He hires Exeter Hall or the Surrey Gardens merely in the way of an advertisement. If he could have the Coliseum at Rome, it would be a safe investment. His scheme for building a conventicle to hold fifteen thousand persons is all in the way of business, just like the big shop, *touie la Rue du Coq,*in Paris.

“All we can do is to warn the public; but we are afraid it will be to little purpose. P*opulus vult decipi.*It is, we fear, scarcely more useless to caution people against joint-stock banks and public companies when there is a plethora of money, than seriously to hold up Mr. Spurgeon to the world as a very ordinary impostor. The only effectual remedy is, in the one case, to provide safe and honest investments for capital; — in the other, to offer more healthful and rational counter-attractions. We have been accused, in some quarters, of recommending Sunday amusements in the place of religion. As a fact, we have done no such thing, for our arguments were all based on the compatibility of religious exercises with healthful and innocent recreation, and the policy of combining them. But if the question is between Sunday bands and Sunday doings of the Spurgeon character at the Surrey Gardens, by all means, we say, let the bands at least be admitted to unrestricted competition. We do not wish to silence Mr. Spurgeon; but, for the sake of the public safety, let there be a chance of thinning the crowds. Very judiciously, on a late occasion, we had fireworks simultaneously in the West End Parks. on Primrose Hill, and in the East of London; and we do not see why Mr. Spurgeon should have a monopoly on brazen instruments South of the Thames. Whitefield used to preach at fairs. In these days of open competition, we perceive no reason why this practice should not be inverted. The innovation would only be the substitution of one set of amusements for another; — or, rather, an addition to our list of Sunday sports. Let religious people ask themselves whether this is not in fact the true way of putting the case. It is a profanation to religion to imagine that, as regards the crowds who flock to the Spurgeon show, there is any higher influence at work than the common love of excitement. Mr. Spurgeon’s doings are, we believe, entirely discountenanced by his coreligionists. There is scarcely a Dissenting minister of any note who associates with him. We do not observe, in any of his schemes or building operations, the names, as trustees or the like, of any leaders in what is called the religious world. Nor can we attribute to mere envy the feelings with which Mr. Spurgeon is apparently regarded by those respectable persons who are his brethren in the: Dissenting ministry. Somehow, it is generally felt that religion is not benefited by his abnormal proceedings. There is, at any rate, this most remarkable *differentia*between him and other revivalists, — that he stands alone, or nearly so. The flint is an antecedent ground for grave suspicion and natural distrust.

“This hiring of places of public amusement for Sunday preaching is a novelty, and a painful one. It looks as if religion were at its last shift. It is a confession of weakness rather than a sign of strength. It is not wrestling with Satan in his strongholds, — to use the old earnest Puritan language; — but entering into a very cowardly truce and alliance with the world. After all, Mr. Spurgeon only affects to be the Sunday Jullien. We are told of the profanity which must have been at the bottom of the clerical mind when the Church acted miracle-plays, and tolerated the Feast of the Ass; but the old thing reappears when popular preachers hire concert-rooms, and preach Particular Redemption in saloons re. eking with the perfume of tobacco, and yet echoing with the chaste melodies of *Bobbing Around*and the valse from the *Traviata.*And where is this to end? If, as Mr. Spurgeon doubtless argued, Exeter Hall can be hired by a clergyman of the Establishment to read Mr. Caird’s sermon, and if the enterprising divine who performed this notable feat was rewarded for it by the judicious Archbishop of Canterbury with a living of f500 per annum, why should not he hire the Surrey Gardens? Mr. Spurgeon has outbid Mr. Mansfield;but why should not somebody outbid Mr. Spurgeon? Or why should he be content with his present achievements? The Surrey Gardens affair was a great coup. The deplorable accident, in which seven people lost their lives, and scores were maimed, mutilated, or otherwise cruelly injured, Mr. Spurgeon only considers as an additional intervention of Providence in his favor.’ This event will, I trust, teach us the necessity of’ — being sober, rational, and decent? — No; — ‘having a building of our own.’ Preach another crowd into a frenzy of terror, — kill and smash a dozen or two more, — and then the speculation will have succeeded.

“Mr. Spurgeon, improving the occasion, is said to have remarked that ‘this gathering had aroused Satan, and he would not allow the service to go on without endeavouring to interrupt it.’ We do not profess that familiarity with Satan and his doings which is enjoyed by Mr. Spurgeon. Doubtless, he possesses more of Satan’s confidence, and more knowledge of his character, than ordinary men; at least, with our estimate of the power of evil, we should judge so from this mode of dealing with the deplorable result of his vanity and cupidity. We certainly believe that Satan was busy enough on Sunday evening last. The reporters tell us that the publicans and pickpockets ‘reaped a rich harvest’ from the occasion. These are, at any rate, new fruits of a gospel ministry, and strange triumphs of the cross. Expostulation and advice are thrown away upon one who can act as Mr. Spurgeon is reported to have acted in the very presence of these unusual seals to his ministry. Yet it is always a public duty to show up selfishness and vanity; and we can only hope that it will prove in this instance to be a public benefit also.”

Our church-book contains the following entry concerning the catastrophe; it shows the way in which this great affliction was viewed by our own friends : — *“Lord’s-day,*October 19, 1856. On the evening of this day, in accordance with the resolution passed at the church-meeting, October 6, the church and congregation assembled to hear our Pastor in the Music Hall of the Royal Surrey Gardens. A very large number of persons (about 7,000) were assembled on that occasion, and the service was commenced in the usual way, by singing, reading the Scriptures, and prayer. Just, however, after our Pastor had commenced his prayer, a disturbance was caused (as it is supposed, by some evil-disposed persons acting in concert), and the whole congregation was seized with a sudden panic. This caused a fearful rush to the doors, particularly from the galleries. Several persons, either in consequence of their heedless haste, or from the extreme pressure of the crowd behind, were thrown down on the stone steps of the northwest staircase, and were trampled on by the crowd pressing upon them. The lamentable result was that seven persons lost their lives, and twentyeight were removed to the hospitals seriously bruised and injured. Our Pastor, not being aware that any loss of life had occurred, continued in the pulpit, endeavouring by every means in his power to alleviate the fear of the people, and was successful to a very considerable extent. In attempting to renew the service, it was found that the people were too excited to listen to him, so the service was closed, and those who had remained dispersed quietly. This lamentable circumstance produced very serious effects on the nervous system of our Pastor. He was entirely prostrated for some days, and compelled to relinquish his preaching engagements. Through the great mercy of our Heavenly Father, he was, however, restored so as to be able to occupy the pulpit in our own chapel on Sunday, November end, and gradually recovered his wonted health and vigor. ‘The Lord’s name be praised!’

“The church desires to note this event in their Minutes, and to record their devout thankfulness to God that, in this sad calamity, the lives of their beloved Pastor, and deacons, and members were all preserved; and also with the hope that our Heavenly Father may, from this seeming evil, produce the greatest amount of real lasting good.”

(Mr. Spurgeon did not approve of the printing of his prayers, as a rule; but the circumstances under which the church and congregation met on that Lord’s-day morning, — November 2, 1856, — were so unusual, that an exception may be made in order to insert the record of the Pastor’s first public utterance after the accident: —

“We are assembled here, O Lord, this day, with mingled feelings of joy and sorrow, — joy that we meet each other again, and sorrow for those who have suffered bereavements. Thanks to Thy Name! Thanks to Thy Name] Thy servant feared that he should never be able to meet this congregation again; but Thou hast brought him up out of the burning fiery furnace, and not even the smell of fire has passed upon him. Thou hast, moreover, given Thy servant special renewal of strength, and he desires now to confirm those great promises of free grace which the gospel affords. Thou knowest, O Lord, our feelings of sorrow! We must not open the sluices of our woe; but, O God, comfort those who are lingering in pain and suffering, and cheer those who have been bereaved! Let great blessings rest upon them, — the blessings of the covenant of grace, and of this world, too. And now, O Lord, bless Thy people! We have loved one another with a pure heart fervently; — we have rejoiced in each other’s joy, — we have wept together in our sorrow. Thou hast welded us together, and made us one in doctrine, one in practice, and one in holy love. Oh, that it may be said of each individual now present with us that he is bound up in the bundle of life! O Lord, we thank Thee even for all the slander, and calumny, and malice, with which Thou hast allowed the enemy to honor us; and we pray Thee to grant that we may never give them any real cause to blaspheme Thy holy Name! We ask this for our Lord Jesus; Christ’s sake. Amen.”

The opening sentences of the discourse delivered on that occasion have a special and permanent interest from the fact that the Lord so abundantly fulfilled Mr. Spurgeon’s prophecy concerning future services and blessing in the Music Hall : —

“I almost regret, this morning, that I have ventured to occupy this pulpit, because I feel utterly unable to preach to you for your profit. I had thought that the quiet and repose of the last fortnight had removed the effects of that terrible catastrophe; but on coming back to this chapel again, and more especially, standing here to address you, I feel somewhat of those same painful emotions which well-nigh prostrated me before. You will therefore excuse me, this morning, if I make no allusion to that solemn event, or scarcely any. I could not preach to you upon a subject that should be in the least allied to it; I should be obliged to be silent if I should bring to my remembrance that terrific scene in the midst of which it was my solemn lot to stand. God will overrule it, doubtless. It may not have been so much by *the malice*of men, as some have asserted; it was perhaps simple wickedness, — an intention to disturb a congregation; but certainly with no thought of committing so terrible a crime as that of the murder of those unhappy creatures. God forgive those who were the instigators of that horrid act! They have my forgiveness from the depths of my soul. *It shall not stop us, however;*we are not in the least degree daunted by it. I shall preach there again yet; aye, and God will give us souls there, and Satan’s empire shall tremble more than ever. God is with us; who is he that shall be against us? The text I have selected is one that has comforted me, and, in a great measure, enabled me to come here to-day, — the reflection upon it had such a power of comfort on my depressed spirit. It is this : — ‘ Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a Name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in Heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.’ I shall not attempt to preach upon this text; I shall only make a few remarks that have occurred to my own mind; for I could not preach to-day. I have been utterly unable to study, but I thought that even a few words might be acceptable to you this morning, and I trust to your loving hearts to excuse them. O Spirit of God, magnify Thy strength in Thy servant’s weakness, and enable him to honour his Lord, even when his soul is cast down within him!”)

I have many times used the great calamity as an illustration of the truth that accidents are not to be regarded as Divine judgments; perhaps the most notable instance is the sermon I preached soon after the collision in the Clayton tunnel on the Brighton railway. (See *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit,*No. 408, “Accidents, not Punishments.”) That discourse is to me the more memorable as I possess a copy of it which Dr. Livingstone had carried with him in his African journeys, and on the top of which he had writtel1, “Very *good*. — D. L.” It was found, after his death, in the volume of his Diary from November,: 1861, to July, 1863, and was sent to me by his daughter, Mrs. Livingstone-Bruce. In the course of the sermon I said: — ”It has been most absurdly stated that those Who.travel on the first day of the week, and meet with an accident, ought to regard that accident as being a judgment from God upon them on account of their violating the Christian’s day of worship. It has been stated, even by godly ministers, that the late deplorable collision should be looked upon as an exceedingly wonderful and remarkable visitation of the wrath of God against those unhappy persons who happened to be in the Clayton tunnel. Now I enter my solemn protest against such an inference as that, not in my own name, but in the Name of Him who is the Christian’s Master and the Christian’s Teacher. I say of those who were crushed in that tunnel, Suppose ye that they were sinners above all the other sinners? ‘ I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those who were killed last Monday, think ye that they were sinners above all the sinners that were in London? ‘ I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.’ Now, mark, I would not deny that there have been judgments of God upon particular persons for sin; sometimes, and I think but exceedingly rarely, such things have occurred. Some of us have heard, in our experience, instances of men who have blasphemed God, and defied Him to destroy them, who have suddenly fallen dead; and in such cases, the punishment has so quickly followed the blasphemy that one could not help perceiving the hand of God in it. The man had wantonly asked for the judgment of God, his prayer was heard, and the judgment came .... But in cases of accident, such as that to which I refer, and in cases of sudden and instant death, again I say, I enter my earnest protest against the foolish and ridiculous idea that those who thus perish are sinners above all the sinners who survive unharmed. Let me just try to reason this matter out with Christian people; for there are some unenlightened Christians who will feel horrified by what I have said. Those who are ready at perversions may even dream that I would apologize for the desecration of the day of worship. -Now, I do no such thing. I do not extenuate the sin, I only testify and declare that accidents are not to be viewed as punishments for sin, for punishment belongs not to this world, but the world to come. To all those who hastily look on every calamity as a judgment, I would speak in the earnest hope of setting them right.

“Let me begin, then, by saying, my dear brethren, do you not see that *what you say is not true,*and that is the best of reasons why you should not say it? Do not your own experience and observation teach you that one event happeneth both to the righteous and to the wicked? It is true, the ,wicked man sometimes falls dead in the street;’but has not the minister fallen dead in the pulpit? It is true that a boat, in which men were seeking their own pleasure on the Sunday, has suddenly gone down; but is it not equally true that a ship, which contained none but godly men, who were bound upon an excursion to preach the gospel, has gone down, too? The visible providence of God has no respect of persons; and a storm may gather around the *John Williams*missionary ship, quite as well as around a vessel filled with riotous sinners. Why, do you not perceive that the providence of God has been, in fact, in its outward dealings, rather harder upon the good than upon the bad? For, did not Paul say, as he looked upon the miseries of the righteous in his day, ‘If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable’? The path of righteousness has often conducted men to the rack, to the prison, to the gibbet, to the stake; while the road of sin has often led a man to empire, to dominion, and to high esteem among his fellows. It is not true that, in this world, God does, as a rule, and of necessity, punish men for sin, and reward them for their good deeds; for, did not David say, ‘ I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree ;’ and did not this perplex the psalmist for a little season, until he went into the sanctuary of God, and then he understood their end?

“Will you allow me also to remark that the supposition, against which I am earnestly contending, is *a very cruel and unkind one?*For, if it were the case, that all persons who thus meet with their death in an extraordinary and terrible manner were greater sinners than the rest, would it not be a crushing blow to bereaved survivors, and is it not ungenerous on our part to indulge the idea unless we are compelled by unanswerable reasons to accept it as an awful truth? Now, I defy you to whisper it in the widow’s ear. Go home to her, and say,’ Your husband was a worse sinner than the rest of men, therefore he died.’ You have not brutality enough for that. A little unconscious infant, which had never sinned, though, doubtless, an inheritor of Adam’s fall, is found crushed amidst the *debris*of the accident. Now, think for a moment, what would be the infamous consequence of the supposition that those who perished were worse than others; you would have to make it out that this unconscious infant was a worse sinner than many in the dens of infamy whose lives are yet spared. Do you not perceive that the thing is radically false? And I might perhaps show you the injustice of it best by reminding you that it may, one day, turn upon your own head. Let it be your own case that you should meet with sudden death in such a way, are you willing to be adjudged to damnation on that account? Such an event may happen in the house of God. Let me recall to my own, and to your sorrowful recollection, what occurred when once we met together. I can say, with a pure heart, we met for no object but to serve our God, and the minister had no aim in going to that place but that of gathering many to hear who otherwise would not have listened to his voice; and yet there were funerals as a result of that holy effort (for holy effort still we avow it to have been, and the aftersmile of God hath proved it so). There were deaths, and deaths among God’s people; — I was about to say, I am glad it was with God’s people rather than with others. A fearful fright took hold upon the congregation, and they fled; and do you not see that, if accidents are to be viewed as judgments, then it is a fair inference that we were sinning in being there,man insinuation which our consciences repudiate with scorn? However, if that logic were true, it is as true against us as it is against others; and inasmuch as you would repel with indignation the accusation that arty were wounded or hurt on account of sin in being there to worship God, what you repel for yourself repel for others, and be no party to the accusation which is brought against those who have been destroyed, during the last fortnight, that they perished on account of any great sin.

“Here I anticipate the outcries of prudent and zealous persons who tremble for the: ark of God, and would touch it with Uzzah’s hand. ‘Well,’ says one,’ but we ought not to talk like this, for it is a very serviceable superstition, because there are many people who will be kept from travelling on the Sunday by the accident, and we ought to tell them, therefore, that those who perished, perished because they travelled on Sunday.’ Brethren, I would not tell a lie to save a soul; and this would be telling lies, for it is not the fact. I would do anything that is right to stop Sunday labor and sin, but I would not forge a falsehood even to do that. They might have perished on a Monday as well as on a Sunday. God gives no special immunity any day of the week, and accidents may occur as well at one time as at another; and it is only a pious fraud when we seek thus to play upon the superstition of men to make capital for Christ. The Roman Catholic priest might consistently use such an argument; but an honest Christian man, who believes that the religion of Christ can take care of itself without his telling falsehoods, scorns to do it. These men did not perish because they travelled on a Sunday. Witness the fact that others perished on the Monday when they were on an errand of mercy. I know not why or wherefore God sent the accident. God forbid that we should offer our own reason when God has not given us His reason; but we are not allowed to make the superstition of men an instrument for advancing the glory of God. You know, among protestants, there is a great deal of Popery. I meet with people who uphold infant baptism on the plea, ‘ Well, it is not doing any hurt, and there is a great deal of good meaning in it, and it may do good; and even confirmation may be blessed to some people, therefore do not let us speak against it.’ I have nothing to do with whether the thing does hurt or not; all I have to do with is whether it is right, whether it is Scriptural, whether it is true; and if the truth does mischief, — which is a supposition we can by no means allow, — that mischief will not lie at our door. We have nothing to do but to speak the truth, even though the heavens should fall.”  
I thank God that, terrible as the great catastrophe was, there was never in my experience another like it, for I do not think I could have survived a second one. I have, on several occasions, seen some cause for alarm when I have been conducting services in places that have not seemed to me to be able to stand the strain of the multitudes gathered to hear the Word; and the sensation I felt at the Surrey Gardens has, in a moment, come over me again. Many years ago, I was preaching in a building which was exceedingly crowded; and, to my apprehension, there was a continuous tremor. I grew so anxious that I said to a friend, who understood such matters, “Go downstairs, and see whether this structure is really safe; for it seems hardly able to bear the weight of this crowd.” When he returned, he looked anxious, but gave me no answer. The service ended quietly, and then he said, “I am so glad that everything has gone off safely. I do not think you should ever preach here again, for it is a very frail affair; but I thought that, if I frightened you, there would be more risk of a panic than there was in letting the service go on.” The narrowest escape I ever had of a repetition of the Music Hall fatality was about eighteen months; after the accident there; on the following Lord’s-day morning, — April 11, 1858, — I thus described to my congregation the Lord’s merciful interposition :—

“During this week, my mind has been much directed to the subject of providence, and you will not wonder when I relate a portion of one day’s story. I was engaged to preach, last Wednesday, at Halifax, where there was a heavy snowstorm. Preparations had been made for a congregation of 8,000 persons, and a huge wooden structure had been erected. I considered that, owing to the severe weather, few persons could possibly assemble, and I looked forward to the dreary task of addressing an insignificant handful of people in a vast place. However, when I arrived, I found from 5,000 to 6,000 people gathered together to hear the Word; and a more substantial-looking place it has not been my lot to see. It certainly was a great, uncomely building; but, nevertheless, it seemed well adapted to answer the purpose. We met together in the afternoon, and again in the evening, and worshipped God; and we separated to our homes, or rather, we were about to separate, and all this while the kind providence of God was watching over us. Immediately in front of me there was a huge gallery, which looked an exceedingly massive structure, capable of holding 2,000 persons. This, in the afternoon, was crowded, and it seemed to stand as firm as a rock. Again, in the evening, there it stood, and neither moved nor shook. But mark the provident hand of God; in the evening, when the people were retiring, and when there were scarcely more than a hundred persons there, a great beam gave way, and down came a portion of the flooring of the gallery with a fearful crash. Several people were precipitated with the planks, but still the good hand of God watched over us, and only two persons were severely injured with broken legs, which it is trusted will be set so as to avoid the necessity of amputation. Now, had this happened any earlier, not only must many more have been injured, but there are a thousand chances to one, as we say, that a panic must necessarily have ensued similar to that which we still remember, and deplore as having occurred in this place. Had such a thing happened, and had I been the unhappy preacher on the occasion, I feel certain that I should never have been able to occupy the pulpit again. Such was the effect of the first calamity, that I marvel that I ever survived. No human tongue can possibly tell what I experienced. The Lord, however, graciously preserved us; the fewness of the people in the gallery prevented any such catastrophe, and thus a most fearful accident was averted. But there is a more marvellous providence still to record. Overloaded by the immense weight of snow which fell upon it, and beaten by a heavy wind, the entire Structure fell with an enormous crash three hours after we had left it, splitting the huge timbers into shivers, and rendering very much of the material utterly useless for any future building. Now mark this, — had the snow begun three hours earlier, the hall must have fallen upon us, and how few of us would have escaped, we cannot guess. But mark another thing. All day long it thawed so fast, that the snow as it fell seemed to leave a mass, not of white snow, but of snow and water together. This ran through the roof upon us, to our considerable annoyance, and I was almost ready to complain that we had hard dealings from God’s providence. But if it had been a frost, instead of a thaw, you can easily perceive that the place must have fallen several hours before it did; and then your minister, and the greater part of his congregation, would probably have been in the other world. Some there may be who deny providence altogether. I cannot conceive that there were any witnesses of that: scene who could have done so. This I know, if I had been an unbeliever to this day in the doctrine of the supervision and wise care of God, I must have been a believer in it at this hour. Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His Name together! He hath been very gracious unto us, and remembered us for good.”  
(In his record of “The Life and labors of Pastor C. H. Spurgeon,” published by Messrs. Passmore & Alabaster under the title, *From the Usher’s Desk to the Tabernacle Pulpit,*Mr. Shindler says, concerning the catastrophe at the Surrey Gardens: — ”Twenty-five years afterwards, the writer witnessed the terribly depressing effect the memory of this sad event had on Mr. Spurgeon. During the session of the Baptist Union at Portsmouth and Southampton, in 1881, Mr. Spurgeon was announced to preach in the largest available room in the former town. Long before the service began, every available seat and all standing-room were occupied, and still there were hundreds pressing forward, and endeavoring to crowd in. There was some confusion just as the preacher was passing on to the platform to take his seat. He seemed entirely unmanned, and stood in the passage leaning his head on his hand. He told the writer that the circumstance so vividly recalled the terrible scene at the Surrey Music Hall, that he felt quite unable to preach. But he did preach, and preach well, though he could not entirely recover from the agitation of his nervous system. Prince Edward of Saxe-Weimar, a cousin of Queen Victoria, who was then the military commander of the district, was present with his suite, and cordially greeted ‘ the prince of preachers’ after his sermon.”

Pastor W. Williams, in his *Personal Reminiscences of Charles Haddon Spurgeon,*writes : — “‘What are you going to preach from to-morrow?’ he once asked me.”’ The curse of the Lord is in the house of the wicked: but He blesseth the habitation of the just;”’ I answered. He gave a deep sigh; his countenance changed even before I had finished the verse, brief as it was; and he said, in tones of deep solemnity, ‘ Ah, me!’ ‘ What is the matter, sir?’ I asked. ‘ Don’t you know,’ he replied, ‘ that is the text I had on that terrible night of the accident at the Surrey Music Hall?’ I did not know it, but I learned, from the mere mention of it, how permanent was the effect upon his mind of that awful night’s disaster. I never alluded either to this text or to the Surrey Gardens calamity after that. I cannot but think, from what I then saw, that his comparatively early death might be in some measure due to the furnace of mental suffering he endured on and after that fearful night.”)

CHAPTER 51.

LATER SERVICES AT THE MUSIC HALL.

Standing in this pulpit, this morning, I recall to myself that evening of sorrow when I saw my people scattered, like sheep without a shepherd, trodden upon, injured, and many of them killed. Do you recollect how you cried for your minister, that he might be restored to a reason that was then tottering? Can you recollect how you prayed that, out of evil, God would bring forth good, that all the curses of the wicked might be rolled back upon themselves, and that God would yet fill this place with His glory? And do you remember how long ago that is, and how God has been with us ever since, and how many of those, who were injured that night, are now members of our church, and are praising God that they ever entered this hall? Oh! shall we not love the Lord? There is not a church in London that has had such answers to prayer as we have had; there has not been a church that has had such cause to pray. We have had special work, special trial, special deliverance, and we ought preeminently to be a church, loving God, and spending and being spent in His service. — C. H. S., *in sermon preached at the Surrey Gardens Music Hail, February*27, 1859.

I cannot speak, as a grey-headed man, of the storms and troubles which many of you have endured; but I have had more joys and more sorrows, in the last few years, than any man in this place, for my life has been compressed as with a Bramah press, — a vast mass of emotion into one year. I have gone to the very bottoms of the mountains, as some of you know. in a night that never can be erased from my memory, — a night connected with this place. I have had also to pass through severe suffering and trial from the calumny and scorn of man, while abuse hailed pitilessly on my head. And I have had to endure acute bodily pain; but, as far as my witness goes, I can say that the Lord is able to save unto the uttermost, and in the last extremity, and He has been a good God to me. — C. H. S., *in sermon at the Music Hall, May*22, 1859.

In the best work for the Lord, we have no guarantee against accidents, and the losses which they occasion. The young prophet, in the days of Elisha, was most laudably engaged, yet the head of his axe flew off, and fell into the water. Those who conclude that every successful work has the smile of God upon it, should remember that Babylon was mistress among the nations, and none could stand against her, yet was she abhorred of the Lord. Those, on the other hand, who see, in every temporary calamity, a proof that an enterprise is not according to the Lord’s mind, might condemn the preaching of the gospel itself, since in its very infancy it subjected so many to persecution and to cruel death. “Whom the Lord 1oveth, He chasteneth ;” and the works which He approves, He often renders difficult. When the preacher at the Surrey Music Hall saw his congregation scattered by the uproar of wicked men, and mourned over precious life which was so suddenly sacrificed, there were friends who read in that shocking disaster an omen that the work was not of God, and that the preacher must desist; but the young man did not believe in omens, but in duty; and, therefore, as soon as he could, he reappeared in his pulpit, and as the result of his after-ministry in that place, it is not too much to say that thousands found Christ by his direct teaching, while the preaching of the Word in cathedrals, abbeys, music-halls, and theatres, became a tolerated agency, and even a popular method of evangelization. — C. H. S., *in “The Sword and the Trowel,”*1868

T HE preaching in the Music Hall was resumed in the morning only, so that daylight prevented any further deed of darkness, although the evening would have been a time more favourable for the gathering of large congregations. Our first morning service there was held on November 23, 1856, and our last on December 11, 1859. In the providence of God, the great hall was ready exactly when it was needed, and it was available for use almost as long as it was required. The rent paid tot its occupation, during the mornings only, was a respectable item in its accounts, but Sunday takings were preferred to this sure income. The Sabbath before the gardens were opened to the public on the Lord’s-day, we cleared out of the place, and with our occupancy, there departed from the company its chief source of revenue. Its downward way to ruin was rapid enough from that hour; both morally and financially it sank hopelessly. We, that is preacher and people, are bound to commemorate the kind providence which found us such a shelter at a time when we could not otherwise have obtained one for ourselves. All classes — from the Prime Minister downwards — heard the Word there; at no time have so many of the aristocracy made acquaintance with Nonconformist worship. The list of notable persons present on any one Sunday is a long one: statesmen, nobles, divines, great travellers, and all sorts of distinguished persons came to hear the preacher at the Surrey Gardens. Their presence and aid were hopeful signs that the building of our permanent house of prayer would be the provision of a necessity, and that we could accomplish the heavy task. As for the multitude, they were always there in force; and these, not only from the religious section of society, but largely from those who never went to public worship. The reading of newspapers before the commencement of service, though in itself objectionable enough, was the proof that those were present for whom the effort was designed. The best of all is, that God was with us. Conversions were numerous, and some of them were of a very striking kind; they were mainly from that stratum of society which is not touched by ordinary religious services. Though the hall is completely swept away, it will never ,:ease to hold a place in the memory of those to whom it was their spiritual birthplace. All along through the years in which we worshipped in it, there were continual additions to the church, perpetual discoveries of fresh workers, and constant initiations of new enterprises. The College, Orphanage, Colportage, Evangelists, College Missions, and our various branch mission-stations, have all benefited through the advance made by the church during those services. We have seen good brought out of evil; and in our case we have been made to say with the psalmist, *“Thou*hast caused men to ride over our heads: we went through fire and through water; but Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place.”

When I began to preach at the Surrey Gardens, I had such a diversified congregation as few men have ever had to address from Sabbath to Sabbath. God alone knows what anxiety I experienced in selecting my subjects and arranging my appeals for such a vast fluctuating assembly. There was a time when my brain was all in a whirl at the very thought of ascending that pulpit, while for all the services among my own people I enjoyed the greatest liberty. With the confidence of one who felt his heart at ease amidst the home-circle of his own family, I spoke as if my perfect love to the brotherhood had cast out all fear of missing the mark, or failing in the true work of a Pastor. There was all the difference between preaching in the hall, and in the chapel, that might be expected from the contrast between the neutral ground occupied in the one case and the sacred prestige enjoyed in the other.

(After a time, in addition to the great numbers of strangers who always flocked to the Music Hall, so large a part of the assembly consisted of Mr. Spurgeon’s regular hearers that he felt almost as much at home there as in New Park Street Chapel, and he adapted his preaching to the altered condition of affairs. In a discourse delivered on Lord’s-day morning, February 28, 1858, he said: — “When first I preached in this hall, my congregation assumed the appearance of an irregular mass of persons collected from all parts of this city to listen to the Word. I was then simply an evangelist, preaching to many who had not heard the gospel before. By the grace of God, the most blessed change has taken place; and now, instead of having an irregular multitude gathered together, my congregation is as fixed as that of any minister in the whole of London. I can, from this pulpit, observe the countenances of my friends, who have occupied the same places, as nearly as possible, for these many months; and I have the privilege and the pleasure of knowing that a very large proportion, certainly three-fourths of the people who meet together here, are not persons who stray hither from curiosity, but are my regular and constant hearers. And, observe, that my character also has been changed. From being an evangelist, it is now my business to become your Pastor in this place, as well as in the chapel where I labour in the evening. I think, then, it will strike the judgment of every person that, as both the congregation and myself have now changed, the teaching itself should in some measure show a difference. It has been my wont to address you from the simple truths of the gospel; I have very seldom, in this place, attempted to dive into the deep things of God. A text, which I have thought suitable for my congregation in the evening, I should not have made the subject of discussion in this hall in the morning. There are many high and mysterious doctrines which I have often taken the opportunity of handling in my own place, but which I have not felt at liberty to introduce here, regarding you as a company of people casually gathered together to hear the Word. But now, since the circumstances are changed, the teaching will be changed also. I shall not now simply confine myself to the doctrine of faith, or the teaching ot believers’ baptism; I shall not stay upon the surface of truth, but shall venture, as God shall guide me, to enter into those things that lie at the basis of the religion that we hold so dear. I shall not blush to preach before you the doctrine of God’s Divine Sovereignty; I shall not hesitate to proclaim, in the most unreserved and unguarded manner, the doctrine of election. I shall not be afraid to propound the great truth of the final perseverance of the saints; I shall not withhold that undoubted teaching of Scripture, the effectual calling of God’s elect; I shall endeavour, as God shall help me, to keep back nothing from you who have become my flock. Seeing that many of you have now ‘tasted that the Lord is gracious,’ we will endeavour to go through the whole system of the doctrines of grace, that saints may be edified and built up in their most holy faith.”

The following Sabbath, the Pastor preached on “Human Inability,” from Our Lord’s words, “No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him.” A little later, he discoursed upon “Human Responsibility,” taking for his text another of Christ’s most weighty sayings: “If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin.” Not long afterwards, he sought to set forth both sides of Divine truth in a sermon entitled, “Sovereign Grace and Man’s Responsibility,” in which he avoided the errors of Arminianism on the one hand, and those of Hyper-Calvinism on the other. In course of time, either at the Surrey Gardens or at New Park Street Chapel, Mr. Spurgeon had expounded all the doctrines of grace; and one result of that method of teaching the truth was thus described by him: —

“Among the many candidates for baptism and church-membership, who came forward every month, there were great numbers of young people, and others of riper years who had but recently found the Saviour; and I was delighted to hear them, one after another, not only express themselves clearly upon the great fundamental truth of justification by faith, but also give clear evidence that they were well instructed in the doctrines that cluster around the covenant of grace. I believe that one reason why our church has been, for these many years, so signally blessed of God, is that the great majority of those who have been added to our ranks have been well established in the old-fashioned faith of the Puritans and the Covenanters, and therefore have not been turned aside or drawn away from us. It used to be said, in those early days, that we were taking into the church ‘a parcel of girls and boys.’ I remember, long afterwards, at one of our great gatherings in the Tabernacle, reminding our friends of this contemptuous remark, whereat they laughed, and then I added, ‘ I am happy to have around me, still, those very same girls and boys, — they are a good deal older now, — and many of *their*sons and daughters have followed their parents’ example, while some even of the grandchildren of my early converts are already united with us.’ “)

So far as the general public was concerned, the Music Hall services were a great evangelistic campaign, in which “the slain of the Lord” were many. I determined that, whether my hearers would receive the gospel, or reject it, they should at least understand it; and therefore I preached it in plain, homely Saxon that a child could comprehend, and with all the earnestness of which I was capable. I recollect a friend saying to me, one Sabbath, as we went down the stairs from the hall, “There are eight thousand people, this morning, who will be without excuse at the day of judgment;” and I hope that was the case many another time as the vast multitude dispersed from the Surrey Gardens. I did not please everybody even then; and some found fault who ought to have been my best friends. I recollect great complaint being made against my sermon on the words, “Compel them to come in,” in which I was enabled to speak with much tenderness and compassion for souls. The violent, rigid school of Hyper-Calvinists said that the discourse was Arminian and unsound; but it was a small matter to me to be condemned by the judgment of men, for my Master set His seal very clearly upon that message. I think I never preached another sermon by which so many ‘souls were won to God, as our church-meetings long continued to testify; and all over the world, wherever the printed discourse has been scattered, sinners have been saved through its instrumentality; and, therefore, if it be vile to exhort sinners to come to Christ, I purpose to be viler still. I am as firm a believer in the doctrines of grace as any man living, and a true Calvinist after the order of John Calvin himself; and probably I have read more of his works than any one of my accusers ever did; but if it be thought an evil thing to bid sinners “lay hold on eternal life,” I will be yet more evil in this respect, and herein imitate not only Calvin, but also my Lord and His apostles, who, though they taught that salvation is of grace, and grace alone, feared not to speak to men as rational beings and responsible agents, and to bid them “strive to enter in at the strait gate,” and “labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life.”

Among the sermons preached in the Music Hall, another which was very greatly blessed was the one entitled, “Looking unto Jesus.” It was often mentioned by converts who were brought to the Lord through hearing it delivered; and when it was published, and scattered abroad, I received many testimonies that the reading of it had been attended with a like unction from on high. This fact I do not wonder at, for it is but another proof of the Sovereignty of God, since the discourse is one of the most simple of the series, and would probably be overlooked by those who were seeking for anything original and striking. The Master is in the sermon; and, therefore, it has rejoiced the hearts of His people, when applied by the Holy Spirit. I value a discourse, not by the approbation of men, nor by the ability manifest in it; but by the effect produced in comforting the saint, and awakening the sinner. The sermon on “The Shameful Sufferer” was the means of a great blessing to very many. Christ bleeding always makes the heart bleed, and His shame makes men ashamed of sin. Let but the Holy Spirit open the eyes of men to behold a sorrowing Saviour, and they will at once sorrow for sin.

There were many instances of remarkable conversions at the Music Hall; one especially was so singular that I have often related it as a proof that God sometimes guides His servants to say what they would themselves never have thought of uttering, in order that He may bless the hearer for whom the message is personally intended. While preaching in the hall, on one occasion, I deliberately pointed to a man in the midst of the crowd, and said, “There is a man sitting there, who is a shoemaker; he keeps his shop open on Sundays, it was open last Sabbath morning, he took ninepence, and there was fourpence profit out of it; his soul is sold to Satan for fourpence!” A city missionary, when going his rounds, met with this man, and seeing that he was reading one of my sermons, he asked the question, “Do you know Mr. Spurgeon?” “Yes,” replied the man, “I have every reason to know him, I have been to hear him; and, under his preaching, by God’s grace I have become a new creature in Christ Jesus. Shall I tell you how it happened? I went to the Music Hall, and took my seat in the middle of the place; Mr. Spurgeon looked at me as if he knew me, and in his sermon he pointed to me, and told the congregation that I was a shoemaker, and that I kept my shop open oh Sundays; and I did, sir. I should not have minded that; but he also said that I took ninepence the Sunday before, and that there was fourpence profit out of it. I did take ninepence that day, and fourpence was just the profit; but how he should know that, I could not tell. Then it struck me that it was God who had spoken to my soul through him, so I shut up my shop the next Sunday. At first, I was afraid to go again to hear him, lest he should tell the people more about me; but afterwards I went, and the Lord met with me, and saved my soul.”  
I could tell as many as a dozen similar cases in which I pointed at somebody in the hall without having the slightest knowledge of the person, or any idea that what I said was right, except that I believed I was moved by the Spirit to say it; and so striking has been my description, that the persons have gone away, and said to their friends, “Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did; beyond a doubt, he must have been sent of God to my soul, or else he could not have described me so exactly.” And not only so, but I have known many instances in which the thoughts of men have been revealed from the pulpit. I have sometimes seen person’s nudge their neighbors with their elbow, because they had got a smart hit, and they have been heard to say, when they were going out, “The preacher told us just what we said to one another when we went in at the door.”

Several persons who joined the church at New Park Street, traced their conversion to the ministry in the Surrey Gardens Music Hall, but they said it was not the preaching alone, but another agency co-operating with it that was the means of bringing them to decision. They were fresh from the country, and one of our friends, who is in Heaven now, met them at the gate, spoke to them, said he hoped they had enjoyed what they had heard, asked them if they were coming to the chapel in the evening, and told them he would be glad if they would be at his house to tea; they went, he had a word with them about the Master, and then brought them again to our service. The next Sunday the same thing occurred; and, at last, those whom the sermons had not much impressed, were brought to hear with other ears, till, through the good old man’s persuasive words, and the good Lord’s gracious work, they were converted to God.

While I was preaching at the Music Hall, an unknown censor, of great ability, used to send me a weekly list of my mispronunciations and other slips of speech. He never signed his name, and that was my only cause of complaint against him, for he left me with a debt which I could not discharge. With genial temper, and an evident desire to benefit me, he marked down most relentlessly everything which he supposed me to have said incorrectly. Concerning some of his criticisms, he was himself in error; but, for the most part, he was right, and his remarks enabled me to perceive many mistakes, and to avoid them in the future. I looked for his weekly memoranda with much interest, and I trust I am all the better for them. If I repeated a sentence which I had used two or three Sundays before, he would write, “See the same expression in such-and-such a sermon,” mentioning the number and page. He remarked, on one occasion, that I too often quoted the line, —

***Nothing in my hand I bring,” —***

and he added, “we are sufficiently informed of the vacuity of your hand.” He demanded my authority for calling a man *covechus,’*and so on. Possibly, some young men might have been discouraged, if not irritated, by such severe criticisms; but they would have been very foolish, for, in resenting such correction, they would have been throwing away a valuable aid to progress.

(The last service at the Surrey Gardens was held on Lord’s-day morning, December 11, 1859. Mr. Spurgeon preached, on that occasion, from Paul’s farewell to the Ephesian elders: “Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.” That discourse so well summarizes his three years’ ministry in the Music Hall that an extract from it may be appropriately inserted here : —

“If any of us would clear our conscience by delivering all the counsel of God, we must take care that we preach, in the first place, *the doctrines of the gospel.*We ought to declare that grand doctrine of the Father’s love towards His people from before all worlds. His sovereign choice of them, His covenant purposes concerning them, and His immutable promises to them, must all be uttered with trumpet tongue. Coupled with this, the true evangelist must never tail to set forth the beauties of the person of Christ, the glory of His offices, the completeness of His work, and, above all, the efficacy of His blood. Whatever we omit, this must be in the most forcible manner proclaimed again and again. That is no gospel which has not Christ in it; and the modern idea of preaching THE TRUTH instead of Christ, is a wicked device of Satan. Nor is this all, tot as there are three Persons in the Godhead, we must be careful that They all have due honour in our ministry. The Holy Spirit’s work in regeneration, in sanctification, and in preservation, must be always magnified from our pulpit. Without His power, our ministry is a dead letter, and we cannot expect His arm to be made bare unless we honour Him day by day.

“Upon all these matters we are agreed, and I therefore turn to points upon which there is more dispute, and consequently more need of honest avowal, because more temptation to concealment. To proceed then : — I question whether we have preached all the counsel of God, Unless predestination, with all its solemnity and sureness, be continually declared, — unless election be boldly and nakedly taught as being one of the truths revealed of God. It is the minister’s duty, beginning from the fountainhead, to trace all the other streams; dwelling on effectual calling, maintaining justification by faith, insisting upon the certain perseverance of the believer, and delighting to proclaim that gracious covenant in which all these things are contained, and which is sure to all the chosen, bloodbought seed. There is a tendency in this age to throw doctrinal truth into the shade. Too many preachers are offended with that stern truth which the Covenanters held, and to which the Puritans testified in the midst of a licentious age. We are told that the times have changed, that we are to modify these old (so-called) Calvinistic doctrines, and bring them down to the tone of the times; that, in fact, they need dilution, that men have become so intelligent that we must pare off the angles of our religion, and make the square into a circle by rounding off the most prominent edges. Any man who does this, so far as my judgment goes, does not declare all the counsel of God. The faithful minister must be plain, simple, pointed, with regard to these doctrines. There must be no dispute about whether he believes them or not. He must so preach them that his hearers will know whether he preaches a scheme of free-will, or a covenant of grace, — whether he teaches salvation by works, or salvation by the power and grace of God.

“But, beloved, a man might preach all these doctrines to the full, and yet not declare all the counsel of God. It is not enough to preach doctrine; we must preach *duty,*we must faithfully and firmly insist upon *practice.*So long as you will preach nothing but bare doctrine, there is a certain class of men, of perverted intellect, who will admire you; but once begin to preach responsibility, — say outright, once for all, that if the sinner perish, it is his own fault, that if any man sinks to hell, his damnation will lie at his own door, and at once there is a cry of ‘Inconsistency; how can these two things stand together?’ Even good Christian men are found who cannot endure the whole truth, and who will oppose the servant of the Lord who will not be content with a fragment, but will honestly present the whole gospel of Christ. This is one of the troubles that the faithful minister has to endure; but he is not faithful to God, — I say it solemnly, I do not believe that any man is even faithful to his own conscience, who can preach simply the doctrine of Sovereignty, and neglect to insist upon the doctrine of responsibility. I do assuredly believe that every man who sinks into hell shall have himself alone to curse for it. The apostle Paul knew how to dare public opinion, and on one hand to preach the duty of man, and on the other the Sovereignty of God. I would borrow the wings; of an eagle, and fly to the utmost height of high doctrine when I am preaching Divine Sovereignty. God hath absolute and unlimited power over men to do with them as He pleases, even as the potter doeth with the clay. Let not the creature question the Creator, for He hath given no account of His matters. But when I preach concerning man, and look at the other aspect of truth, I dive to the utmost depth. I am, if you will so call me, a low doctrine man in that, for as an honest messenger of Christ I must use His own language, and cry, ‘ He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the Name of the only begotten Son of God.’

“Moreover, if a man would declare all the counsel of God, and not shun to do so, he must be very outspoken concerning the crying sins of the times. The honest minister does not merely condemn sin in the mass, he singles out separate sins in his hearers; and without drawing the bow at a venture, he puts an arrow on the string, and the Holy Spirit sends it right home to the individual conscience. He who is true to his God looks to his congregation as separate individuals; and he endeavours to adapt his discourse to men’s consciences, so that they will perceive he speaks of them. If there be a vice that you should shun, if there be an error that you should avoid, if there be a duty that you ought to fulfil, if all these things be not mentioned in the discourses from the pulpit, the minister has shunned to declare all the counsel of God. If there be one sin that is rife in the neighbourhood, and especially in the congregation, should the minister avoid that particular vice in order to avoid offending you, he has been untrue to his calling, dishonest to his God.

“But, then, let me remark further, the true minister of Christ feels impelled to preach the whole truth, because it and it alone can meet the wants of man. The believer in Christ, if he is to be kept pure, simple, holy, charitable, Christ-like, is only to be kept so by the preaching of the whole truth as it is in Jesus. And as for the salvation of sinners, ah! my hearers, we can never expect God to bless our ministry to the conversion of sinners, unless we preach the gospel as a whole. Let me get but one part of the truth, and always dwell upon it, to the exclusion of every other, and I cannot expect my Master’s blessing; but if I preach as He would have me preach, He will certainly own the Word; He will never leave it without His own living witness. But let me imagine that I can improve the gospel, that I can make it consistent, that I can dress it up and make it look finer, I shall find that my Master has departed, and that ‘ Ichabod’ is written on the walls of the sanctuary. How many there are kept in bondage through neglect of gospel invitations! They go Up to the house of God, longing to be saved, and there is nothing but predestination for them. On the other hand, what multitudes are kept in darkness through practical preaching! It is, ‘ Do! Do! Do!’ and nothing but ‘ Do!’ and the poor -soul comes away, and says, ‘ Of what use is that command to me? I can do nothing. Oh, that I had the way of salvation pointed out as available for me!’

“I must now address to you A V ERY FEW EARNEST, SINCERE, AND AFFECTIONATE WORDS BY WAY OF FAREWELL. I wish not to say anything in self-commendation; I will not be my own witness as to my faithfulness; but I appeal to you, I take you to witness this day, that ‘ I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.’ Often have I come into this pulpit in great weakness, and I have far more often gone away in great sorrow, because I have not preached to you as earnestly as I desired. I confess to many errors and failings, and more especially to a want of earnestness when engaged in prayer for your souls; but there is one charge of which my conscience acquits me, this morning, and I think you will acquit me, too, ‘ for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.’ If in anything I have erred, it has been an error of judgment. I may have been mistaken; but, so far as I have learned the truth, I can say that no fear of public opinion, nor of private opinion, has ever turned me aside from that which I hold to be the truth of my Lord and Master. I have preached to you the precious things of the gospel. I have endeavored, to the utmost of my ability, to preach grace in all its fulness, I know’ the preciousness of that doctrine in my own experience; God forbid that I should preach any other! If we are not saved by grace, we can never be saved at all. It; from first to last, the work of salvation be not in God’s hands, none of us can ever See His face with acceptance. I preach this doctrine, not from choice, but from absolute necessity; for if this doctrine be not true, then are We lost souls; your faith is vain, our preaching is vain, and we are still in our sins, and there we must continue to the end. But, on the other hand, I can also say, I have not shunned to exhort, to invite, to entreat; I have bidden the sinner come to Christ. I have been urged not to do so, but I could not resist it. With bowels yearning over perishing souls, I could not conclude without crying, ‘ Come to Jesus, sinner, come.’ With eyes weeping for sinners, I am compelled to bid them come to Jesus. It is not possible for me to dwell upon doctrine without invitation. If you come not to Christ, it is not for want of calling, or because i have not wept over your sins, and travailed in birth for the souls of men. The one thing I have to ask of you is this, — Bear me witness, my hearers, bear me witness that, in this respect, I am pure from the blood of all men, for I have preached all that I know of the whole counsel of God. Have I known a single sin which I have not rebuked? Has there been a doctrine that I have believed which I have kept back? Has there been a part of the Word, doctrinal or experimental, which I have wilfully concealed? I am very far from perfect, again with weeping I confess my unworthiness, I have not served God as I ought to have done, I have not been so earnest with you as I could have desired to be. Now that my three years’ ministry here is over, I could wish that I might begin again, that I might tall on my knees before you, and beseech you to regard the things that make for your peace; but here, again, I do repeat it that, while as to earnestness I plead guilty, yet as to truth and honesty I can challenge the bar of God, I can challenge the elect angels, I can call you all to witness, that I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.

“In a little time, some of you may be frequenting places where the gospel is not preached, you may embrace another and a false gospel; I only ask this thing of you, — Bear me witness that it was not my fault, that I have been faithful, and have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Possibly, some here, who have been restrained from evil by the fact of having attended a place of worship, seeing the chosen minister has gone, may not go anywhere else afterwards. You may become careless. Perhaps, next Sabbath-day you may be at home, lolling about, and wasting the day; but there is one thing I should like to say before you make up your mind not to attend the house of God again, — Bear me witness that I have been faithful with you. It may be that some here, who have professedly run well for a time while they have been hearing the Word, may go back; some of you may go right into the world again, you may become drunkards, swearers, and the like. God forbid that it should be so! But I charge you, if you plunge into sin, do at least say this one thing for him who desired nothing so much as to see you saved, say I have been honest to you; that I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. O my hearers, some of you in a little time will be on your dying beds! When your pulse is feeble, when the terrors of grim death are round about you, if you are still unconverted to Christ, there is one thing I shall want you to add to your last will and testament, it is this, — the exclusion of the poor minister, who stands before you this day, from any share in that desperate folly of yours which has led you to neglect your own soul. Have I not implored you to repent? Have I not bidden you look to Christ ere death surprises you? Have I not exhorted you, my hearers, to lay hold upon the hope set before you in the gospel? O sinner, when thou art wading through the black river, cast back no taunt on me as though I was thy murderer, for in this thing I can say, ‘ I wash my hands in innocency; I am clear of thy blood.’ But the day is coming when we shall all meet again; this great assembly shall be merged into a greater one, as the drop loses itself in the ocean; and, in that day, if I have not warned you, if I have been an unfaithful watchman, your blood will be required at my hands; if I have not preached Christ to you, and bidden you flee to Him for refuge, then, though you perish, your soul shall be required of me. I beseech you, if you laugh at me, if you reject my message, if you despise Christ, if you hate His gospel, if you will be damned, yet at least give me an acquittal of your blood. I see some before me who do not often hear me; and yet I can say concerning them that they have been the subject of my private prayers; and often, too, of my tears, when I have seen them going on in their iniquities. Well, I do ask this one thing, and as honest men you cannot deny it me; if you will have your sins, if you will be lost, if you will not come to Christ, at least, amid the thunders of the last great day, acquit me of having helped to destroy your souls.

“What can I say more? How shall I plead with you? Had I an angel’s tongue, and the heart of the Saviour, then would I plead; but I cannot say more than I have often done. In God’s name, I beseech you, flee to Christ for refuge. If all hath not sufficed before, let this suffice thee now. Come, guilty soul, and flee away to Him whose wide-open arms are willing to receive every soul that fleeth to Him in penitence and faith. In a little time, the preacher himself will lie stretched upon his bed. A few more days of solemn meeting, a few more sermons, a few more prayers, and I think I see myself in yon upper chamber, with friends watching around me. He who has preached to thousands now needs consolation for himself; he who has cheered many in the article of death is now passing through the river himself My hearers, shall there be any of you, whom I shall see upon my deathbed, who shall charge me with being unfaithful? Shall these eyes be haunted with the visions of men whom I have amused, and interested, but into whose hearts I have never sought to convey the truth? Shall I lie there, and shall these mighty congregations pass in dreary panorama before me; and as they subside before my eyes, one after the other, shall each one curse me as being unfaithful? God forbid! I trust: you will do me this favor that, when I lie a-dying, you will allow that I am clear of the blood of all men, and have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Thunders such as have never been heard before must roll over this poor head, and lightnings more terrific than have ever scathed the fiend shall blast this heart, if I have been unfaithful to you. My position — if I had but once preached the Word to these crowds, not to speak of many hundreds of times, — my position were the most awful in the whole universe if I were unfaithful. Oh, may God avert that worst of ills — unfaithfulness — from my head! Now, as here I stand, I make this my last appeal: ‘I pray you, in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.’ But if ye will not be, I ask you this single favor, — and I think you will not deny it me, — take the blame of your own ruin, for I am pure from the blood of all men, since I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.”

In chapter 51 *,*Mr. Spurgeon states that, after the preaching at the Surrey Music: Hall was discontinued, *“both*morally and financially it sank hopelessly.” A remarkable confirmation of this assertion came to hand while this volume was in course of preparation. It was contained in a letter written by a Christian man who was baptized in the Metropolitan Tabernacle, in November, 1897, but who had long before been employed at the hall under the circumstances which he describes. In his communication, the names of all the persons mentioned are given in full; he writes: —

“Having spent my last sovereign of compensation for the loss of the sight of my right eye while in the ‘nigger’ business, I was given to understand that Mr. \_\_\_\_\_, the manager of the Alhambra, Leicester Square, was going to re-open the Music Hall as a theatre with a capital of £63,000; no expense was to be spared to make the venture a brilliant financial speculation. The opera (a burlesque) was entitled *Eurydice,*and was a shameful travesty on Holy Writ, some of the characters portrayed lost souls in hell. Knowing the principal manager, Mr. \_\_\_\_, at Norwood, I applied to him for something to do; he engaged me, and suggested that I should go, under \_\_\_\_, the decorator and property-master, at sixpence an hour, and two shillings for the evening, attending to the female Blondin. When the rehearsals were on, the performers were constantly enquiring, ‘What will Spurgeon think about it? What will Spurgeon say about it? What will Spurgeon do about it?’ We had not long to wait before we heard what Mr. Spurgeon was doing; it came in this wise. On learning that the tenants of the houses overlooking the Gardens were nearly alii members of Mr. Spurgeon’s flock, and that they were going to petition against what they considered an intolerable nuisance, Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ tried to mollify them-by sending free passes of admission for themselves and their lodgers. He received the passes back by post, with tracts and letters urging him not to attempt to wage war against Christ; the writers, in many instances, adding these significant words, ‘ We *are praying for you.’*This all leaked out through the manager’s confidants when drinking at the theatre bars.

“Well, from the opening, everything connected with the venture of converting that place from a temporary hospital to a theatre and pleasure gardens, went wrong. The performers played to paper (admission free by ticket); the money lavished on the speculation to reproduce the gods and goddesses of heathen mythology went out of Mr. \_\_\_\_’s pocket, never to be returned, and failure upon failure came thick and fast. The very elements assisted in keeping the people away, the violent thunderstorms (almost phenomenal while they lasted) caused the visitors to exclaim, ‘There is a judgment on this’ place; it will never pay,’ while every fresh financial disaster was met by the usual cynical phrase, ‘ *They’re praying again,’ — meaning*Mr. Spurgeon and his congregation. As I write this true account, it seems but last week that it all happened. Poor \_\_\_\_\_, who died of a broken heart, always put his failure down to the prayers of C. H. Spurgeon and his flock. We rallied round him, and got what scenery, etc., we could away from the Surrey Gardens, and tried the Satanic venture again at the Royal Amphitheatre, Holborn, but with the same result, nothing but disaster.

“Perhaps you wonder why I never mentioned all this to you before; it was because I had gone back to the ‘nigger’ business, and being a servant of the devil, I did not wish to furnish you with anything in the shape of testimony which would only make you more importunate in urging me to come to the Saviour. But now, being a child of God, through the blood of Jesus, I do what I can to show forth His power over sin and Satan.”

After this chapter was in the hands of the printer, the following interesting letter was received. The writer of it was evidently a most appreciative member of the great congregations that assembled at the Music Hall, and it contains such a graphic description of the Surrey Gardens services, that a place is gladly found for it here, with heartiest thanks to the unknown correspondent: —

“Dear Mrs. Spurgeon,

“As I believe there will shortly be issued a second volume of Mr. Spurgeon’s Autobiography*,*I thought I would venture to send you some of the impressions I had concerning him at the Music Hall, Royal Surrey Gardens. I have always been of opinion that his ministry there was the most wonderful and the most romantic that ever fell to the lot of any Christian minister. The vast concourse of people, the almost-dramatic excitement experienced by them when expecting to see the youthful preacher appear, the sudden hush and impressive silence of the great throng (composed of all classes, from the aristocracy to the very humblest,) as he was seen to approach the pulpit stairs, the solemn and pale face contrasting with the black hair, and the beautiful voice that charmed every ear as he said, ‘ Let us commence the worship of God by prayer,’ — all this, though it occurred forty years ago, is as vivid in my recollection as if it had only happened recently.

“I am sorry that I cannot recall *the first time*I heard Mr. Spurgeon. I know I had done so before a certain Sunday, in April, 1857, when my father came home full of admiration for the sermon entitled, ‘ David’s Dying Prayer,’ which, for its matchless preface, and the stirring character of the whole discourse, must have been one of the most notable ever delivered. But the first sermon of which I have a distinct recollection is No. x33, ‘ Heavenly Rest,’ preached in the following month. How well I remember enjoying that sermon, and his reference to the ‘Stitch, stitch,’ of the poor needlewoman! I believe Mr. John Ruskin was present on that occasion.

“I attended a Sunday-school in Camberwell, but I had such a passionate enthusiasm for C. H. Spurgeon that I obtained permission to leave a few minutes after ten, which enabled me to reach the Gardens in time for service. I only missed one Sunday morning, and that was through ill-health. I remember how solemn was the sermon entitled, ‘The Warning Neglected,’ preached November 29; and how happy he was on December 20, when he preached on ‘The First Christmas Carol,’ and wound up his sermon by wishing all his hearers the happiest Christmas they had ever had in their lives. It made me wonder whether the assembled thousands would not verbally reciprocate the kind wish. Nor can I ever forget the discourse, ‘What have I done?’ delivered on the last Sabbath of the year 1857. With what burning eloquence he condemned the sin of men who were leading others astray, and warned them that they would have a double hell unless they repented. He seemed to speak like one of the old prophets or apostles, and several persons in the galleries, and other parts of the building where they were not able to see him when seated, rose to look at the preacher who was uttering such wondrous words. In the sermon about Felix trembling, Mr. Spurgeon made some remarks about the workings of the Holy Spirit which received strong censure from a preacher at Kennington. He said that, if the Holy Spirit acted in the way Mr. S. said He did, he would shut up his Bible, and never read it again. I know, however, that, in after years, the same minister had the highest opinion of C. H. S., just as a good many others subsequently gravitated towards him whom they had originally opposed.

“During the months of February and March, 1858, I thought he seemed sad. It was about this time that he told his audience that he looked upon them as a fixed congregation, and that he would shape his discourses accordingly. Still, he seemed troubled; and, one Sunday morning, he commenced his sermon by saying that the prophets in the olden times spoke of the message they had to deliver as ‘ the burden of the Lord ;’ and I thought to myself, ‘ You seem to have the burden of the Lord resting upon you also.’ I shall never forget the way in which, about this period, he quoted those words of our Lord, ‘ My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?’ The piercing, wailing, almost shrieking cry, and the sorrowful tones of his voice, must have gone to many another heart as they did to mine. ‘Very enjoyable was it to notice how grateful Mr. Spurgeon was for having escaped a serious accident, mentioned in the discourse entitled, ‘Providence.’ It was in April, 1858, that he preached from John 17:24; and, coming from the hall, I told a friend my opinion of the sermon; and an old man, a stranger to me, hearing what I said, remarked, ‘ Ah, my lad! does it not make one wish to go to Heaven?’ I was very much impressed by the discourse on ‘The Wicked Man’s Life, Funeral, and Epitaph ;’ there was something specially solemn about it. In the introduction, the preacher spoke of children playing among the graves in a churchyard, and recalled some of his early memories of Srambourne. But how happy he was when he preached, in the month of August, from that text, ‘ As thy days, so shall thy strength be.’ He had been unwell a few days previously, and I well remember two lines of a hymn we sang then, —

***‘Tis He that heals thy sicknesses,  
And makes thee young again.’***

“In September, the sermon entitled, ‘His Name — Wonderful!’ was listened to by a lady-relative of mine who, for years after, whenever I saw her, always referred to it in terms of admiration; and the following month, as you are aware, Mr. Spurgeon was laid aside by severe suffering, which necessitated his being absent from the Music Hall for three Sundays. I recollect his coming back, the first Sabbath after his illness, and being almost carried up the pulpit stairs; the preliminary part of the service was conducted very efficiently by Mr. Probert, of Bristol. The sermon about Samson, delivered in November, I did not hear, as I was unwell; and you may smile when I tell you how I endeavored to sing to myself, during the Sunday morning, such hymns as ‘Grace, ‘tis a charming sound,’ and ‘Blow ye the trumpet, blow,’ — both being great favorites with C. H. S.

“On December 19, 1858, the congregation at the Surrey Gardens suddenly dwindled down to very small dimensions; the weather was not bad, but the platform was only half-full, there was scarcely anyone in the third gallery, and the area was only three-parts filled. Mr. Spurgeon preached a delightful discourse on God’s love, and I so wondered what effect the reduced audience would have on his mind that I went to New Park Street in the evening. He certainly appeared sad, but his spirits rose as he went on with his sermon. I was rather anxious, during the week, as to how the Music Hall would look on the following Sabbath; and when that day came, and with it rain, I was still more concerned. However, my sister and I walked to the service all in the wet, and I remember that she said, ‘Well, there will be two of us present, at any rate.’ But I had been only meeting trouble half-way, for, on arriving, I found that the congregation was much larger than on the previous Sunday, and, in a short time, it reverted to its original dimensions. Early in the New ‘Year (1859), it was rumored that Mr. Spurgeon was going to America, and he confirmed the truth of the report by telling his hearers that he might be away for some time. However, we know he never went there. About this time, he preached a very able sermon, which was entitled, ‘Reform,’ parts of which were aimed at some of the amusements of the people, such as dancing and the theatre. Were any in his audience offended, I wonder?

“A month or two later, during the singing of a hymn, he suddenly stopped, and said, ‘ A little while ago, when I was worshipping in a Jewish synagogue, I kept on my hat in accordance with the custom of the friends meeting there; I notice two gentlemen, probably of the Jewish persuasion, who have their hats on; will they kindly take them off as we do when we meet for worship?’ I could not see the parties referred to; but, doubtless, they did as the preacher requested, for, after a moment’s pause, the service was resumed. not many could have conveyed a reproof in such a kind manner to the irreverent individuals who, possibly out of bravado, had kept on their hats after the service had commenced.

“On the first Sabbath in July, Mr. Spurgeon delivered a very pathetic sermon from the text, ‘ Kiss the Son, lest He be angry,’ etc. On the following Sunday afternoon, he preached on Clapham Common, under a tree where a man had been killed by lightning a fortnight previously. I shall never forget the sermon on July 17, 1859, ‘The Story of God’s Mighty Acts.’ I believe the Music Hall authorities had proposed to open the place for concerts on Sunday evening; but Mr. S.’s threat to leave prevented them doing; so. How he revelled in preaching that morning! It was very hot, and he kept on wiping the perspiration from his forehead; but his discomfort did not affect his discourse, his words flowed on like a torrent of sacred eloquence.

“As you are aware, in August was laid the foundation stone of the Tabernacle, the ruins of which can now be regarded with feelings similar to those experienced by the old Jew when he thought of the destruction of the first Temple, for the new Tabernacle can never be quite the same as the old one. I was present at the last service held in the Music Hall, on December 11, 1859. It was very foggy, but the place was crowded, as much indeed as it could be. I had a front seat in the second gallery, and therefore enjoyed a splendid view of the people. Mr. S. preached an earnest sermon on declaring the whole counsel of God. There is always something sad about last ‘things; and, as I came away, I felt that one of the happiest experiences of my youth belonged to the past. So also — in my opinion — passed away the most romantic stage even in Mr. Spurgeon’s wonderful life.

“I have thus finished conveying to you some of my impressions of your dear husband’s ministry at the Royal Surrey Gardens. You may ask what useful purpose has been served by my writing about those facts with which you, of course, were well acquainted; but when I read that the second volume of C. H. *Spurgeon’s Autobiography*would cover his experience at the Music Hall, I felt an irresistible desire to send you these recollections. The other day, I stood opposite what used to be the entrance to the old Gardens. I could not help thinking of more than forty years since, . when the carriages, like a stream, used to roll up and down the  
neighbourhood with their fashionable occupants, and the thousands of people coming away from the hall when the service was over; also of the number who used to wait to see the young minister take his departure’; and when he was seen ‘to approach, with head uncovered, a section of the crowd, kindly and respectfully, would call out, ‘ Put on your hat, sir; put on your hat, sir.’ All is now changed; and where there was once life, excitement, and curiosity, nothing but dulness, and apathy, and lifelessness reign.

“Were not C. H. Spurgeon in his *youth,*and W. E. Gladstone in his *old age,*the two most wonderful phenomena of the nineteenth century? Both are gone; but I shall always count it a great privilege, as well as a high honour, to have lived under the influence of those good and noble men. I am aware of the general objection there is to anonymous communications; but, for several reasons, I prefer to abstain from giving my name and address, which I trust you will excuse. I may mention that I am a perfect stranger to you, although, on one occasion, shortly after the Tabernacle was opened, I had the pleasure of conversing with you.  
*“With*every expression of respect, “Believe me,  
*“Yours*very faithfully,

“S. J. C.”)  
**THE FAST-DAY SERVICE AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE.**

During the time of our sojourn at the Surrey Gardens, it was my privilege to conduct one service which deserves special mention, for it was the occasion on which I addressed the largest congregation to which I ever preached in any building. This was on Wednesday, October 7, 1857, when 23,654 persons assembled in the Crystal Palace to join in the observance of the day appointed by proclamation “for a solemn fast, humiliation, and prayer before Almighty God: in order to obtain pardon of our sins, and for imploring His blessing and assistance on our arms for the restoration of tranquillity in India.” About a month previously, in my sermon at the Music Hall on “India’s Ills and England’s Sorrows,” I had referred at length to the Mutiny, and its terrible consequences to our fellow-countrymen and women in the East. The Fast-day had not then been proclaimed; but when it was announced, [ was glad to accept the offer of the Crystal Palace directors to hold a service in the centre transept of the building, and to make a collection on behalf of the national fund for the sufferers through the Mutiny.

The Lord set His seal upon the effort even before the great crowd gathered, though I did not know of that instance of blessing until long afterwards. It was arranged that I should use the Surrey Gardens pulpit, so, a day or two before preaching at the Palace, I went to decide where it should be fixed; and, in order to test the acoustic properties of the building, cried in a loud voice, “Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” In one of the galleries, a workman, who knew nothing of what was being done, heard the words, and they came like a message from Heaven to his soul. He was smitten with conviction on account of sin, put down his tools, went home, and there, after a season of spiritual struggling, found peace and life by beholding the Lamb of God. Years after, he told this story to one who visited him on his death-bed.  
A complete record of the service is preserved in Nos. 154-5 of The *New Park Street Pulpit,*so I need not give details here, but simply mention that the text was, *“Hear*ye the rod, and who hath appointed it.” The collection amounted to nearly £500, to which the Crystal Palace Company added £200, beside contributing £50 to the Tabernacle Building Fund, as I declined to accept any fee for preaching. It was a service that I was not likely ever to forget, and one result upon my physical frame was certainly very remarkable. I was not conscious, at the close of the service, of any extraordinary exhaustion, yet I must have been very weary, for after I went to sleep that Wednesday night, I did not wake again until the Friday morning. All through the Thursday, my dear wife came at intervals to look at me, and every time she found me sleeping peacefully, so she just let me slumber on until —

***“‘Fired nature’s sweet restorer, balmy sleep,”***

had done its work. I was greatly surprised, on waking, to find that it was Friday morning; but it was the only time in my life that I had such an experience. Eternity alone will reveal the full results of the Fast-day service at the Crystal Palace.

CHAPTER 52.

VARYING VOICES — PRO AND CON.

It is not by the power of *eloquence*that souls are saved. I believe every man who preaches the gospel from his heart is eloquent, so I have used a wrong word; I mean, however, that great oratorical powers are seldom made use of by God to produce great spiritual results. You have heard of the preaching of Whitefield; but did you ever read his sermons? If you did, you will say they were by no means remarkable productions; there is nothing in them that I should think could have approached to oratory, it was only the man’s earnestness that made him eloquent. Have you heard any preacher who has been blessed by God to move the multitude? He has been eloquent, for he has spoken earnestly; but as to oratory, there has been none of it. I, for my own part, must eschew every pretension thereunto. I am certain I never think, when I come into this pulpit, *“How*shall I talk to these people in a grand fashion?” I think, when I come up here, “I have something to say which these people ought to hear;” but how I will tell it to them, does not signify much to me; I find the words, somehow or other, God helping me; but about any of the *graces*of eloquence, or the tricks of oratory, I am utterly and quite in the dark; nor do I wish to imitate any who have been masters in that art. I believe that the men, whom we call eloquent now they are dead, were laughed at in their day as poor bungling speakers; now they are buried, they are canonized, but in their lives they were probably abused.

Now, my brethren, God. I do think, will generally cast a slur upon fine speaking, and grand compositions, and so on, in order that He may show that the blessing comes not by any human power, but by His Spirit. I could stand here, and point my finger in a certain direction, and I could pause at such-and-such a chapel, and say, *“There*is a man preaching there whose compositions are worthy to be read by the most intellectual persons, but whose chapel contains, this morning, perhaps a hundred people.” I could point you to another, of whose preaching I could say that it was the most faultless oratory to which I ever listened, but his congregation were nearly all of them asleep. I might point you to another, of whom I could say that there was the most chaste simplicity, the most extraordinary beauty in the compositions he delivered, but there has not been a soul known to be saved in the chapel for years. Now, why is that? I think it is because God says, it shall not be by any earthly power. And I will also say that, whenever God is pleased to raise up a man by individual power to move the world, or to work any reform, He invariably selects one whose faults and whose errors are so glaring and apparent to everyone, that we are obliged to say, “I wonder that man should do it; surely it must be of God, it could not be of the man himself.” No, there are some men who are too great for God’s designs, their style is too excellent. If God blessed them, the world would cry, — specially the literary world, — it is their talent that God blesses; but God, on the other hand, takes up some rough fellow, and just shakes the whole world by him. People say, *“We*do not see how it is, it is certainly not in the man.” The critic takes up his pen, dips it in gall, writes a most fearful character about the preacher; he reads it, and says, “It is quite true, and I am glad of it, for if it had not been true, God would not have used me. I glory in my infirmities, because Christ’s own power rests on me. If I had not those weaknesses, so much could not have been done; but the very infirmities have insured me against men’s saying, ‘ It was the man.’“ I have often been delighted at some Of my opponents; they have sneered at everything in me, — from the crown of my head to the sole of my foot, I have been all over bruises and putrefying sores; — -very word has been vulgarity, every action has been grotesque, the whole of it has been abominable and blasphemous; and I have said, *“Well,*that is delightful;” and while some persons have said, “Now we must defend our minister,” I have thought, *“You*had better let it alone; for suppose it is true, — and it is, the most of it, — there is all the more glory to God; for who can deny that the work is done?” And he is a great workman that can use bad tools, and yet produce a fine piece of workmanship; and if the conversion of hundreds of souls now present, if the sobriety of drunkards, if the chastity of harlots, if the salvation of men who have been swearers, blasphemers, thieves, and vagabonds from their youth up, is not a grand result, I do not know what is. And if I have been the unwieldy, uncouth, unworthy tool employed in doing it, I bless God, for then you cannot honor me, but must give all the glory to Him, and to Him all the glory belongs. He will have it proved that it is *“not*by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts.” — C. H. S., *in sermon preached at the Surrey Gardens Music Hall, August*31, 1857.

I N Chapter 50, mention was made of the cruel and libellous articles which appeared in various newspapers after the great catastrophe at the Music Hall, and extracts from two of them were given as specimens of the rest. There were other secular papers which published more favourable comments, one of the first being *.The Evening Star,*November 5, 1856, which said : —

“Other questions than that of the structure of the building, or the selfprotection of the startled assemblage, are raised by the Surrey Gardens calamity. The vocation of the preacher, and the secret of his power, are brought by it within the range of every man’s thoughts, and, therefore, of newspaper discussion. The worldly-minded are forced to reflect on the nature of an institution which survives the most sweeping changes, defies alike persecution and rivalry, and is no less conspicuous in this nineteenth century, to which the press and platform are almost peculiar, than in the twelfth or sixteenth, when the altar and the pulpit had no competitors but in the throne. The’ devout, moreover, who prefer to think of all religious exercises as more: or less supernatural, and the result of direct or indirect inspiration from on high, are compelled to observe the very different operations of the same Divine Spirit working through different human instrumentalities; so that, while a host of good, and perhaps able men, are discoursing from Scripture texts to their few hundreds of hearers each, one — and he a comparatively untrained youth — draws the multitude by ten and fifteen thousand at a time, and is even besought to continue his preaching while the dead and wounded are being carried from the doors of the meeting-house.

“No one can go into a well-filled church, or into the majority of chapels, without being tempted to ask, — ‘ Where are the poor?’ Preacher and hearers are alike emphatically of the middle class. The grey-headed, whiteneckclothed, and otherwise respectable-looking men, in conspicuous seats, are prosperous traders, lawyers, or doctors. The younger fathers of families are clerks or shopkeepers. A few Sunday-school teachers, unmarried shopmen and clerks, make up the males of the congregation. The female portion greatly preponderate in number, are almost exclusively connections of the before-mentioned; though, here and there, is some solitary wife or widowed mother, who has slipped away from a penurious home to snatch consolation from the lips that speak of Heaven. But where are the artizan classes, — that keen-eyed, strong-minded race, who crowd the floor at political meetings or cheap concerts, fill the minor theatres, and struggle into the shilling gallery of the Lyceum or Princess’s? So very scanty is their attendance upon the most noted preachers, that it is their adhesion to Mr. Spurgeon which has made that gentleman a prodigy and a phenomenon. The first that we heard of him, two or three years since, was that the Bankside labourers went to hear him on Sundays and week-nights. The summer before last, we found the artisans of Bethnal Green — a much:more fastidious race — flocking round him in afield at Hackney. And in the list of the killed and wounded at the Music Hall, are journeymen painters, tanners, and milliners’ girls. It is worth while to ask the reason why.

*“A*single hearing is sufficient to answer the question, — supposing the hearer can also see. There never yet was a popular orator who did not talk more and better with his arms than with his tongue. Mr. Spurgeon knows this instinctively. When he has read his text, he does not fasten his eyes on a manuscript, and his hands to a cushion. As soon as he begins to speak, he begins to act, — -and that not as if declaiming on the stage, but as if conversing with you in the street. He seems to shake hands with all around, and put everyone at his ease. There is no labored exordium, making you wonder by what ingenious winding he will get back to his subject; but a trite saying, an apt quotation, a simple allegory, one or two familiar sentences, making all who hear feel interested and at home. Then there is no philosophical pomp of exposition, — but just two or three catch-words, rather to guide than to confine attention. Presently comes, by way of illustration, a gleam of humour, — perhaps a stroke of downright vulgarity, — it may be, a wretched pun. The people are amused, but they are not left at liberty to laugh. The preacher’s comedy does but light up his solemn earnestness. He is painting some scene of death-bed remorse, or of timely repentance; some Magdalene’s forgiveness, or some prodigal’s return. His colours are taken from the earth and sky of common human experience and aspiration. He dips his pencil, so to speak, in the veins of the nearest spectator, and makes his work a part of every man’s nature. His images are drawn from the homes of the common people, the daily toil for daily bread, the nightly rest of tired labor, the mother’s love for a wayward boy, the father’s tenderness to a sick daughter. His anecdotes are not farfetched, they have a natural pathos. He tells how some despairing unfortunate, hastening with her last penny to the suicide’s bridge, was stopped by the sound of psalmody, and turned into his chapel; or how some widow’s son, running away from his mother’s home, was brought back by the recollection of a prayer, and sits now in that pew. He does not narrate occurrences, but describes them, with a rough, graphic force and faithfulness. He does not reason out his doctrines, but announces, explains, and applies them. He ventures a political allusion, and it goes right to the democratic heart. In the open air, someone may interrupt or interrogate, and the response is a new effect. In short, this man preaches Christianity — his Christianity, at any rate, — as Ernest Jones preaches Chartism, and as Gough preaches temperance. Is it any wonder that he meets with like success? Or is he either to be blamed or scorned? Let it first be remembered that Latimer was not less homely when he preached before the king, — nor South less humorous when he cowed Rochester, — nor Whitefield less declamatory when he mowed Hume and Franklin, — nor Rowland Hill less vulgar, though brother to a baronet. To us, it appears that dulness is the worst fault possible to a man whose first business it is to interest, — that the dignity of the pulpit is best consulted by making’ it attractive, — and that the clergy of all denominations might get some frequent hints for the composition of their sermons from the young Baptist preacher who never went to College.”

Soon after the services were resumed at the Music Hall, a correspondent of *The Sun*newspaper wrote: — “If what we heard, last Sunday, be a specimen of Mr. Spurgeon’s usual preaching, there was certainly nothing at all more extravagant than would be heard from most of the Evangelical clergymen and Dissenting preachers in the country. There were no outrageous descriptions of Divine anger and future punishment, nor any wiredrawn refinements on the theology of repentance. His statements on the latter point, were characterized by remarkable common sense; they were forcibly expressed and illustrated, as were his arguments for the necessity of repentance. Indeed, there was little in which preachers of all creeds would not have concurred. His voice is a noble one, filling the whole place with the greatest ease; at the further end of the building, we did not miss a syllable. His manner was perfectly unrestrained, but not irreverent. His command, of language is very considerable, but does not lead him, for an extempore speaker, into verbosity. His style is unfettered, homely, forcible, and abounds in pointed remarks. There was a total absence of anything humorous or ludicrous. The secret of his popularity, taking last Sunday as a specimen, appeared to us to be something very different.

“It was impossible not to feel that the preacher was absorbed, not in himself, but in his audience. The formal separation of the pulpit did not separate .him from his hearers. He conversed with them, he was one of them. He did not lecture them *ex cathedra,*or indulge in disquisitions or topics out of their line of thought; but spoke with them as he would have done on a solemn subject in their own houses. Most of our pulpits ‘die of dignity;’ but, while there was nothing unbecoming on Sunday, the preacher placed himself on a level with all. Of course, a vivid fancy, and considerable powers of expression, aided by a first-rate voice, will account for much; but we think what we have pointed out was the chief reason why, among so many thousands of hearers, we could not — and we looked carefully — detect .a single sleeper.

“Our more dignified preachers might’ study with advantage the phenomenon of this youth’s popularity. We can only say that, for our part, his manner disarmed criticism, and we could think only of his probable usefulness to the thousands present who, we are confident, by their appearance, are not listeners to our customary pulpit prosaics. Lord Chief Justice Campbell, with his son, was present on the platform, and seemed to take the same view with ourselves; he remarked several times to one of the managers, after the service, in our hearing, and also to Sir Richard Mayne (Commissioner of Police), who was likewise present, ‘He is doing great good, sir, — great good.’ London could find room for twenty such preachers; they are just what the populace needs.”

Dr. John Campbell reprinted the foregoing letter in *The British Banner,* and added the following remarks:—

“Such a testimony, from such a quarter, possesses a special value, and the deliberate language of the Lord Chief Justice of England will be duly estimated wherever it shall be read. There is no living man from whom a ranting, raving enthusiast would have so much to fear. A better judge of teaching, or preaching, or eloquence, than Lord Campbell, is nowhere to be found. The friends of Mr. Spurgeon, therefore, may congratulate themselves on having anticipated the decision of this great legal luminary.”

The famous *Greville Memoirs*contain the following record relating to the period now under consideration: — ”8th February, 1857. — I have just come from hearing the celebrated Mr. Spurgeon preach in the Music Hall of the Surrey Gardens. It was quite full. He told us from the pulpit that there were 9,000 persons present. The service was like the Presbyterian, — psalms, prayer, expounding a Psalm, and a sermon. He is certainly very remarkable; and, undeniably, a fine character; — not remarkable in person; in face, rather resembling a smaller Macaulay; — a very clear and powerful voice, which was heard through the hall; a manner natural, impassioned, and without affectation or extravagance; wonderful fluency and command of language, abounding in illustration, and very often of a very familiar kind, but without anything either ridiculous or irreverent. He gave me an impression of his earnestness and sincerity; speaking without book or notes, yet his discourse was evidently very carefully prepared. The text was, ‘ Cleanse Thou me from secret faults,’ and he divided it into heads, —  
-the misery, the folly, the danger (and a fourth, which I have forgotten,) of secret sins, in all of which he was very eloquent and impressive. He preached for about three-quarters of an hour; and, to judge by the use of the handkerchiefs and the audible sobs, with great effect.”

The letter in chapter 52 was published in *The Times,*April 13, 1857. Mr. Spurgeon thought it was worthy of preservation, for it came from the pen of a learned professor, and did much to turn the tide of public opinion in his favor.

**“P REACHING *AND*PREACHING.**  
“To the Editor of *The Times,*

“Sir, — One Sunday morning, about a month ago, my wife said, ‘ Let us send the children to St. Margaret’s, to hear the Archbishop of*\_\_\_\_*preach on behalf of the Society of Aged Ecclesiastical Cripples, which is to celebrate today its three hundredth anniversary.’ So the children went, though the parents, for reasons immaterial to mention, could not go with them. ‘Well, children, how did you like the Archbishop of \_\_\_\_, and what did he say about “the Aged Ecclesiastical Cripples”?’ Here the children — for it was during their dinner, — attacked their food with great voracity; but never a word could we get out of their mouths about the spiritual feast of which they had just partaken. No! not even the text could they bring out. The more they were pressed, the more they blushed, and hung their heads over their plates, until, at last, in a rage, I accused them of having fallen asleep during the service. This charge threw my first-born on his defence, and he sobbed out the truth, for, by this time, their eyes were full of tears. *‘Why,*papal we can’t say what the Archbishop of \_\_\_\_ said, because we could not hear a word. He is very old, and has got no teeth; and, do you know, I don’t think he has got any tongue either, for, though we saw his lips moving, we could not hear a single word.’ On this I said no more, but 1 thought a good deal of ‘ the Aged  
Ecclesiastical Cripples,’ and their venerable advocate, and, being something of a philologist, I indulged in dreamy speculations on the possibility of an alphabet composed entirely of labials; and if my wife had not roused me from my dream by some mere matter-offact question, I almost think I should have given my reflections to the world in the shape of a small pamphlet entitled, ‘The Language of Labials; or, how to preach sermons without the aid of either tongue or teeth; published for the benefit of the Society of Aged Ecclesiastical Cripples, and dedicated, of course by permission, to the Archbishop of \_\_\_\_\_.’

*“Now*listen to another story. A friend of mine, a Scotch Presbyterian, comes up to town, and says, ‘ I want to hear Spurgeon; let us go.’ Now, I am supposed to be a High Churchman, so I answered, ‘What! go and hear a Calvinist, — a Baptist, — a man who ought to be ashamed of himself for being so near the Church, and yet not within its pale?’ ‘ Never mind, come and hear him.’ Well, we went yesterday morning to the Music Hall in the Surrey Gardens. At first, I felt a strange sensation of wrongdoing. It was something like going to a morning theatrical performance on Sunday; nor did a terrific gust of wind (which sent the Arctic Regions, erected out of laths and pasteboard in a style regardless of expense, flying across the water of the lake,) tend to cheer a mind depressed by the novelty of the scene. Fancy a congregation, consisting of ten thousand souls, streaming into the hall, mounting the galleries, humming, buzzing, and swarming, — a mighty hive of bees, — eager to secure at first the best places, and at last, any place at all. After waiting more than half-an-hour, — for if you wish to have a seat, you must be there at least that space of time in advance, — Mr. Spurgeon ascended the tribune. To the hum, and rush, and trampling of men, succeeded a low, concentrated thrill and murmur of devotion, which seemed to run at once, like an electric current, through the breast of everyone present; and by this magnetic chain, the preacher held us fast bound for about two hours. It is not my purpose to give a summary of his discourse. It is enough to say of his voice, that its power and volume are sufficient to reach everyone in that vast assembly; of his language, that it is neither high-flown nor homely; of his style, that it is at times familiar, at times declamatory, but always happy, and often eloquent; of his doctrine, that neither the Calvinist nor the Baptist appears in the forefront of the battle which is waged by Mr. Spurgeon with relentless animosity, and with gospel, weapons, against irreligion, cant, hypocrisy, pride, and those secret bosom sins which so easily beset a man in daily life; and to sum up all in a word, it is enough to say of the man himself that he impresses you with a perfect conviction of his sincerity.

“But I have not written so much about my children’s want of spiritual food when they listened to the mumbling of the Archbishop of — — -, and my own banquet at the Surrey Gardens, without a desire to draw a practical conclusion from these two stories, and to point them by a moral. Here is a man not more Calvinistic than many an incumbent of the Established Church, who ‘ humbles and mumbles,’ as old Latimer says, over his liturgy and text. Here is a man who says the complete immersion, or something of the kind, of adults is necessary to baptism. These are his faults of doctrine; but, if I were the examining chaplain of the Archbishop of \_\_\_\_, I would say; ‘May it please your Grace, here is a man able to preach eloquently, able to fill the largest church in England with his ‘voice, and, what is more to the purpose, with people’.. And may it please your Grace, here are two churches in the metropolis, St. Paul’s and Westminster Abbey. What does your Grace think of inviting Mr. Spurgeon, this heretical Calvinist and Baptist, who is able to draw ten thousand souls after hi,n, just to try his voice, some Sunday morning, in the nave of either of those churches? At any rate, I will answer for one thing that, if he preaches in Westminster libbey, we shall not have a repetition of the disgraceful practice, now common in that church, of having the sermon. *before* the anthem, in order that those who would quit the church when the arid sermon begins, may be forced to stay it out for the sake of the music which follows it.’ But I am not, I am sorry to say, examining chaplain to the Archbishop of — — ., so I can only send you this letter from the devotional desert in which I reside, and sign myself, —

“HABITANS IN SICCO.”  
“Broad Phylactery, Westminster.”

*The Times,*of the same date, had the following leading article upon the letter: — “Society, like the private individual, has its grievances, — certain old-established sores, any allusion to which is sure to excite general sympathy in all companies. The extortions of cabmen, inn charges, rates and taxes, — any reference to these veteran impositions kindles a spark of genial hostility in every circle. Everyone has had his particular collision with these offensive claims, and has his story to tell. Those compositions called sermons belong to this class of veteran grievances. An allusion to them will revive a drooping conversation, and awaken a spirit of rebellion in every breast. Everybody has suffered from this quarter, and a long vista of recollection opens out before every eye the retrospect of a yoke long borne, — the image of yourself sitting in a pew or stall after or before an anthem, with a look of calm resignation, which vaguely betrays, however, the general impression that something or other — we do not say what, — will be over in half-an-hour, or three-quarters of an hour, or even an hour from the present moment. A series of tableaux, representing yourself in formal relations with a sounding-board, is produced by the machinery of the brain. The relation is one of temporary subjugation. There are one or two others near you with the same mixed expression that you have yourself, indicative of transient and bearable adversity. The sky is lowering overhead, but the horizon is clear. We will not call this ‘ smiling at grief,’ because, to say the truth, the attitude of the figures is rather too comfortable to be sentimental. It is unnecessary to say what sympathy the same pictorial representation pervading the whole company creates. ‘A fellow-feeling; makes us wondrous kind.’ It is, indeed, curious to observe the extraordinary difficulty which some of our most respectable writers — nay, our ablest moralists,-seem to have had in encountering this particular ordeal. Dr. Johnson repented, most sincerely and devoutly, but still annually, over his very rare use of this great opportunity and privilege. We hardly know whether it is fair to notice the same delinquency in the valetudinarian Coleridge. Certainly, to hear the remarks that are generally made, a good preacher does seem to be a very rare production, and to require the lantern of Diogenes to discover him. The fact of the excessive dullness of sermons being indeed taken for granted, people are lost in perplexity how to account for it. Do the Canons require it? Do the Bishops enjoin it? The evil is altogether mysterious, and broods over the public like a nightmare. Its origin, like that of the source of the Nile, is unknown. Is it the result of volcanic influences? Will the same discovery explain it that will, some day, explain the phenomenon of the tides? Or does the enigma await a meteorological solution? There appears also to be something mysterious in the sensations of the sufferers. Language can give the superficial characteristics of what is experienced, but there seems to be something at the bottom which is indescribable. In fact, the whole thing is very mysterious, and we feel out of our depth when we attempt to penetrate it analytically.

But, as metaphysicians say, the facts of consciousness in this department are plain; and, so long as we keep quite close to them, we feel ourselves tolerably safe.

“Now, undoubtedly, preachers have something to say on their side of the question. As a class of public exhibitors, they labour under peculiar difficulties. For example, a good lecture and a good theatrical piece can be repeated, and we have Mr. Albert Smith and *The Corsican Brothers*night after night. But a good sermon has only one existence. It goes off like a rocket, and disappears for ever. The preacher cannot advertise a second delivery. If it takes place, it is by stealth.. But success is not so frequent that it can afford this waste and extravagance without serious results. In other departments, the failures escape notice, because they are merely tentative, and are withdrawn as soon as they are discovered not to take, while one good hit is hammered for months running into the public mind. In the case of sermons, good and bad are on the same exhibitory level, and human nature is pinned forcibly to its average mark.

“The reputation, however, of this class of compositions being thus low, it is not surprising’ if the sudden phenomenon of a monster preacher excites some astonishment; and if our correspondent, ‘ HABITANS IN SICCO,’ regrets that the Church has not the benefit of similar services, it is quite natural to ask why should such demonstrations be confined to Dissent? Why cannot the Church have a monster preacher drawing his crowds?

“Physically speaking, there can be no reason why the Church should not have, at any rate once or twice in a generation, a natural orator in its clerical ranks endowed with a voice as loud as Mr. Spurgeon’s; and, if she has, there can be no cogent reason why she should not use him. A loud voice is a decided *gift,*an endowment; it may be thrown away in the prodigality of nature upon a man who has no purpose to turn it to, no thought to utter from that splendid organ; upon a man, in fact, who is a mere pompous Stentor in a pulpit; but give it to one who has thought and a purpose, and see the effect. It collects a crowd to listen, but that is only the first step. Another crowd comes because there is a crowd to begin with, and a third follows the second. But this is not all. A multitude listens with a different feeling to a speaker from that with which a roomful of people or a churchful of people listen, for the multitude *feels*itself a multitude; it is conscious of its numbers, and every individual partakes in some degree the gigantic vibrations of the mass. The addition of power which is thus gained is immense; and, therefore, how is it that the Church never has a monster preacher?

“The reason is, that a loud voice requires its proper material to exert itself upon. The voice is notoriously the most sympathetic thing in nature. It cannot be loud and soft indiscriminately. Some things are made to be shouted, and others to be whispered. Nobody shouts out an axiom in mathematics; nobody balances probabilities in *thunder,* — N*emo consilium cum clamore dat.*There must be a strong sentiment, some bold truth, to make a man shout. In religion, there must be something rather extravagant in the shape of doctrine. The doctrine of sudden conversion or of irresistible grace can be shouted; but if a man tried ever so hard to shout in delivering a moderate and sensible discourse on free-will, he would find himself talking quietly in spite of himself. A loud voice, then, must have ‘ loud’ doctrine to develop it. But the Church of England has rather a distaste for ‘loud’ doctrine; her general standard is opposed to it, her basis is a balanced one, mixing opposite truths, and qualifying what she teaches with judicious protests and disclaimers. She preaches Catholicity with a protest against Rome, and protestantism with a protest against Geneva. This is very sensible, and very true; but it is not favorable to popular preaching. Of the two parties into which she is divided, one thinks it wrong to shout, as being against the principle of reverence. This school specially contrasts itself in this respect with ‘ the rude world,’ which is supposed to be always shouting, and doing everything that is noisy and vulgar, and with heretics who are audacious and immodest; and it plumes itself on its refinement and good taste in the delivery of religious truth, which it thinks ought to be done in a sort of veiled and fragmentary way, so as to reach the sensitive ears of the good, and pass over those of the profane. All this is very excellent and refined, but it is against popular preaching. So much for one party. The other party might speak loud if it liked; it has no theory against it, and its doctrines admit of it, but it does not like the trouble. And, besides, this party, though it professedly holds strong doctrine, practically tempers it considerably, and bends to the moderate standard of the Church. Thus, what with the fear of criticism, the deference to a recognized standard, idleness, reverence, and a great many other things, — what with some thinking it heretical to shout, and others thinking it unpolite to be popular, — there is no monster preaching in the English Church. It does certainly admit of a question whether, in our general policy, we are not over-cautious, and gain greater theoretical correctness at the cost of much practical efficiency. It admits of a question whether a little extravagance and a little onesidedness might not be tolerated for the sake of a good, substantial, natural, telling appeal to the human heart. We should have no objection, for our part, to an Evangelical clergyman, with a strong voice, doing what Mr. Spurgeon does. The doctrines of the two are in reality much the same; and, that being the case, why should fear of criticism prevent the Evangelical school from making themselves as effective as they can? But such is the influence of a conventional standard, which, like conscience, ‘ makes cowards of us all.’”

*The British Quarterly Review,*June, 1857, contained a long article, of which the following were the opening and closing paragraphs: —  
**“CHARLES SPURGEON AND THE PULPIT.**

*“Mr.*Spurgeon is a notability. He filled Exeter I tall with eager listeners for months together. He has since done the same in the great Music Hall of the Surrey Gardens, though spacious enough to receive 9,000 persons. Hitherto, the prophets have been in the wrong. The feeling’ does not subside. The crowds gather even more than before. The ‘common people’ are there, as at the first; but with them there are now many who are of a much higher grade. Professional men, senatorial men, ministers of state, and peers of the realm, are among Mr. Spurgeon’s auditory. These are facts that cannot be questioned. That there is something very extraordinary in them, everyone must feel. How is the matter to be explained?...

“We believe that, to explain the fact presented in the Sunday meetings at the Surrey Gardens, we must go beyond the personal as found in the preacher, beyond the scheme of truth which he propounds, — and we must rest in nothing short of the Divine hand itself. The All-wise has often worked by instruments, and in ways which would seem to have been chosen for the purpose of making a mock of the world’s wisdom. He did so when he founded Christianity, — He may do much like it again.

“Certainly, a choice rebuke has been administered to a course of speculation which has become somewhat rife among us of late, especially among parties who account themselves as belonging to the far-seeing of their generation. It has come to be very much in fashion, with some persons, to speak of all things connected with religion as beset with great difficulty and mystery. On all such questions, we are told, there must be two sides; and the negative side, it is said, is generally much more formidable than is commonly imagined. It is assumed, accordingly, that, to be in a state of some hesitancy and doubt, is the sign of intelligence, while to be positive, very sure about anything, is the sign of a vulgar and shallow mind. Our people are said to be familiar with phrases about the doctrines of the gospel, but with little more. They may become bigots in their conceit on such subjects, and know nothing. Educated men now must not be expected to be content with phrases, or with assertions. The preacher, in consequence, owes it to himself to deal with matters much otherwise than formerly. To insist on the authority of Scripture now, as in past times, it is said, would be in vain. To set forth the doctrines of the gospel now as formerly, would be wasted labour. The preacher must be more considerate, more candid, more forbearing. He must acquit himself with more intelligence, more independence, and in a more philosophical spirit, presenting his topics on broader and more general grounds. In other words, the old mode of presenting what is called ‘the old truth’ has had its day. Whitefield himself, were he to come back, would produce little impression on our generation.

“But here comes a man — no Whitefield in voice, in presence, in dignity, or genius, who, nevertheless, as with one stroke of his hand, sweeps away all this sickly sentimentalism, this craven misbelief. It is all to him as so much of the merest gossamer web that might have crossed his path: He not only gives forth the old doctrine of Paul in all the strength of Paul’s language, but with exaggerations of his own, such as Paul would have been forward to disavow. This man knows nothing of doubt as to whence the gospel is, what it is, or wherefore it has its place amongst us. On all such subjects his mind is that of a made-up man. In place of suspecting that the old accredited doctrines of the gospel have pretty well done their work, he expects good from nothing else, and all that he clusters about them is for the sake of them.

“The philosophical precision, the literary refinements, the nice discriminations between what we may know of a doctrine and what we may not, leaving us in the end, perhaps, scarcely anything to know about it, — all this which, according to some, is so much needed by the age, is Mr. Spurgeon’s utter scorn. He is the direct, dogmatic enunciator of the old Pauline truth, without the slightest attempt to soften its outline, its substance, or its results; and what has followed? Truly, Providence would seem once more to have made foolish the wisdom of this world. While the gentlemen, who know so well how people ought to preach, are left to exemplify their profound lessons before empty benches and in obscure corners, the young man at the Surrey Gardens can point to his 9,000 auditors, and ask, ‘Who, with such a sight before him, dares despair of making the gospel, the good old gospel, a power in the great heart of humanity?’“

The following extracts from an article written by Mr. J. Ewing Ritchie (“ Christopher Crayon “), and published in his volume entitled, T*he London Pulpit,*will show that, even in 1857, “all men” did not “speak well” of the young preacher:—

**“THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON.**

“I fear there is very little difference between the Church and the world. In both, the tide seems strongly set in favor of ignorance, presumption, and charla-tanism. In the case of Mr. Spurgeon, they have both agreed to worship the same idol. Nowhere more abound the vulgar, be they great or little, than at the Surrey Music Hall on a Sunday morning. Mr. Spurgeon’s service commences at a quarter to eleven, but the doors are opened an hour and a half previously, and all the while there will be a continuous stream of men and women, — some on foot, some in cabs, many in carriages, — all drawn together by this world’s wonder. The motley crowd is worth a study .... A very mixed congregation is this one at the Surrey Gardens. The real flock — the aborigines from Park Street Chapel — are a peculiar people, — very plain, much given to the wearing of clothes of an ancient cut, — and easy of recognition. The men are narrow, hard, griping, to look at ; — the women stern and unlovely ; — yet they, and such as they alone, if we are to believe them, are to walk the pearly streets of the New Jerusalem, and to sit down with martyrs and prophets and saints, — with Abraham, and Isaac,. and Jacob, — at the marriage supper of the Lamb ....

“Here is a peer, and ‘there his tailor. Here Lady Clara Vere de Vere kills a weary hour, and there is the poor girl who sat up all night to stitch her ladyship’s costly robe. Here is a blasphemer come to laugh; there, a saint to pray. Can these dry bones live? Can the preacher touch the heart of this listening mass? Breathed on by a spell more potent than his own, will it in its anguish and agony exclaim, ‘What must we do to be saved?’ You think how this multitude would have melted beneath the consecrated genius of a Chalmers, or a Parsons, or a Melville, or an Irving, — and look to see the same torrent of human emotions here. Ah, you are mistaken! — Mr. Spurgeon has not the power to wield ‘ all thoughts, all passions, all delights.’ It is not in him to ‘ shake the arsenal, and fulmine over Greece.’ In the very midst of his fiercest declamation, you will find his audience untouched; so coarse is the colouring, and clumsy the description, you can sit calm and unmoved through it all ; — and all the while the haughty beauty by your side will fan herself with a languor Charles Matthews in ‘ Used Up’ might envy. Look at the preacher ; — the riddle is solved. You see at once that he is not the man to soar; and, soaring, bear his audience, trembling and enraptured, with him in his Heavenward flight ....

“Of course, at times, there is a rude eloquence on his lips, or, rather, a fluent declamation, which the mob around takes for such. The orator always soars with his audience. With excited thousands waiting his lightest word, he cannot remain passionless and unmoved. Words and thoughts are borne to him from them. There is excitement in the hour; there is excitement in the theme; there is excitement in the living mass; and, it may be, as the preacher speaks of a physical hell and displays a physical heaven, some sensual nature is aroused, and a change may be effected in a man’s career.  
“Little causes may produce great events; one chance word may be the beginning of a new and a better life; but the thoughtful hearer will learn nothing, will be induced to feel nothing, will find that, as regards Christian edification, he had much better have stayed at home. At the best, Mr. Spurgeon will seem to him a preacher of extraordinary volubility. Most probably he will return from one of Mr. Spurgeon’s services disgusted with the noisy crowding, reminding him of the Adelphi rather than the house of God; disgusted with the commonplace prayer; disgusted with the questionable style of oratory; disgusted with the narrowness of the preacher’s creed, and its pitiful misrepresentations of’ the glorious gospel of the blessed God;’ disgusted with the stupidity that can take, for a Divine afflatus, brazen impudence and leathern lungs. Most probably, he will come back confessing that Mr. Spurgeon is the youngest, and the loudest, and the most notorious preacher in London, — little more; the idol of people who dare not go to theatres, and yet pant for theatrical excitement ....

“Will not Mr. Spurgeon’s very converts, as they become older, — as they understand Christianity better, — as the excitement produced by dramatic dialogues in the midst of feverish audiences dies away, — feel this themselves? And yet this man actually got nearly 24,000 to hear him on the Day of Humiliation. Such a thing seems marvellous. If popularity means anything, which, however, it does not, Mr. Spurgeon is one of our greatest orators. It is true, it is not difficult to collect a crowd in London. If I simply stand stock still in Cheapside, in the middle of the day, a crowd is immediately collected. The upper class of society requires finer weapons than any Mr. Spurgeon wields; but he preaches to the people in a homely style, and they like it, for he is always plain, and never dull. Then, his voice is wonderful; of itself, a thing worth going to hear; and he has a readiness rare in the pulpit, and which is invaluable to an orator. Then, again, the matter of his discourses commends itself to uneducated hearers. We have done with the old miracle-plays, ‘wherein God the Father appeared upon the stage in a blue coat, and wherein the devil had very visible hoofs and tail; but the principle to which they appealed — the love of man for dramatic representations rather than abstract truths — remains, and Mr. Spurgeon avails himself of it successfully. another singular fact — Mr. Spurgeon would quote it as a proof of its truth, — is that what is called high doctrine, — the doctrine Mr. Spurgeon preaches, — the doctrine which lays down all human pride, — which teaches us we are villains by necessity, and fools by a Divine thrusting on, — is, always popular, and, singular as it may seem, especially on the Surrey side of the water.

“In conclusion, let me not be understood as blaming Mr. Spurgeon. We do not blame Stephani when Caliban falls at his feet, and swears that ‘he’s a brave god, and bears celestial liquor.’ Few ministers get people to hear them. Mr. Spurgeon has succeeded in doing so. It may be a pity that the people will not go and hear better preachers; but, in the meanwhile, no one can blame Mr. Spurgeon that he: fearlessly and honestly preaches what he deems the truth.”

In the Preface to the volume, *From the Usher’s Desk lo the Tabernacle Pul*p*it,*Mr. Shindler thus writes:*— “*In the hall at ‘Westwood’ there hangs a picture, of considerable size, — containing the portraits of one hundred and ninety-three men and women of mark, almost exclusively divines of the: Protestant Church, — in the centre of which is a large likeness of Mr. Spurgeon, when about twenty-three years of age, and when hardly the promise of a beard adorned his face. The portraits were pieced together, in a very neat and ingenious manner, by the Rev. Joseph Mountford, then of Sevenoaks, and afterwards of Leighton Buzzard, where he died in 1867. Mr. Mountford presented the picture to Mr. Spurgeon, and it was photographed and sold for the benefit of the Metropolitan Tabernacle Fund, when the building was in course of erection. In the picture, Mr. Spurgeon stands in the attitude in which he was commonly represented at that time, — the right arm raised, and the forefinger of the right hand pointing upwards. It might, have seemed to some too great an honour conferred on the young Pastor to place him so conspicuously among the learned doctors and great divines of the Puritan and later times; but his subsequent career has fully justified the position then assigned to him. He has eclipsed in popularity and usefulness the greatest of them all, though no one could have dreamed, at that time, to what vast dimensions his influence, his fame, and his varied and marvellous usefulness would extend.”

Beside the historic interest attaching to the group of portraits, readers of the *Autobiography*will be able to pick out the likenesses of many ministers and prominent laymen who were more or less closely associated with Mr. Spurgeon, and whose names are mentioned in this or the preceding volume.

CHAPTER 53

THE “DOWN-GRADE” CONTROVERSY FORESHADOWED.

It is frequently objected that the preacher is censorious: he is not desirous of defending himself from the charge. He is confident that many are conscious that his charges are *true,*and if true, Christian *love*requires us *to*warn those who err; nor will candid men condemn the minister who is bold enough to point out the faults of the Church and the age, even when all classes are moved to anger by his faithful rebukes, and pour on his head the full vials of their wrath. IF THIS BE VILE, WE PURPOSE TO BE VILER STILL. — C. H. S., 1856.

I have often thought, the best answer to the new theology is, that the true gospel was always preached to the poor: “The poor have the gospel preached to them.” I am sure that the poor will never learn *the gospel*of these new divines, for they cannot make head or tail of it; nor will the rich either. After you have read one of their volumes, you have not the least idea what the book is about until you have gone through it eight or nine times, and then you begin to think you are very stupid for having ever read such inflated heresy, for it sours your temper, and makes you feel angry, to see the precious things of God trodden under foot. Some of us must stand out against these attacks on truth, although we love not controversy. We rejoice in the liberty of our fellow-men, and would have them proclaim their convictions; but if they touch these precious things, they touch the apple of our eye. We can allow a thousand opinions in the world, but that which infringes upon the doctrine of a covenant salvation, through the imputed righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, — against that we must, and will, enter our hearty and solemn protest, as long as God spares us. — C. H. S., *in sermon preached at New Park Street Chapel, April*15, 1860.

As good stewards, we must maintain the cause $f truth against all comers. “Never get into religious controversies,” says one; that is to say, being interpreted, “Be a Christian soldier, but let your sword rust in its scabbard, and sneak into Heaven like a coward.” Such advice I canot endorse. If God has called you by the truth, maintain the truth which has been the means of your salvation. We are not to be pugnacious, always contending for every crotchet of our own; but wherein we have learned the truth of the Holy Spirit, we are not tamely to see that standard torn down which our fathers upheld at the peril of their lives. This is an age in which truth must be maintained zealously, vehemently, continually. Playing fast and loose, as many do, believing this to-day and that to-morrow, is the sure mark of children of wrath; but having received the truth, to hold fast the very form of it, as Paul bids Timothy to do, is one of the duties of heirs of Heaven. Stand fast for truth, and may God give the victory to the faithful! — C. H. S., 1867.

W HEN, in 1887, there arose the great “Down-grade” controversy, in which Mr. Spurgeon was to prove himself Christ”s faithful witness and *martyr,* many people were foolish enough to suppose that he had adopted a new role*,*and some. said that he would have done more good by simply preaching the gospel, and leaving the so-called “heretics” to go their own way! Such critics must have been strangely unfamiliar with his whole history, for, from the very beginning of his ministry, he had earnestly contended for the faith once for all delivered to the saints. Long before *The Sword and the Trowel*appeared, with its monthly “record of combat with sin and of labor for the Lord,” its Editor had been busily occupied both in battling and building, — vigorously combating error in all its forms, and, at the same time, edifying and establishing in the faith those who had been brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus.

While the church under Mr. Spurgeon’s pastoral charge was worshipping in New Park Street Chapel, there were two notable controversies, — the first was caused by the issue of a book of hymns, written by the Rev. Thomas Toke Lynch, and entitled, *The Rivulet,’ or, Hymns for the Heart and Voice.*The other arose from the publication of a volume of sermons by Rev. James Baldwin Brown, B.A., entitled, *The Divine Life in Man.*Mr. J. Ewing Ritchie, whose adverse opinion concerning Mr. Spurgeon, at that period, is Wen, wrote at about the same time in this friendly fashion with regard to Mr. Lynch : —  
“Some few years back, when Professor Scott, then of University College, London, now of Owen’s College, Manchester, was in town, it seemed as if an honest attempt was made to meet and win to Christianity the philosophy that was genuine and earnest and religious, though it squared with the creed of no church, and took for its text-boole the living heart of man rather than the written Word. In our time, the same thing is attempted. The man who has had the courage to make the attempt, — and to whom honour should be given for it, — is the Rev. Thomas Lynch.”

*The Baptist Messenger,*May, 1856, in reviewing Mr. James Grant’s pamphlet upon “The Rivulet Controversy,” gave the following resume of the dispute, which will enable present-day readers to understand the merits of the subject then under discussion : —

“A volume of poetry by Rev. T. T. Lynch, has lately been published. These ‘hymns’ were very highly commended in *The Eclectic Review,*and subsequently in *The Patriot,*and *The Nonconformist.*The Editor of *The Morning Advertiser*(Mr. James Grant), who has in his day done much service to the cause of Evangelical truth, also reviewed the volume; and while referring most respectfully to Mr. Lynch and his poetry, pronounced these ‘hymns’ to be seriously defective with regard to the essentials of vital Christianity; that, while in them there was no distinct recognition of the Divinity of Christ, or of the mediatorial work and vicarious sacrifice of the Savior, or of the personality, office, and work of the Holy Ghost; at the same time there was an implied, denial of the doctrine of innate and total depravity. In proof of this latter charge, the following stanzas, from one of the hymns in question, were quoted by Mr. Grant : —

***~~“‘Our heart is like a little pool,  
Left by the ebbing sea;  
Of crystal waters still and cool,  
When we rest musingly.~~***

***~~“‘ And see what verdure exquisite,  
Within it hidden grows;  
We never should have had the sight,  
But for this brief repose.’~~***

‘“Only imagine,’ says the Editor of *The Morning Advertiser,*‘ this and other such kind of hymns being sung in a place of public worship, or being quoted to or by a person in the near prospect of the world to come. There is poetry,’ says Mr. Grant,’in the 63rd hymn, but we look in vain for the least atom of practical religion in it;’ and he adds, ‘ if the materials of the reverend gentleman’s sermons be substantially similar to those of his hymns, we should be much surprised were not the instances very rare indeed of persons crying out in intense agony of soul, under his ministrations, “What must we do to be saved?’”

“In a subsequent notice of the work, the same writer expressed his regret that The *Eclectic Review*should have endorsed this ‘ modified Deism’ of Mr. Lynch, hoping that the objectionable article had crept into the pages of that Magazine unawares. To these animadversions, the Editor of *The Eclectic*replied, not ingenuously enough to escape further remonstrances from his sturdy opponent, at which *The Eclectic*took great umbrage, and accused Mr. Grant of being guilty of’ sordidness and calumny,’ and of being influenced by ‘extreme personal prejudice.’ For ourselves, we have no hesitation in saying that, from all we know of the Editor of *The Morning Advertiser,*we can testify that he is too much of a Christian and a gentleman to be influenced by mean and unworthy motives. So far from this, Mr. Grant has not been in the least degree backward to acknowledge the literary taste which the volume displayed, and spoke of Mr. Lynch as being both amiable and highly intellectual. It was his *theology*only that was condemned.

“In the March number of *The Eclectic,*the strife was renewed with more than tenfold vigor. On this occasion, some fifteen of the leading metropolitan ministers, headed by the Revs. Allon, Binney, and Newman Hall, came to the help of the Editor of *The Eclectic,*and their *protege,*the Rev. T. T. Lynch. The literary and devotional merits of these hymns, as well as the orthodoxy of their author, they endorsed and commended in the form of a protest signed by all the fifteen.

“The Editor of *The Morning*A*dvertiser, not*hing daunted by the *status*or talents of his reverend assailants, met the combined forces — an imposing phalanx, — with a simple interrogatory: — ’Can Mr. Newman Hall, Mr. Binney, Mr. Martin, or either of the remainder of the fifteen reverend protesters reconcile it with his views of right, to give out the “hymn” we have just quoted in his chapel? No one of the number will venture to return an affirmative answer to the question.’ If this be so, then we ask, wherefore do these reverend gentlemen appear in the field at all? It had been far better for themselves, and for *The Eclectic Review,*had they heeded the counsel of the wise man, ‘ Leave off contention, before it be meddled with,’ and had left the criticism and remonstrances of Mr. Grant to their own merits, than for them to have interfered at all in the affair. We do most deeply deplore the position these fifteen reverend gentlemen have voluntarily and needlessly taken in this business, inasmuch as we greatly fear it betokens, on their part, an evident leaning towards a transcendental theology, the blighting influences of which have proved most fatal tO many onceflourishing churches.

“In a series of powerfully-written articles, which have appeared in The *Banner,*headed ‘The Theology of Nonconformity,’ Dr. Campbell has given the results of his searching analysis of Mr. Lynch’s volume, which he pronounces to be as destitute of poetic excellence as it is of the elementary principles of Christian doctrine, containing hymns which any infidel might compose or use. We thank Mr. Grant for the outspoken truths contained in his pamphlet. Although but a layman, he has, in its ]?ages, contended nobly and earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, — ‘ an effort,’ to adopt his own words, ‘ which’ may the Almighty be pleased to crown with eminent success!’”

In *The Christian Cabinet,*May 23, Mr. Banks published the following article written by Mr. Spurgeon : —  
**“MINE OPINION.**

“The appearance of a volume entitled *The Rivulet*has excited a controversy of the most memorable character. I shall not enter into the details of that fierce affray; the champions on either side have been of noble rank, have done their best, and must await the verdict of the Master for whom they profess to strive. Some of the fighting has not appeared quite in keeping with fairness, and there are a few persons who have gained little but disgrace in the battle, while there are others who deserve the eternal thanks of the faithful for their valiant defence of the truth. It is my business, not to review the controversy, but the book of poems. Another time I may possibly give ‘ mine opinion’ upon that subject. ‘Suffice it here to say that my mind on doctrinal points is wholly with {he men who have censured the theology of the writer of the hymns.

“With the leave of Mr. Editor, I will forget the past for a moment, and give ‘mine opinion.’ It may be of little worth, but there are not a few who will give it a patient hearing. Concerning this *book, — The Rivulet, — let*me say, in the first place, I believe that, except in Kentish Town (Mr. Lynch’s residence), there is scarcely to be found an individual who would ever think of using these *Hymns for the Heart and Voice*in the public assembly. A book may be very excellent, and yet unfit for certain purposes. Who would dream of giving out a verse from quaint old Quarles? Imagine the precentor saying, ‘Let us sing to the praise and glory of God the ode on the 150th page of Quarles’ *School of the Heart, —*

***“‘What!  
Shall I  
Always lie  
Grov’ling on earth,  
Where there is no mirth?  
Why should I not ascend,  
And climb up where I may mend  
My mean estate of misery?  
Happiness, I know, is exceeding high;  
Yet sure there is some remedy for that.’***

*“We*should not find fault with Milton’s *Paradise Lost,*Herbert’s *Temple,* or Young’s; *Night Thoughts,*because we cannot sing them in our houses of prayer, for such was not their design. But *The Rivulet*professes to be a book of hymns ‘suitable for the chamber or the church;’ they may be ‘said or sung;’ and to facilitate, their use in song, the author has appended tunes from *The Psalmist.*We are, therefore, called upon to judge it as a hymnbook; and it is our firm opinion that, until Butler’s *Hudibras*is sung in Heaven, Mr. Lynch’s *Rivulet*will not be adopted in the assemblies of the saints below.

“There is scarcely an old woman in our churches who would not imitate that ancient dame in Scotland who hurled her stool at the minister’s head, should any of us venture to mount our pulpits, and exclaim, ‘ Let us commence the present service by singing the 34th hymn in *The Rivulet, —*

***“‘When the wind is blowing  
Do not shrink and cower;  
Firmly onward going,  
Feel the joy of power:  
Heaviest the heart is  
In a heavy air,  
Every wind that rises,  
Blows away despair.’***

“I ask, without fear of any but a negative reply, — Could any man in Christendom sing the concluding ‘l’Envoi’? I believe I shall never find an advocate for the singing of these hymns in churches, and will therefore have done with that point, only remarking that, if a book be not what it professes to be, it is a failure, however excellent it may be in other respects. One would fain hope that the intelligent author, should another edition be demanded, will preface it with other words, purporting another object for his book, and then one great objection would be quietly removed, while he could still use his work himself as a hymn-book, if any could be found to sing with him.

“It is said that the new hymn-book matter omens badly; well, it is very likely, but that is not my business just now.

“In the second place, when reading these hymns, simply as literary compositions, I found them far from despicable. There is true poetry in some of them, of a very delicate and refined order. Every now and then, the voices of the flowers or of the rain-drops are clear and soft, and perpetually the thinkings of the poet wake an echo in the soul. There is much mist, and a large proportion of fog; but, nevertheless, there is enough of poetic light to cheer the darkness. I believe there is a moderate quantity of unintelligible writing in the book. At any rate, there are many sentences of which I cannot see the connection; but; no doubt, these are grand thoughts which broke the backs of the words, or frightened them out of their propriety. There is nothing very wonderful in the book. We hope to see many productions far superior to it before we are very much older, and we hope at least to see many volumes which can endure the criticism 05 a daily journal, and yet keep up their spirits without the potent cordial of fifteen ministerial recommendations.

“I should set this *Rivulet*on my shelf somewhere near Tennyson for its song, and sundry nondescript labyrinthine divines for its doctrine; but should I place it in the same bookcase with Watts, Cowper, Hart, and Toplady, I should be on the lookout for a tremendous hubbub if the worthy authors should arouse themselves from the covers of their volumes; and should it show itself in the region sacred to Owen, Baxter, Howe, Charnock, Bunyan, Crisp, Gill, &c., I am sure their ancient effigies would scarcely be able to display their indignation in the absence of those fists whereof the antique oval frame has bereaved them. Apart from all theological consideration, a man of reading would not regret the purchase of this volume; but the mass of book-skimmers would, with some qualification, apply to the present book the words of the wit concerning Tennyson’s Maud, —

**“‘Dreadfully *dry and dreadfully dawdling,  
Tennyson’s Maud should be Tennyson’s maudlin.’***

“This, I am aware, is no argument against the book; in fact, many writers think themselves complimented when they are told that only the few can appreciate them. I am midway between the many and the few; I shall not exclaim against a man’s poem because I have not culture of mind enough to sympathize with his mode of expression, nor can I hope to claim the privilege which allows to the discerning few the right of decisive criticism. I can only say, I had rather have written *Divine and Moral Songs for Children*than these fine but comparatively useless verses. No man of even moderate education can despise the talent, the mind, and the research, which have together produced this ‘ rivulet singing as it flows along ;’ but he who desires to see talent well applied, and mind put out to the largest interest, will never consider the writing of these verses a profitable employment. A minister of Christ’s holy gospel should ever be seeking after the conversion of his fellow-men; and I would be sorry to write so much, and expend so much labor’, on a work so little calculated to arouse the careless, guide the wanderer, comfort the desponding, or edify the believer.

“In the next place, what have I to say of the hymns theologically? I answer, there is so little of the doctrinal element in them that I am at a loss to judge; and that little is so indefinite that, apart from the author’s antecedents, one could scarcely guess his doctrinal views at all. Certainly, some verses are bad, — bad in the most unmitigated sense of that word; but others of them, like noses of wax, will fit more than one face.

“There are sweet sentences which would Become the lips of those rich poets of early times in whom quaintness of style and weight of matter were united, but an unkind observer will notice that even these are not angular enough to provoke the hostility of the Unitarian, and might be uttered alike by the lover and the hater of what we are well known to regard as the gospel.

“Frequently, an honest tongue must pronounce unhesitating condemnation; but in many other places, one must pause lest, while cutting up the tares, we destroy the wheat also.. The scale one moment descends with good truth, and for many a long hour it hangs aloft with emptiness for its only glory. There is nothing: distinct in the book but its indistinctness; and one becomes painfully nervous; while wandering through this pretty valley, lest: it should turn out to be what some of its waymarks betoken, — an enchanted ground full of ‘deceivableness of unrighteousness.’ There are in it doctrines which no man who knows the plague’ of his own heart can tolerate for a moment, and which the believer in free-grace will put aside as being nothing but husks, upon which he cannot feed. ‘ It is not my book,’ the convinced sinner will exclaim; and the matured believer will say, ‘ Nor is it mine,’ and yet it is more covertly unsound than openly so.

“These hymns rise up in the *Rivulet*like mermaids, — there is much form and comeliness upon the surface, but their nether parts, I ween, it were hard to describe. Perhaps they are not the fair things they seem: when I look below their glistening eyes and flowing hair, I think I discern some meaner nature joined with the form divine, but the surface of this *Rivulet is* green with beautifully-flowering weeds, and I can scarcely see into the depths where lurks the essence of the matter.

“This much I think I can discover in this volume, — viz., that it is not the song of an Isaiah speaking more of Jesus than all the rest, nor a canticle of Solomon concerning ‘my Well-beloved.’ It is doubtful who is the mother of this babe; and so little claim will orthodoxy ever lay to it, that its true parent may receive it into her loving arms, and there will be no demand for the half thereof. But, then, the writer never asked us to grant him the reputation of our orthodoxy; we need not, therefore, dispute with him concerning that to which he makes no claim.

“If I should ever be on amicable terms with the chief of the Ojibewas, I might suggest several verses from Mr. Lynch as a portion of a liturgy to be used on the next occasion when he bows before the Great Spirit of the West wind, for there are some most appropriate sonnets for the worship of the God of nature which the unenlightened savage would understand quite as well as the believer in Revelation, and might perhaps receive rather more readily. Hark! O ye Delawares, Mohawks, Choctaws, Chickasaws, Blackfeet, Pawnees, Shawnees, and Cherokees, here is your primitive faith most sweetly rehearsed, — not in your own wild notes, but in the white man’s language: —

***“‘My God, in nature I confess  
A beauty fraught with holiness;  
Love written plainly I descry  
My life’s commandment in the sky;  
Oh, still to me the days endear,  
When lengthening light leads on the year!’***

“It is, I conceive, but a fair judgment to which even the writer would give his assent that these are more the hymns of nature than the songs of Zion, though I am far from believing that even the voice of nature is here at all times faithfully interpreted. This rivulet runs through fair meadows, and between glorious hills, but it flows rather too far away from ‘the oracle of God’ to please me. It has some pure drops of God’s own rain within its bosom, but its flood is not drawn from the river,’ the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God.’ It has good thoughts, holy thoughts, from God’s glorious temple of nature, commingled with a few of the words of the inspired prophets of the Lord; but, in. the main, its characteristic is not Revelation, but nature. As such, it can never suit the taste of the spirituallyminded who delight in fellowship with the Divine Jesus. Those who would crown the Head of their Maker with wreaths of thought, may here find some little assistance; but she who would wash the feet of the God-man, Christ Jesus, with her tears, will never find a companion in this book. I can talk with it for an hour, and learn much from it; but I cannot love it as I do my favourite Herbert, and it does not open the door of Heaven to me as does the music of Zion which it is my wont to hear. But why am I to condemn a book because it does not touch a chord in my own soul? Why should I blame a man because he has not written for the old-fashioned piety which some of us inherit from our fathers? Why murmur if he speaks his own much-puzzled mind in language which the repose of an anchored faith cannot interpret? It were unfair to burn this book because it came. forth, like some other queer things, on the fifth of November; and it is not very brave to be so desperately afraid of a plot because, on that day, a man was discovered, with a dark lantern, singing in the vaults beneath the house which ancient people call *the truth, against which the gales of hell shall not prevail.*

“Liberty of conscience is every man’s right; our writer has spoken his mind, why should he alone provoke attack when many others, who agree quite as little with our views, are allowed to escape? The battle is either a tribute to superior ability, or else a sign of the times; I believe it to be both. The work has its errors, in the estimation of one who does not fear to subscribe himself a Calvinistic Christian, but it has no more evil leaven than other books of far less merit. No one would have read it with a jealous eye unless it had been made the centre of a controversy, for we should either have let it quietly alone, or should have forgotten the deleterious mixture, and retained the little good which it certainly contains. The author did not write for us; he wrote for men of his own faith, he tells his little book, —

**“‘ *Thy haven shall the approval be  
Of hearts with faith like thine.’***

*“The*only wonder is, that men, whom we thought to be of other mind, should endorse all therein;’ but private friendship operates largely, and perhaps some of them may have sympathized more with the *man censured* than with the *man singing.*This deed of men, who in standing are eminent, is not a theme for our present discussion. We must, however, observe that we cannot wonder that they themselves are attacked, and we cannot think that any other course was open to the original censor than to reply *with spirit.*

*“We*are sure this book could not cheer us on a dying bed, or even nerve us with faith for a living conflict. Its sentiments are not ours; its aims, its teachings, are not enough akin to any which we hold dear to give us any aid in our labors; but if there be any goodness, doth not the bee suck honey from the nettle? We would do the same, believing it to be a nettle still; but one which does not grow in our garden, and is not of very gigantic stature, and therefore no great object of abhorrence. Had the author claimed to be one of the old school, we might be up in arms; but we know the men and their *communications,*therefore we need not read what we do not approve.

*“‘The*book is out of our line as a theological work, it does not advocate what *we*believe; having said that, we have been but honest; and those who think with us need not malign the author; but, seeing that the fight is now in another quarter, let them respect the man, however much they may oppose the sentiments which have been for a while brought into fellowship with his volume. This controversy is but one volcano indicative of seas of latent fire in the bosom of our churches. It will, in a few more years, be hard to prove the orthodoxy of our churches if matters be not changed. It has manifested what existed already; it has dragged to light evils which were before unseen.  
“Would to God that the day were over when our churches tamely endure false doctrine; and would, moreover, that all champions of truth would keep the one point in view, and cease from all personalities! May God, of His infinite mercy, preserve the right; and may those who err from the faith be brought to the fold of Jesus, and be saved! The old doctrines of freegrace are gracious doctrines still; there are none of these in this book, what then? They are in our hearts, I trust; and the outspoken enunciation of them will do ten times more for these truths than the high-flying language of the pseudo-intellectual few can ever do against them. This book is important only as the hinge of a controversy, as such alone ought it to excite our minds; but the less we observe the hinge, and the more we look to the matter itself, the more easy will be our victory.

“As long as the fight is thought to be concerning a man, or a book, the issue is doubtful, but let it be for God and for His truth, and the battle is the Lord’s. The time is come for sterner men than the willows of the stream can afford; we shall soon have to handle truth, not with kid gloves, but witch gauntlets, — the gauntlets of holy courage and integrity. Go on, ye warriors of the cross, for the King is at the head of you. *The Evening Star*exhorts the ministers to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Cromwell and Milton have made them free; but the apostle of the Son of God bids you stand fast in. the liberty wherewith *Christ*has made you free. THE OLD FAITH MUST BE TRIUMPHANT.

“C. H. SPURGEON.”

Mr. Lynch thus commented on this article *: — “*This review of Mr. Spurgeon’s enjoys the credit with me of being the only thing on his side — that is, *against*me, — that was impertinent, without, being malevolent. It evinced far more ability and appreciation than Grant or Campbell had done, and indicated a man whose eyes, if they do not get blinded with the fumes of that strong, but unwholesome, incense, popularity, may glow with a heavenlier brightness than it seems to me they have yet done. Mr. Spurgeon concluded by remarking that ‘the old faith must be triumphant,’ in which I entirely agree with him, doubting only whether he is yet old enough in experience of the world’s sorrows and strifes to know what the old faith really is. He says, ‘We shall soon have to handle truth, not with kid gloves, but with gauntlets, — the gauntlets of holy courage and integrity.’ Aye, that we shall, and some of us now. do! And, perhaps, the man who has a soul that ‘fights to music,’ —

**“‘*Calm ‘mid the bewildering cry,  
Confident of victory,’ —***  
is the likeliest to have a hand with a grip for battle, and a grasp for friendship alike strong and warm.”

The controversy continued for a long time; *The Freeman*and *The Wesleyan Times*joined the other papers that had supported Mr. Lynch; but so powerful was the protest of Mr. Grant and Dr. Campbell, that the Congregational Union actually had to postpone its autumnal session. The ultimate result of this long-past *“fight*for the faith” appears to have been very much the same as followed the *“Down-grade”*controversy more than thirty years later: many ministers, and their people, too, were led back to the fundamental doctrines from which they had begun to wander; Evangelical truth was, at least for a time, more widely proclaimed; and, although some strayed yet further away from the great central verities of the inspired Word, yet, on the whole, the discussion was declared by contemporary and reliable witnesses to have been productive of “an untold amount of good to the Church of God.”

Nearly four years elapsed before the next historic controversy, which was produced by Mr. Baldwin Brown’s volume of sermons. The veteran Baptist minister, Rev, J. Howard Hinton, M.A., wrote two articles, which were published in *The Baptist Magazine,*March and April, 186o, under the title, “Strictures on some passages in the Rev. J. B. Brown’s *Divine Life in Man.”*The conclusion of his protest is such a pattern and justification of Mr. Spurgeon’s similar action, twenty-seven years afterwards, that it must be inserted here. Mr. Hinton wrote: —

“I offer no apology for these ‘Strictures’, since the matter on which they are made is before the public. I have written them with a feeling of perfect respect towards Mr. Brown; and I trust nothing inconsistent with that feeling has escaped from me. I submit them respectfully to my brethren in the ministry, and in ‘ the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,’ deeply feeling the importance of the subjects to which they relate, and not without hope that they may be deemed worthy of serious consideration.

“To my own conviction, I am pleading for vital Evangelical truth, — for the truth of God, and for the souls of men. I speak because I would fain contribute somewhat, however little, to withstand what I take to be the first open inroad, into English Evangelical Nonconformist churches, of a theology fatally deficient in the truth and power of the gospel. Whether this, or any similar system may have privately diffused itself to any considerable extent, I neither know, insinuate, nor conjecture; but, assuredly, I should regard the prevalence of it as a mischief of the gravest character; and whether I am heard or not, I cannot but lift up my voice against it.

“It is true, I am now an old minister, and perhaps I ought, as is said to have been pleasantly suggested by some fast spirit of the rising generation of divines concerning old ministers in general, to be ‘ hung up in God’s armory,’ as the armor of ancient heroes is in the Tower; but words of truth and soberness may find a response, if breathed low from the verge of the grave. The aspect of the times emboldens me. It is not now, dear brethren, — above all times, it is not now, when ‘ the end’ must be so near, and when so many cheering tokens of revival enkindle our hopes, that a perversion, or even a dilution, of the truth as it is in Jesus should find welcome or entrance among us; and I trust in God it will be given to us to ‘contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.’”

The articles were after:wards reprinted, and issued as a pamphlet. The review of the “Strictures “, published in *The Freeman,*was considered by several prominent Baptist ministers to be of so unsatisfactory a character that seven of them signed the following joint-protest, which duly appeared in the denominational paper on April 11: —

**“THE REV. J. B. BROWN, AND THE REV. J. H. HINTON.** “To the Editors of *The Freeman,*  
“Dear Sirs,

“We are constrained to address you by considerations which, if we may not say they are imperative, appear to us too urgent and weighty to be resisted. We entertain, however, so high a sense of the value of free and unbiassed criticism, and are so jealous of infringing on the proper liberty of a public journal, that we address you with great reluctance, and only under the influence of what we deem our duty, at once to ourselves and to what we regard as important theological truth.  
“Our duty to ourselves seems to us to require that we should, with your permission, explicitly state in your columns that the review, in your last number, of Mr. Hinton’s ‘Strictures’ on the recent work of the Rev. J. B. Brown, is so far from expressing *our*sentiments that we altogether disagree with the writer’s estimate, both of the theological principles Mr. Brown avows, and of the services which Mr. Hinton has rendered to Evangelical truth by his strictures upon them. *The Freeman*is so generally assumed to be connected with the Baptist denomination that, but for such a disclaimer as we now send you, that review might be supposed to speak the sense of the body. A more erroneous opinion could not, so far as we know, be entertained. At all events, *our*position as Baptist ministers is well known, and we speak for ourselves.

“We shall not indulge in any indefinite censures on the character and tendency of Mr. Brown’s volume; but we feel constrained to say that the passages on which Mr. Hinton founds his ‘ Strictures’ contain, in our judgment, pernicious error. We would not hold an author responsible for the inferences which may seem to another fairly deducible from his statements, and we entertain the hope that Mr. Brown does not see the consequences which we think inevitably follow from some of his principles. But we do not hesitate to avow our conviction, that both the principles and their consequences, whether categorically stated, or involved in a metaphor, go to subvert the whole scheme of God’s moral government as revealed in the sacred Scriptures, and with it those precious truths which cluster round the cross and centre in it, and which, for that reason, are most distinctive of the gospel, and most fundamental to it.

“In our judgment, therefore, Mr. Hinton has rendered a timely and valuable service to Evangelical Christianity by his animadversions on those portions of Mr. Brown’s book; and, for our part, we thank God that our brother’s pen has been so well and so ably employed. We are no more lovers of controversy in the Church than is your reviewer; but if errors subversive of the gospel are advocated by some of her ministers, it is the duty of others to withstand them; and we honor Mr. Hinton that, at a period of life when he might be naturally desirous of repose, he has stepped forward in the vindication and defence of some of the vital doctrines of the faith. “Nor, in conclusion, can we refrain from expressing our earnest hope that our pulpits may be preserved from the sentiments which M,’. Brown has published, and which *we cannot but fear your reviewer approves.*Without conjuring up any ‘phantasmal hydra’ of heterodoxy, as your reviewer speaks, and imagining that it is beginning to be rampant in our churches, which we do not for a moment suppose or believe, we take the liberty of saying that we trust our ministers will continue to be students of Howe, and Charnock, and Hall, and Fuller, rather than draw their theology from Maurice, Professor Scott, and others of the same school, whom Mr. Brown so strongly recommends.

“Above all, we desire affectionately to caution those in the ministry, who are younger than ourselves, against that style of preaching which, under the pretentious affectation of being intellectual, grows ashamed of the old and vulgar doctrines of man’s guilt, as well as of his total depravity, of Christ’s atonement and satisfaction for sin, of justification by the imputation of His righteousness through faith, of the new birth by the agency of the Holy Spirit, and, in a word, of that scheme of dogmatic Christian truth which is popularly known under the designation of’ the doctrines of grace.’ Those doctrines are dear to us as epitomizing and concentrating the theology of the Bible, and as constituting, through the presence and power of the Christian Comforter, the spiritual life of our churches.

“Pardon us in one final word to yourselves. By whomsoever the evil work of lowering the estimate entertained of the value of these doctrines, and so diminishing their influence, may be perpetrated, let it be far from you as the conductors of one of our public denominational journals, to further it with your countenance, or to lend even the semblance of your aid.

“We are,  
*“Dear*Sirs,  
“Yours very faithfully,

*“* EDWARD STEANE.  
“DANIEL KATTERNS.  
“C. H. SPURGEON.  
“CHARLES STANFORD.  
“W. G. LEWIS, JUNR.

“WILLIAM BROCK. “JOSEPH ANGUS.” “London,  
“April 9, 1860.”

To this communication the Editors of Th *e Freeman*added the following note : — “We have no hesitation in giving insertion to the above letter. Notwithstanding that it is somewhat unusual, and generally inconvenient, to admit of discussion respecting reviews, the spirit of our brethren who have favoured us with the above letter is at the same time so excellent, and so kindly respectful to ourselves, that we should be doing both ourselves and them an injustice if we hesitated about admitting this expression of their views. At the same time, we cannot but be somewhat surprised that they should have considered such an expression necessary. In whatever sense *The Freeman*may be regarded as ‘ the organ of the Baptist denomination,’ *we*had never been so vain as to suppose that the editoral ‘we’ in our columns meant Messrs. Steane, Katterns, Spurgeon, Stanford, Lewis, Junr., Brock, and Angus; still less had we imagined that any judgment respecting a work, which was formed and expressed by our reviewer, would be regarded by anybody as the judgment of the Baptist denomination. The modesty’ of our reviewer, at least, is so shocked at the very idea of being supposed to review in this representative character, that he begs us to state, once for all, that his judgment of the works which come before him is simply *his own,*and that, neither the brethren who have favoured us with the above letter, nor any other brethren, are at all responsible for opinions of books which probably they have not seen, and about which, assuredly, he has not consulted them.

“As to our friend’s review of Mr. Brown’s book, we do not think it is needful to say anything. Our reviewer has already given *his*opinion of that work at considerable length, and his objections to the volume were by no means ‘indefinite.’ Indeed, he pointed out its deficiencies, in relation to the person and work of the Redeemer, with a precision that ought, we venture to say, to have secured him from the censures of our brethren. If he felt it his duty, as an impartial critic, to object to some things, also, in Mr. Hinton’s ‘ Strictures’, everyone who read the review would see at once that it was not the *doctrine*of the ‘Strictures’ that he had any doubt about, — for the ‘doctrine’ he declared emphatically to be ‘important to be upheld,’ — but the *style and character*of the ‘ Strictures ‘, upon which he still retains his own opinion.

*“We*hope it is not necessary for *us*to say that we also ‘trust’ — without thinking we are ‘taking a liberty’ in saying so, — that ‘our ministers will continue to be students of Howe, and Charnock, and Hall, and Fuller? We trust — and, what is more, *we thoroughly believe — that*our ministers will not grow ashamed of ‘ the old’ *(we*will not venture to say, ‘vulgar’) doctrine of man’s guilt as well as of his total depravity, of Christ’s atonement and satisfaction for sin, of justification by the imputation of His righteousness through faith, of the new birth by the agency of the Holy Spirit, and, in a word, of that scheme of dogmatic Christian truth which is popularly known under the designation of’ the doctrines of grace.’ At the same time, we must be permitted still to doubt whether ‘our younger ministers’ have given any. cause to their ‘ elder’ brethren, — amongst whom, it seems, are Mr. Spurgeon, Mr. Stanford, and Mr. Lewis, Junr., — to ‘caution’ them publicly against becoming ‘ashamed’ of these doctrines. To our ‘ younger’ ministers as well as to their ‘ elders’, these doctrines are ‘dear.’ In the pulpits of our ‘younger’ ministers, as much, if not as ably as in those of their elders, these doctrines are preached. We so far sympathize with our reviewer as to hope that ‘the last days of our elder brethren may not be embittered by suspicions of their younger brethren’s orthodoxy, from which souls such as theirs must naturally recoil.’ — Eds.”

Preaching at New Park Street Chapel, on Lord’s-day evening, April 15, from the text, “for He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him,” the Pastor, in commencing his discourse, thus referred to the burning question of the hour: —

“Some time ago, an excellent lady sought an interview with me, with the object, as she said, of enlisting my sympathy upon the question of ‘AntiCapital Punishment.’ I heard the reasons she urged against hanging men who had committed murder; and, though they did not convince me, I did not seek: to answer them. She proposed that, when a man committed murder, he should be confined for life. My remark was, that a great many men, who had been confined half their lives, were not a bit the better for it, and as for her belief that they would necessarily be brought to repentance, I was afraid it was but a dream. ‘Ah!’ she said, good soul as she was, ‘that is because we have been all wrong about punishments. We punish people because we think they deserve to be punished. Now, we ought to show them that we love them; that we only punish them to make them better.’ ‘ Indeed, madam,’ I replied, ‘ I have heard that theory a great many times, and I have seen much fine writing upon the matter, but I am no believer in it. The design of punishment should be amendment, but the ground of punishment lies in the positive guilt of the offender. I believe that, when a man does wrong, he ought to be punished for it, and that there is a guilt in sin which justly merits punishment.’ She could not see that. Sin was a very wrong thing, but punishment was not a proper idea. She thought that people were treated too cruelly in prison, and that they ought to be taught that we love them. If they were treated kindly in prison, and tenderly dealt with, they would grow so much better, she was sure. With a view of interpreting her own theory, I said, ‘I suppose, then, you would give criminals all sorts of indulgences in prison. Some great vagabond, who has committed burglary dozens of times, — I suppose you would let him sit in an easy chair in the evening, before a nice fire, and mix him a glass of spirits and water, and give him his pipe, and make him happy, to show how much we love him.’ Well, no, she would not give him the spirits; but, :still, all the rest would do him good. I thought that was a delightful picture, certainly. It seemed to me to be the most prolific method of cultivating rogues which ingenuity could invent. I imagine that you could grow any number of thieves in that way; for it would be a special means of propagating all manner of wickedness. These very beautiful theories, to such a simple mind as mine, were the source of much amusement; the idea of fondling villains, and treating their crimes as if they were the tumbles and falls of children, made me laugh heartily. I fancied I saw the Government resigning its functions to these excellent persons, and the grand results of their marvellously kind experiments, — the sword of the magistrate being transformed into a gruel-spoon, and the jail becoming a sweet retreat for people with bad reputations.

“Little, however, did I think I should live to see this kind of stuff taught in the pulpit; I had no idea that there would arise teaching which would bring down God’s moral government from the solemn aspect in which Scripture reveals it, to a namby-pamby sentimentalism, which adores a deity destitute of every masculine virtue. But we never know to-day what may occur tomorrow. We have lived to see a certain sort of men, — thank God, they are not Baptists! — though I am sorry to say there are a great many Baptists who are beginning to follow in their trail,-who seek to teach, nowadays, that God is a universal Father, and that our ideas of His dealing with the impenitent as a Judge, and not as a Father, are remnants of antiquated error. Sin, according to these men, is a disorder rather than an offence, an error rather than a crime. Love is the only attribute they can discern, and the full-orbed Deity they have not known. Some of these men push their way very far into the bogs and mire of falsehood, until they inform us that eternal punishment is ridiculed as a dream. In fact, books now appear which teach us that there is no such thing as the vicarious sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. They use the word atonement, it is true; but, in regard to its meaning, they have removed the ancient landmark. They acknowledge that the Father has shown His great love to poor sinful man by sending His Son; but not that God was inflexibly just in the exhibition of His mercy, nor that He punished Christ on the behalf of His people, nor that, indeed, God ever will punish anybody in His wrath, or that there is such a thing as justice apart from discipline. Even *sin*and *hell* are but old words employed henceforth in a new and altered sense. Those. are old-fashioned notions, and we poor souls, who go on talking about election and imputed righteousness, are behind our time. Aye, and the gentlemen who bring out books on this subject applaud Mr. Maurice, and Professor Scott, and the like, but are too cowardly to follow them, and boldly propound these sentiments. These are the new men whom God has sent down from Heaven, to tell us that the apostle Paul was all wrong, that our faith is vain, that we have been quite mistaken, that there was no need for propitiating blood to wash away our sins; that the fact was, our sins needed discipline, but penal vengeance and righteous wrath are quite out of the ‘question! When, I thus speak, I am free to confess that such ideas are not boldly taught by a certain individual whose volume excites these remarks, but as he puffs the books of gross perverters of the truth, I am compelled to believe that he endorses such theology.

“Well, brethren, I am happy to say that sort of stuff has not gained entrance into this pulpit. I dare say the worms will eat the wood before there will be anything of that sort sounded in this place; and may these bones be picked by vultures, and this flesh be rent in sunder by lions, and may every nerve in this body suffer pangs and tortures, ere these lips shall give utterance to any such doctrines or sentiments! We are content to remain among the vulgar souls who believe the old doctrines of grace. We are willing still to be behind in the great march of intellect, and stand by that unmoving cross, which, like the pole star, never advances, because it never stirs, but always abides in its place, the guide of the soul to Heaven, the one foundation other than which no man can lay, and without building upon which no man shall ever see the face of God and live.

“Thus much have I said upon a matter which just now is exciting controversy. It has been my high privilege to be associated with six of our ablest brethren in the ministry, in a letter of protest against the countenance which a certain newspaper seemed willing to lend to this modern heresy. We trust it may be the means, in the hands of God, of helping to check that downward march, — that wandering from truth which seems, by a singular infatuation, to have unsettled the minds of some brethren in our denomination.”

So far as that particular’ publication *(The Freeman)*was concerned, the protest was unavailing; and a few weeks later, Mr. Spurgeon forwarded to at least two other papers the following letter, which appears to have been his final contribution to the controversy : —

“Clapham,  
“May 21, 1860.  
“Sir*,*

“The fulfilment of irksome duties is the test of sincere obedience. When pleasure and service are identical, it is easy to be diligent in Heavenly business; but when flesh and blood rebel against a known duty, it is time to invoke the aid of Divine grace. Every personal feeling and private affection must give way .before the imperative demands of our Lord and Master. Contention for the faith is far less pleasant than communion with Christ; but the neglect of the precept may involve the withdrawal of the privilege.

“In the matter of *The Freeman*newspaper, I most sorrowfully enter upon a work as distasteful to my feelings as it is inconvenien to my circumstances. Excuses for silence have utterly failed me. Although my respect for the gentlemen who conduct that journal has given me great readiness in suggesting arguments for peace, my conscience permits me no longer to purchase peace at the expense of the truths in which my soul finds its solace and delight. Private resentment I have none; but, on the contrary, I cherish feelings of personal regard, which restrain me in this controversy from the use of a more vigorous style, and seriously encumber me in the conflict which lies before us. Can we not honour the gentlemen in their private capacity, and yet regret the fact that they have officially occupied a position which exposes them to severe criticism? I can honestly say that I can meet, with cordial charity, many men from whom I differ widely; and I never consider a blow dealt against my opinions in the light of a personal attack ; — nay, I respect an honest antagonist, and only despise the man who mingles resentment with public debate. We have solemn matters to discuss, — in some degree, connected with one of the most serious heresies which ever afflicted the Christian Church ; — and it behoves us to use language which shall become the lips of men who know the value of the doctrines upon which they debate; and it will be our wisdom to cherish the spirit which shall be in consonance with the sentiments which we maintain. Solemnly, as in the sight of God, I believe *The Freeman*to have been very guilty; but to our own Master we must stand or fall. It is ours to reprove, but not to condemn; it will be the duty of the offender to defend, and not to recriminate.

“The fact that seven brethren among the London Baptist ministers, led by one of the most venerable fathers of the denomination, had unitedly dissented from their opinion upon an important question, should have had some weight with the Editors. They are not so conspicuous for learning, ability, or success, as to be beyond the reach of friendly’ admonition; and surely they are not so immodest as to hold in contempt a solemn protest signed by brethren whom they are compelled to regard as honored servants of Christ. Was the document in which that protest was contained insulting, contemptuous, or unfriendly? Far from it. Was it not written by one whose amiable spirit might rather tempt him to laxity than lead him to severity? What but the most weighty reasons and powerful motives could compel the most loving spirit in the universe, at a time of life when age and painful infirmity have brought him very low, to spend a great part of a weary night in penning a deliberate protest against a dangerous evil? This may be a joke to some men; to us, it was as devout an act as our baptism into the name of our Lord Jesus. Freely would I have signed that letter with my blood had it been needed; and I think I speak the sentiments of all. We saw in the matter before us one of the ramifications of a deadly evil, which has commenced by polluting our literature, and may conclude by debauching our pulpits. We wrote under a strong sense of duty as in the sight of God, and there has not been a moment since in which I would not have signed it again with all my heart. We did not attack *The Freeman;*we only deprecated its patronizing the new school of theology. It is true, we ,expressed our fear that the reviewer was a personal believer in the sentiments we denounced; that fear has since ripened into conviction; but it did not involve a suspicion of the Editors, as we had reason to believe the reviewer to be a person totally distinct from the managers of the journal. At the risk of being considered egotistical, I do not hesitate to say that a more judicious, generous, gentlemanly, and Christian letter was never written. It was worthy of its author, and honorable to the cause it vindicated.

“But now the evil begins. How, think you, was the admirable document received? Why, Sir, it was supplemented by an editorial postscript, the marrow of which consisted in a joke upon the juvenility of three of the brethren, who are yet old enough to know some who are their juniors in years, and a few who are far more their juniors in decency. A ghastly smile, like that which flickers upon the face of a man who is confused and confounded, but who longs to conceal his fears with the mask of levity, was the only answer we received. We were dealing with Divine realities, and with verities which concern the very basis of our holy religion; the reply was a play upon a harmless sentence, highly appropriate in the mouth of most of the seven, and not indecorous upon the lip of any one of them. This absurd trifling was esteemed to be so terrible a piece of artillery that it must needs be fired off again at Exeter Hall on the missionary occasion, to the disgust of many of the audience, by a gentleman who was so alarmed at the stupendous engine with which he was entrusted, that the echo of his own voice seemed to startle him, and one word from an indignant hearer extorted a trembling apology.

“A silence ensued. Discretion mounted guard, and hushed alike review and article, save one faint growl, which showed the animus within more surely than the most laboured writing. We will not hint that conscience was at work; and yet this is a better supposition than some have hinted at. However, the quietude was at last broken, and *The Freeman*came forth in a new and unexpected character. It refused to be styled an organ, or even to be suspected of such a relation to the body. Who in his senses could have thought it possible that a paper could represent even seven men, much less a denomination? The question was a singularly refreshing one. We had certainly been unreasonable enough to assist in the first circulation of the paper, and some of us in its continued maintenance, under the hallucination that it was, in some sense, the representative of the denomination.

“In this belief, we wrote our letter. We now find that we were all the victims of a mistaken, if not ridiculous, idea. It is true that the irrational conception of a representative newspaper is embodied in scores of journals which are the advocates and organs of bodies political and religious; but facts, however stubborn, must give way before the powerful satire of *The -Freeman.*It is equally true that the circulation of that paper is mainly owing to the absurd notion which our Editors so merrily repudiate; but, when a protest presents no other assailable point, common sense and interest are alike invaluable, and must be slaughtered if they stand in the way of revenge. Oh, sad result of this most rebellious protest! It has achieved its purpose in a manner the most unexpected. We thought to screen ourselves from complicity with error, and it is done more effectually than we could desire when *The Freeman*rejects the representative standing which was its greatest honour and the very breath of its nostrils. This is committing suicide in order to be avenged. The worst enemies of the paper could not have uttered a sentiment more damaging to it than that which it reiterates *ad nauseam.*The Member has taken his seat in the Parliament of the Press, but he is not now the representative of the men whose suffrages he sought. He laughs in your face if you have the impertinence to show him kindness in that capacity. Be it so, Mr. Freeman, follow your own sweet will, and utter your own opinions without restraint. From this day forth, we will never slander you by the supposition that there is any connection between you and our churches; you are your own spokesman, and not ours. We would not have touched the subject if we had not believed ourselves compromised; and, as we find we were laboring under a delusion, now happily dispelled, there is no need for protesting in a. friendly manner. The field of battle now divides us; and, if the old Lutheran spirit be not buried for ever, we will be clear of the blood of all men by clearing ourselves each day from the errors of the times.

“But, Sir, it seems that, in the performance of *The Freeman,* tragedy must always be followed by a farce. This marvellously-free actor has mounted the judgment-seat, put on the wig and gown, and tried the brethren who gently rebuked him, as if they had been guilty of misdemeanor. In mimic justice, he condemns; but, in comic mercy, he offers pardon. Forgive me, Sir, if I leave my place as a minister for a moment, and answer these brethren according to their folly. What brilliant wits these men are! They seem to expect the whole seven of us to perform a penitential pilgrimage to *The Freeman*office, and, with ropes about our necks, plead:for pardon at the hands of the offended Editors. In truth, the offence is very grievous, and demands punishment the most exemplary. It is all in vain to plead that witnessing was of old an honored service, and that protesting is sanctioned by the very name of our protestant theology. It is equally in vain to hint that the opinions of seven ministers may be, in some cases, equal in value to the *dicta*of two or even three Editors. This is not to the point; the criminals are guilty, and let them plead so, that mercy may step in. It is a memorable proof of the longsuffering of a paper which, not long ago, pretended to exercise a sort of archiepiscopal oversight and authority, that the seven culprits were not executed upon the spot, and that space for repentance is still allowed. We are assured (and I do not doubt it) that our retractation, when tendered, will be received with all the lovingkindness with which the yearning bowels of our tender parent are so abundantly surcharged. Oh, hasten to be wise, my erring brethren, sorrowful comrades in crime! We have but to confess our great iniquity, and the forgiveness, which we so ill deserve, shall be poured in unctuous abundance upon our heads, low as they must be in the very dust. *The Freeman,*glorious in magnanimity, stretches out to you the hand of mercy; run into its gracious arms, and be smothered by its suffocating compliments. By dint of steady obedience, you’ may recover your lost position, and once more receive the paternal approbation. Yes, gentle *Freeman;*when we retract, when we ask your pardon, when we confess that our protest was anything but a needed tribute to the soundness of the Baptist denomination, and a most proper warning to yourself, then, and not till then, put us all in your portrait gallery, from which some of our ablest ministers have prayed to be excluded, and dandle us upon your knee in blissful companionship with Kingsley and J. B. Brown.

“However agreeable this comedy may be to *The Freeman,*I am completely wearywith it, and once more return to the sobriety which our subject demands. I must now refer to the injurious insinuations with which we have been personally assailed. *The Freeman*affirms that some of us had never read the book to which we referred. I am sure I had both read and marked it; but, as to inwardly digesting it, I am not nearly enough allied to an ostrich to be able to accomplish that feat. Next, it unfairly takes it for granted that the letter of Dr. Angus was a joint affair, although it is his writing, and his alone. Admirable as it is, that letter is no more the composition of the whole seven than is this epistle, which the Editor will take care to observe is mine, and mine alone.

“A worse act than this imperiously demands enquiry. The F *reeman* must make good a statement to which I am now about to refer, or tacitly admit that its courage and truthfulness have vanished. *It dares to say that one of previously approved of Mr. Brown’s book.* Name the man. Why stab the whole seven in the dark? In the name of common honesty, not to say religion, point out the individual. None of us would take the pains to deny an accusation so indefinitely worded. The charge is so serious that, to whomsoever it may be falsely applied, it will be his duty, for the protection of society, to visit the author of the libel with the fullest punishment the laws of his country can enforce, unless an ample apology be forthcoming. The imputation is tantamount to calling a man dishonest, if not a liar, and what remains to any of us when such charges are allowed to pass unchallenged?

“This last item is weighty enough to allow me to pause for a reply. I have written to you rather than to *The Freeman,*because this last matter is a barrier to communication too serious to be overleaped.

“I am, Sir,  
“Yours very truly,  
“C. H. Spurgeon.”  
Mr. Brown wrote the following letter to the Editors of *The Freeman: —*

“Sirs,

“I hold no controversy with the six Baptist ministers who have joined Mr. Spurgeon in a deliberate effort to prejudice my ministry, and the book which I have recently published on *The Divine Life in Man.*

“So many Christian brethren have testified to me that the. y find the book full of the light of those truths which I am said to weaken or deny, that I am able to bear with great composure the judgment of my critics.

“I content myself with declaring, in the belief that there are men in the Baptist ministry candid enough to find my words credible, that the doctrines of grace, in the broad, full, Evangelic sense of the term, have for nearly twenty years been the great theme of my ministry, and, if I know my own heart:, will be till I die.

“I pray these seven to bear more faithful witness to their Master’s words in their ministry, than they have borne to mine, and am, “Yours faithfully,  
“J. BALDWIN BROWN.”  
“P.S. — Is it too much to expect that those papers which have copied the protest, will do me the justice to insert this brief reply?”  
One of the papers which published Mr. Brown’s letter added this significant comment: —

“While we feel it to be a matter of simple justice to give insertion to Mr. Baldwin Brown’s letter, it is, to say the least of the matter, not a little remarkable that Mr. Brown should hold to ‘ the doctrines of grace, in the broad, full, Evangelic sense of the term,’ as he here professes to do; and that he should, at the same time, declare his full appreciation of Professors Maurice and Scott, as model teachers of truth, ‘whose published works are most decidedly antagonistic to, and subversive of, the fundamental truths of the gospel.”

“ *The Inquirer,*a Unitarian paper, in an article on the controversy, fully justified the protests of Mr. Hinton, and his seven brother-ministers, when it said: — ”It is not a little encouraging to us, who have maintained a faithful confession through long years of ill-report, to find the most thoughtful and earnest of the younger school of orthodox ministers gradually and painfully struggling, amid much opposition, towards the recognition of the same conclusions which we have long advocated as the highest truth of the Scriptures. With deep sympathy do we watch their struggles, praying that they may have strength from above to quit themselves like true men in the contest, and to follow *the whole truth* faithfully wheresoever it may lead them.”

*The Dial,*in quoting this extract, very pertinently adds: — “Mr. Brown will probably say, ‘Save me from my friends!’” The writers in the Unitarian paper could see clearly enough whither his teaching was tending, just as, a whole generation afterwards, their successors plainly perceived the drift of the “Down-gradeism” which broke the heart of the brave champion of the faith, — C. H. Spurgeon, — who counted not even his life dear unto him if he might, in any degree, stem the torrent that was bearing away so much that he regarded as the priceless truth of the living God.

CHAPTER 54.

“HELENSBURGH HOUSE” AND GARDEN.

BY Mrs. C. H. Spurgeon.

A W ELL-KNOWN writer of to-day, in one of his pleasant little sketches, : — ”There are certain scenes in one’s early life which come before us in a somewhat confused fashion. One is quite sure of the facts; but where to place them as to time, - and how to connect them with relation to other facts, is not easy. It is a curious medley that memory gives back to one, passing quickly ‘ from grave to gay, from lively to severe.’”

This exactly describes my experience while trying to chronicle the further events of .our early married life. I am embarrassed with the multitude and variety of the recollections which crowd upon me; but many of them are not important enough to be written down, and some are so disjointed that I fail to reproduce them connectedly. I seem to have before me a mass of bright, shining webs of precious memories, hopelessly disarranged and entwisted; and the question is, — How can I bring these rebellious threads into something like order and beauty? I remember a story of my childhood’s days, in which a little maiden — for a punishment of untidy habits, I think, — was given a basket full of tangled skeins of silk, and told that she must, by a certain time, have them all sorted out, and laid in regular rows. The fairy “Order”, pitying her distress, came to her relief; and, with a touch of her wand, did the work deftly, and thus disposed of all her difficulties. I want better help than a fairy could give. “Order” and dates are some little aid to me; but, beside this, I have earnestly asked to have brought to my full remembrance only those incidents, the relation of which shall not tend so much to gratify natural curiosity, as to render some immediate and lasting benefit to those who read them. My husband’s whole life was “an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity;” and if, in any of the pages I have written, I have failed to set this bright example forth with due prominence, the fault is mine, and will be deeply grieved over ; — but if I have at all succeeded in magnifying the grace of God in him, it is simply because the Lord, for His own glory, has given skill for the service. I can say with Ezra, “I was strengthened as the hand of the Lord my God was upon me.”

We left the New Kent Road, in *1857,*to reside in Nightingale Lane, Clapham. This was then a pretty and rural, but comparatively unknown, region;and our delight in the change and interest it afforded, was unbounded. The sketch on page 282 (the original being a water-colour by our late friend, Mr. Sherrin,) gives a good idea of the umbrageous beauty of the locality. On the right hand of the road, if the visitor came from Clapham, stretched a glorious park, which, with its residential mansion, was then the property of J. Dent, Esq. Our house stood on the left side; facing the park and its palings; it was just below and behind the spot where the angle of a cottage wall is shown in the picture. I do not think there were more than five or six houses, beside our own, the whole length of the “Lane” from one end to the other! This secludedness was a great attraction to my beloved, for he felt the need of absolute quiet and rest after the labours and toils of the day; and he found them here. We could walk abroad, too, in those days, in the leafy lanes, without fear of being accosted by too many people, and this privilege brought us very great pleasure. In one of these wanderings, an incident occurred which my dear husband has so tenderly described, and so aptly turned into an encouragement for a seeking sinner, that I introduce it here, as a diamond among my rockcrystals, praying that some longing soul may find it, appropriate it, and be rich for ever: —

“We were walking up the lane near where I live, and there was a poor woman, who stopped us. She spoke in French. This poor soul had some children at Guildford, and she was wanting to find her way to them, but did not know a single sentence of English. She had knocked at the doors of all the gentlemen’s houses down the lane, and of course the servants could do nothing for her, for they did not understand a word she said. So she went from one place to another, and at last she did not: know what would become of her. She had some thirty miles to walk; she did not mind that, but then, she could not tell which way to go; so I suppose she had made up her mind she would ask everybody. All she knew was, she had written on a piece of paper the word ‘Guildford,’ and she held it up, and began to ask in French which was the right road.

“When, at last, she had met with someone who could tell her the path she must take, beautifully did she express both her distress and her gratitude; she’ said she felt like a poor little bird who was hunted about, and did not know how to find her way to the nest. She poured a thousand blessings on us when we told her the way; and, I thought, — how much this is like the sinner when he wants to find the way to Heaven! All he knows is, he wants Christ; but where to find Him, and how to get to Him, he cannot tell; and he knocks, first at one door, and then at another; and perhaps the minister at the place of worship does not know the language of human sympathy. He cannot comprehend the sinner’s need, for there are many servants in my Master’s house, I am sorry to say, who do not understand the language of a sinner’s cry. O sinner, thou shalt surely find Christ though thou knowest not how to find Him! He will ask thee, ‘ Whom seekest thou?’ and thou wilt answer, ‘ I seek Jesus,’ and He will say, ‘ I that speak unto thee am He.’ I am much mistaken if He who speaks in thy heart is not the very Jesus whom thou art seeking. His speaking in thy heart is a token of His love. Trust Him, believe in Him, and Thou shalt be saved.”

The house was a very old one; and, in its first estate, I should judge it had been an eight-roomed cottage, with ‘underground cellars afterwards turned into kitchens. Some bygone owner had built another story, and thrown the eight small rooms into four better-sized ones; but, even with this improvement, they were narrow and incommodious. To us, however, they were then all that we could desire, and the large garden made up for all the inconveniences indoors. Oh, what a delightsome place we thought it, though it was a very wilderness through long neglect, — the blackberry bushes impertinently asserting themselves to be trees, and the fruit trees running wild “for want of the pruning-knife! It was all the more interesting to us in this sweet confusion and artlessness because we had the happy task of bringing it gradually into accord with our ideas of what a garden should be. I must admit that we made many absurd mistakes both in house and garden management, in those young days of ours; but what did that matter? No two birds ever felt more exquisite joy in building their nest in the fork of a tree-branch, than did we in planning and placing, altering and rearranging our pretty country home.

What a boon such a retreat was to my beloved, can be well understood by all zealous workers who know the penalties exacted by weary brains and jaded powers. At this time, Mr. Spurgeon’s sermons were having a phenomenal sale both at home and abroad, and the generous arrangements of the publishers, together with the increased income from the church, made possible the purchase of the freehold of this house and grounds; and the fact of the place being old and long untenanted, enabled him to obtain it on very easy terms. It had some queer corners in it, which we peopled with mysterious shadows for the mere gratification of afterwards dispersing them. A large brewhouse sort of erection at the side was a great puzzle to us, with its flagged floor, its great boiler in one corner, and its curious little rooms, like cells, which we converted into apple-chambers.

But *the*sensation of the place was *the well,*which altogether fascinated us, and did not withdraw its spell till the demolition of the old house broke the charm by covering it up entirely, and leaving only a common pump-handle *“en e*vidence.” It was a wonderful well; the water came up pure, sparkling, and cold as ice. The story of it was, as far as I can recollect, as follows: — A former occupant of the house had resolved, at any cost, to have water at that particular spot. So he hired well-diggers, and they began to dig. At one hundred feet depth, they stopped. There was no sign of water *“Go* on,” said the master; “you must go deeper.” They dug another two hundred feet, and came to the solid rock! “Now,” said he, *“you*must *bore,* for I am going to have water here if I bore to the centre of the earth for it.” So they bored, and bored, and got quite disheartened, for they had now gone 460 feet into the bowels of the earth! But the master insisted that they should continue their efforts; and, one day, they came up as usual to have their dinner, but they never went down to the rock again, for the water had burst through, and covered up their tools, and risen high in the well! Was not the man right glad that he had not relinquished his object, and was he not well rewarded for his perseverance? He was a benefactor to succeeding generations, too, for the delicious water had quite a fame round about the place, and residents in our time used to send and beg the favor o! a large jugful of “water from the well.”

Many years afterwards, when the main drainage works were in progress, its generous abundance diminished; and when the new house was built, though its services were still secured, it lost, as I have said, all its ancient *attractiveness, — and danger.*Yes, there was danger in the old well, as we painfully realized, one day, when a man, while making some repairs, a short way down, lost his footing, and fell through many of the wooden stages (erected inside the well, and reached by ladders), and would have been precipitated into the deep water, with a very faint chance of life, but that, by God’s great mercy, he was caught by the arms on one of the stagings, and there hung suspended, in horror and darkness, till his mates could reach and rescue him! I can never forget my dear husband’s anguish of mind on that occasion. He paced to and fro, before the well-house door, in an agony of suspense. We were all white and trembling, and sick with frightful fears. But it pleased the Lord to avert the threatened tragedy; and, after a time, the man was brought up from the depths, to see again the blessed light of the sun. He looked more like a dead than a living creature when he was safely on *terra firma;*but, beyond being much bruised, he was uninjured. After that, my dear husband allowed no one to go down the well without having a stout rope round his body, securely fastened, or held by other men. We never again had an accident there.

In the little parlour of this old house, — see the window of the room to the:left of the porch in the picture, — there occurred, one day, an incident of much interest, which, though it concerns a notable and still living author (Mr. John Ruskin),’ I think I may be permitted to reveal. It will but disclose the existence, at that time, in a very noble and gifted heart, of a sweet spring of brotherly love, which has long remained sealed-up and hidden. Towards the end of the year 1858, my beloved had a serious illness, which kept him out of his pulpit for three Sabbaths. In those early days, Mr. Ruskin was not only a frequent attendant at the Surrey Music Hall services, and a loving friend to my dear husband, but I believe he was also an ardent admirer of him as a preacher of the gospel. When Mr. Spurgeon was partly convalescent, but still painfully weak, Mr. Ruskin, knowing of his condition, called to see him. My beloved was downstairs for the first time that day, and was lying on the couch in the room I have indicated. How well I remember the intense love and devotion displayed by Mr. Ruskin, as he threw himself on his knees by the dear patient’s side, and embraced him with tender affection and tears. “My brother, my dear brother,” he said, “how grieved I am to see you thus!” His sorrow and sympathy were most touching and comforting. He had brought with him two charming engravings, — gems of artistic taste, which still adorn the walls of one of the rooms at “Westwood,” — and some bottles of wine of a rare vintage, which he hoped would prove a cordial to the sufferer’s much-weakened frame. My husband was greatly moved by the love and consideration so graciously expressed, and he very often referred to it afterwards in grateful appreciation; especially when, in later years, there came a change of feeling on Mr. Ruskin’s part, and he strongly repudiated some of the theological opinions to which Mr. Spurgeon closely clung to the end of his life.  
I am not sure that it was on the occasion of the visit I have now described, or at some other time, that Mr. Ruskin told my husband a very remarkable story, for the truth of which he himself could answer. I think they had been talking together of the interpositions of God’s providence, of His care over His people, and of the singular deliverances which He had vouchsafed to them when in danger or distress; and Mr. Ruskin then related, with an impassioned tenderness and power which my pen cannot possibly imitate, the following instance of direct and Divine preservation from a dreadful death.

A Christian gentleman, a widower, with several little ones, was in treaty for the occupancy of an old farm-house in the country, for the sake of his children’s health. One day, he took them to see their new residence, before finally removing into it. While he talked with the landlord or agent, the young people set off on a tour of inspection, and scampered here, there, and everywhere over the garden and grounds. Then they proceeded to examine the house, and rushed up and[ down stairs, looking into every room, dancing with delight, full of fun and frolic, and shouting out their joy over every new discovery. Presently, when they seemed to have exhausted the wonders of the old house, one of them suggested that the underground premises had not yet been explored, and must therefore be visited at once. So the merry band went helter-skelter in search of a way below, found a door at the head of some dark stairs, and were rushing down them at great speed, when, midway, they suddenly stopped in startled amazement, *for,* standing at the bottom of the steps, they saw *their mother,*with outstretched arms and loving gesture, waving them back, and silently forbidding their further passage. With a cry of mingled fear and joy, they turned, and fled in haste to their father, telling him that they had seen “Mother,” that she had smiled lovingly at them, but had eagerly motioned them to go back. In utter astonishment, the father listened to the children’s tale, and at once perceived that something unusual had happened. Search was made, and close at the foot of those narrow, gloomy stairs, they found a deep and open well, entirely unguarded, into which, in their mad rush, every child must inevitably have fallen and perished, had not the Lord in His mercy interposed.

Stories of the supernatural are seldom worthy of credence; but, in this case, both my dear husband and Mr. Ruskin were convinced that God permitted the appearance of their mother to those dear children, in order to save them from a terrible death; and that nothing else, and nothing less than such a vision could have attained this object, and prevented the calamity.

I find, from data kindly supplied to me by Pastor J. W. Davies, of Lee, that on one occasion, “under the Oak” at “Westwood,” the question was asked of Mr. Spurgeon, “Do you believe in supernatural visitations?” and for answer he repeated this story of Mr. Ruskin’s. The students listened with eager interest, and then promptly requested their President to give his theory of the nature of the appearance. He replied that he could not explain it, but he thought that God had impressed on the retina of the children’s eyes an object which would naturally cause them to return at ‘once to their father, thus ensuring their safety.

There have been many other well-authenticated instances of similar appearances permitted by the Lord in seasons of special danger to His children; and the calm and reverent consideration of such a subject, by devout minds, might have the happy effect of bringing the soul very close to the veil which separates the things that are seen, and are temporal, from the things that are not seen, and are eternal.

CHAPTER 55.

“HELENSBURGH HOUSE”AND GARDEN (CONTINUED).

I took my little boys, a few years ago, to a churchyard, and we carried with us a piece of tape. I told them to measure some of the little graves, for I wanted them to learn practically how soon they might die. They found there were several which were shorter than they themselves were. Ah! there are many who are taken away before they are your age, my young friends, and why may not you be so taken? It is early with you, but it is not too early for Death to be even now pointing his darts at you. — *C. H. S, in sermon to senior scholars, at John Street Chapel, Bedford Row, May 1*, 1867.

W E lived in the dear old house in Nightingale Lane for many happy back them from this distance of and, looking years; upon time, I think they must have been the least shadowed by care and sorrow of all the years of our married life. We were both young, and full of high spirits. We had fairly good health, and devoutly loved each other. Our children grew apace in the sweet country air, and my whole time and strength were given to advance my dear husband’s welfare and happiness. I deemed it my joy and privilege to be ever at his side, accompanying him on many of his preaching journeys, nursing him in his occasional illnesses, — his delighted companion during his holiday trips, always watching over and tending him with the enthusiasm and sympathy which my great love for him inspired. I mention this, not to suggest any sort of merit on my part, but simply that I may here record my heartfelt gratitude to God that, for a period of ten blessed years, I was permitted to encircle him with all the comforting care and tender affection which it was in a wife’s power to bestow. Afterwards, God ordered it otherwise. He saw fit to reverse our position to each other; and for a long, long season, suffering instead of service became my daily portion, and the care of comforting a sick wife fell upon my beloved. How lovingly he fulfilled so sorrowful a duty, will be fully seen in future pages. I have already said what a great joy the garden was to us. At first, there was always something fresh and new to interest us; and when, by degrees, the novelty of its possession wore off, then we loved it all the better, because we knew more about it. Here my dear husband enjoyed, not only rest and recreation for the body, but stimulus and quickening for the mind. Original illustrations for sermons,-side-lights on texts, — metaphors and parables, whereby the hearts of hearers might be moved or impressed, — all these Mr. Spurgeon found ready to his hand in this old pleasaunce, which ungrudgingly laid its stores at his feet. It mattered not to him how commonplace was the figure which could supply a barb or a feather to the arrow which he designed to send straight home to the heart of a saint or a sinner. He did not disdain to employ the simplest incidents or similes to further the important purposes of illustration and instruction.

He himself gives a notable instance of the working of this life-long habit, in one of the lectures to his students, where he says: — “If you keep your eyes open, you will not see even a dog following his master, nor a mouse peeping up from his hole, nor will you hear even a gentle scratching behind the wainscot, without getting something to weave into your sermons if your faculties are all on the alert. When you go home to-night, and sit by your fireside, you ought not to be able to take up your domestic cat without finding that which will furnish you with an illustration. How soft are pussy’s pads, and yet, in a moment, if she is angered, how sharp will be her claws! How like to temptation, soft and gentle when it first cometh to us, but how deadly, how damnable the wounds it causeth ere long!

“I recollect using, with very considerable effect in a sermon in the Tabernacle, an incident that occurred in my own garden. there was a dog which was in the habit of coming through the fence, and scratching in my flower-beds, to the manifest spoiling of the gardener’s toil and temper. Walking in the garden, one Saturday afternoon, and preparing my sermon for the following day, I saw the four-footed creature, — rather a scurvy specimen, by-the-by, — and having a walking-stick in my hand, I threw it at him with all my might, at the same time giving him some good advice: about going home. Now, what should my canine friend do but turn round, pick up the stick in his mouth, bring it, and lay it down at my feet, wagging his tail all the while in expectation of my thanks and kind words! Of course, you do not suppose that I kicked him, or threw the stick at him any more. I felt quite ashamed of myself, and told him that he was welcome to stay as long as he liked, and to come as often as he pleased. There was an instance of the power of non-resistance, submission, patience, and trust, in overcoming even righteous anger. I used that illustration in preaching the next day, and I did not feel that I had at all degraded myself by telling the story.”

If my memory does not play me false, there used to be sundry crusts, or even bones, secretly conveyed to that mongrel cur after this memorable encounter.

Here, too, the young Pastor could peacefully enjoy all the ordinary sights and sounds of an open space in the country. The song of birds was sweetest music to him, and the commonest flowers gave him joy, because they both revealed to him the love of his Father’s heart. “When I go into my garden,” he once said, referring to this same old place of which I am writing, “I have a choir around me in the trees. They do not wear surplices, for their song is not artificial and official. Some of them are clothed in glossy black, but they carol like little angels; they sing the sun up, and wake me at break of day; and they warble on till the last red ray of the sun has departed, still singing out from bush and tree the praises of their God. And all the flowers, — the primroses that are almost gone, — convey to my heart deep meanings concerning God till the last one shuts his eye. And now the ‘mignonette, and the wallflowers, and the lilac, and the guelderroses, and a host of sweet beauties are pouring out their incense of perfume, as if they said, ‘Thank the God that made us! Blessed be His Name! The earth is full of His goodness.’”

On another occasion he wrote: — “On summer evenings, the queen of our little kingdom spreads a banquet in our great green saloon which the vulgar call a lawn; it is opposite the parlour window, and her guests punctually arrive, and cheerfully partake, while their hostess rejoices to gaze upon them. Some of them are now so tame that, when fresh provision is brought out to them, they take no more notice of the lady-servitor than a child at table does of a servant who brings in a fresh .joint. We do not allow a gun in our garden, feeling that we can afford to pay a few cherries for a great deal of music; and we have now quite a lordly party of thrushes, blackbirds, and starlings upon the lawn, with a parliament of sparrows, chaffinches, robins, and other minor prophets. Our summer-house is occupied by a pair of blue martins, which chase our big cat out of the garden by dashing swiftly across his head one after the other, till he is utterly bewildered, and makes a bolt of it.”  
He was no irisignificant enemy, as the accompanying faithful likeness of him will prove; yet again and again have I, too, seen him reduced to abject fear by the little creatures who were bravely defending their home. He was a splendid specimen of *Felis domestica,*and a great favourite with his master. He weighed nearly eighteen pounds, and was singularly intelligent and affectionate. He had a trick of helping himself to milk, which highly diverted Mr. Spurgeon. His depredations were carried on for some time before the culprit was discovered; but there was so serious a loss of milk in the usual morning supply, that a watch was set to see what became of it, since a thief of some sort was an uncomfortable certainty. Judge of the spy’s surprise, when he saw this great creature march slowly across the yard, push open the lid of the can, insert his huge paw into it, and deliberately lick the creamy member till it needed recoating by another dip! This process was repeated till puss was satisfied, and all the while he showed no fear of punishment, or sense of wrong-doing.

When Mr. Spurgeon heard of this escapade, he was much amused, and had the cat and a can of milk brought to him that he might see “how it was done.” Dick was nothing loth to show him, and thereafter became quite a hero in his master’s eyes! lie would try to induce him to show off this trick at the tea-table, when guests were present; and if Dick indulged him by a repetition of the performance, he would greatly applaud and pet him.

There were some curiosities of ornamentation in this old garden of ours. The pulpit stairs, led up to a breezy and delightful seat in the heart of the willow tree; and there, in summer-time, we could always be sure of a shadow from the heat. However sultry the weather might be, there were cool and gentle zephyrs frolicking amid the branches, and waiting to fan the hot cheeks of those who cared to climb to their playground. We never knew the cause of this singular movement of the air in that particular spot, but it was a very pleasant fact, and “the sound of a going” in the big tree was one of our most delightful mysteries.

We had also what I should imagine must be a very unusual addition to the charms of a Baptist minister’s garden, — the font out of a High Church building, which one of the early students secured for Dissenting worship when it was vacated by its Ritualistic congregation for a more imposing structure. My dear husband used to point it out to visitors, calling it “one of the spoils of the Holy War,” and I am sure he heartily rejoiced that, in its changed position, it was at least unable ever again to assist in deluding people into the errors of baptismal regeneration.

As I am writing, there flashes across my mind the remembrance of a great surprise in the adornment (!) of our garden which once awaited us on our return from a Continental trip. After the bustle and joy of the homecoming, of asking and answering innumerable questions, of kissing and petting the boys, and generally making ourselves amiable, we strolled into the garden, to renew our acquaintance with its old-fashioned enticements and delights. We thought it looked very quiet, peaceful, and lovely; and we felt the sweetness of God’s mercy to us, in bringing us back in safety to such a fair and comely home. But our serenity was to be quickly disturbed. Close by the spot where Mr. Spurgeon interviewed the little dog, there were some steps leading under an archway to slightly lower ground, and two large vases were placed, one on each side of the descent. When we came near to this turn in the path, we saw before us a sight which nearly took our breath away; our amazement was so great that we stood for a minute or two without speaking, looking from one to the other, and then at the innocent vases which caused us such consternation. Someone *had painted them a bright blue, relieved here and there with yellow!*

“Who could have been guilty of such Vandalism?” we wondered. Fresh from the land of art and artists, and from beholding all that skill and good taste combined could provide of beauty of design and charm of colouring in every small detail of decoration and embellishment, our recoil from our disfigured belongings can be easily imagined. Passing round the garden, we found more stone or stucco work treated in the same way, —*the font included!*We made enquiries within the house, and learned that these brilliant tints were intended to be a special “Welcome Home” to the travellers from the hands of our gardener, who thought to give us immense pleasure by the contemplation of his artistic skill! Unfortunate ,nan! Still more unfortunate possessors of the too-gaily-bedecked garden! I cannot remember when the gardener was shown his error, nor how soon the unsightly ornaments were restored to their original purity; but I know that only dear Mr. Spurgeon could have successfully negotiated such a delicate piece of business as to secure for them a return to their former whiteness without, by a single word, hurting the feelings of the man who had unwittingly wrought the mischief.  
Every Saturday morning, for a good many years, the quiet seclusion of our happy home was changed into a scene of rather noisy activity in consequence of the visits of the early students of the Pastors’ College, who came to spend an hour or two with their President. First, one young brother; then, two; a little later, three; and, by-and-by, quite a company of these good soldiers of Jesus Christ marched down to Nightingale Lane for a season of special drill under the direction of their loved and loving leader. They were the forerunners of successive generations of “our own men” who were to be influenced throughout their whole lives by being brought into close personal contact with him who was neither the last nor the least of the: Puritans.’ The earliest “Record of the Lord’s Work in connection with the Pastors’ College,” written in 1863 by Professor Fergusson, contained the following reference to these visits: —

“Whilst resident at Mr. Rogers’ house, once every week the students assembled at that of the Pastor, and were there instructed in theology, pastoral duty, preaching, and other practical subjects. Here was the nucleus of the present Monday and Friday’ classes, conducted by Mr. Spurgeon himself, in which his wide experience in church matters is presented to the young men, and furnishes them with the most essential preparation for their future work.” I may add, that here was also the nucleus of those never-tobe-forgotten *Lectures to my Students,*which still continue to be of untold value in the equipment of Christian ministers of all denominations, and which are among the most precious monuments of the peerless President’s consecrated genius, wit, and wisdom.

As an appropriate ending to this chapter, I have inserted, in *fa*csimi*le,*the beautiful love-song which my dear husband wrote at Hull, during one of his many evangelistic journeys, and which reached me at “Helensburgh House,” one happy morning in September, 1865. None can be expected to feel the same rapturous delight in the sweet verses as I did when I first read them; I was far more proud of them than I should have been of chains of gold or strings of pearls; and they have still the power to move my soul to an overwhelming tenderness both of memory and anticipation ; — but they may at least touch a chord of sympathy in some loving heart, and set it trembling with the tones of the long-forgotten music of bygone years.

CHAPTER 56.

PASTORAL EPISTLES.

D URING Mr. Spurgeons illness, mentioned in chapter 54, he wrote the following letters, which are interesting, not only for their own sake, but because they are probably the first of that long series of epistles from the sick room, or from the sunny South, in which the beloved Pastor manifested his deep affection and tender care for the large flock committed to his charge: —

“Clapham,  
“October 26th, 1858.  
“Beloved Friends and Kindred in Christ,

“The days seem like weeks, and the weeks seem like months, since I went up to the house of the Lord. My heart and my flesh are crying out for the assembly of the saints. Oh, how I long to hear once more the solemn shout of the festal throng, who, with the voice of joy and praise, keep holy day! I am slowly rallying. My great struggle now is with weakness. I feel as if my frail bark had weathered a heavy storm which has made every timber creak. Do not attribute this illness to my having labored too hard for my Master. For His dear sake, I would that [ may yet be able to labor more. Such toils as might be hardly noticed in the camp, for the service of one’s country, would excite astonishment in the Church, for the service of our God.

“And now, I entreat you, for love’s sake, to continue in prayer for me. When ye find access to God, remember me. Mind, it is not by the words of your mouth, nor yet by the cravings of your heart, but it is by the precious blood of Christ you must draw nigh to God. And when you are in His sweet presence, and are bedewed with His holy anointing, then pour out your souls before Him, and make mention of me in your supplications.

“Yours, to love and serve, in the gospel,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
“Clapham,  
“November 2nd, 1858.  
“Dearly-beloved Friends,

“I am a prisoner still. Weakness has succeeded pain, and languor of mind is the distressing result of this prostration of my physical powers. It is the Lord’s doing. In some sense, I might say with Paul,’ I am a prisoner of Jesus Christ.’ But, ah! my bonds are more easy and less honorable to wear than his. Instead of a dungeon, my lof is cast in an abode of comfort. I am not restrained from my accustomed ministry by a chain forged by man, but by the silken cord of God’s providence; no rough jailer, but loving relatives and friends attend upon me in these tedious hours of my bondage. I beseech you therefore, my beloved, let your many prayers to God on my behalf be each and all mingled with thanksgiving. Gratitude should ever be used in devofion, like salt of old was in sacrifice, ‘ without prescribing how much.’

“And now, though unable to stand in the pulpit, I will endeavor to give you a short address, — or rather, I will attempt to express the kindlings of my heart in a few broken sentences.

“And, first, to you my well-beloved and trusty brethren and sisters in Christ, and in the family tie of church-fellowship; to you I tender my fondest regards, my sincerest thanks, my sweetest love. I feel refreshed by your sympathy, and my heart is overwhelmed at the estimation in which you hold me. It brings the hof blush to my cheek, and well it may. Tenderly as a husband thinks of the dofing affection of his wife, as the father receives the fond homage of his children, as a brother when he is held in honor by all the family circle, — so tenderly, and even more tenderly, I remember your care of me. The tone of your supplications during my affliction has made me beyond measure thankful. I rejoice that you have, with humble: submission, kissed the rod, not impatiently asking for my recovery, but meekly acquiescing in the providence of our Heavenly Father, craving most of all that the Lord would sanctify the pains of your Pastor, and guard the flock with His own watchful eye. ‘ Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord.’

“Yet again, in the still chamber of retirement, I anxiously remember some who would have been, ere this, baptized on a profession of their faith, and received into membership with the church, had not my health been thus impaired. Be not fretful concerning this delay; accept it as an ordained trial of your patience. If a farmer has a field of corn severed by the sickle from its native earth, but not yet housed in the garner, is he not concerned lest he suffer loss? How much more, as a minister of Christ, am I concerned for you, — the converts God hath given me! O beloved, be steadfast! Commit not the great sin of apostacy. Beware lest Satan take advantage of you: ‘for we are not ignorant of his devices.’ Draw not back. It is written in the law, ‘No devoted thing, that a man shall devote unto the Lord of all that he hath, shall be sold or redeemed: every devoted thing is most holy unto the Lord.’ The Israelite might not take back for his own use the beast that he had dedicated from his flock or his herd for an offering unto the Lord; far less may the Christian, when he hath resolved to yield up his heart, his life, his soul, to Jesus, withhold any part of the sacrifice. I write not thus to grieve you. Think not that my jealousy bodes a suspicion, but rather that it betokens my love. ‘We are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.’ ‘My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not.’

“To those who have worshipped with us, during the past two years, in the Surrey Music Hall, the preacher sends his greetings and his love. Ye have heard how the prophet Samuel set up a stone, and called the name of it EBENEZER, saying,’ Hitherto hath the Lord helped us.’ That stone marked the place where the Lord gave the children of Israel a great victory over the Philistines; but it likewise marked the very place where, twenty years before, the Israelites were defeat,M, and the ark of God was taken. Let us rejoice, O my people, with trembling! Two years ago, the Music Hall was the scene of such discomfiture, such dire calamity and death, as we hardly dare to think of. Surely that was the night of my heart’s bitterest anguish. ‘ Howbeit our God turned the curse into a blessing.’ For ninety-nine successive Lord’s-days was I enabled to supply the pulpit; no congregation could have been more evenly sustained; never were sermons more widely echoed. God has owned these services to the quickening of many souls, to the establishing of many in our most holy faith, and by them, through His goodness, hath the blessed Spirit stirred up many of my brethren in the ministry to a righteous emulation. ‘According to this time it shall be said, What hath God wrought!’ Ah, sirs! if ye knew in what fear we began, and with what anxiety we have continued, — if ye knew the unrequited exertions of those beloved brethren, whose names are unknown to fame, but whose good offices were essential to keep the place open, — if ye knew, once more, how many a time your minister has prostrated himself as a brokenhearted sinner before God to renew his first vows of unreserved self-dedication, — if ye knew these things, ye would not be backward in adopting the psalmist’s ascription of praise, ‘ not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory.’ ‘Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.’

“Yet I have other friends. They are scattered far and wide throughout this country, and the sister isles. To you also let me write a word. Ye have received me most kindly; faster friendships were surely never made in fewer hours than I have cemented with some of you. ye are my spiritual kith and kin. I take you to record that my God hath graciously proportioned my strength to my days, while I have been among you ‘in labors more abundant.’ When I have labored most for His glory, I have feasted most on the provisions of His grace. And, blessed be God, when ofttimes called to visit a people heretofore unknown to me, He hath given me the key of David, to unlock the secret springs of your heart; nay, rather, He holdeth the key in His own hand; He openeth, and no man can shut. Keep, beloved, the Word of His patience, and He will keep you’ from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth.’

“Finally, my brethren, I am cheered and comforted beyond measure by the joyous hope that, on the coming Sabbath, I shall again appear among you. This prospect is as oil to my bones; and, although I cannot hope to fulfil my ministry with my wonted vigor, yet to attempt to address you will be to me as strengthening medicine, a tonic to my fluttering heart. ‘Brethren, pray for us.’

“Yours in covenant,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

In the early years of his London ministry, it was Mr. Spurgeon’s custom to write an annual letter to his people. This series of pastoral epistles, from 1857 to 1862, covers rather more than the period described in this volume, and gives a bird’s-eye view of the progress of the work from the memorable night of the great catastrophe in the Music Hall to the happy settlement of the congregation in the: Metropolitan Tabernacle. All of the letters show the Pastor’s intense desire for the growth in grace of the brethren and sisters in fellowship with the church, and for the ingathering of those who were still *“out*of the way.” With the exception of the last one, they were all addressed *“To*the Church in New Park Street,” so it is only necessary to give the date of the year’ to which each one belongs.

**1857.**  
“Dearly-beloved,

“We have hitherto been assisted by our Covenant Head; let us pause and thank Him. Dark have been some of the dealings of providence towards us; but however much we may lament, we cannot alter, let us therefore give our time to action rather than regret.

“Our numbers have been multiplied, and our zeal maintained; for this let us be grateful. And now that we enter upon another period of time, what shall we do in it? Let our answer be, that, through God’s grace, we will be devoted to His cause, and seek out means of glorifying Him. Our hearts are set Upon A LARGER  
TABERNACLE. Will we not labor to immortalize this year by laying the foundation stone ‘thereof? I am persuaded that God demands it; will we not delight to give Him all His cause requires?

“The Lord has been on our side, and through much opposition He has preserved us unscathed. Let us build Him a house to His honor, which will be the means of making known His glory, and discomfiting His enemies.

“The Church of Christ will help us; but, if all forsake us, by God’s help let us do it alone. We have hitherto had the answer to that prayer of Moses, ‘Let his hands be sufficient for him;’ and it shall not fail us now. We will toil together with one warm heart until the topstone be laid, and then our prayer shall be, ‘ Lord, fill the house with Thy glory!’

“May every blessing attend you in your families, in your businesses, and especially in your souls; and may Pastor and people meet in glory!

“‘*Trust in the Lord, and do good.’”*

**1858.**  
“Dearly-beloved,

“We again acknowledge the goodness of our Covenant Lord. Last year, we wrote in faith. Surrounded by dark clouds, we believed that all things would work for our good; and now, rejoicing in hope, we record the fulfilment of the promise. The huge waves which Satan stirred against us have not caused us damage; but, by God’s good grace, we have surmounted every billow, and are still sailing on to our desired haven. This has been the greatest year of all. Every Sabbath, crowds have filled the Music Hall; and every month, the pool of baptism has witnessed that they have not heard in vain.

“Let us be grateful for past indulgence, and let us be on the lookout for trial. We must not expect to be let alone. Satan has many plofs; and though signally foiled in one, another may be ready. Be prayerful, that trial come not upon us as a thief in the night; be watchful, lest we ourselves should, by our slofh, become the instruments of our own ruin.

“The Tabernacle Fund progresses beyond our hopes. It is most probable that, before the end of the year, we shall have far exceeded £5,000, which is no small sum. Another year of earnest effort, and the work will be nearing a conclusion. ‘ Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy Name.’ The Lord will prosper that which concerneth us; we shall continue in loving labor, knit together as the heart of one man; and, by-and-by, we shall raise the topstone to its place amidst the shouts of the people.

“I am anxious beyond measure for your purity and unity. I pray you, watch over one another in the Lord, and may the Master Himself keep us all by His grace! Accept your minister’s most hearty love, with every good wish for yourselves and your families; and be not unmindful to offer fervent prayer for our success and preservation. Your minister’s mofto is, —

“‘O N! ON! ON!’  
*“Let*yours be,—  
“‘GO FORWARD.’“

**1859.**  
“Dearly-beloved and longed-for, my joy and crown,

“May the blessing of the Most High God descend upon you in answer to my earnest prayers’! This has been a year of prayer. I thank God for the daily supplications which you have presented at the throne of grace. Rest assured that your Pastor appreciates your affectionate earnestness on his behalf, and is greatly strengthened and encouraged thereby. It often brings tears of joy to my eyes when, in the midst of weary labor and cruel abuse, I remember your united prayers. May God hear you, and make me a better preacher, causing ray labors among you to be more successful, both in your edification and increase!

“Permit me to counsel you as to the training of your families. I would have all our children fully taught the Word of God. Let me strongly recommend to you the use of *The Assembly’s Catechism.* Many a minister has derived his first doctrinal knowledge from that book; and, indeed, it has in it the very life-blood of the gospel. Let our youths and maidens study the Scriptures daily, and let them use *The Baptist Confession of Faith,*which they will find to be a useful compendium of doctrinal knowledge. My desire is, that I may have around me a well-instructed people, who shall be able to give a reason for the hope which is in them.

“There are many among us who are, at present, cold or lukewarm; may the Divine fire, which is in some of you, be kindled in their hearts also! Cleave to the Lord ‘with purpose of heart, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you!”

**1860.**  
*“My*Very Dear Friends,

*“I*am glad of this opportunity to assure you of the continuance and increase of my hearty and undissembled love to you. Each year unites us more firmly. We have suffered together, and we have also rejoiced together. In the cause of our common Master, we have alike endured the reproach of men, and the reviling of the people; and in the success which has attended us, we have had to rejoice in the smile of a Covenant God, and in the energy of His Spirit. Comrades in battle, we are also co-heirs of victory. May the Lord, whom I serve in the gospel of His Son, abundantly bless you, and return into your bosoms a thousand-fold those acts of love, and those words of affection, by which you so perpetually prove your earnest attachment to me! Never had pastor a better flock; never did minister more sincerely long for the good of his people. And now, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation which I address to you: —

“ **1**.*In relation lo myself.*I beseech you, cease not to plead with God on my behalf. I have always acknowledged and recognized the value of the supplications of my church, and I feel the necessity of your earnest prayers more than ever. I entreat you, as the spiritual father of very many of you, cease not to intercede with God on my behalf.

“ **2.***In relation lo the deacons and elders.*Let me: indulge the hope that our church shall become as Scriptural in its order as in its doctrines; and let me go further, let me hope that we may not only walk in Scriptural order, but in spiritual power. Seek unitedly the purity and increase of the whole body. Rally round the officers of our little army, and submit yourselves to their guidance and counsel. Let every member know the elder who presides over his district; and should that brother fail to visit him, let the member visit the elder, and remind him that he has overlooked one of the sheep of his flock. endeavor to maintain meetings for prayer in each district of this great city; and if there be a door for other agencies, use them to the utmost of your ability. Each district, with its elder, should be a regiment with its officer; and then all the different bands, when called to united action, would be ready to achieve an easy victory. Honor the brethren who serve you in the gospel, and esteem them very highly in love, for the Lord’s sake.

“ **3.***In relation to one another.*I admire the liberality of our poor brethren to the cause, and the zeal of all for the spread of the truth, and the love which exists among you one toward another. ‘ Let brotherly love continue.’ We are none of us perfect, and therefore need forbearance from others; our fellow-members are like ourselves, and therefore we must exercise the like charity towards them. We must mutually seek the comfort and sanctification of each other, ‘endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.’

“A meek and quiet temper will always tend to sustain you under injuries from others, and will prevent your dealing harshly with brethren. The character of Archbishop Leighton is one which it would be a noble thing for us to imitate to the letter. Speaking of his humility, Burner says ‘that he seemed to have the lowest thoughts of himself possible, and to desire that all other persons should think as meanly of him as he did of himself; and he bore all sorts of ill-usage and reproach, like a man that took pleasure in it.’ And again, of his temperament, ‘ he had so subdued the natural heat of his temper that, in a great variety of circumstances, and in the course of intimate conversation with him for twenty years, he never observed the least sign of passion in him, but upon one occasion. The accidents and behaviour which usually disturb the temper had no power to ruffle the equanimity of Leighton. Whilst living at Dunblane, his man-servant, being desirous of fishing, went off one morning very early, locking the door, and taking the key with him, thus making his master a prisoner; nor did he return until the evening, when the only rebuke which he received from the Bishop was, *“John,*when you next go a-fishing, remember to leave the key in the door.”’ Perhaps it is too much to expect so great a degree of gracious temper in all; but, nevertheless, let us strive after it. This will make it easy work to maintain cordial and joyous communion.

“ **4.***In relation to other churches.*Be careful to maintain your orthodoxy, and bear your witness against all error; but be even more mindful to secure the communion of saints, and avoid all bigotry and bitterness.

“ **5.***With*rega*rd to the world.*Let it not seduce you; come out from it daily, and be separate; but strive daily for the salvation of souls; and may the Lord make you, in His hands, the salt of the earth, and the instructors of the people! Huge is our city, and hideous its sin; labor for the good of men, and, finally, when the chief Shepherd shall appear, may we all appear with Him in glory!”

**1861.**  
“Brothers and Sisters,

“Bless God for the past, and trust Him for the future. It is far better to prepare for what lies before us than to congratulate ourselves upon that which is already accomplished. Great as have been ‘the blessings with which Almighty God has favored us, we are longing and looking for larger displays of His goodness. Permit me very lovingly to thank all of you for your hearty assistance in labors already performed, and allow me to entreat your continued aid in our new undertakings. Above all things, I most earnestly crave your prayers; and I am sure you will not deny them to me.

“*Pray for me in my ministry.*It is no narrow sphere to which my

Lord has called me. nothing but all-sufficient grace can enable me to discharge the labors which devolve upon me. Oh, I beseech you, as Aarons and Hurs, hold up my hands that my pulpit power may not abate!

“ *Pray for me as Pastor.*The church is of so great a magnitude, that no eye but that of Omniscience can oversee it all. AS a company of fallible men, we have many infirmities; and it is a matchless favor to deal faithfully with all, and yet maintain perfect peace; to be ever active in stirring up the whole company, and yet very tender and pitiful to the lambs of the flock. Pray for me, my beloved, for I wou![d rather renounce my office than lack your prayers.

*“Pray for me as an evangelist.*I am incessantly itinerating through the cities, towns, and villages of this land. There are few large towns in which I have not uplifted the cross of Christ. These frequent journeyings require much physical strength; and constant preaching demands great mental power, and spiritual might. Ask e f my Lord that, everywhere, His Word may have free course, run, and be glorified. There are lifeless churches to be aroused, and careless sinners to be called. Entreat our Heavenly Father that my preaching may have a share of success in promofing these most important objects.

“Pray *for me as a teacher of teachers.*The Lord put it into my heart to commence an Institution for the training of young ministers. With a very able coadjutor, I have constantly increased the number of young men. Prayer and faith have always supplied the means so far, although I have no society or regular funds to depend upon. I would rejoice greatly if m7 gracious Lord would send me pecuniary aid to enable me to increase the number at once to twenty. This I must leave ‘with Him. Much wisdom is needed in training uncultivated but earnest minds, and in finding suitable spheres for the men when they are ready for the work. Let this matter, then, be remembered at the mercy-seat so often as it shall be well with you.

*“Pray for me as an intercessor for others.*Beg that the Lord may give *me*power in prayer. The most of a minister’s work must be done upon his knees. Weak here, we are weak everywhere. I desire to bear you ever on my heart before the throne; but how can I do this unless you shall pray the Lord to enable me? For this, I appeal to you, and beg your perpetual remembrances.

“Finally, brethren, wait for the appearance of the Lord from Heaven, and be ye found with well-trimmed lamps and well-girt loins, that, when He cometh, you may rejoice before Him.”

**1862.**  
“To the Church in the Metropolitan Tabernacle, over which the Lord has made me overseer.  
“Beloved Friends,

“Your faithfulness and affection are gratefully remembered in my daily thanksgivings, and in this public manner I tender you my’ warmest gratitude. Truly, I haw~. no cause to complain of fickle or lukewarm friends in the church. No abuse, however venomous, has shaken your confidence; no misrepresentations, however ingenious, have perverted your opinions; and no slanders, however scurrilous, have loosened your attachment. We have borne equally and cheerfully the cross of Christ. You have not repudiated the burden, as though it belonged only to the Pastor; but you have felt that an attack upon him was an assault upon yourselves, and any wounds which he might suffer have rankled in your:spirit as well as in his own. Persecution has been greatly blessed to us, for it has made us a united people; and we may add, a separated company, who are constantly constrained to contend for one another against the world, both religious and profane. A thousand times have the haters of our holy cause uttered the most villainous calumnies against your Pastor; but, as; one by one you have heard their report, they have no more alarmed you than the crackling of thorns in the fire, or the noise of summer insects among the trees. We can afford to endure this ‘ trial of cruel mockings,’ for a clear conscience, prevalence in prayer, and abundant success, are an armour quite sufficient for the church in her worst condition.

“During the past year, we have entered upon our new Tabernacle, having no debt to encumber our future action. What a cause for gratitude to our all-gracious, prayer-hearing God! And what a claim upon us to exercise abundant faith and entire consecration to His cause! The Lord hath not dealt thus with every people; let us be glad and rejoice in Him.

“Since the opening of the building, very many necessary works have been performed which have engrossed the larger part of the annual revenue; and much remains still to be done before the Tabernacle can be called complete; hence there will be: little or nothing to spare for the College, and the Pastor must look to your thankofferings for the support of this great cause. You have not been backward aforetime, and will certainly be ready now.

“With regard to our spiritual interests, let us ask ourselves whether we have grown in grace this year, whether, like the living tree, we have put forth fresh branches and leaves, or whether we have stood like posts, on which the rain descends and the dew distils, but they remain as dead and unfruitful as before. Is our faith stronger? Is our love warmer? Is our hope brightel’? Have we advanced in courage, patience, virtue, and true holiness? Has grace in the blade become grace in the ear? Have we a deeper sense of the depravity of our nature? Are we more habitually looking out of self into Christ, and do we walk in closer fellowship with Him? Let us answer these questions, and then remember the injunction of the apostle, ‘ See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.’

“And now that the lion-standard of the tribe of Judah is uplifted for another march, let us confidently and joyously follow it. Jehovah is with us, and the God of Jacob is our Refuge. Rise up, Lord, and let Thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate Thee flee before Thee! We shall tread upon the lion and adder; the young lion and the dragon shall we trample under our feet. ‘They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.’”

CHAPTER 57.

BUILDING “OUR HOLY AND BEAUTIFUL HOUSE.”

How can the poor have the gospel preached to them, if they cannot come and listen to it? And yet how many of our places of worship there are into which they cannot come, or into which, if they are admitted, they only come as inferior creatures l They may sit in the back seats, but they are not to be known and recognized as being like other people. Hence the absolute necessity of having places of worship large enough to accommodate the multitude; and hence, moreover, the obligation to go out into the highways and hedges. If the poor are to have the gospel preached to them, then we must take it where they can hear it. If I wanted to preach to English people, it would be of no use for me to go and stand on one of the peaks of the Himalayas, and begin preaching; they could not hear me there. And it is of little avail to build a gorgeous structure for a fashionable congregation, and then to think of preaching in it to the poor; they cannot come there any more than the Hoftentofs can make the journey from Africa, and listen to me here. I should not expect them to come to such a place, nor will they willingly enter it.

The gospel should be preached, then, where the poor will come. We should have houses of prayer where there is accommodation *for*them, and where they are regarded and respected as much as any other rank and condition of men. It is with this view alone that I have labored earnestly to be the means of building a large place of worship, ‘because I feel that, although the bulk of my congregation in New Park Street Chapel consists of poor people, yet there are many in the humbler ranks of soc!iety who can by no possibility enter the doors, because we cannot find room for the multitudes that desire to come.

You ask me, perhaps, why I do not preach in the street. I reply. I would do so, and am constantly doing so in every place except London; but here I cannot do it, since the enormous crowds that would probably assemble would be likely to cause a breach of the peace. I trembled when I saw *twelve*thousand persons on the last occasion when I preached in the open air; therefore I have thought it best, for the present at least, to desist, until haply there shall be fewer to follow me. — *C. H. S., in sermon preached at the Music Hall, Royal Surrey Gardens, January 25, 1857, from the text, “The poor have the gospel preached to them.”*

I N June, 1856, the Building Committee for the proposed new Tabernacle was appointed. Their first meeting was held on June 16, and they were able so far to put their recommendations into practical form that it was possible to hold the first public meeting in aid of the project in New Park Street Chapel, on Monday evening, September 29. In view of the ultimate expenditure of over £31,000, it is interesting to read the official account of that early gathering, and the estimate then formed as to the probable financial responsibility the church and congregation thought of incurring: — ”Resolutions were unanimously passed (1) that a Tabernacle, holding S,000 sittings, should be erected, and (2) that subscription lists should be opened. Upwards of £3,000 was promised, and the Committee are very sanguine in their expectation that: the sum of £12,000 (the amount required) will be speedily forthcoming. They earnestly solicit the hearty cooperation of the Christian public in this undertaking. Their chief object in this movement is the welfare of the masses, who hitherto have been neglectful of their souls. Steady, earnest assistance is required, that the building may be erected. It would be gratifying to the Committee if every church in the kingdom had a brick or a beam in the new Tabernacle.”

No one in the densely-crowded and enthusiastic audience, on that Monday evening, could have imagined that, just three weeks later, a sorrowstricken assembly would be gathered in the same place, without the beloved Pastor, who had been utterly prostrated by “the great catastrophe” at the Surrey Gardens Music Hall. Among the many comments and criticisms of that trying period, several newspapers, including *The Times, The Daily News,*and *The Saturday Review,*stated that the contemplated new Tabernacle was to hold 15,000 people; so, at the first service in the Music Hall, after the accident, Mr. Spurgeon corrected this exaggeration, and explained the need for a large permanent home for his church and congregation He said:—  
“There have been a great many rumors abroad respecting the new chapel, the building of which has been contemplated by a number of my friends. It has been asserted that we want to erect a Tabernacle capable of holding I5,000 people. With respect to that assertion, I will only say that some truthful (!) person has thought fit to put a ‘ x ‘ before the ‘ 5,’ for we have never entertained even a thought of building such a place. ‘It has, however, been judged that a place of worship capable of accommodating about 5,000 persons is necessary. For my own part, I have no wish for such a large sanctuary; only I cannot bear to see, Sabbath after Sabbath, as many people go away as are able to enter the chapel where we have been accustomed to assemble for worship. It is the will of people to come in great multitudes to listen to my proclamation of the truths of the gospel; I have not asked them to come, it is of their own free will that they meet with us; and if it is a sin for me to have so many hearers, it is at least an uncommon sin, which many others would like to commit if they could. It has; been said, ‘ Let those who wish to hear Mr. Spurgeon pay for their seats;’ but that method would defeat the object I have in View. I want to preach to those who cannot afford to pay for seats in a chapel, and it is my wish to admit as many of the general public as possible. Many of my friends, I know, are most anxious on the subject of a larger place of worship than we have at present, and would give double what they have done if they could afford it. It is much to the inconvenience of my congregation to attend here. We have a comfortable place of worship at New Park Street. There we are very happy together, and I have as many hearers and church-members as any man need desire:. It is only with a view of winning more souls to God that we have come to this larger building, and that we wish to erect our proposed Tabernacle. Should we be charged with seeking any other objects, the judgment-day will declare what our motives have truly been.”

The next large meeting in aid of the Building Fund was held on Monday evening, March 23, *1857,*at New Park Street Chapel, which was again quite crowded. The chairman was W. Joynson, Esq., of St. Mary Cray, whose donations, during the evening, reached altogether f200. The amount paid in or promised at the meeting was over f500, making the total to that date about f4,500. Mr. Spurgeon, in his address, recounted the history of the enlargement;at New Park Street, and of the services at Exeter Hall and the Surrey Gardens Music Hall. Of the latter gatherings, and of the need of the new Tabernacle, he said: —  
*“In*the Music Hall, we have reason to believe that the Lord has gathered great numbers to His Heavenly Shiloh. Few have witnessed the teeming multitudes who have assembled there to join in the praises of God, but have done so with tears; and it has well-nigh overpowered me many a time. Truly, the Lord hath done wonderful things for us, whereby we are laid under solemn obligation to Him. The Lord having given me favor in the eyes of the people, and blessed me with not a little success, the number of members has so increased as well-nigh to fill this place; indeed, we have 300 more friends, whose names are on the church-book, than are able to sit down in the area of the chapel to partake of the communion; and if the Lord should continue to bless my labors in the years to come, as He has done in those that are past, very soon there will not be room for an unconverted sinner to get into the chapel. What should I do then? ‘Oh!’ you say,’ there is the work of building up God’s people.’ I know there is, but I also know what it is to travail in soul for the unsaved, and I cannot bear the thought of not having sinners to speak to. Therefore it becomes me to look for a large place where they can be permanently gathered. The Music Hall has been made a trap for many a soul; but, then, it would not do always to worship there. Many of the converts want to join the church, and to come regularly under my ministry; but we have no room for them here; our chapel is altogether out of proportion to the crowds that gather with us at the Surrey Gardens. Where do they spend their Sabbath evenings? It is my duty to look after them. Long ago, I made up my mind that either a suitable place must be built, or I would resign my pastorate: you by no means consented to the latter alternative; yet I sternly resolved that one or the other must be done, — either the Tabernacle must be erected, or I would become an evangelist, and turn rural dean of all the commons in England, and vicar of all the hedge-rows. Some nobleman, speaking or writing of this matter, said, ‘ Who knows whether the place will ever be built?’ I wrote to him, and said, ‘ You need not ask that question, my lord; there’s a man alive who will earn the money.’ Yes, it shall be had. I have prayed to the Lord, and I shall keep on praying; and I know He will not refuse my request.”

A newspaper *canard,*in *The Morning Star,*June 10, 1857, might have checked the flow of contributions for the Tabernacle; but the Pastor promptly contradicted the story, and so neutralized its effects. A contemporary suggested that, instead of Mr. Spurgeon being “done” by the person referred to, it was the Editor of the *Star*who had himself been “done” by a penny-a-liner. The paragraph was as follows: —

“M R. SPURGEON DONE BY A PICKLE-SELLING TARTUFFE. — Most persons have observed in the newspapers, and on the walls of the metropolis, announcements of a reward for the apprehension of Mr.\_\_\_\_ , an oil and pickle merchant in the Borough, who has not surrendered to his bankruptcy, but has left the country in company with, it is said, his governess. It may not be known that, in Mr.\_\_\_\_ we have to add another to the unhappily long list of persons who have traded on religion for the purpose of deluding the world in general. Mr.\_\_\_\_ , who was accustomed to wear a white neckclofh among his other personal adornments, was Treasurer of the funds in process of collection for the new chapel about to be erected for Mr. Spurgeon, — by whose teaching, it would seem, he has profited but little; — and has absconded, it is said, with over f2,000 of the popular young Baptist’s money.”

Mr. Spurgeon wrote the following letter, which the Editor at once published: —

“Nightingale Lane,  
“Clapham,  
“June 10, 1857.

“Sir,

“I beg to call your immediate attention to several errors in an article in this morning’s *Slat,*headed ‘ Mr. Spurgeon done by a pickleselling Tartuffe.’ I cannot imagine the origin of so extraordinary a statement, for it might as well have been said that Adam robbed my orchard as that Mr.\_\_\_\_ had appropriated our funds. I am happy to say that the moneys for the new Tabernacle are ‘preserved’ in the London and Westminster Bank, in two good names, and have never been placed in any jeopardy up to the present. It is very probable that Mr.\_\_\_\_ was a hearer of mine; for, in a congregation of such magnitude, he may have been sometimes included; but he was not a member of my church, he did not hold a seat, nor did he regularly attend. He may have worn a white neckclofh, but he did not purchase it out of our funds, for he was in no way whatever connected with us beyond being an occasional attendant. If ever your informant has been under the sound of my ministry, I can only regret that I must put him down, with , as one who did not hear to profit. Men should be cautious in their repetition of unfounded tales, and especially so in cases where the sacred name of religion is concerned.

*“I*am,  
*“Yours*faithfully,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

On September 7, 1857, a meeting was held at New Park Street Chapel, for the double purpose of giving thanks to God for the success that had attended the Pastor’s labors; in gathering funds for the new Tabernacle, and of encouraging the people to do their utmost for the same object. On this -occasion, Mr. Spurgeon said that the many thousands of hearers, who regularly worshipped at the Music Hall, proved that, as soon as a building could be erected to seat 5,000 persons, that number of friends might be safely calculated upon to fill it, and they would then have the best and strongest church in London. Sir Morton Peto had promised to get his agent to look out for a suitable site, and he had also guaranteed substantial help to the Building Fund, which continued to grow, though not as rapidly as the young Pastor desired.

The following resolution, preserved in the church-book, shows that, in July, 1858, the time appeared to have arrived for making a further advance in connection with the much-needed new Tabernacle: —

“Meeting of the male members of the church,  
“Monday*,*July 26th, 1858.

“Our Pastor convened this meeting in order to acquaint the church with the position of the great design for erecting a new Tabernacle, and also to obtain the opinion of the church as to immediate progress.

“The church unanimously resolved, — That the Committee be desired to proceed with all prudent speed, and agree that our Pastor should leave us alternate months, if he saw it necessary to do so, in order to collect the needful funds.  
“The meeting afforded a. most pleasing proof of the unity and zeal of the brethren.”

This was the memorable gathering of *“the*men members of the church” (in accordancewith the provisions of the Trust Deed), to which Mr. Spurgeon often referred when relating the history of the building of the’. Tabernacle. His account of it will be found, with other autobiographical paragraphs, at the close of the present chapter.

It was not long after this time that the public announcement was made concerning the purchase of the freehold site for the new sanctuary; and on December 13, 1858, New Park Street Chapel was once more crowded with an eager and expectant audience, which had assembled “to hear a statement of the progress made, and to devise steps for recruiting the funds necessary for building the proposed Tabernacle.” The venerable Deacon James Low, presided; and Deacon Thomas Cook, the Honorary Secretary, presented a report which contained the following information with regard to the financial and other progress made by the Building Committee:—

“Their first efforts were directed to adopt measures for raising funds, and obtaining a site for the building, in both of which they have met with abundant success. Since the opening of the account, in September, 1856, to the present date, a period of 27 months, the sum of £9,418 19s. 7d. has been received, or an average of £348 17s. per month. The object, however, of paramount importance to the Committee was obtaining an eligible site for the building. This was, indeed, surrounded with innumerable difficulties, which seemed at times to be beyond the power of the Committee to overcome. At length, however, their labors were crow,led with complete success, and they were rewarded for their long and tedious negotiation by obtaining the promise of the Fishmongers’ Company to sell a portion of their land at Newington. F20 In announcing this, the Committee cannot refrain from expressing their high appreciation of the service rendered by W. Joynson, Esq., of St. Mary Cray, who, when it was stated that an Act of Parliament would, in all probability, be required to legalize the sale of the land, in the most generous manner offered to meet the expense which might be incurred in so doing, to the extent of f400. The Committee feel that the completion of this great and important work, which is now brought to so satisfactory a state, must rest entirely with the Christian public; and it only remains for those who desire to see the Kingdom of Christ extended in this our world of sin and iniquity, to cooperate with them, and the house shall be built; and long may the sure and certain message of salvation echo within its walls!”

After several other ministers had addressed the meeting, Mr. Spurgeon said: —

“I do not feel in speaking order to-night, because I seem to have something in my heart so big that I am not able to get it out. I cannot, however, resist the temptation of saying a few words on a topic which you may think far remote from the object of the meeting. The times in which we live are most wonderful; and I wish that this church should be in the future what it has been in the past, — the advance-guard of the times. I cannot help observing that, during the last four or five years, a remarkable change has come over the Christian mind. The Church of England has been awakened. How has this been accomplished, and what means have been used? I cannot help remembering that God honored us by letting us stand in the front of this great movement. From our example, the blessed fire has run along the ground, and kindled a blaze which shall not soon be extinguished. When I first heard that clergymen were to preach in Exeter Hall, my soul leaped within me, and I was ready to exclaim, ‘Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace!’ When I heard that Westminster Abbey was opened on Sunday evenings for the preaching of the gospel, and then St. Paul’s Cathedral, I was overwhelmed with gratitude, and prayed that only the truth as it is in Jesus might be preached in those places; and that the ministers might travail in birth for souls, that Christ might be formed in them the hope of glory. I never felt such union to the Church of England as I now do. The fact, is that, when a youth in the country, I was accustomed to associate with the name of clergyman, fox-hunting and such-like amusements; I abhorred them, for I thought they were all like that. Now I see them anxious to win souls to Christ, I cannot help loving them; and as long as they go on to feel the value of souls, I shall continue to pray for them. Now, seeing that the Lord has thus honored us to be leaders of others, we must continue to lead; we must not take one step backwards, but must still be the very van of the army. What if God should spread the late revival, and let the New Park Street Church still go on as the advanceguard of the host?

“Now, as to the Tabernacle, I am quite certain that it will be built, and that I ‘shall preach in it; and I have no doubt that the money will be forthcoming, — that matter is no burden to me. Some of you have done a great deal, but you ought to have done a great deal more. There are others who, if measured by oughts, ought not to have done so much. We have not done badly, after all; for, after paying f5,000 for the site, we have a balance in hand of £3,600. I hope that you will all agree that the spot is a most eligible one; though some recommended Kensington, others Holloway, and others Clapham. Having secured the ground, the next thing we did was to advertise for plans, and the following is the circular issued to architects: —

*“‘*The Committee for building the new Tabernacle for the congregation of the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon give notice that they are prepared to receive designs or models from architects or others, for the erection of a building on land situate near *“The*Elephant and Castle,” Newington, for which they offer the following premiums: — £50 for the best design, f30 for the second, and £20 for the third. The following are the conditions: — The building to contain on basement floor (which is to be five feet below the level of footway) school-rooms, twelve feet high, for boys and girls, and lecture-hall to seat 800 persons. The chapel above to seat 3,000 persons, with standing-room for not less than 1,000, and with not more than two tiers of galleries. Each sitting to be not less than two feet six inches by one foot seven inches. Gothic designs will not be accepted by the Committee. The plan of the Surrey Music Hall has proved to be acoustically good, and will be decidedly preferred. The total cost, including architect’s commission, warming, ventilation, lighting, boundary walls, fences, paths, fittings, and every expense, to be about £16,000. If the architect, to whom a premium may be awarded, shall be employed to superintend the execution of the work, he will not be entitled to receive such premium. Each architect to state the commission he will require on outlay, — such commission to include all expenses for measuring, superintendence, etc. The designs in respect of which premiums may be given are, thereupon, to become the property of the Committee. The designs to be addressed to the Building Committee, New Park Street Chapel, Southwark, and delivered, carriage free, on or before the 31st day of January, 1859. Each design to be inscribed with a motto, and an envelope, — with the same motto on the outside, — containing the name and address of the competitor, to be also sent to the Committee. The envelopes will not be opened until the premiums are awarded. The architects competing will be requested to act as judges, and to award the first and third premiums. The second premium to be awarded by the Committee. No architect will be allowed to select his own design.’ More than 250 architects have applied for this circular, all of whom appear desirous to build the place; so that I anticipate we shall have a very pretty Tabernacle picture-gallery by-and-by. There are many friends with us to-night who attend the Music Hall; they cannot get in here on a Sabbath evening, so they are obliged to be content with half a loaf. For their sake, I want to see the new chapel built, for I cannot bear the thought that so many should come here Sabbath after Sabbath, unable to get inside the doors.

“Brow, as to money; we say that the building is to cost about f16,000; but depend upon it, it will be f20,000. Someone asks, perhaps, ‘ How are we to get it?’ Pray for it. When I thought of the large sum, I said to myself, ‘ It may as well be twenty thousand as ten; for we shall get one amount as readily as the other.’ Brethren, we must pray that God will be pleased to give us the money, and we shall surely have it. If we had possessed more faith, we should have had it before now; and when this Tabernacle is built, we shall find money enough to build a dozen. Look at what Mr. Muller, of Bristol, has done by faith and prayer. When this land was threatened with famine, people said, ‘What will you do now, Mr. Muller?’ ‘ Pray to God,’ was the good man’s answer. He did pray, and the result was, that he had an overwhelming increase. Do you ask, ‘ What is required of me to-night?’ Let me remind you that all you possess is not your own; it is your Master’s; you are only stewards, and must hereafter give an account of your stewardship.”

Evidently many who were present were touched by the Pastor’s words, for the sums collected and promised during the evening amounted to nearly £1,000.

It will be noticed that the date for sending in plans, models, and estimates, was *January*31, — a day which was afterwards to become sadly memorable in the history of the church at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, for on that day, in 1892, its beloved Pastor heard the call, “Come up higher,” and went to join “the general assembly and church of the first-born, which are written in Heaven.” Careful readers will also note that, although “about £16,000” was the amount the architects were to allow for the total cost of the building and its fittings and surroundings, Mr. Spurgeon said, “Depend upon it, it will be £20,000;” and so it was, and more, too.

In February, 1859, the competing architects’ drawings (sixty-two sets and one model) were exhibited in the Newington Horse and Carriage Repository, and proved exceedingly attractive both to the New Park Street congregation and the general public. By a vote taken among themselves, about forty of the competitors assigned the first premium (£50) to the design submitted by Mr. E. Cookworthy Robins. The following letter from Mr. Spurgeon to Mr. Robins shows that the Pastor himself placed the prize design among the first three, but that the drawings submitted by Mr. W. W. Pocock had been selected by himself and the Committee: —

“Dear Sir,

“I am requested by the Committee to forward the enclosed cheque for £50 as the first premium. In so doing, allow me to congratulate you upon the architectural taste which is so manifest in your drawings. In my own personal selection, your design was one of three which I considered to be pre-eminent among the many. We have inspected the designs with great care, and long deliberation; and, although we are compelled to prefer Mr. Pocock’s design as the best basis for our future building, we could not but regret that we were thus compelled to lose your services in the erection. You may not be aware that we have received from private friends of yours, and persons for whom you have erected buildings, the most flattering testimonials of your ability. Since these were unsolicited on your part, and probably unknown to you, we thought them worthy of the highest consideration, and should have felt great pleasure in entrusting our great undertaking to your hands. Wishing you every prosperity,

“I am,  
“Yours heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

The Committee awarded the second premium (f30) to Mr. W. W. Pocock, and the Tabernacle was erected after his design, though with considerable modifications, including the abandonment of the towers at the four corners of the building. When Mr. Spurgeon found that they would probably cost about f1,000 each, he thought that amount of money could be more profitably expended, and therefore had them omitted, and the style of the structure was altered to the form which has since become familiar to hundreds of thousands of earnest worshippers from all quarters of the globe. The motto on the envelope accompanying Mr. Pocock’s drawings was the word “Metropolitan” — a singularly appropriate one, for the building erected under his superintendence was to contain that word in its official designation, — The Metropolitan Tabernacle. F21

When the plans were finally settled, and the tenders were received and opened, it was found that the highest amounted to f26,370, and the lowest to f21,500, with a saving of f1,500 if Bath instead of Portland stone should be used. This was the tender of Mr. William Higgs; and at the net estimate of f20,000, the very figures the Pastor had stated some months before, the contract was signed. Mr. Spurgeon often said that it was one of his chief mercies that Mr. Higgs was the builder of the Tabernacle, and it was a special cause of joy to many that the contract was secured by one of the Pastor’s own spiritual children, who afterwards became an honored deacon of the church, and one of the dearest personal friends and most generous helpers his minister ever had.

All needful preparations for the great building having been made, the foundation stone was laid by Sir Samuel Morton Peto, Bart., M.P., on Tuesday afternoon, August 16, 1859. About 3,000 persons were present at the ceremony, which was commenced with the singing of the hundredth Psalm, and prayer by Mr. Spurgeon; after which Mr. B. W. Cart read the statement, which he had drawn up on behalf of the deacons, rehearsing the history of the church, as summarized in Chapter 28. of the *Autobiography.* The closing paragraph, narrating the unparalleled advance made during the five years from 1854 to 1859 at New Park Street, Exeter Hall, and the Surrey Gardens, has been anticipated in the former part of the present volume; but a brief extract from it will show the tenor of the deacons’ testimony to their Pastor’s usefulness throughout the whole period of his ministry among them: —

“The antecedents of many generations, and the cherished reminiscences of the older members, prepared for the Rev. CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON that enthusiastic welcome with which he was spontaneously hailed by this church. From the day he commenced his labors in our midst, it pleased the Lord our God to grant us a revival which has steadily progressed ever since. Among the earliest additions to our number, there were not a few disciples of Christ, who, after making a profession under faithful ministers long ago departed to their rest, had wandered about, and found no settled home. Many such were gathered into the fold of our fellowship. Here their souls have been restored, while they have found the presence of the good Shepherd, who maketh us to lie down in green pastures, and leadeth us beside the still waters. But the greater work was that of conversion. So did the Holy Ghost accompany the preaching of the gospel with Divine power, that almost every sermon proved the means of awakening and regeneration to some who were hitherto ‘ dead in trespasses and sins.’ Thus our church became asylum for the aged, as well as a nursery for the babes of our Saviour’s family ....

“The prejudice against entering a Nonconformist sanctuary has, in many instances, been laid aside by those who have worshipped within the walls of an edifice that is justly accounted neutral ground, it being sacred or profane according to the temporary use it is made to serve. Every week has borne testimony to the saving influence of the gospel, as it has been proclaimed in the Music Hall to art assembly of 5,000 persons. Still, with so large a congregation, and so small a chapel, the inconvenience of a temporary meeting-place becomes more and more grievously felt. There is, and has been for the past two years, as fair an average of that large congregation, who are devout persons, and regular attendants, as in any sanctuary in London. Yet not one-third of them can find a place under the same ministry for more than one service during the week. The churchmembers far exceed the extent of accommodation in our own chapel to provide all of them with sittings. It is only by having two distinct services that we can admit our communicants to the table of the Lord. Tile necessity therefore for the undertaking that we assemble to inaugurate, must be perceived by all. Every attempt to trace the popular demand for Evangelical teaching to spasmodic excitement, has failed. The Pastor of New Park Street Church has never consciously departed from the simple rule of faith recorded in the New Testament. The doctrines he has set forth are identical with those which have been received by godly men of every section of the Church since the days of the apostles. The services of religion have been conducted without any peculiarity or innovation. No musical or aesthetic accompaniments have ever been used. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but they are mighty. The history of our progress for five years is patent to the world. The example has been found capable of successfully stimulating other churches in their aggressive efforts to save perishing souls. With earnest individual and united prayer, each step has been taken; and to the exclusive honor and praise of our God, our stone of Ebenezer is this day laid.”  
After the reading of the paper, Mr. Spurgeon said: — ”In the bottle which is to be placed under the stone, we have put no money, — for one good reason, that we have none tO spare. We have not put newspapers, because, albeit we admire and love the liberty of the press, yet that is not so immediately concerned in this edifice. The articles placed under the stone are simply these: — the Bible, the Word of God, we put that as the foundation of our church. Upon this rock doth Christ build the ministration of His truth. We know of nothing else as our standard. Together with this, we have put *The Baptist Confession of Faith,*which was signed in the olden times by Benjamin Keach, one of my eminent predecessors. We put also *the declaration of the deacons,*which you have just heard read, printed on parchment. There is also an edition of Dr. Rippon’s Hymn Book, published just before he died; and then, in the last place, there is a programme of this day’s proceedings. I do not suppose, that the New Zealander who, one day, is to sit on the broken arch of London Bridge, will make much out of it. If we had put gold and silver there, it is possible he might have taken it back to New Zealand with him; but I should not wonder, if ever England is destroyed, these relics will find their way into some museum in Australia or America, where people will spell over some of our old-fashioned names, and wonder whoever those good men could be who are inscribed here, as Samuel Gale, James Low, Thomas Olney, Thomas Cook, George Winsor, William P. Olney, George Moore, and C. H. Spurgeon. And I think they will say, ‘ Oh! depend upon it, they were some good men, so they put them in stone there.’ These deacons *are*living stones, indeed; they have served this church well and long. honor to whom honor is due. I am glad to put their names with mine here; and I hope we shall live together for ever in eternity.”

Sir Morton Peto, f22 having duly laid the stone, addressed the assembly as follows:— “My Christian friends, I congratulate my excellent friend, Mr. Spurgeon, the deacons, the church, and all assembled here, on this interesting event. It is one to which you have. looked forward for some time. It is the commencement of an edifice in which we trust that the era of usefulness inaugurated by your Pastor’s ministry will be continued, and largely increased. That admirable paper, which was read before the stone was laid, gave you a succinct but interesting account of the church up to the present time; we hope that those glories, which have been so remarkably shown in the earlier history of the church, may not only be continued in the salvation of a larger number than has ever yet been known, but that, in years to come, those glories may be even surpassed, and that all who live may have the happiness of feeling that the work, which has been begun to-day, was one which the Lord had eminently blessed. I could not but feel, during the reading of that paper, that the fact there stated, that the church at New Park Street is larger, at the present time, than can be accommodated in the building, that there is practically no room in the chapel for the world, is one which, to every Christian heart, must show that there remained nothing but for the church to arise and build. I know it may be said that the Music Hall, and other large places, might have given Mr. Spurgeon an opportunity of making known the unsearchable riches of Christ; but then there are other institutions in connection with an edifice of this kind, which are of equal importance with that to which I have referred. We have not only the assembly of the church within its walls, but we must have an opportunity of gathering the young for instruction; and when we look to the fact that this new Tabernacle will accommodate about two thousand Sunday-school children, and also place nearly five thousand people in the position of hearing the gospel of Christ, we not only feel that the world will be accommodated to hear, and the church amply provided for, but the young will be trained up in the way in which they should go. When my excellent friend, Mr. Spurgeon — as I have no doubt he will if spared (and I trust he will be spared), — opens this place, and declares the full, free, and finished gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ as the basis of his ministry in years to come, as it has been the basis of his ministry in the past, — I hope that it will be in a chapel free from debt. I know there is no testimony which his loving heart would so freely acknowledge, as that testimony to himself, or rather to his Lord through him, which would enable him to feel, when he first ascends the pulpit of this new chapel, ‘ I am here preaching the gospel to a people who are assembled in an edifice which has no claim whatever to discharge.’ Accept my sincere congratulations on this event, my hearty prayers that every wish of yours may be more than abundantly realized in all the future, that my dear friend, Mr. Spurgeon, and his deacons and friends, may not only live to see this house completed without accident, but that they and you, occupying it together, may have what, after all, is of the greatest importance, a rich baptism of the Holy Spirit, without whom all that we undertake is worthless.”

Mr. Spurgeon then said: — ”My dear friends, this is; not the first time that I have borrowed light from Sir Morton Peto. I have often cheered the darkness of a long railway journey by a most excellent lamp of his own manufacture, which he kindly presented to me, that I might see to read by it as I was travelling. I am very glad to see him blazing forth again to-day; in the light of his countenance many of us have been made glad. It is my earnest prayer that, while God is pleased to bless him with wealth, and rank, and influence, he may find it quite as easy to serve his God in the future as he has done in the past. We owe him much, as Dissenters, for his great zeal and wisdom in having brought through the House of Commons an Act whereby our chapels are well secured to us. I pray that God may give him grace, every day, that he may know his own title to the Kingdom of Heaven to be clearer and clearer as years come upon him.

“Before I speak about the building we are going to erect here, I want just to mention that I had a sweet letter from that eminent servant of God, John Angell James, of Birmingham, in reply to one I had written asking him to come to this meeting. He said, ‘ I would have done so if I had been well enough, but I am unable to travel. My work is almost done, I cannot serve my Master much longer; but I can still do a little for Him. I preach perhaps once on the Sabbath, and I still continue to do what I can with my pen. What a mercy,’ he adds, ‘to have been permitted to serve my Master so long!’ We frequently exchange notes, and in his last letter to me he said, ‘ My dear brother, be on your watch-tower, and gird your sword on your thigh. The devil hates you more than most men, for you have done so much damage to his kingdom; and, if he can, he will trip you up.’ I am sure what good Mr. James says is true, but I know that he, and you, and many more of the Lord’s people are praying that I may be upheld, and that we may successfully carry through this great undertaking. I never answer any slanders against myself, and very seldom answer any questions about what I mean to do. I am obliged to be a self-contained man, just going on my own way, and letting other people go in their own way. If I am wrong, ][ will be accountable to my own Master, but to no flesh living; and if I am right, the day will declare it. God knows how sincere are my intentions even when 1 may have acted unwisely.

“I said, some time ago, when our brethren were half afraid, ‘ The Tabernacle is to be built, and it will be built, and God will fill it with His presence and glory.’ There is no doubt whatever about the money being obtained. I scarcely know that I have asked an individual to give anything, because I have such a solid conviction that the money must come. I suppose that, out of all that is now in our hands, I have myself collected more than half through my preaching; and I daresay that is how the larger part of the remainder will come, through the kindness of the provincial and metropolitan churches, who have almost all treated me with the noblest generosity. I give this day my hearty thanks to all who have helped me; and I do not know but what I may as well add, to all who have not helped me. Many of them mean to do so, and therefore I will thank them beforehand. There is one gentleman here to.-day who is to address you.’ I think (albeit that he can speak admirably,) the best part of his speech will be made with his hand, for he has three thousand pounds with him to give as a noble donation from an aged servant of Christ, long sick and confined to his house, but who loves Christ’s ministers, and desires to help Christ’s cause. He would not like me to mention his name, and therefore I shall not do it.

“And now, my dear friends, as to the place to be erected here. I have a word or two to say with regard to *its style,*with regard to *Rs purposes,* and with regard to *our faith and our prospects.*

“It is to me a matter of congratulation that we shall succeed in building in this city a Grecian place of worship. My notions of architecture are not worth much, because I look at a building from a theological point of view, not from an architectural one. It seems to me that there are two sacred languages in the world. There was the Hebrew of old, and I doubt not that Solomon adopted Jewish architecture for the Temple, — a Hebrew form and fashion of putting stones together in harmony with the Hebrew faith. There is but one other sacred language, — not Rome’s mongrel tongue — the Latin; glorious as that may be for a battle-cry, it is of no use for preaching the gospel. The other sacred language is the Greek, and that is dear to every Christian’s heart. Our fullest revelation of God’s will is in that tongue; and so are our noblest names for Jesus. The standard of our faith is Greek; and this place is to be Grecian. I care not that many an idol temple has been built after the same fashion. Greek is the sacred tongue, and Greek is the Baptist’s tongue; we may be beaten in our own version, sometimes; but in the Greek, never. Every Baptist place should be Grecian, — never Gothic. We owe nothing to the Goths as religionists. We have a great part of our Scriptures in the Grecian language, and this shall be a Grecian place of ‘worship; and God give us the power and life of that master of the Grecian tongue, the apostle Paul, that here like wonders may be done by the preaching of the Word as were wrought by his ministry! “As for our faith, as a church, you have heard about that already. We believe in the five great points commonly known as Calvinistic; but we do not regard those five points as being barbed shafts which we are to thrust between the ribs of our fellow-Christians. We look upon them as being five great lamps which help to irradiate the cross; or, rather, five bright emanations springing from the glorious covenant of our Triune God, and illustrating the great doctrine of Jesus crucified. Against all comers, especially against all lovers of Arminianism, we defend and maintain pure (gospel truth. At the same time, I cart make this public declaration, that I am no Antinomian. I belong not to the sect of those who are afraid to invite the sinner to Christ. I warn him, I invite him, I exhort him. Hence, then, I have contumely on either hand. Inconsistency is charged against me by some people, as if anything that God commanded could be inconsistent; I will glory in such inconsistency even to the end. I bind myself precisely to no form of doctrine. I love those five points as being the angles of the gospel, but then I love the centre between the angles better still. Moreover, we are Baptists, and we cannot swerve from this matter of discipline, nor can we make our church half-and-half in that matter. The witness of our church must be one and indivisible. We must have one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. And yet dear to our hearts is that great article of the Apostles’ Creed, ‘I believe in the communion of saints.’ I believe not in the communion of Episcopalians alone; I do not believe in the communion of Baptists only, I dare not sit with them exclusively. I think I should be almost strict-communionist enough not to sit with them at all, because I should say, ‘This is not the communion of saints, it is the communion of Baptists.’ Whosoever loves the Lord Jesus Christ in verity and truth hath a hearty welcome, and is not only permitted, but invited to communion with the Church of Christ. However, we can say, with all our hearts, that difference has never lost us one good friend yet. I see around me our Independent brethren; they certainly have been to AS;non to-day, for there has been ‘ much water’ here; and I see round about me dear strictcommunion brethren, and one of them is about to address you. He is not so strict a communionist but what he really in his own heart communes with all the people of God. I can number among my choicest friends many members of the Church of England, and some of every denomination; I glory in that fact. However sternly a man may hold the right of private judgment, he yet can give his right hand with as tight a grip to everyone who loves the Lord Jesus Christ.  
“Now with regard to *our prospects.*We are to build this place, and the prospect I anticipate is, that it will be paid for before it is opened. I think it is likely to be so; because, if we carry out our intention, as a Committee, we have a notion that, if our friends do not give us liberal contributions, we will put up the carcass and roof it in, and allow them to come in and stand. Those who want seats can buy them. I am sure my people would soon get me a pulpit, and such is the zeal of our brethren that they would soon build me a baptistery. I leave it open for any generous friend here, who pleases to do so, to engage to provide some part of the Tabernacle, and to say, ‘ I will give that.’ Churchmen give painted windows for their places of worship; and if some of you agree to give different parts of the chapel, it may be so erected. You must understand that our large expenditure is caused partly by the fact that we have immense school-rooms underground, and also a lecture-hall, holding between 800 and 900 persons, for church-meetings. This is necessary, because our church is of such an immense size, and our members come out to every service if possible:; there is no church-edifice in London so well used as ours is; they hack it to pieces. We must build this Tabernacle strongly, I am sure, for our friends are always with us. They love to be at the prayer-meetings. There are no people who take out their quarter’s seat-money so fully. They say,’We will hear all that we can;’ and, depend upon it, they never give me a chance of seeing the seats empty. But our desire is, after we have fitted up our vestry, schools, and other rooms, that we shall be able to build other chapels. Sir Morton Peto is the man who builds one chapel with the hope that it will be the seedling for another; and we will pretty soon try *our* hands at it. Our people have taken to chapel-building, and they will go on with it. They built a chapel, that held ‘near a thousand hearers, in Horselie-down,’ for Benjamin Keach; then they built one in Carter Lane, for Dr. Gill; then one in Park Street, for Dr. Rippon; and now we have set about building one here. God sparing my life, if I have my people at my back, I will not rest until the dark county of Surrey is covered with places of worship. I look on this Tabernacle as only the beginning; within the last six months, we have started two churches, — one in Wandsworth and the other in Greenwich, and the Lord has prospered them, the pool of baptism has often been stirred with converts. And what we have done in two places, I am about to do in a third, and we will do it, not for the third or the fourth, but for the hundredth time, God being our Helper. I am sure I may make my strongest appeal to my brethren, because we do not mean to build this Tabernacle as our nest, and then to be idle. We must go from strength to strength, and be a missionary church, and never rest until, not only this neighborhood, but our country, of which it is said that some parts are as dark as India, shall have been enlightened with the gospel.”

Mr. Inskip, of Bristol, said: — ”I appear to-day as the representative of one, who is confined to a sick chamber, and has not seen the outside of the city for some years past; but that chamber is enlivened and enlightened by the bright illumination of the Eternal Spirit. That man’s large fortune has been dedicated to his Lord. He is eighty-three years of age, and he has given away upwards of eighty thousand pounds. And he has sent me here to say that he will give you *three thousand pounds,’*and, what is more, if twenty gentlemen will come forward with one hundred pounds each upon the opening of this chapel, I am prepared to put down twenty hundreds to meet theirs. It is not for me to laud the man, and therefore I leave him in his solitude, with an earnest prayer, in which no doubt many of you will unite’., that the Lord will grant to him the bright shinings of His countenance in his last declining hours. As regards this building which is about to be erected, it is a matter of considerable delight to me to be able to forward in the least degree the views of my friend, Mr. Spurgeon. It has been my happiness to hear of many sinners, in the West of England, brought to a knowledge of Christ through his ministry. Let me now place on this stone, in accordance With the mission with which I am entrusted, not a painted window, but a printed piece of paper.”

Many other donations were laid upon the stone, before the assembly dispersed. About two thousand persons sat down to tea in the Repository, and at half-past six the chair was taken by the Lord Mayor, Alderman Wire, when other addresses were delivered, and large additional contributions given, the total proceeds of the day amounting to between f4,000 and f5,000. In due time, the full amount required to claim the extra f2,000 from Bristol was forthcoming, and the generous friend there gave the amount he had authorized Mr. Inskip to promise on his behalf.

At the close of the entry in the church-book, from which the above account is condensed, there is, in Mr. Spurgeon’s handwriting, under date September 5, 1859, the following paragraph:—

“As a record of the laying of the first stone, the accompanying report is inserted. We were highly favored with the smile of our Heavenly Father, and desire to raise a joyful Ebenezer in remembrance of the happy event. May God speed the work, and permit us to meet for His service within the walls of the spacious edifice thus joyously commenced!”

In January, 1860, the total receipts had grown to £16,868 6s. 2d., and on Monday evening, April 2, one more crowded meeting was held at New Park Street Chapel, under the presidency of the Pastor, “to hear a statement as to the progress of the Building Fund, and to adopt measures for obtaining additional contributions.”

Mr. Spurgeon mentioned that the number of members had nearly reached 1,500, and that there was a constant and regular stream of enquirers and candidates for church-fellowship; and he had no doubt that, soon after the new Tabernacle was opened, and all the organizations were in operation, they would have over 3,000 members in full communion with them. Mr. Cook reported that there had been received, up to that date, £18,904 15s. 2d., but it was estimated that a further sum of £12,000 would be required before the Tabernacle could be opened free of debt. Towards this amount, upwards of £500 was contributed that evening.

(The remainder of this chapter consists of autobiographical paragraphs which Mr. Spurgeon had intended to use in narrating this portion of his life-story.)

It has always been a subject of satisfaction to me that Newington Butts was the site selected for the erection of the Tabernacle. It appears that, in the old days of persecution, some Baptists were burnt “at the Butts at Newington,” — probably on or near the very spot where thousands have been brought to the Lord, and have confessed their faith in the identical way which cost their predecessors their lives. If this is not actually an instance in which “the blood of the martyrs” has proved to be “the seed of the Church,” it is certainly a most interesting and pleasing coincidence. Our district seems to have furnished other martyrs, for in a record, dated 1546, we read: — ”Three men were condemned as Anabaptists, and brente in the highway beyond Southwark towards Newington.” Though that description is not very explicit, the region referred to could not have been very tar from the place where, these many years, there has been gathered a great congregation of those believe:cs whom some people still erroneously persist in calling “Anabaptists”, though we most strenuously hold to “one Lord, one faith, one baptism.”  
Our friends were at first not at all agreed as to the position which they thought would be most suitable for the new sanctuary. Some would have liked to go as far West as Kensington, others would have preferred the Northern district of Holloway while some would have gone nearer to Clapham; but, as soon as I found that it was possible for us to obtain the site formerly occupied by the Almshouses belonging to the Fishmongers’ Company, I set my heart upon securing that position. I could see that it was a great advantage to be so near the spot where many great public roads converged, and in a region from which we might reasonably expect to draw a large part of our future congregation.

When the male members of the church were summoned to attend a special meeting for the transaction of important business in connection with the site for the new Tabernacle, the sisters, who were unable to be present on the occasion, were greatly concerned; and when it, somehow, leaked out that the Pastor wished to buy the land in a certain position, and that some of the members of the Building Committee wanted to go elsewhere, every one of our brethren who had a wife, or daughter, or sister, or sweetheart, before he started for that memorable meeting received some such injunction as this: — ”Never you mind what anybody else says, you vote for what the Pastor proposes.” So it came to pass that, as soon as I described the advantages of the Newington Butts site, there was such an emphatic endorsement of my recommendation that it was quite useless for any other position to be mentioned, and the meeting decided accordingly.

I had said to the friends on the Committee who would have preferred some other site, “I have two plans for carrying out my proposal; the first is, to call the male members together, and to consult them about the matter.” When the special church-meeting had been held, and its verdict was so very decisive, one of the objectors said to me, “You told us that you had two plans for carrying out your proposal; what was the second one? .... Oh!” I replied, “simply that I had made up my mind not to go elsewhere, as I felt sure that we had been Divinely guided to the right spot.” The brother was rather amused at my answer to his question, but he and all the rest soon came round to my way of thinking, and we all rejoiced together that the Lord had so graciously prepared the place on which we were to erect “our holy and beautiful house” to His praise and glory. It was, certainly, by the special providence of God that Mr. James Spicer and other friends were placed upon the Court of the Fishmongers’ Company just when their services were needed to enable us to secure the land; and it was also a matter for sincere congratulation that the Company was able to sell the freehold, for I would never have built the Tabernacle on leasehold or copyhold ground, as so many other places of worship have been erected.

Soon after the building operations commenced, I went to the site with Mr. Cook, the Secretary of our Committee, and there, in the midst of the bricks, and mortar, and stone, and scaffold poles, and so on, we two knelt down, and prayed for the Lord’s blessing on the whole enterprise, and also asked that no one of the many workmen employed might be killed or injured while they were helping to rear our new place of worship; and I was afterwards able to testify that our prayer-hearing God had graciously granted both of our requests.

I have one, among many reasons, for speaking with ‘bated breath as to anything which God has wrought by me, because, in my heart of hearts, I am made to feel that the true honor belongs to unknown helpers, who serve the Lord, and yet have none of the credit of having done so. I cannot help being pushed to the front; but I envy those who have done good by stealth, and have refused to have their names so much as whispered. I do not think I ever told in public, until the night of my pastoral silver-wedding celebration (May 19, 1879), one fact which will ever live in my men:tory. The Tabernacle was to be built, and some £30,000 would be wanted. We did not know, when we started, that it would be so much; we thought about £12,000 or £15,000 would suffice, and we felt that we were rather bold to venture upon *that.*When we came to the undertaking of responsibilities, there was a natural shrinking on the part of the Committee with which we started. No one could be blamed; it was a great risk, and, personally, I did not wish anyone to undertake it. I was quite prepared for any risk; but then I had no money of my own, and so was a mere man of straw. There was, in some of our friends, a measure of fear and trembling, but I had none; I was as sure upon the matter as possible:, and reckoned upon paying all the cost. This quiet assurance, however, had a foundation which reflects credit upon one who has for some years gone to his reward. When I was riding with a friend to preach in the country, a gentleman overtook us, and asked me if I would get out of the trap, and ride with him in his gig, as he wished to speak with me. I did so. He said, “You have got to build that big place.” I said, “Yes.” He said, “You will find that many friends will feel nervous over it. Now, as a business man, I am sure you will succeed; and, beside that, God is with the work, and it cannot fail. I want you never to feel anxious or downcast about it.” I told him that it was a great work, and that I hoped the Lord would enable me to carry it through. “What do you think,” he asked, “would be required, at the outside, to finish it off altogether?” I replied, “£20,000 must do it in addition to what we have.” “Then,” he said, “I will let you have the £20,000, on the condition that you shall only keep what you need of it to finish the building. Mark,” he added, “I do not expect to give more than f50; but you shall have bonds and leases to the full value of £20,000 to fall back upon.” This was truly royal. I told no one, but the ease of mind this act gave me was of the utmost value. I had quite as much need of faith, for I resolved that none of my friend’s money should be touched: but I had no excuse for fear. God was very good to me; but, by this fact, I was disabled from all personal boasting. My friend gave his £50, and no more, and I felt deeply thankful to him for the help which he would have rendered had it been required. There were others who did like generous deeds anonymously, and among them was the giver of £5,000. If there be honors to be worn by anyone, let these dear brethren wear them.

CHAPTER 58.

WEEK-DAY SERVICES, 1858 — 1860.

Preach, preach twice a day,! can and will do; but, still, there is a travailing in preparation for it, and even the utterance is not always accompanied with joy and gladness; and God knoweth that, if it were not for the good that we trust is to be accomplished by the preaching of the Word, it is no happiness to a man to be well known. It robs him of all comfort to be from morning to night hunted for labor, to have no rest for the sole of his foot or for his brain, — to have people asking, as they do in the country, when they want to get into a cart, “Will it hold us?” never thinking whether the horse can drag them; — so they ask, “Will you preach at such-and-such a place? You are preaching twice, couldn’t you manage to go to the next town or village, and preach again?” Everyone else has a constitution, the minister is supposed not to have any; and if he kills himself by overwork, he is condemned as imprudent. I bless God that I have a valiant corps of friends who, day and night, besiege God’s throne on my behalf. I would beseech you again, my brethren and sisters, by our loving days that are past, by all the hard fighting that we have had side by side with each other, not to cease to pray for me now. The time was when, in hours of trouble, you and I have bent our knees together in God’s house, and we have prayed that He would give us a blessing. You remember what great and sore troubles rolled over our head; and now that God has brought us into a large place, and so greatly multiplied us, let us still cry unto the living God, asking Him to bless us. What shall I do if you cease to pray for me? Let me know the clay when you give up praying for me, for then I must give up. preaching, and I must cry, “O my God, take me home, for my work is done!” — C. H. S., *in sermon preached at the Music Hal/Royal Surrey Gardens, June*28, 1857.

I can say, and God is my witness, that I never yet feared the face of man, be he who or what he may; but I often tremble — yea, I always do, — in ascending the pulpit, lest I should not faithfully proclaim the gospel to poor perishing sinners. The anxiety of rightly preparing and delivering a discourse, so that the preacher may fully preach Christ to his hearers, and pray them, in Christ’s stead, to be reconciled to God, is such as only he knows who loves the souls of men. It is no child’s play to be the occupant of a pulpit; he who finds it to be so may find it to be something more fearful than devil’s play when the day of judgment shall come. — C. 1t. S., *in sermon preached at Belfast, August, 18*58.

W HEN the project for the building of the Tabernacle was fairly launched, the Pastor set to work most energetically in gathering the funds needed for the great enterprise. By means of his preaching, speaking, and lecturing, a very large proportion of the required amount was collected. In many cases, half the proceeds were devoted to local objects, and the remainder given to Mr. Spurgeon for his new chapel; but, in other instances, the whole sum was added to the Building Fund. Scarcely a single monthly list of contributions was issued without the inclusion of several of these items. The congregation at the Surrey Gardens Music Hall was of such a special character that it was only on rare occasions that the young minister could be absent on the Lord’s-day. Once, when he did spend a Sabbath, as well as some week-days in Scotland, he was able, on his return, to pay into the treasury the sum of £391 as the net result of his visit to Glasgow and Edinburgh. He also continued, as far as he was able, to preach on behalf of various provincial churches which sought his aid; and it sometimes happened that where the collections had been given one year towards the new Tabernacle, the next year Mr. Spurgeon would go again, and raise as large a sum as possible for the funds of those who had previously helped him.

A bare outline of these week-day services, even if it could be made, would occupy far more space than can be spared in this work. There: is no need to attempt the task, for that campaign of love is recorded on high, and it is gladly and gratefully remembered in thousands of the cities, and tow. ns, and villages of the United Kingdom; and the story of it has been told, again and again, from sire to son, in almost every part of the land. Eternity alone will reveal how great was the young evangelist’s influence upon the religious life of that portion of the nineteenth century; and those who formed a part of his vast audiences may well treasure in their memories, and hand on to their descendants, reminiscences of the notable incidents of those long-past days. Just a few representative instances only can be given, from which may be gathered something of the character of the *“labors* more abundant” in which the New Park Street Pastor was engaged in addition to his arduous occupation in connection with his ever-growing church and work.

In London, Mr. Spurgeon’s services were constantly in request every day or hour that was not required to meet the claims of his pastorate; and he was ever the ready and willing advocate of all who were downtrodden and oppressed. In a discourse upon Isaiah lxii. 10, — *”*Gather out the stones,” — delivered at the Scotch Church, Regent Square, on February 22, 1858, in aid of the Early Closing Association, he gave utterance to sentiments which are as appropriate to the present time as to the occasion when they were first spoken, although “early closing” has made great advances during the intervening period. After trying to remove, out of the way of those who desired to tread the Heavenly road, such “stones” as these, — (i) the supposed sacred character of the buildings in which the gospel was preached, (2) the obscure and learned language of many of the preachers, (3)the inconsistencies or gloominess of professors of religion, — Mr. Spurgeon thus referred to the object for which he had been asked to preach: —

“And now, what else have you to say? Perhaps you reply, ‘ What you say is well and good; no doubt religion is a holy and Heavenly thing; but, sir, there is one more stone in my path, — can you take that away? I am so engaged in business that it is utterly impossible for me to attend to the concerns of my soul. From Monday’ morning to Saturday night, — or, rather, till Sunday morning, — it is work, work, work, and I scarcely seem to throw myself upon my bed before I have to rise in the morning, and resume my tasks. You invite me to come to your place of worship on the Sabbath morning; do you wish me to go there to sleep? You ask me to come and listen to the minister; if you fetched an angel from Heaven, and gave him Gabriel’s trumpet, with which he could wake the dead, then I might listen; but I require something almost as powerful as that to keep my poor eyelids open. I should be snoring while the saints were singing; why’ should I come to mar your worship? What is the use of the minister telling me to take the yoke of Christ upon me, because His yoke is easy, and His burden is light?. I know not whether Christ’s yoke be easy, but I know that the yoke a so-called Christian population puts upon me is not easy. I have to toil as much as if I were a slave, and the Israelites in the brick-kilns of Egypt could hardly have sweated more fearfully under the taskmaster’s lash than I do. Oh, sir, this is the great stone in the midst of my path; and it so impedes me, that it is all in vain for you to talk to me of Christianity while this obstacle is in my way!’

“I tell you all, that this barrier is like the great stone that was laid at the door of the sepulchre of the dead Christ. Unless you try to remove it, where is the hope of getting these people under the sound of the Word? It is for this reason that I came, this evening, to preach a sermon on behalf of the Early Closing Movement. I felt that I could not make that matter the staple of my discourse; but that I might bring it in as one of the points to which I would ask your very special attention, and I am endeavoring to do so. I do think, Christian people, that you ought to take this stone out of the path of those who are without; and to do so, you must put a stop to that evil but common custom of visiting shops and houses of business at a late hour. If you make a man work so many hours in the six days, — really, it is twelve days in six, for what is it better than that when he has two days’ labor crowded into every one? — how can you expect the Sabbath to be kept sacred by him? And even if the man is willing so to keep it, how can you imagine that he can be in a proper frame of devotion when he comes into the house of God? Our Lord Jesus Christ is able to save to the uttermost; were He not, the salvation of poor dressmakers, and young men employed in drapers’ and other shops, would be impossible; for it is saving to the uttermost when He saves them nothwithstanding their exhaustion, and gives them strength to feel and repent, when they have scarcely physical and mental power enough left for any effort at all. O brethren and sisters, gather out the stones! If you cannot take them all away, do not strew the road more thickly with them by unthink-ingly keeping your fellow-creatures at work when they ought to be at rest.

“There are many young men and women, who are seeking something higher than the dust and ashes of this world, who might be converted to Christ, and who might be happy, but who are restrained because they have not the time which they desire for seeking the Lord. I say not that it is a valid excuse for them to make,-for very little time is needed for the exercise of repentance and faith; — but I do say that there are hundreds and thousands who are hindered from coming to Christ, and have theirearly religious impressions checked and damped, and their convictions stifled, and the first dawn of a better life quenched within them, because of the cruel system of the present state of society. I remember seeing a good farmer stop his chaise, and let his old grey pony stand still while he got down to pick off the road the bottom of a glass bottle, and throw it over the hedge, ‘Ah!’ he said, ‘I remember how my pony cut his foot by stepping on a glass bottle, and I should not like anyone to lame a valuable horse in the same way, so I thought I would get out, and remove the cause of danger.’ Let all of us act in the same fashion as that old farmer did,. and gather out all stones that may be an occasion of stumbling to any of our brothers and sisters.”

It must have been a memorable sight for those who saw the Surrey Gardens Music Hall packed on a week-day morning, — April 28, 1858, when Mr. Spurgeon preached the annual sermon of the Baptist Missionary Society from Psalm 46:8, 9:

“Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolations He hath made in the earth. He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; He breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; He burneth the chariot in the fire.”

The discourse is published in *The New Park Street Pulpit,*under the title, “The Desolations of the Lord, the Consolation of His Saints,” so it need not be described at length; but it is interesting to note Dr. Campbell’s comment on the new era which had dawned in connection with the Society’s anniversary: —

“The missionary sermon of Mr. Spurgeon, on Wednesday, at the Surrey Music Hall, was a magnificent affair. The immense, edifice was crowded to overflowing at the early hour of 11 o’clock in the forenoon. The great preacher was, as; usual, completely at home, full of heart, vivacity, and business. Mr. Spurgeon cannot devote weeks, if not months, to the preparation of such a sermon, and then take a fortnight’s rest to recruit his strength before the great day. All his days are great; and ‘they come in such rapid succession as to exclude the possibility of finish and elaboration, even if he aspired to it. But, with him, there is no aiming at greatness; exhibition has no place in his thoughts. He scorns it. What the occasion:supplies, amid ceaseless toils, past and coming, is all that he seeks, and all that he’. gives. In the proper sense, he preaches; and preaches, not to the ministers, but to the people; and he has his reward. He has no conception of reading a treatise, by way of a May Meeting sermon, extending to two or three hours! This he would deem a perversion of his office, and an insult to his hearers. His discourse on Wednesday was of the usual length, and of the usual character, only throughout highly missionary. Common sense in this, as in most of Mr. Spurgeon’s doings, obtained for once a thorough triumph. The collection amounted to nearly £150.”

Two notable week-day sermons were preached by Mr. Spurgeon, on Friday, June 11, 1858, on the Grand Stand, Epsom race-course. The text in the afternoon was singularly suitable to such a place’ “So run, that ye may obtain;” in the evening, the discourse was a powerful gospel invitation founded upon Isaiah 55:1:

“Yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price.”

There was a large congregation on each occasion, £60 was contributed towards the funds of a chapel in Epsom, and none who were present were likely to forget the unusual purpose to which “Satan’s seat” was that day devoted.

In August, 1858, Mr. Spurgeon paid his first visit to Ireland, and preached four sermons in Belfast. He gave his services freely, in order that the whole of the proceeds might help the Young Men’s Intellectual Improvement Association to build new school-rooms. That he was in a very unfit state of health for making such an effort, is evident from his remarks at the Music Hall service on the Sabbath morning after his return. Preaching on the words, *“As*thy days, so shall thy strength be,” he said: — ”Children of God, cannot you say that this has been true hitherto? /can. It might seem egotistical if I were to talk of the evidence I have received of this during the past week; but, nevertheless, I cannot help recording my praise to God. I left this pulpit, last Sunday, as sick as any man ever left the pulpit; and I left this country, too, as ill as I could be; but no sooner had I set my foot upon the other shore, where I was to preach the gospel, than my wonted strength entirely returned to me. I had no sooner buckled on the harness to go forth to fight my Master’s battle, than every ache and pain was gone, and all my sickness fled; and as my day was, so certainly was my strength..”

The first sermon was an earnest appeal to the undecided; the text was Mark 12:34:  
“And when Jesus saw that he answered discreetly, He said unto him, Thou art not far from the Kingdom of God.”  
Twenty-three years afterwards, Mr. Spurgeon received, from a missionary, the following cheering note: —

“Your first sermon in Belfast caused me to decide finally to enter the ministry. Since then, I have given ten years to mission work in Damascus, where I built the first church ever erected for the spiritual worship of the true God in that city. I built two churches on Mount Hermon, and again and again I have preached there your sermons in Arabic; one of them was delivered on the top of Mount Hermon at a picnic given to our different villagers.”

The second discourse was upon a subject of which Mr. Spurgeon was especially fond. In those early days, if he was preaching several sermons at any place, one of them was almost certain to be founded upon Revelation 14:1-3

“And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Sion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father’s Name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from Heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth;”

— and in the course of the sermon, Mr. Spurgeon usually introduced a few sentences describing his love for the harp. It was so at Belfast, as the following extract shows: —

“John says, ‘I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps.’ Surely, of all instruments, the harp is the sweetest. The organ has a swelling grandeur, but the harp has a softness and sweetness about it that might well make it a fit instrument for a royal musician like David. I must confess that a harp has so great a charm for me that I have sometimes found myself standing in the street, listening to some old harper making music on his harp. I have bidden him colne into the house and play to me, that I might prepare a sermon while he played; and I have found comfort, and my heart has been stirred within me, as I have listened to the thrilling strains. The singing in Heaven has all the tender melody of the harp, while it thunders like the rolling sea. Why is this? Because there are no hypocrites there, and no formalists there, to make a jarring noise, and spoil the harmony. There are —

***“‘No groans to mingle with the songs  
Which warble from immortal tongues.’***

No pain, nor distress, nor death, nor sin, can ever reach that blessed place; there is no drawback to the happiness of the glorified spirits above. They all sing sweetly there, for they are all perfect; and they sing all the more loudly, because they all owe that perfection to free and sovereign grace.”

The text of the third sermon was Matthew 28:5:*—*  
“The angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that: ye seek Jesus, which was crucified,” — and was specially aimed at finding out and comforting true seekers.

The last of the four services was held in the Botanic Gardens, when it was estimated that 7,000 persons heard the discourse delivered from Matthew 1:21:

*“Thou*shalt call His Name JESUS:  
for He shall save His people from their sins.” Towards the end of the sermon, Mr. Spurgeon told the story of Jack the Huckster, whose theology was comprised in the familiar lines, — ***“I’m a poor sinner, and nothing at all,  
But Jesus Christ is my All-in-all.”***

In closing the service, the preacher said: — ”I have to thank you all for the kindness with which I have been received, and especially I have to thank the ministers of Belfast. I never was in a town in my life where I met with such a noble body of men who love the good old truth, and I can say that I love every one of them. I thank them for all the kind things they have said to me and concerning me, and [ wish them and all my friends a hearty good-bye, and may the day come when we shall all meet in Heaven!”

Mr. Spurgeon went to Ireland many times after this, and Irish friends contributed very generously to the building of the Tabernacle. On one of his visits;, after the great revival, when preaching in Exeter Hall, from Amos 9:13, —

“ *Behold,*the days come, saith the Lord, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt,”

— he said: —

“Here we are told that ‘ the mountains shall drop sweet wine;’ by which we are to understand that conversions shall take place in unusual quarters. Brethren, this day is this promise literally fulfilled to us. I have: this week seen what I never saw before. It has been my lot, these last six years, to preach to crowded congregations, and to have many, many souls brought to Christ; it has been no unusual thing for us to see the greatest and noblest of the land listening to the Word of God; but this week I have seen, I repeat, what mine eyes have never before beheld, used as I am to extraordinary sights. I have seen the people of Dublin, without exception, from the highest to the lowest, crowd in to hear the gospel; and I have known that my congregation has been composed in a considerable measure of Roman Catholics, and I have beheld them listening to the Word with as much attention as though they had been Protestants. I have noticed military men, whose tastes and habits were not like those of the Puritanic minister, but who have nevertheless sat to listen; nay, they have come again, and have made it a point to find the place where they could hear the best, and have submitted to be crowded if they might but hear the Word. I have heard, too, cheering news of men, who could not speak without larding their conversation with oaths, who have come to hear the Word; they have been convinced of sin; and I trust there has been a work done in them which will last throughout eternity.

“But the most pleasing thing I have seen is this, and I must tell it to you. Hervey once said, ‘Each floating ship, a floating hell.’ Of all classes of men, the sailor has been supposed to be the one least likely to be reached, by the gospel. In crossing over from Holyhead to Dublin and back, — two excessively rough passages, — I spent the most pleasant hours that I ever remember. The first vessel that I entered, I found my hand very heartily shaken by the sailors. I thought, ‘What can these men know of me?’ They began calling me *‘Brother.’*Of course, I felt that I was their brother; but I did not know how they came to talk to me in that way. It is not usual for sailors to call a minister ‘ Brother.’ They paid me the utmost attention; and when I made the enquiry, ‘What makes you so kind?’ ‘Why!’ said one, ‘because I love your Master, the Lord Jesus.’ I enquired, and found that, out of the whole crew, there were but three unconverted men; and that, though the most of them had been before without God, and without Christ, yet, by a sudden visitation of the Spirit of God, they had nearly all been converted. I talked to many of these men; and more spiritually-minded men, I never saw. They have a prayer-meeting every morning before the boat starts, and another prayer-meeting after she comes into port; and on Sundays, when they lie-to off Kingstown or Holyhead, a minister comes on board, and preaches the gospel. Service is held on deck when it is possible; and an eye-witness said to me, ‘The minister preaches very earnestly, but I should like you to hear the men pray; I never heard such pleading before, they pray as; only sailors can pray.’ My heart was lifted up with joy, to think of a ship being made a floating church, — a very Bethel.

“When I came back by another steamer, I did not expect to have my previous experience repeated; but it was. The same kind of work had been going on among these sailors; I walked among them, and talked to them. They all knew me. One man took out of his pocket an old leather-covered book in Welsh, and said to me,’ Do you know the likeness of that man in front?’ ‘Yes,’ I replied, ‘! think I do; do you read those sermons?’ ‘Yes, sir,’ he answered, ‘ we have had your sermons on board ship, and I read them aloud as often as I can. If we have a fine passage coming over, I get a few around me, and read them a sermon.’ Another man told me the story of a gentleman who stood laughing while a hymn was being sung; so one of the sailors proposed that they should pray for him. They did so, and the man was suddenly smitten down, and on the quay began to cry for mercy, and plead with God for pardon. ‘Ah! sir,’ said the sailors, ‘ we have the best proof that there is a God here, for we have seen this crew marvelously brought to a knowledge of the truth; and here we are, joyful and happy men, serving the: Lord.’

Now, what shall we say of this blessed work of grace, but that the mountains drop sweet wine? The men who were loudest with their oaths, are now loudest with their songs; those who were the most daring sons of Satan, have become the most earnest advocates of the truth; for, mark you, once get sailors converted, and there is; no end to the good they can do. Of all men who can preach well, seamen are the: best.. The sailor has seen the wonders of God in the deep; the hardy British tar has got a heart that is not made of such cold stuff as many of the hearts of landsmen; and when that heart is once touched, it gives big beats, and sends great pulses of energy right through his whole frame; and with his zeal and energy, what may he not do, God helping him, and-blessing him?”

So far as can be ascertained, Mr. Spurgeons first sermons to a W ELSH audience were delivered in the ancient village of Castleton, midway between Newport and Cardiff, on Wednesday, July 20, 1859. Pastor T. W. Medhurst, who kindly forwards this information, says: —

“This visit is still greatly talked about by the aged people in the district; I have often been delighted to see their glistening eyes as they have related their recollections of this red-letter day in their past experience. Never in the annals of the village, either before or since, has there been anything at all approximating to the scene which was witnessed that day. For some time previously, it had been made known through Monmouthshire and Glamorganshire that the popular preacher, C. H. Spurgeon, would deliver two discourses in the open air at Castleton. The excitement among the people, and especially among the inhabitants of the hill-districts, in anticipation of the services, was immense. The question, ‘Are you going to hear Spurgeon?’ took the place of the usual remarks about the weather. The various railway companies ran excursion trains, and the result was an enormous gathering of people from all parts.

“The first service began at eleven o’clock in the morning, in a field which was admirably adapted for the occasion, as it gradually sloped to a level at the bottom. The seats were arranged in a semi-circular form. Everyone had a full view of the preacher, and his powerful voice was distinctly heard by the ·nine or ten thousand persons assembled. Before announcing his text Mr. Spurgeon said: — ‘My dear friends, I most earnestly and humbly entreat your prayers that I may be enabled-to preach the gospel with power this day. I do not know that at any time I ever felt my own weakness more than I do now. I recollect to what mighty men of God some of you have sometimes listened, ministers whose names ought to be held in reverence as long as any man’s name endures on the face of the earth. I can scarcely hope to tread in the footsteps of many of those preachers whom you have heard. This, however, I can say to you, — you may have men in Wales who can preach the gospel *in a better manner*than I can hope to do, but you have no one who can preach a better gospel. It is the same gospel from first ‘to last, and tells of the same Saviour, who is ready to receive the meanest, the feeblest, the most guilty, and the most vile, who come unto God by Him. May the Holy Spirit graciously rest upon us now! I will read my text to you from the Gospel according to Matthew, the twenty-eighth chapter, and the fifth verse, and then Mr. Davies, of Haverfordwest College, will read it to you in Welsh, — a feat which I cannot accomplish.’

“The sermon was a most powerful discourse, delivered with impassioned earnestness and fire, never surpassed by the most eloquent of the .Welsh preachers. The text in the evening was Revelation 14:1-3. Every word of the preacher was plainly audible to the whole of the vast audiences at both the services; and at the close of the day it was remarked that his voice was as clear and as vigorous as at the commencement.”

Mr. Spurgeon preached in the Principality on several occasions afterwards; the service to which he refers on page 93 was probably the one held at Abercarne on Wednesday, May 3o, 1860, when it was estimated that 20,000 persons heard the discourse which he delivered in the open air.

Among all the notable week-day services in his earlier years, few were more memorable to both preacher and people than those held in Paris, on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, February 7-9, 1860. The record of them is preserved in a pamphlet of thirty-two pages. On the title-page of Mr. Spurgeon’s own copy is inscribed, in his handwriting: — ”By Rev. Wm. Blood, who escaped at the burning of the *Amazon.”*This gentleman was temporarily officiating as minister of the American Church in Paris, and he thus narrates the circumstances which resulted in Mr. Spurgeon’s visit: —

“I had not been long in Paris, when it occurred to me that a good opportunity presented itself for inviting my friend, the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, to preach in the French capital; hoping that, thereby, with the blessing of God, a revival might commence in this land of superstition and error. And well knowing that France and the Continent offered a fine field for missionary enterprise, though awfully neglected since the days of the Reformation, I did not see why an attempt should not be made to enkindle the smoking embers of pure religion, which might eventually send forth a flame of light and heat which would spread over the entire country. It was a solitary monk, in his lonely cell, who, discovering the Word of God, read it, and, finding that it cheered his otherwise dismal hours, and gave light and warmth to his heart, determined that others should be made happy by the celestial fire. He snatched the torch of Divine truth, went forth from his darkness, and held it up, that all might see the. living light; other hearts were illumined by the same flame; and, soon, a blaze of Heavenly truth spread all over Germany. Why should there not be another and even a better Luther raised up in beautiful France? Why not many? Why should not the ministry of the Lord’s servant, which has been blessed to the conversion of so many souls in Great Britain, be also blessed in this great country?

“Still, there were obstacles to encounter. Mr. Spurgeon had engagements made for almost every day for two years to come, and he had refused to go to America, even for a short time; although f20,000 had been offered to help build his chapel in London. I had, it is true, preached for him under peculiar circumstances when he had been seized with severe illness. But would it not be ‘*uncanonical’*for a clergyman to invite one to preach not ‘in holy orders’? But is he not ‘in holy orders,’ God having evidently ‘*ordered’*him to preach the gospel of peace; for he can already point to thousands of sinners made *‘holy’*by his preaching, and say, ‘The seals of my ministry are ye, in the Lord.’ The matter was then decided. I at once applied to my friend, Mr. Curtis, — a generous and noble-spirited American, who had originated the erection of the American Chapel, — for the use of that building, expressing the desire that, if any collection were made, it might be given to liquidate the debt on the chapel, or for the poor. The Committee met immediately, when the following resolution was agreed to:—

“‘Paris, January 18, 1860. — The Committee have unanimously resolved to give up the American Chapel to the Rev. William Blood, to be disposed of as he thinks proper for the use of his friend, the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon; but they decline the collection for the American Chapel, preferring to give it towards the erection of the chapel for Mr. Spurgeon.’

“Application was next made to the *Consistoire*of the Reformed Church of France for the use of a much larger building, — the Eglise *de l’Oratoire,* nearer the centre’, of Paris. The application was at once responded to by the following resolution: —

“‘The *Consistoire*held a council last night, and decided to lend the Eglise *de l’Oratoire*to the Rev. W. Blood, for the *predications*of his friend, the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.’

“This was accompanied by a few lines from one of the venerable Pastors, the Rev. Dr. Grandpierre, in which he said: — ’I fervently [)ray that the Holy Spirit may bless the *predications*of our brother, Mr. Spurgeon, to the conversion of many souls, and the strengthening of the regenerate in the faith.’“

Mr. Spurgeon was then asked if he would go to Paris, and he cheerfully consented to preach three sermons. To the further request that he would deliver two discourses on each of the three days of his visit, he replied: —

“My Dear Mr. Blood,

“I am willing to preach once on Tuesday, in the evening, wherever you pleas(:. Then twice on Wednesday, and twice on Thursday; but I must return the first thing on Friday morning. I thought I was coming over to serve the American Church; but, as the Committee prefer to give the collection for the chapel in London, I am content. Let me stay *in some quiet house,*where I shall not be overwhelmed with visitors. The lionizing is the worst [)art of my labors. I hope the visit will be blessed by God.

“Yours very heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

Mr. Blood was especially impressed with the self-abnegation manifested by this note; and, writing after the services had been held, he thus referred to Mr. Spurgeon’s disinterestedness in being willing “to serve the American Church” in Paris, when he had need of such a large amount to complete the Tabernacle: —

“He had no idea that the building of his chapel would be benefited by his visit. He expressed astonishment when he heard for the first time that it was proposed to be so. This ought at once to silence the slander of some evil-disposed correspondents of the London newspapers in their false reports of the collections made in the American Chapel. Had those collections been made *properly,* f23 as I suggested, either for the American Chapel or that in London, or for the poor of Paris, or had Mr. Spurgeon been in the least degree anxious on the subject, the collections might have been f6oo, instead of f60. But Mr. Spurgeon was not at all consulted, neither did he pass a thought upon the matter; for he was invited *for one object,*and for that *a/one*he came, — viz., to seek to lead souls to Christ; and, thank God, this great result has been attained in several cases already known! If it were prudent, many instances might be given as illustrations of this remark. One fact, may, however, be stated here. An English gentleman, occupying a high position in Paris, who had not entered any church for years, was led by curiosity, from the reports of the popularity of the preacher, to go and hear him. Some days after, a friend of the writer called to see him at his office, and was astonished to find him in a state of great excitement, weeping as if some great calamity had fallen upon his household. The Bible, which he had been reading, was open before him. His visitor’ enquired what was the matter with him; and the gentleman replied that ‘ he had gone to hear that young man (Mr. Spurgeon) preach, his eyes had been opened to a consciousness of his real state before God, he had been led to see himself as a sinner of the vilest description, without God and without Christ in the world, and he was searching in the Holy Scriptures to try to find some ray of hope.’ This and similar language described his state of mind, while it so excited the sympathy and emotion of his friend that they wept together, and joined in praying to God for mercy. His daughter, too, was similarly affected. She was a lady of fashion, though a religionist of the most formal kind. She had been scrupulous, like the apostle in his unconverted state, in attending to all the ceremonial of outward religion. She had been ‘alive without the law once,’, and even having the law she was blind as to its spiritual nature and convincing power; but now, ‘the commandment came,’ applied to her conscience by the agency of the Holy Spirit, and she ‘ died’ in despair as to any hope that the violated law could give her life, or even the promise of life. She saw her need of the vicarious sacrifice of the Son of God; she shut herself up in her room, and there, in agony of soul, sought the Saviour, gave up all dependence on her own righteousness, and submitted herself to ‘ the righteousness of Christ.’“

One specimen of the reports published in certain London newspapers will show that Mr. Blood did not write at all too strongly when he alluded to “the slander of some evil-disposed correspondents” concerning the collections at the services:—

“The unconquerable Spurgeon left Paris this morning, through which he passed, as it were, like a whirlwind. The Parisian public, however, seemed far less enchanted with him than he appeared to be with himself. Perhaps there might be good reason for this. Whatever may have been the moral result of Mr. Spurgeon s eloquence, it is certain that he has but little cause of complaint against the effect which he produced, for the extreme generosity of his congregations evinced itself in the well-filled plates, which, piled up with gold pieces; excited the astonishment of the few French listeners who had come, as usual, provided with their ten-souspieces, and who, on perceiving the magnificence displayed by the English portion of the audience, feeling ashamed of the contrast, passed by, and gave nothing at all. I have heard of a discontented individual, perhaps a rival French pastor, who left at the church a parcel of some weight and breadth, as his contribution to the erection of Mr. Spurgeon’s Tabernacle. It was a tempting-looking packet, beautifully enveloped in silver paper, and carefully tied with rose-coloured ribbons. The chronicle speaks not of the varied emotions which must have agitated the heart of the person who opened it, but merely mentions that its contents consisted of a small brick from the factory of St. Germain, with a most polite note, in which the writer, regretting his inability to vie with the other contributors in money to that mighty work, begged to offer his *petit possible*in kind, expressing his opinion that, if every one of Mr. Spurgeon’s legions of admirers were to do the same, not merely a church, but a city might be built with the materials thus collected. The friends of Lamartine, like those of ‘ Holloway,’ ‘ Rowland,’ and ‘ Day and Martin,’ who never lose the opportunity of aiding their cause by the passing events of the day, have already made good use of the *rouleaux*of napoleons with which it was reported the plates of Spurgeon were well-nigh filled, and have pathetically compared the state of things they represent to that demonstrated by the miserable sum of five hundred thousand francs, subscribed by ‘ all France and foreign countries,’ which poor Lamartine is obliged to pocket while waiting for the rest, which does not come.

“Mr. Spurgeon’s egotism and arrogance have carried him so far as to advertise his sectarian chapel as *‘The Metropolitan*Tabernacle,’ thus ignoring all the other Dissenting chapels and ministers. The next step, doubtless, will be to call *himself*the *‘Metropolitan’*and his building the cathedral, thus ignoring also the Archbishop of Canterbury; but that humble and modest Christian will not dispute the point with this upstart, even though he were ready to advertise his ready-cash shop as’ The Metropolitan Tea Warehouse!!’ But pride and avarice will soon be discovered, especially when the holiest and most sacred subjects are used to fan the flame.”

In vivid contrast to the above was the following article, written by Dr. Grandpierre, and published in the French religious paper, *L’Esperance: —* “The eminent preacher officiated three times at the American Chapel, Rue de Berri, and twice at the Church of the Oratoire. The subject of his first discourse in the American Chapel was, ‘Salvation’ (Acts 16:31); that of the second, ‘The Unfathomable Love of Christ’ (Ephesians 3:19); and the third, ‘Jesus, the Shepherd of the Faithful’ (Psalm 23:1). At the Oratoire, he preached, the first time, on ‘Prayer’ (Psalm 73:28), and the second, on ‘The New Song of the Redeemed’ (Revelation 14:1-3).

“No one will feel inclined to contradict us when we declare that this celebrated orator fully justified, or even surpassed, the high opinion which the generality of his auditors had conceived of him. Mr. Spurgeon appears of a strong constitution, and nothing in his exterior betrays at first the excellence of the gifts which so particularly distinguish him. As a Christian, he is animated by the warmest piety; and, from his whole person, there seems to shine the sacred fire of the love of souls. One feels that he preaches especially for the salvation of unconverted sinners, and for the strengthening of the faith of those who are regenerate. As a theologian, his doctrine is clear, precise, square, — we might say; he is Calvinistic, incontestably,-but moderately so. It was, with peculiar satisfaction, that we heard him proclaim, from the pulpit of the Oratoire, with a vigor and a clearness equalled only by his eloquence, the perfect Divinity of the Saviour, and redemption by the expiation of His death, the eternal election of the children of God, and other essential points.

“As an orator, he is simple and powerful, clear and abundant. The plans of his sermons are easy to comprehend and to follow; his developments are logical, and his language, always flowing and elegant, never fatigues. One would willingly hear him for hours at a time. Among the requisites to oratory which he possesses in a remarkable degree, three particularly struck us, — a prodigious memory, which furnishes him, on the instant, with the comparisons, facts, and images, best calculated to throw light upon his ideas; — a full and harmonious voice, which he modulates with peculiar ease, from the lowest to the highest tone, — and, lastly, a most fruitful imagination, giving colour to all his thoughts, constantly varying their expression, and painting to the eye of the mind the truths of Christ.

“Mr. Spurgeon is in reality a poet. But without having heard him, an idea can scarcely be formed of the richness of his conceptions, — never, however, carrying him beyond the simplicity of the Christian pulpit, or the dignity of a minister of Christ. It is affirmed that Mr. Spurgeon has never been to College, and has been in the habit of preaching since the age of seventeen. He is not yet six-and-twenty; but once having heard him is enough to convince us that, in every respect, physically, morally, and spiritually, God has specially qualified him to be an orator, — and a Christian orator. He has left, in the hearts and minds; of his auditory, the most pleasing, and, let us hope, the most salutary impression. Before and after his preaching, special meetings for private and public prayer took place, in order to beg of God to bless his proclamation of the gospel.

“We have no doubt that some souls have been converted. We are certain that all Christians must have felt their activity and inner life invigorated and reanimated. Our dear and honored brother has received the most fraternal reception from the Christians of every Evangelical denomination in this capital, and he quitted us, apparently touched, grateful, and happy, promising to return, if possible, shortly, to visit us again. For our part, we bless God that the Council of our Reformed Church at Paris has considered it an honor and a privilege to respond to the request of his friend, in opening for him the doors of its great temple, which, during both services, was filled with a compact crowd. In the midst of this vast assemblage, the members of our own church were: happily by no means in a minority. Our church has thus once more given proof that she possesses many families who value and appreciate the faithful and living exposition of the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

Even more remarkable was the article in *the Journal des Debats,*from the pen of M. Prevost-Paradol, its principal leader-writer, and one of the most popular and distinguished of the Parisian *litterateurs;*though a Romanist, he wrote in this appreciative strain of Mr. Spurgeon and his services: —

“Mr. Spurgeon has fulfilled his promise. The indefatigable apostle has spent three:lays among us, and during his visit he preached five times without our being able to detect the slightest weariness in this gifted man. Yet we do not think that any other orator could put more emphasis into his words, or give himself up more completely to his audience. Without posing, or getting too much excited, Mr. Spurgeon animates his discourse from beginning to end. The subject of his sermon is generally commonplace, and the end of it can be foreseen; but what is neither commonplace nor foreseen, and which is incomprehensible without hearing Mr. Spurgeon, is the persuasive, familiar, and yet forcible way in which he compels his audience to follow him, without fatigue, through the long continuous recitals, full of vivid pictures, exhortations, timely warnings or entreaties, with which he, by so much art, makes up the rich and solid groundwork of his discourses. But why speak of art, when gifts are in question, or rather, we would say, the most inspired oratory we have ever had the pleasure of hearing? Never has a sermon been preached with less apparent preparation, or given to the hearer the idea of a studied discourse; yet where is the audience that has noticed the least weakness, or the slightest hesitation, in his flowing and simple eloquence? One listens with pleasure to his powerful and sympathetic voice, which never rises or falls beyond proper limits, and yet fills the whole church with its sweet cadences.

“The man who possesses these gifts, and uses them so generously, is not yet twenty-six years of age. It is impossible to look upon his energetic and loyal face without reading there conviction, courage, and earnest desire to do the right. This orator, who is the most popular preacher in a country where liberty of speech and conscience exercises such potent influence, is not only the most modest, but also the most simple of men. It is true that he has the happiness to address a nation which does not think it necessary to be unjust in its public criticism; but, after all, Mr. Spurgeon owes to himself alone the great and salutary influence which he has acquired, and yet no one could ever rightly accuse him of egotism. It is without affectation that he, unreservedly, ascribes all the glory to God. It seems to us that all disputes concerning religion ought to vanish before such an apostle; and to recognize his power, is but just. As for us, who have seen in this youthful and eloquent preacher one of the most happy examples of what modern Christianity and liberty can produce, we feel that it is an honor to come into contact with such a man as Mr. Spurgeon, and to exchange with him the grasp of friendship.”

Mrs. Spurgeon had the great joy of accompanying her dear husband on this visit. Deacon James Low, who was another of his Pastor’s companions on this occasion, gave the following account of an extra service of considerable interest: — ”By special invitation, Mr. Spurgeon visited the College at Passy, where there were several young men of great promise being educated for the mission field. Mr. Spurgeon received the students with much heartiness, and gave them a very touching and interesting address on the importance and duties of missionary work, especially urging them to preach Christ and Him crucified, as that doctrine would influence their hearers’ hearts more than any other theme. The President translated the address into French, and the students appeared very grateful for the visit.

“Mr. Spurgeon was very much pressed by the various ministers and others to preach again in Paris as soon as possible. The results of the services were altogether most gratifying. To show the kindly feeling of the friends, collections were made, at the American Chapel, amounting to f64, towards the Tabernacle Building Fund. Two collections were also made at the Oratoire for the poor of Paris; they realized £40.”

Mr. Blood wrote: — ”It is gratifying to know that, not only in Paris was there a great wish to hear Mr. Spurgeon, but the same desire existed in different parts of France, in consequence of the articles which had been disseminated by the press. Several came hundreds of miles to attend the services; and amongst others, the ministers of Marseilles and Lyons. After the last service at the Oratoire, Mr. Spurgeon was invited to meet the *Consistoire*at the house of the Pastors. There was a great number of Christian friends present; in fact, the *salons*were crowded. Hymns of joy and praise were heartily sung, and fervent prayers were offered that God might bless the seed which had been sown, and cause it to take deep roof in many a heart. Mr. Spurgeon was cordially thanked for his kind help:to the Church in France, and he gave a brief farewell address. It was:indeed a sweet and solemn time, — a little Pentecostal season, not soon to be forgotten. This service was entirely in French.”

On his return home, Mr. Spurgeon wrote a loving letter of hearty greeting and thanks, from which the following extract may appropriately complete the records of that very memorable visit to Paris: —

“Mon Eglise a offert au Seigneur ses plus instantes supplications pour la prosperite et l’extension de l’Eglise de Christ en France. Nous vous porterons desormais sur nos coeurs, et nous esperons occuper aussi une place dans vos prieres journalieres .... Puis-je repondre toujours aux temoignages d’estime que vous avez bien voulu m’accorder! Je m’incline jusqu’a terre sous le poids des misericordes dont le Seigneur a daigne me favoriser, et les marques d’affection que me donnent Ses enfants penetrent mon coeur de gratitude.”

This chapter may fitly be closed with a brief reference to the week-day services at the Tabernacle, Moorfields, which were among the fixed engagements of each year. Dr. John Campbell, who had long stood forth as the friend and advocate of the young Pastor, thus spoke of this annual visit: — ”Every 365 days, Mr. Spurgeon and his dear companion and the two little Princes Imperial honor my family with their presence for a whole day. We count on it; it is a high day with us. By two sermons, on that occasion, Mr. Spurgeon almost entirely supports our City Mission at the Tabernacle.” In the reminiscences, of which mention is made in chapter41, Mr.Spurgeon referred to this happy compact in the following terms: — ”It was always a great pleasure to me to have been associated with good old Dr. Campbell, the Editor of *The British Banner.*He was a very dear friend of mine. I used to preach for him every year, and it was understood that, when I went, I must take my dear wife and our two little boys with me. The day before we were to go, that great stern strong man, who had no mercy upon heretics, but would beat them black and blue, — I mean in a literary sense, not literally, — used to visit a toy-shop, and buy horses and carts or other playthings for the children. One time, when he sent the invitation for us all to go to his house, he wrote: — ’Our cat has had some kittens on purpose that the boys may have something fresh to play with.’ It showed what a kind heart the old man had when he took such pains to give pleasure to the little ones.”

One of the most memorable of these annual visit,.; was paid on Wednesday, March I4, 186o. There had been, near that time, a great many serious accidents and notable sudden deaths. A mill in America had fallen, and buried hundreds of persons in the ruins. A train had left the rails, and great numbers of the passengers were in consequence killed. The captain of the largest vessel then afloat, who had been brought safely through many a storm, had just said farewell to his family when he fell into the water, and was drowned. A judge, after delivering his charge to the grand jury with his usual wisdom, calmness, and deliberation, paused, fell back, and was carried away lifeless. Mr. Corderoy, a well-known generous Christian gentleman, was suddenly called away, leaving a whole denomination mourning for him. Mr. Spurgeon’s sermon — ”Memento Mori” — at Exeter Hall, the following Lord’s-day morning, contained a reference to these occurrences, and also to another which more directly affected Dr. Campbell. Preaching from the words, “O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!” Mr. Spurgeon said: —

“It was but last Wednesday that I sat in the house of that mighty servant of

God, that great defender of the faith, the Luther of his age, — Dr. Campbell; we were talking then about these sudden deaths, little thinking that the like calamity would invade his very family; but, alas! we observed, in the next day’s paper, that his second son had been swept overboard while returning from one of his voyages to America. A bold brave youth has found a liquid grave. So that here, there, everywhere, O Death! I see thy doings. At home, abroad, on the sea, and across the sea, thou art at work. O thou mower! how long ere thy scythe shall be quiet? O thou destroyer of men, wilt thou never rest, wilt thou ne’er be still? O DDeath! must thy Juggernaut-car go crashing on for ever, and must the skulls and blood of human beings continue to mark thy track? Yes, it must be so till He comes who is; the King of life and immortality; then the saints shall die no more, but be as the angels of God.”

CHAPTER 49.

MEETING THE UNFINISHED TABERNACLE.

I hope I shall never, while I live, cease to have another project always in hand. When one thing is done, we will do something else. If we have tried to make ministers more diligent in preaching, we must try to make the churches more earnest in praying. When we have built our new chapel, we must build something else; we must always have something in hand. If I have preached the gospel in England, it must be my privilege to preach it beyond the sea; and when I have preached it there, I must solicit longer leave of absence that I may preach it in other countries, and act as a missionary throughout the nations. — C. *H. S., in sermon at the Music Hall Royal Surrey Gardens, January 2,*1859.

At a church-meeting, held in New Park Street Chapel, August 6, 186o, the following resolution was carried unanimously and enthusiastically: —

“We hereby record our sincere thankfulness to Almighty God for the gracious providence which has preserved our Pastor in foreign lands, and for the lovingkindness which has blest Iris travels to the restoration of his health. It is our earnest prayer that, for many years to come, our beloved Pastor may be spared to labor among us in the power of the Spirit and with the smile of our Heavenly Father. It is no small joy to us to hear of the great acceptance which the printed sermons of our dear Pastor have met with in France, Switzerland, Germany, Holland, Sweden, and the United States, and we equally rejoice that his personal presence among foreign churches has been attended with Divine blessing. Specially are we glad that our Pastor has been honored to occupy the pulpit of John Calvin in the venerable city of Geneva, and we devoutly pray that on that city the love of the great Head of the Church may ever rest, and that all her ancient glory may be restored. Unto Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, be glory for the gracious success which has been with us even unto this day, and may it please our Covenant God to remember us for good even unto the end!”

T HE first meeting in the Tabernacle was held on Tuesday afternoon, August 2, 1860, while the building was still unfinished. The object of the gathering was twofold; — first, to give thanks to God for the success which had thus far attended the enterprise; and, next, to raise as much as possible of the amount required to open the sanctuary free from debt. £22,196 19s. 8d. had been received up to that time, but more than f8,000 was still needed. Apsley Pellatt, Esq., presided, and heartily congratulated the congregation upon being present in the largest place of worship in Great Britain for the use of Nonconformist Christians. Several representative speakers delivered interesting and sympathetic addresses, and Mr. Spurgeon gave a detailed description of the main building in which the meeting was being held, and of the smaller rooms connected with it. After a few introductory sentences referring to his ministerial brethren who were about to speak, the Pastor said: —

*“Now,*my dear friends, you may perhaps guess the joy with which I stand before you to-day, but no man but myself can fathom its fulness, and I myself am quite unable to utter it. ‘Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy Name.’ Much as I wish to express my gratitude, I must go at once to my business, and first say a few words about *the structure itself.*If the floor were to give way, our brethren, who are now upon the platform, would find themselves in the baptistery; and if, at any time, those of them who have never been baptized wish to be immersed in obedience to their Master’s command, they will always find a willing servant in me. The baptistery will be usually uncovered, as we are not ashamed to confess our belief in believers’ baptism.

“On the occasion of the administration of the Lord’s supper, the table will also stand here; and there are steps on each side at the back of the platform by which the deacons will descend to distribute the memorials of the Saviour’s death. You see, above us, the pulpit, or platform, which might hold a large number of persons. I cannot stand like a statue when I preach; I prefer a wide range both of thought and action. The pulpit will also be convenient for public meetings, so that there will be no expense for erecting platforms. Concerning this vast chapel, I believe it is the most perfect triumph of acoustics that has ever been achieved. If it had been a failure at present, I should not have been at all disappointed, because the walls have yet to be covered with matched boarding, so that not a particle of brickwork is to be exposed, — it being my theory that soft substances are very much the best for hearing;, having proved in a great number of buildings that stone walls are the main creators of an echo, and having seen hangings put up to break the reverberation, and to give the speaker a hope of being heard.

“It has been remarked by a great many friends, as they entered, that the building was not so large as they expected; and I was pleased to hear them say so, for it showed me that the structure did not appear huge and unsightly. To look very large, a building must be generally out of proportion, for when there is proportion, the idea of size is often lost. If you went down below, you would find the lecture-hall, about the same area as New Park Street Chapel, or rather larger; and the school-room, larger in its area than the venerable sanctuary in which my brother, Dr. Campbell, long preached the word, — I mean, the Tabernacle, Moorfields;. I believe that four chapels like the one at Moorfields could be put into this building; two resting on the basement would only just fill up the same area, and then there: would be room for two more on the top of them. Now, perhaps, you may get some idea of the size of the Tabernacle.

“With regard to the appearance of the structure, I have this much to say; I think: it is highly creditable to the architect. The omission of the towers has deprived him of much of the effect which he hoped to produce by his design, and is perhaps the reason why the roof seems to rise too much, but they will never be erected as long as I am here. I will have no ornament which has not a practical use, and I do not think those towers could have had any object except mere show. As for the front elevation, it is not surpassed by anything in London. The building has no extravagance about it, and yet, at the same time, it has no meanness. True, the roof rises to a very great height above the portico, and does not present a very architectural appearance from the Causeway, but we must recollect this, — those who only look at the Tabernacle from the outside have not subscribed anything towards its erection, and therefore cannot judge of its true beauty.

“The lecture-hall, beneath this platform, is for our church-meetings; it is rendered fully necessary, as we have now more than 1,500 members. The schoolroom will contain, I should think, 1,500 if not 2,000 children. There are large class-rooms which will be used on the Sabbath-day for classes, and on the week-days for my students. I have no doubt my friend, Mr. Rogers, who has so long been my excellent helper in that work, — and to whom very much credit is due, — will feel himself more comfortable when he has proper rooms in which all his young men can be taught in every branch necessary to give them a complete education for the ministry. There is a very fine room for the ladies’ working meetings, which will also be available for a library, — a place where the works of all our former Pastors will be collected and preserved, for you must know that, of old, our church has ever been prolific of good works, in both senses of that term. We have the almost innumerable works of Keach, — they were so many that it was difficult to find them all. The chap-books, which used to be hawked about the country, — printed from worn type on bad brown paper, and adorned with quaint illustrations, yet containing good, sound theology, — I have no doubt interested the villagers, and greatly impressed the public mind at the time. Then we have the ponderous tomes of Gill, the tractares and hymns of Rippon, and the works of those *who,*since their day, have served us in the Lord. The pulpit of my glorious predecessor, Dr. Gill, will be brought here, and placed in the vestry below, that we may retain our ancient pedigree. It is said to have had a new bottom, and some: of the four sides are new, yet I affirm it to be Dr. Gill’s pulpit. I am as certain that it is so, as that I am the same man as I was seven years ago, though all the component parts of my body may have been changed in the meantime.

“Behind the upper platform, there are three spacious rooms; in the centre, is the minister’s vestry; to the right and left, are the rooms of the deacons and elders, — the officers of the army on either side of the captain, so that they may be ready to go forward at the word of command. Then above them, on the third story, there are three other excellent rooms, to be used for tract and Bible depositories, and for other schemes which we hope the church will undertake.

“I have thus tried to explain the structure of the building to you; I do not think that anything else remains to be said about it, except I draw your attention to the staircases by which you ascend to the galleries, each gallery having a distinct entrance and staircase, so that there is no fear of any overcrowding. I will only say that a design was never carried out with more fidelity by any builder than this has been. There have been improvements made as we have gone on, but they always have been improvements, to which, if they did not seem absolutely necessary, the builder has objected, lest he should have any extras; and when we have compelled him to make them, he has done them as cheaply as possible. He is a man of whom I am proud that he is at once a member of the church, a member of the Building Committee, and the builder of this house of God. Mr. Higgs, besides being: a most generous donor, gives us in solid brick and stone far more than he has done in cash. If I had ten thousand buildings to erect, I would never look to anybody else; I would stick to my first love, for he has been faithful and true.

‘I must pass on to another point, namely, *the present position of this project.*We have pushed beyond the era of objection to it. Now, those very wise friends (and they were very wise) who said the building ought: not to be built, it would be too big, cannot undo it; the only thing they can do is to help us through with it, for so much money has been spent already that we cannot propose to pull it down, however absurd the structure may be. Some of our brethren have asked,’ When Mr. Spurgeon dies, who will take his place?’ — -as if God could not raise up servants when He would, or as if we ought to neglect our present duty, because of something which may happen in fifty years’ time. You say, perhaps, ‘ You give yourself a long lease, — fifty years.’ I don’t know why I should not have it; it may come to pass, and will, if the Lord has so ordained. Dr. Gill was chosen Pastor of this church when he was twenty-two, and he was more than fifty years its minister; Dr. Rippon was chosen at the age of twenty, and he was Pastor for sixty-three years; I was nineteen when I was invited; and is it not possible that I also,, by Divine grace, may serve my generation for a long period of time? At any rate, when I am proposing to commence a plan, I never think about whether I shall live to see it finished, for I am certain that, if it is God’s plan, He will surely finish it, even if I should have to leave the work undone.

“I said, just now, that this project has gone beyond the era of objections; it has even passed beyond the realm of difficulties. We have had many difficulties, but far more providences. The ground was as much given to us by God as if He had sent an angel to clear it for us. The money, too, hats been given, even beyond our hopes, and we have had it from quarters where we should least have expected it. All the Christian churches have contributed their portion, and almost all the ends of the earth have sent their offerings. From India, Australia, America, and everywhere, have we received something from God’s people to help us in this work. We hope now we shall go on even to the end of it without feeling any diminution of our joy.  
“Now I come to my closing remark, which is, *that we earnestly desire to open this place without a farthing of debt upon it.*You have heard that sentence again and again. Let me repeat it; and I pray that our brethren here, who have the command of the public press, will repeat it again and again for me. It is not because a small debt would weigh upon this church too much; we are not afraid of that; it is just this, we think it will tell well for the whole body of believers who rely upon the voluntary principle if this Tabernacle is completed without a loan or a debt. Our new place of worship has been spoken of in the House of Commons, it has been mentioned in the House of Lords; and as everybody happens to know of it, since it stands so conspicuously, we want to do our utmost, and we ask our brethren to give us their help, that this forefront of Nonconformity, for the time being, may have about it no failure, no defeat to which anyone can point, and say, ‘Your voluntaryism failed to carry the project through.’ I believe in the might of the voluntary principle. I believe it to be perfectly irresistible in proportion to the power of God’s Spirit in the hearts of those who exercise it. When the Spirit of God is absent, and the Church is at a low ebb, the voluntary principle has little or no power; and then it becomes a question, with many carnal wise men, whether they shall not look to Egypt for help, and stay themselves on horses. But, when the Spirit of God is shed abroad, and men’s hearts are in the right state, we find the voluntary principle equal to every need of the Church. Whenever I see members of any denomination turn aside, and begin to take so much as a single halfpenny from the hand of the State, I think they do not believe in their God as they ought, and that the Spirit of God is not with them in all His Divine power. Only give us a minister preaching Christ, and a people who will serve their God, and feel it to be their pleasure to devote themselves and their substance to His cause, and nothing is impossible.

“I ask you to prove this to all men; and I appeal to you to help us in the effort to raise that remnant of £8,000. I believe we shall have a good and hearty response, and that, on the day of opening, we shall see this place filled with a vast multitude who will complete the work, and leave not a shilling unpaid. We pledge ourselves to the Christian public that they shall be:no losers by us. While this building has been going on, we have done as much as any church for all other agencies, — as much as it was possible for us to do. We hope to help other places, by first giving to our young men an education when God has called them to the ministry, and afterwards helping them when they are settled. We wish our church to become a fruitful mother of children, and pray that God may make this Tabernacle a centre, from which rays of truth, and light, and glory, may radiate to dispel the darkness of the land. We will not be an idle church; we do not ask to have our load taken away, that we may eat, and drink, and play, but only that we may go straight on to do God’s work. Of all things, I do abhor a debt. I shall feel like a guilty sneaking sinner if I come here with even a hundred pounds debt upon the building. ‘Owe no man anything,’ will stare me in the face whenever I try to address you. I do not believe that Scripture warrants any man in getting’ into debt. It may stimulate the people to raise more money; but, after all, attention to the simple Word of God is infinitely better than looking at the end which may be attained by the slightest deviation from it. Let us not owe a farthing to any living soul; and when we come here for the opening services, let us find that all has been paid.”

In the course of the meeting, Mr. Spurgeon made other interesting remarks. After the address of the clergyman who had accepted his invitation to be present, and who had spoken with great heartiness of the Pastor and his work, Mr. Spurgeon said: —

“I thank my brother, the Rev. Hugh Allen, for coming here to-day. I know the opposition he has met with, and I believe he cares about as much for it as a bull does when a gnat settles on his horn. He shall have my pulpit at any time he likes, — I am quite sure he will commit no offence by preaching in it. I licensed Exeter Hall as a place of Dissenting worship, a few years ago, and the record stands on the: book yet. If it is a sin for a clergyman to preach in a licensed place, there are one hundred clergymen who are great sinners, for about that number have since preached there.”

Dr. Campbell having made some allusion to the name of the building, Mr. Spurgeon first stated that more than a million persons had contributed, chiefly in small sums, towards the erection of the Tabernacle, and then said: — ”I am astonished at Dr. Campbell for not knowing that the word Tabernacle involves a religious doctrine, namely, that we have:not come to the Temple-state here, we are now passing through the Tabernacle-state. We believe this building to be temporary, and only meant for the time that we are in the wilderness without a visible King. Our prayer is, ‘Thy Kingdom come.’ We do firmly believe in the real and personal reign of our Lord .Jesus Christ, for which we devoutly wait. That is the reason why our new house of prayer is called a Tabernacle, not a Temple. We have not here the King in person, the Divine Solomon; till He come, we call it a Tabernacle still. Dr. Campbell and I will never quarrel for any precedence; his is a most mighty pen, he may have the kingdom of the pen if he will let me keep some part of’ the kingdom of the tongue. His pen is sharper and mightier than Ithuriel’s spear; it has detected many of the toads; of heresy, and transformed them to their right shape, and I have no doubt it will lind out a great many more yet.”

Mr. Spurgeon gave, at this meeting, a detailed and cheering account of the Continental tour which he had recently enjoyed, with Mrs. Spurgeon, Mr. Passmore, and another friend. The address was printed, shortly afterwards; but it contains so much interesting autobiographical information relating to the period, that at least a part of it must find a place here, to make the record as complete as possible. The Pastor said: —

“I have been requested by two well-known and deservedly eminent publishers to print some notes of my journey on the Continent; but I went there for rest and recreation, and I felt that this most sacred purpose could not be attained if I chained myself to the drudgery of book-writing. My congregation would have been disappointed if I had come home as tired as I went, and I could have had no solid excuse for ceasing my daily preaching if I had not really rested my weary brain. I believe, moreover, that the narrative of my journey will be far more valuable to me as a fountain of fresh illustrations and suggestions, than if I could pour it all out into a book. Will it not be better to retain my pearl, and let it glitter every now and then, than to melt it into one small draught, too shallow to satisfy the public thirst?

“I went from St. Katherine’s Docks down the river, accompanied by my well-beloved deacons and several of my friends. At Gravesend, they left me and my party, with the kindest wishes, and with many a prayer to God for our safety. The journey was rendered abundantly pleasant by the evening which we spent together in prayer and fellowship before our departure. I never heard such kind words and such loving prayers uttered, concerning any human being, as I heard that night concerning myself. There was nothing like fulsome flattery, all the glory was given to God; but every brother invoked such choice blessings upon my head that I went away with a rich cargo of joy, knowing that a full wind of prayer was following behind.  
“The captain of our vessel was from Essex, and as all Essex men have a high opinion of their countrymen, we soon found ourselves in full talk upon the excellences of our native county. Many were our anecdotes, and swiftly flew the time. Mine I have told so many times, I daresay you know them. Some of the captain’s tales were new and original. I shall give you one, because it tends to illustrate the place in which we landed, — Antwerp. That city is so full of images of the Virgin Mary that you cannot turn the corner of a street without seeing them — sometimes under a canopy of many colours, arrayed in all manner of imitation jewellery, and at other times in neat little niches which seem to have been picked out of the wall for their special accommodation; sometimes Mary is represented by an ugly’ black doll, and at other times by a decent respectable statue. So many of these objects are there, that the sailors may be excused for imagining every image which they see to be a Virgin Mary. One of them, who landed there, went to buy some tobacco; and when he returned to the ship, his companions said, ‘ That is very good tobacco, Jack; where did you get it?’ ‘ Oh!’ he answered, ‘you will know the shop, for there is a Virgin Mary sitting over the door, smoking a pipe.’ I don’t wonder at the man’s blunder, for, among so many idols, one may easily mistake a Turk and his turban for the-Virgin and her crown. I am sure they think vastly more of her than of our Lord Jesus Christ; for, though we saw many crucifixes, and many representations of the Saviour, yet even in their image-work it seemed to me that the Virgin Mary was *cent per cent*beyond the Lord Jesus Christ.

“It happened, the very day we landed at Antwerp, that there was a grand procession just streaming in its full glory out of the cathedral, a fine and venerable building. There were priests in their robes, beadles resplendent in their livery, and a great number of men, whom I supposed to be penitents, carrying huge candles;, certainly I should think two inches in diameter. These men walked two-and-two along the streets. Whether that burning of the candles typified the consumption of their sins, the melting of their church, or the illumination of soul which they so greatly needed, I do not know. There were also carried great lamps of silver, or electro-plate, very much like our own street lamps, only of course not quite so heavy; and these, too, when the sun was shining brightly. and there was no need of the slightest artificial light. In all solemnity, the men marched along, not in the dark cathedral, but in the open streets, with these candles and lanterns blazing and shaming the sunlight. Someone told me they were taking ‘ the most blessed and comfortable sacrament’ to some sick people; but what the candles had to do with the sacrament, or the sacrament with the candles, or the people with the sacrament, I do not know. I noticed two little boys, very handsomely dressed, walking in the middle of the procession, and throwing flowers and oak leaves before the priests as they walked; so that, as they went along, their holy feet scarcely needed to touch the soil, or to be hurt with the stones. The presence of those children, full of infantile joy, relieved the soul for a moment, and bade us pray that our own little ones might take part in a nobler celebration when the Lord Himself should come in the glory of His Father. Almost every house had, just before the window, a little place for holding a candle; and as soon as the inmates heard the procession coming along, the candles were lighted. I noticed that, the moment it passed, the thrifty housewives blew out the lights, and so they saved their tallow if they did not save their souls. I enquired, and was informed — and I think on good authority, — that even some of the Protestants in Antwerp burn these candles in front of their houses lest their trade should be hindered if they did not conform to the customs of the rest of the people; it is an unutterable disgrace to them if they do so. I would like to have seen Martin Luther with a candle before his door when the priests were passing, unless, indeed, he had burned the Pope’s Bull before their eyes. He would sooner have died than have paid respect to a baptized heathenism, a mass of idolatries and superstitions. Never did I feel my Protestant feelings boiling over so tremendously as in this city of idols, for I am not an outrageous Protestant generally, and I rejoice to confess that I feel sure there are some of God’s people even in the Romish Church, as I shall have to show you by-and-by; but I did feel indignant when I saw the glory and worship, which belong to God alone, given to pictures, and images of wood and stone. When I saw the pulpits magnificently carved, the gems set in the shrines, the costly marbles, the rich and rare paintings upon which a man might gaze for a day, and see some new beauty in each time, I did not marvel that men were enchanted therewith; but when I saw the most flagrant violation of taste and of religion in their “Calvarys” and cheap prints, my spirit was stirred within me, for I saw a people wholly given unto idolatry. They seem as if they could not live without Mary the Virgin, and without continually paying reverence and adoration to her.

“We journeyed from Antwerp to Brussels. I cannot say that Brussels greatly interested me; I do not care much for places in which there is nothing but fine buildings and museums. I had much rather see an odd, oldfashioned city like Antwerp, with its sunny memories of Rubens, Quintin Matsys, and other princes in the realm of art. I think its singular houses, its quaint costumes, and its ancient streets, will never die out of my memory. In Brussels, I heard a good sermon in a Romish church. The place was crowded with people, many of them standing, though they might have had a seat for a halfpenny or a farthing; and I stood, too; and the good priest — for I believe he is a good man, — preached the Lord Jesus with all his might. He spoke of the love of Christ, so that I, a very poor hand at the French language, could fully understand him, and my heart kept beating within me as he told of the beauties of Christ, and the preciousness of His blood, and of His power to save the chief of sinners. He did not say, ‘justification by faith,’ but he did say, ‘efficacy of the blood,’ which comes to very much the same thing. He did not tell us we were saved by grace, and not by our works; but he did say that all the works of men were less than nothing when brought into competition with the blood of Christ, and that the blood of Jesus alone could save. True, there were objectionable sentences, as naturally there must be in a discourse delivered under such circumstances; but I could have gone to the preacher, and have said to him, ‘Brother, you have spoken the truth;’ and if I had been handling his text, I must have treated it in the same way that he did, if I could have done it as well. I was pleased to find my own opinion verified, in his case, that there are, even in the apostate church, some who cleave unto the Lord, — some sparks of Heavenly fire that flicker amidst the rubbish of old superstition, some lights that are not blown out, even by the strong wind of Popery, but still cast a feeble gleam across the waters sufficient to guide the soul to the rock Christ Jesus. I saw, in that church, a box for contributions for the Pope; he will never grow rich with what I put into it. I have seen moneyboxes on the Continent for different saints, — Santa Clara, St. Francis, St. Dominic; another box for the Virgin, and another for the poor; but I never could make out how the money got to the Virgin, and to Dominic, and to the rest of them; but I have a notion that, if you were to discover how the money gets to the poor, you would find how it reaches the saints.

“After leaving Brussels, and getting a distant glimpse of the Lion Mound of Waterloo, we hurried down to Namur, and steamed along the Meuse, — that beautiful river, which is said to be an introduction to the Rhine, but which to my mind is a fair rival to it; it quite spoiled me for the Rhine. Everywhere, on each side, there were new phases of beauty, and sweet little pictures which shone in the sunshine like small but exquisite gems. It was not one vast Koh-i-noor diamond; it was not sublimity mingling its awe with loveliness such as you would see in Switzerland with its majestic mountains, but a succession of beautiful pearls, threaded on the silver string of that swiftly-flowing river. It is so narrow and shallow that, as the steamboat glides along, it drives up a great wave upon the banks on either side. In some parts, along the river, there were signs of mineral wealth, and the people were washing the ironstone at the. water’s edge to separate the ore from the earth.

“One thing which I saw here I must mention, as it is a type of a prevailing evil in Belgium. When there were barges of ironstone to be unloaded, *the women*bore the heavy baskets upon their backs. If there were coals or bricks to be carried, the women did it; they carried everything; and their lords; and masters sat still, and seemed to enjoy seeing them at work, and hoped it might do them good, while they themselves were busily engaged in the important occupation of smoking their pipes. When we came to a landing-place, if the rope was to be thrown off so that the steamboat might be secured, there was always a woman to run and seize it, and there stood a big, lazy fellow to give directions as to how she should do it. We joked with each other upon the possibility of getting our wives to do the like; but, indeed, it is scarcely a joking matter to see poor women compelled to work like slaves, as if they were only made to support their husbands in idleness. They were lagged and worn; but they looked more fully developed than the men, and seemed to be more masculine. If I had been one of those women, and I had got a little bit of a husband sitting there smoking his pipe, if there is a law in Belgium that gives a woman two months for beating her husband, I fear I should have earned the penalty. Anyhow, I would have said to him, ‘ I am very much obliged to you for doing me the honor of marrying me; but, at the same time, if I am to work and earn *your*living and my own, too, you will smoke your pipe somewhere else.’ The fact is, my dear friends, to come to something that may be worth our thinking about, employment for women is greatly needed in our country, and the want of it is a very great evil; but it is not so much to be deplored as that barbarity which dooms women to sweep the streets, to till the fields, to carry heavy burdens, and to be the drudges of the family. We greatly need that watchmaking, printing, telegraphing, bookselling, and other indoor occupations should be more freely open to female industry, but may Heaven save our poor women from the position of their Continental sisters! The gospel puts woman where she should be, gives her an honorable position in the house and in the Church; but where women become the votaries of superstition, they will soon be made the burdenbearers of society. Our best feelings revolt at the idea of putting fond, faithful, and affectionate women to oppressive labor. Our mothers, our sisters, our wives, our daughters are much too honorable in our esteem to be treated otherwise than as dear companions, for whom it shall be our delight to live and labor.

“We went next to a sweet little village called Chaufontaine, surrounded with verdant hills, and so truly rural, that one could forget that there was such a place as a busy, noisy, distracting world. Here we found the villagers at work making gun-barrels with old-fashioned tilt-hammers. Here for the first time we saw industrious men. Talk about long hours in England! These blacksmiths rise at four o’clock in the morning, and I do not know when they leave off; only this I know, that we passed by them very late, and found them still hard at work at the blazing forge, hammering away at the gun-barrels, welding the iron into a tube, working almost without clothing, the sweat pouring down them, and mingling with the black and soot of their faces.

*“The*real workers on the Continent seem to be,. always toiling, and never appear to stop at all, except at dinner-time. Then you may go to the shop, and knock until your arm aches, but there is nobody to sell you anything; they are all having their dinner. That is a most important operation, and they do not like to come out even to wait upon a customer. I knocked a long time at a door in Zurich where I wanted to buy a print; but the man had gone to his dinner, so I had to wait till he had finished. That breaking up of the day, I have no doubt tends, after all, to shorten the hours of labor; but there is work to be done in the villages of the Continent by the Early Closing Association, — it will be well if they can persuade people that they can do quite as much if they work fewer hours. In the country villages, science appears to be very backward. My friend declared that he saw the linchpin of a waggon which weighed two pounds; I never saw such a huge linchpin anywhere else. And as to the carts and waggons, they were like racks put on a couple of pairs of wheels, and in every case five times as heavy as they need be; and thus the horses have a load to begin with before the cart is loaded. On the Continent, I think they have, in some towns and cities, made progress superior to our own; but in the rural parts of any country you like to choose, you would find them far behind our village population. The intelligence of those countries is centered in the large towns, and it does not radiate and spread its healthy influence in the rural districts so swiftly as in our own beloved land. It is well to see progress even in these social matters, because, as men advance in arts and commerce, it often happens that they are brought into contact with other lands, and so the Word of God becomes more widely known. I believe every steam-engine, every railroad, every steamboat, and ,every threshingmachine, to be a deadly enemy to ignorance; and what is ignorance but the corner-stone of superstition?

“As everybody who goes on the Continent visits Cologne, so did we; but I must say of Cologne that I have a more vivid recollection of what I smelt than of what I saw. The Cologne odor is more impressive than the Eau de Cologne. I had heard Albert Smith say he believed there were eighty-three distinct bad smells in Cologne, and in my opinion he understated the number, for every yard presented something more terrible than we had ever smelt before. Better to pay our heavy taxes for drainage than live in such odors. Our filthy friend, the Thames, is as sweet as rose-water when compared with Cologne or Frankfort. Hear this, ye grumblers, and:be thankful that you are not worse off than you are! We went down the Rhine; and it was just a repetition of what we saw down the Meuse, with the addition of castles and legends. My want of taste is no doubt the cause of my disappointment upon seeing this river. The lakes of Westmoreland and Cumberland, and the lochs of Scotland, fairly rival the Rhine, and are of much the same character. Go and see for yourselves, and you will not repent it.

“We went across to Frankfort and Heidelberg, and then to Baden-Baden. Let me say a few words about Baden. I went to see the gaming-table there; it was, without exception, the most mournful sight I ever looked upon. The Conversation House at Baden is a gorgeous building. Wealth could not make it more splendid than it is. All the luxuries that can be gathered from the very ends of the earth are lavished there. It is a fairy palace, more like the fantastic creation of a dream than sober substantial fact. You are freely admitted; no charge is made, whilst the most beautiful music that can be found waits to charm your ear. Every place of amusement is free; even the public library is free. You ask me how all this is supported. To the left of the building there are two rooms for gaming. There is a long table, and a great crowd standing round it; the seats are all full, and there sit four men in the middle with long rakes, pulling money this way and that way, and shoving it here and there. I hardly ever saw such a mass of money, except upon a banker’s counter. There are long piles of gold done up in marked quantities, and there are also heaps of silver money. You see a young man come in; he does not seem like a gambler. He puts down a half-napoleon as a mere joke: in a minute it is shovelled away; he has lost his money. He walks round again, and puts down another piece of gold; this time he wins, and he has two. By-and-by he will play more deeply, and the day will probably come when he will stake his all, and lose it. You may see women sitting there all night playing for high stakes. Some people win, but everybody must lose sooner or later, for the chances are dreadfully against any man who plays. The bank clears an enormous sum every year; I am afraid to mention the amount lest I should be thought to exaggerate. What staring eyes, what covetous looks, what fiery faces I saw there! And what multitudes go into that place happy, and return to curse the day of their birth! I had the sorrow of seeing some fools play. I saw young men, who lost so much that they had hardly enough to take them back to England. Such is the infatuation that I am not surprised when spectators are carried away by the torrent. There are some who defend the system; I hold it to be fraught with more deadly evils than anything else that could be invented, even by Satan himself. I saw an old respectable-looking man put down ten pounds. He won, and he received twenty. He put down the twenty; he won again, and he had forty. He put down the forty, and received eighty. He put down the eighty, and took up one hundred and sixty pounds. Then ]he put it all in his pocket, and walked away as calmly as possible. The man would lose money by that transaction, because he would go back on the morrow, and probably play till he would sell the house that covers his children’s heads, and pawn the very bed from under his wife. The worst thing that can happen to a man who gambles is to win. If you lose, it serves you right, and there is hope that you will repent of your folly; if you win, the devil will have you in his net so thoroughly that escape will be well-nigh impossible. I charge every young man here, above all things never have anything to do with games of chance. If you desire to make your damnation doubly sure, and ruin both body and soul, go to the gaming;table; but if not, avoid it, pass by it, look not at it, for it has a basilisk’s eye, and may entice you; and it. has the sting of an adder, and will certainly destroy you if you come beneath its deadly influence.

“From Baden-Baden, we went to Freiburg, and afterwards to

Schaffhausen. There, for the first time, we saw the Alps. It was a wonderful sight, though in the dim distance we hardly knew whether we saw clouds or mountains. We had to hold a sort of controversy with ourselves,w’ Is that solid — that glittering whiteness, that sunny shimmering that we see there? Is it a bank of white mist? Is it cloud, or is it a mountain?’ Soon you are assured that you are actually beholding the everlasting hills. If a man does not feel like praising God at such a moment, I do not think there is any grace in him; if there be anything like piety in a man’s soul when he sees those glorious works of God, he will begin to praise the Lord, and magnify His holy Name. We went from Schaffhausen to Zurich. Everywhere there was something to delight us. The magnificent falls of the Rhine, the clear blue waters of the Zurich lake, the distant mountains, the ever-changing costumes of the people, mall kept us wide awake, and gratified our largest love of novelties. All nature presented us with a vast entertainment, and every turn of the head introduced us to something new and beautiful.

*“At*Zurich, I saw in the great fair what I also saw at Baden-Baden, a sight which gave me pleasure, namely, the little star of truth shining brightly amid the surrounding darkness. Opposite the house at Baden where Satan was ruining souls at the gaming-table, there was a stall at which an agent of the Bible Society was selling Bibles and Testaments. I went up and bought a Testament of him, and felt quite cheered to see the little battery erected right before the fortifications of Satan, for I felt in my soul it was mighty through God to the pulling down of the stronghold. Then, in the midst of the fair at Zurich, where the people were selling all manner of things, as at John Bunyan’s Vanity Fair, there stood a humble-looking man with his stall, upon which there were Bibles, Testaments, and Mr. Ryle’s tracts. It is always a great comfort to me to see my sermons, in French an(] other languages, sold at the same., shops as the writings of that excellent man of God. There is the Simple gospel in his tracts, and they are to my knowledge singularly owned of God. How sweet it is to see these dear brethren in other churches loving our Lord, and honored by Him!

*“At*Lucerne, we spent our third Sabbath-day. Of all days in the year, Sabbath-days on the Continent are the most wretched, so far as the public means of grace are concerned; this one, however, was spent in quiet worship in our own room. Our first Sabbath was a dead waste, for the service at church was lifeless, spiritless, graceless, powerless. Even the grand old prayers were so badly read that it was impossible to be devout while hearing them, and the sermon upon ‘ the justice of God in destroying the Canaanites’ was as much adapted to convert a sinner, or to edify’ a saint, as Burke’s Peerage, or Walker’s Dictionary; there was nothing, however, Puseyistical or heretical. Far worse was our second Sunday, in Baden, which effectually prevented my attending Episcopal service again until I can be sure of hearing truthful doctrine. The preacher was manifestly a downright Puseyite because, during one part of the service, he must needs go up to the Roman Catholic altar, and there bow himself with his back to us. The images and idols were not concealed in any way; there they were in all their open harlotry, and I must say they were in full keeping with the sermon which was inflicted upon us. The preacher thought he would give us a smart hit, so he began with an attack upon all who did not subscribe to baptismal regeneration and sacramental efficacy. He did not care what we might say, he was certain that, when the holy drops fell from the fingers of God’s ordained minister, regeneration there and then took place. I thought, ‘Well, that is ,coming out, and the man is more honest than some of the wolves in sheep’s clothing, who hold baptismal regeneration, but will not openly confess it.’ The whole sermon through, he treated us to sacramental efficacy, and made some allusion to St. George’s riots, saying that it was an awful thing that the servants of God were subjected to persecution, and then he told us we had not sufficient respect for our ministers, that the real ordained successors of the apostles were trodden down as mire in the streets. I abstained from going to church after that; and if I were to continue for seven years without the public means of grace, unless I knew that a man of kindred spirit with Mr. Allen, Mr. Cadman, Mr. Ryle, and that holy brotherhood of Evangelicals, would occupy the pulpit, I never would enter an Anglican church again. These Puseyites make good Churchmen turn to the Dissenters, and we who already dissent, are driven further and further from the Establishment. In the name of our Protestant religion, I ask whether a minister of the ‘Church of England is allowed to bow before the altar of a Popish church? Is there no rule or canon which restrains men from such an outrage upon our professed faith, such an insult to our Constitution? In the church at Lucerne, I think they had the head of John the Baptist, with some of the blood in a dish, and other relics innumerable; yet I was expected to go on Sunday, and worship there! I could not do it, for I should have kept on thinking of John the Baptist’s head in the corner. Though I have a great respect for that Baptist, and all other Baptists, I do not think I could have. controlled myself sufficiently to worship God under such circumstances. *“We*went up the Rigi, as everybody must do who visits the Alps, toiling up, up, up, ever so high, to see the sun go to bed; and then we were awakened in the morning, with a dreadful blowing of horns, to get up and see the sun rise. Out we went, but his gracious majesty, the sun, would not condescend to show himself; or, at least, he had been up half-an-hour before we knew it; so we all went down again, and that was the end of our glorious trip. Yet it was worth while to go up to see the great mountains all around us, it was a sight which might make an angel stand and gaze, and gaze again; the various sharp or rounded peaks and snowy summits, are all worthy of the toil which brings them into view. The circular panorama seen from the Rigi-Kulm is perhaps unrivalled. There is the lake of Zug, there the long arms of Lucerne, yonder Mount Pilatus, and further yet the Black Forest range. Just at your feet is the buried town of Goldau, sad tomb in which a multitude were crushed by a falling mountain. The height is dizzy to unaccustomed brains, but the air is bracing, and the prospect such as one might picture from the top of Pisgah, where the prophet of Horeb breathed out his soul to God.

“We went here, there, and everywhere, and saw everything that was to be seen; and, at last, after a long journey, we came to Geneva. I had received the kindest invitation from our esteemed and excellent brother, Dr. D’Aubigne. He came to meet me at the station, but he missed me. I met a gentleman in the street, and told him I was Mr. Spurgeon. He then said, ‘Come to my house, — the very house’ where Calvin used to live.’ I went home with him; and after we found Dr. D’Aubigne and Pastor Bard, I was taken to the house of Mr. Lombard, an eminent banker of the city, and a godly and gracious man. I think I never enjoyed a time more than I did with those real true-hearted brethren. There are, you know, two churches there, — the Established and the Free; and there has been some little bickering and some little jealousy, but I think it is all dying away; at any rate, I saw none of it, for brethren from both these churches came, and showed me every kindness and honor. I am not superstitious, but the first time I saw this medal, bearing the venerated likeness of John Calvin, I kissed it, imagining that no one saw the action. I was very greatly surprised when I received this magnificent present, which shall be passed round for your inspection. On the one side is John Calvin with his visage worn by disease and deep thought, and on the other side is a verse fully applicable to him: ‘ He endured, as seeing Him who is invisible.’ This  
sentence truly describes the character of that glorious man of God. Among all those who have been born of women, there has not risen a greater than John Calvin; no age,, before him ever produced his equal, and no age afterwards has seen his rival. In theology, he stands alone, shining like a bright fixed star, while other leaders and teachers can only circle round him, at a great distance, — as comets go streaming through space, — with nothing like his glory or his permanence. Calvin’s fame is eternal because of the truth he proclaimed; and even in Heaven, although we shall lose the name of the system of doctrine which he taught, it shall be that truth which shall make us strike our golden harps, and sing, ‘ Unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father; to Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever;’ for the essence of Calvinism is that we are born again, ‘not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.’

“I preached in the cathedral at Geneva; and I thought it a great honor to be allowed to stand in the pulpit of John Calvin. I do not think half the people understood me; but they were very glad to see and join *in heart*with the worship in which they could not join with the understanding. I did not feel very happy when I came out in full canonicals, but the request was put to me in such a beautiful way that I could have worn the Pope’s tiara, if by so doing I could have preached the gospel the more freely. They said, ‘ Our dear brother comes to us from another country. Now, when an ambassador comes from another land, he has the right to wear his own costume at Court; but, as a mark of great esteem, he sometimes condescends to the manners of the people he is visiting, and wears their Court dress.’ ‘Well,’ I said, ‘yes, that I will, certainly, if you do not:require it, but merely ask it as .a token of my Christian love. I shall feel like running in a sack, but it will be your fault.’ It was John Calvin’s gown, and that reconciled me to it very much. I do love that man of God; suffering all his life long, enduring not only persecutions from without but a complication of disorders from within. and yet serving his Master with all his heart.

“I ask your prayers for the Church at Geneva. That little Republic stands now, like an island as it were, on each side shut in by France, and I can assure you there are no greater Anti-Gallicans in the whole world than the Genevese. Without knowing that I trod upon tender ground, I frequently said, ‘Why, you are almost French people!’ At last they hinted to me that they did not like me to say so, and I did not say it any more. They are afraid of being Frenchified: they cannot endure the thought of it; they know the sweets of liberty, and cannot bear that they should be absorbed into that huge monarchy. Dr. D’Aubigne charged me with this message, ‘ Stir up the Christians of England to make Geneva a matter of special prayer. We do not dread the arms of France, nor invasion; but something worse than that, namely, the introduction of French principles.’ There is a French population constantly crossing the border; they bring in infidelity, and neglect of the Sabbath-day, and Romanism is making very great advances. The brethren said, ‘ Ask the people to pray for us, that we may stand firm and true. As we have been the mother of many churches, desert us not in the hour of our need, but hold us up in your arms, and pray that the Lord .may:still make Geneva a praise throughout the earth.’ After the service in the cathedral, it was arranged for me to meet the ministers; D’Aubigne was there, of course, and Caesar Malan, and most of the noted preachers of Switzerland. We spent a very delightful evening together, talking about our common Lord, and of the progress of His work in England and on the Continent; and when they bade me ‘Good-bye,’ every one of those ministers — a hundred and fifty, or perhaps two hundred of them, — kissed me on both cheeks! It was rather an ordeal for me, but it was meant to express their esteem and regard, and I accepted it in the spirit in which it was given. It was a peculiar pleasure to me to have the opportunity of visiting that great centre of earnest Protestantism, and of meeting so many of the godly and faithful men who had helped to keep the lamp of truth burning brightly. To my dying day, I shall remember those servants of Jesus Christ who greeted me in my Master’s name, and loved me for my Master’s sake. Hospitality unbounded, love unalloyed, and communion undisturbed, are precious pens with which the brethren in Geneva wrote their names upon my heart.

*“At*last we got away from Geneva, and went off to Chamouni. What a glorious place that Chamouni is! My heart flies thither in recollection of her glories. The very journey from Geneva to Chamouni fires one’s heart. The mind longs to climb the heavens as those mountains do. It seemed to sharpen my soul’s desires; and longings till, like the peaks of the Alps, I could pierce the skies. I cannot speak as I should if I had one of those mountains in view; if I could point out of the window, and say, ‘There! see its frosted brow! see its ancient hoary head!’ and then speak to you of the avalanches that come rattling down the side, then I think I could give you some poetry. We went up the Mer de Glace on mules. I had the great satisfaction of hearing three or four avalanches come roiling down like thunder. In descending, I was in advance, and alone; I sat down and mused, but I soon sprang up, for I thought the avalanche was coming right on me, there was such a tremendous noise. We crossed many places where the snow, in rushing down from the top, had swept away every tree and every stone, and left nothing but the stumps of the trees, and a kind of slide from the top of the mountain to the very valley. What extraordinary works of God there are to be seen there! We have no idea of what God Himself is. As I went among those mountains and valleys;, I felt like a little creeping insect. I sank lower and lower, and grew smaller and smaller, while my soul kept crying out, —

**“‘Great *God, how infinite art Thou!  
What worthless worms are we!’***

“After leaving Chamouni, we came at last to what was to be the great treat of Our journey, namely, the passage of the Simplon. The crossing of that mountain is an era in any man’s life. That splendid road was carried over the Alps by Napoleon, not for the good of his species, but in order that he might transport his Cannon to fight against Austria. Sir James Mackintosh described the Simplon road as ‘the most wonderful of useful works.’ There are other works which may contain more genius, and some which may seem to be more grand; but this, in the midst of the rugged stern simplicity of nature, seemed to say, ‘ Man is little, but over God’s greatest works man can find a pathway, and no dangers can confine his ambition.’ Where the rock was so steep that the road could not be: made by any other means, workmen were hung down from the top in cradles, and they chipped a groove, and thus carried the road along the precipitous face of the rock; frequently, too, it was made to run through a huge tunnel cut in the solid rock. On and on we went up the enormous height until we came to the region of perpetual frost and snow. There one could make snowballs in the height of Summer, and gather ice in abundance. On the top of the mountain stands the hospice; there were some four or five monks, who came out and asked us to enter; we did so, and would honor the religious feeling which dictates such constant hospitality. We were shown into a very nice room, where.’ there was cake and wine ready, and if we had chosen to order it, meat, soup, and anything we liked to have, and nothing to pay. They entertain any traveller, and he is expected to pay nothing whatever for his refreshment; of course, no one who could afford it would go away without putting something into the poor-box. It pleased me to find that they were Augustinian monks because, next to Calvin, I love Augustine. I feel that Augustine’s works were the great mine out of which Calvin dug his mental wealth; and the Augustinian monks, in their acts of charity, seemed to say, ‘ Our master was a teacher of grace, and we will practice it, and give to all comers whatsoever they shall need, without money and without price.’ Those monks are worthy of great honor; there they are, spending the best and noblest period of their lives on the top of a bleak and barren mountain, that they may minister to the necessities of the poor. They go out in the cold nights, and bring in those that are frostbitten; they dig them out from under the snow, simply that they may serve God by helping their fellowmen. I pray God to bless the good works of these monks of the Augustinian Order, and may you and I carry out the spirit of Augustine, which is the true spirit of Christ, the spirit of love, the spirit o! charity, the spirit which loves truth, and the spirit which loves man, and above all, loves the Man Christ Jesus! We never need fear, with our strong doctrines, and the spirit of our Master in us, that we shall be carried away by the heresies which continually arise, and which would deceive, if it were possible, even the very elect.

“If any of you can save up money — after this Tabernacle is paid for, — to go to Switzerland, you will never regret it, and it need not be expensive to you. If you do not find your head grow on both sides, and have to put your hands up, and say, ‘I feel as if,my brains are straining with their growth,’ I do not think you have many brains to spare. As I have stood in the midst of those mountains and valleys, I have wished I could carry you all there. I cannot reproduce to you the thoughts that then passed through my mind; I cannot describe the storms we saw below us when we were on the top of the hill; I cannot tell you about the locusts that came in clouds, and devoured everything before them; time would utterly fail me to speak of all the wonders of God which we saw in nature and in providence. One more remark, and I have done. If you cannot travel, remember that our Lord Jesus Christ: is more glorious than all else that you could ever see. Get a view of Christ, and you have seen more than mountains, and cascades, and valleys, and seas can ever show you. Thunders may bring their sublimest uproar, and lightnings their awful glory; earth may give its beauty, and stars their brightness; but all these put together can never rival Him, of whom Dr. Watts so well sang, —

***~~“‘Now to the Lord a noble song!  
Awake, my soul, awake, my tongue;  
Hosannah to th’ Eternal Name,  
And all His boundless love proclaim.~~***

***~~See where it shines in Jesus face,  
The brightest image of His grace;  
God, in the person of His Son,  
Has all His mightiest works outdone.~~***

***~~The spacious earth and spreading flood  
Proclaim the wise and powerful God,  
And Thy rich glories from afar  
Sparkle in every rolling star.~~***

***~~But in His looks a glory stands,  
The noblest labor of Thine hands;  
The pleasing lustre of His eyes  
Outshines the wonders of the sides.~~***

***~~Grace! ‘tis a sweet, a charming theme;  
My thoughts rejoice at Jesus’ Name:  
Ye angels, dwell upon the sound,  
Ye heavens, reflect it to the ground!’”~~***

In the course of the day, a total of £1,050 was added to the Tabernacle Building Fund. During the time that the great sanctuary was being completed, the remainder of the amount required was raised, so that the first Sabbath services in the new house of prayer were conducted in a building entirely free from debt.

FOOTNOTES

Ft1 It is worthy of note that the paper which, in 1855, thus described Mr. Spurgeon, in 1898, in reviewing Vol. 1 of his *Autobiography,*spoke of him as “this noble Puritan preacher and saintly Christian.”

Ft2 In the *Autobiography,*Vol. 1, a quotation is given from the reminiscences of Professor Everett, who had been Mr. Spurgeon’s fellow-tutor at Newmarket. Soon after the young Pastor’s settlement at New Park Street Chapel, he invited his former colleague to pay him a visit. During their conversation, Mr. Everett referred to this supposed irreverence; and recalling the interview, in 1892, he wrote: — ”I remember suggesting to him, in this connection, that a man ought to feel and show some sense of awe in the presence of his Maker, and his reply was to the effect that awe was foreign to his nature, — that he felt perfectly at home with his Heavenly Father.”

ft3 That “perhaps” just saves the prophet’s reputation. Over a hundred millions of Mr. Spurgeon’s sermons have been already issued, and they are prized beyond measure by an ever-increasing circle of readers. Can this be said of “the old lights, — Irving, and Hall, and Chalmers”?

ft4 This was the service which is referred to in Mr. Spurgeon’s letter in chapter 35. Readers may be interested in knowing that the discourse then delivered is published by Messrs. Passmore a: Alabaster in their series of “Rare Jewels from Spurgeon.” It is entitled, *“Christ*is All.” *The Clerkenwell News,*in an appreciative account of the service and the preacher, said: — ”His discourse, which was bold, imaginative, and abounding in felicitous and appropriate metaphors, was listened to with the most profound attention — a distinction rarely shown to open-air preaching.”

Ft5 The text on the second occasion was Matthew 8:11, 12; and the sermon was printed in *The New Park Street Pulpit*(Nos. 39-40), under the title, “Heaven and Hell.” Translations were published in various languages, including Russian and French. Copies of the Russian version reached Mr. Spurgeon from time to time, each one bearing on its front cover the “Alpha and Omega” in the centre of the official stamp certifying that it might be read and circulated by faithful members of the Greek Church; on the back, was a list of nine more of the sermons issued by the same publisher. As soon as the permission of the censor had been obtained, the gentleman who had sought it ordered a million copies of the sermons to be printed, and scattered over the Russian Empire. “That day” alone will reveal how many souls have been saved through this method of spreading the truth in that dark region. A copy of the French translation was recently received by Mrs. Spurgeon, from M. Robert Dubarry, one of the French students in the Pastors’ College, who found it a few years ago in a Parisian hospital, where it had been left by a former patient, who had evidently been greatly benefited by reading it. The margin is almost covered with a most elaborate system of marks, and the discourse itself is underlined as though every word had been read and pondered again and again. At the end is written, in French: — ”A Souvenir for my children! Sunday, 3rd June, 186o. Lord, grant that this worthy and true sermon may become to them a salutary and precious blessing, and that it may remind them of their mother!” The beloved preacher had many similar testimonies to the usefulness of his words when translated into foreign tongues, although he was not spared to see this one, which would have greatly interested him.

ft6 It appears, from the New Park Street church-book, that the number was even larger than this. At the end of 1854, there were 313 names on the roll; during 1855, there was a net increase of 282; and the following year the net increase was 265; making the total membership 860.

Ft7 Readers of Vol. 1 of the *Autobiography*may remember that the total income of the New Park Street Church for the year 1853 was less than £300. The following figures prove the truth of Mr. William Olney’s statement, and also show how rapid and how great was the growth of the finances after Mr. Spurgeon’s Pastorate commenced in April, 1854: —

ft8 Mr. Passmore preserved a letter, written to himself by Mr. Spurgeon, in which there was the following allusion to the incident he:re described: — ”You may tell Mr.\_\_\_ that I was so far from intending to insult him by what I said that I uttered the sentence ir the purest love for his soul; and that I dare not be unfaithful to him any more than to anyone else in my congregation. God is my ‘witness, how earnestly I long for the salvation of all my hearers, and I would fi~r rather err by too great personality than by unfaithfulness. At the last great day, none of us will be offended with Christ’s ministers for speaking plainly to us. I am sorry that Mr.\_\_\_\_ was vexed, and have prayed that the sermon may be blessed to him.”

ft9 Mr. John Eastty, who had been up to the time of his death, in 1896, the senior deacon at Maze Pond Chapel, sent to Mrs. Spurgeon, in 1893,::is personal recollections of her dear husband, in which there was the following reference to this m~eting: — ”The grandfather of Mr. Archibald G. Brown was in the chair. Mr. William Olney had introduced Mr. Spurgeon to us, knowing that he would help Le cause by speaking on behalf of the school. What a stripling he then was! What an impression he made! It was then that he related the difficulty he felt, when a child, as to how the apple got through the narrow neck of the boftle (see *Autobiography,*Vol. 1), and made the application, ‘ So, then, you must put it in while it is a little one! ‘ And again, at about the same period, he preached a sermon in the same chapel, one Sunday afternoon, for one of the societies, when my mother pronounced judgment on him, and said, ‘He will be a second Whitefield!’ The minister of Maze Pond, the Rev. John Aldis, at once foresaw for him a very distinguished career, and was the first amongst the London ministers who took him by the hand; and Mr. Spurgeon never forgot it, for he was not so generally well received by his brethren. Most of what was said by them, is better forgotten, for nearly all of them came round to him at last; but, at a devotional meeting where Mr. Spurgeon had been invited to be present, a London Pastor prayed for’our young friend, who has so much to *learn,*and so much to *unlearn.’*The narrafor of this told me, however, that it did not at all affect him, nor did he betray the least feeling of annoyance.”

ft10 See *Autobiography,*Vol. 1., chapter 7.

ft11 As this volume of the *Autobiography*is passing through the press, the *forty-fourtk*year’s publication of the sermons is proceeding, making from No. 2,550 to No. 2,602, in regular weekly succession; and there are still sufficient unpublished discourses to last for several years longer, while the demand for them is as great as ever.

Ft12 ·On March 30, 1884, just after the sudden .death of the Duke of Albany, I preached aga/n from the same *text:*“What is your life?” The sermon was published as No. 1773 in the *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpi~,*and during the following week a gentleman, who came to see me at the Tabernacle upon some matter of business, said to me, “I felt quite overwhelmed with emotion a minute ago.” I asked him the reason; and he answered, “As I entered this building, I saw an announcement that you had lately preached from the words, ‘“What is your life?’” “Well,”! enquired, “what is there special about that?” “Why!” he replied, “the night before you came of age, you preached from the same text.” I told the friend that I had no doubt it was a very different discourse from the one I had just delivered, and then he said, “I have never been able to shake hands with you before to-day; but I have great pleasure in doing so now. When you were twenty-one years old, I was dreadfully depressed in spirit; I was so melancholy that I believe I should have destroyed myself if I had not heard you preach that sermon in celebration of your twenty-first birtheay. It encouraged me to keep on in the battle of life; and, what is better, it made such an impression on me that I have never gone back to what I was before. Though I live a long way from here, no one loves you more than I do, for you were the means of bringing me up out of tho horrible pit, and out of the miry clay.” I was very glad to have that testimony to the usefulness of one of my early sermons.

ft13 Mr. Spurgeon’s copy contains forty-two sermons; it is lettered on the back, — “A CURIOSITY IN RELIGIOUS LITERATURE.” On the fly-leaf, in his handwriting, is the following inscription: — ”Specimen of a collection of sermons given to all the crowned heads of Europe, and the students of Oxford; Cambridge; Trinity College, Dublin; etc., etc.”

During the compilation of this volume of the *Autobiography,*Mrs. Spurgeon received from a Church of England clergyman a letter containing the following reference to this distribution of sermons to the students in the Universities:—

“Over thirty years ago, when an undergraduate at Oxford, one of our men came into College with a volume of your husbanit’s sermons, saying that someone was distributing them to the ‘ men’ who would accept them. I was one of those who had the privileged gift, and have since read it through and through with advantage. I have never preached knowingly other than the doctrines of grace; and though the clergy round about are mostly Ritualists and Sacerdofallets, thank God the error taught by them has never tempted me!”

Ft14 Where the printing-offices were situated at that time.

Ft15 The two caricatures — ” Brimstone and Treacle” and *“Catch-’emalive-O!*” — have been so often reproduced that they are not included in this volume; but others that are less known are given, — ”The Slow Coach and the Fast Train”, “The Old Conducfor and the New Conducfor”. and “The Young Lion of the Day and the Funny Old Woman of the Day” (Chapter 52).

ft20 The site was formerly occupied by the Fishmongers’ Company’s Almshouses. They bore the name of St. Peter’s Hospital, and were built in 1618-36, out of the Kneseworth and other trusts; and consisted of three courts, a chapel, and a hall. They were rebuilt, in 1850-1, at East Hill, Wandsworth; and, after their removal, the land presented such a forlorn appearance that the building of the Tabernacle upon it was regarded as a great public improvement. It proved to be that in more senses than one. In the list of contributions for the Tabernacle Building Fund. is the name of the Worshipful Company of Fishmongers, — one hundred guineas.

ft21 After the disastrous fire, on April 2o, 1898, which almost destroyed the beautiful building he designed forty years before, Mr. Pocock kindly offered to do anything in his power towards the rebuilding of the Tabernacle, and very generously lent to the Committee his original drawings free of charge.

ft22 Sir Morton Peto was a most generous supporter of religious and philanthropic movements of all kinds, and he was a special benefactor to the Baptists. In later days, when reverses came upon him through no fault of his own he was greatly cheered by the reception of the following letter from Mr. Spurgeon: —

“A little time ago, I thought of writing to condole with you in the late tempests; but I feel there is far more reason to congratulate you than to sympathize. I have been all over England, in all sorts of society, and I have never heard a word spoken concerning you, in connection with late affairs, but such as showed profound esteem and unshaken confidence. I do not believe that this ever could have been said of any other man placed in similar circumstances. The respect and hearty sympathy which all sorts of persons bear towards you could never have been so well known to you as they now are by means of the past difficulties.”

ft23 Mr. Spurgeon dispensed with the collection from pew to pew, and simply had the plates held at the doors to receive the voluntary offerings of the worshippers.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY DIARY, LETTERS, AND RECORDS VOLUME 3

***by His Wife and His Private Secretary***

SPURGEON’S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

COMPILED FROM HIS DIARY, LETTERS, AND RECORDS,

**BY  
HIS WIFE,  
AND HIS PRIVATE SECRETARY.**

VOLUME. 3.

1856-1878.

“The law of truth was, in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips; he walke’d with Me in peace and equity, and. did turn many away from *iniquity.”—Malachi*2:6.

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CHAPTER 60.

THE TABERNACLE OPENED.

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

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

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

On December 18, 1859, we commenced our third series of services at Exeter Hall, which ended on March 31, 1861. A few of my remarks upon leaving that place may fitly be quoted here: f1—“In the providence of God, we, as a church and people, have had to wander often. This is our third sojourn within these walls. It is now about to close. We have had at all times and seasons a compulsion for moving: sometimes, a compulsion of conscience; at other times, a compulsion of pleasure, as on this occasion. I am sure that, when we first went to the Surrey Music Hall, God went with us. Satan went, too, but he fled before us. That frightful calamity, the impression of which can never be erased from my mind, became, in the providence of God, one of the: most wonderful means of turning public attention to special services; and I do not doubt that.—fearful catastrophe though it was,—it has been the mother of multitudes of blessings. The Christian world noted the example, and saw its after-success; they followed it, and to this day, in the theater and the: music:—hall, the Word of Christ is preached where it was never preached before. Never could it be more manifestly seen than h! that place, that the gospel, when proclaimed simply and earnestly, is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.

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

“‘But what enemies have we?’ say you. We have multitudes. We shall have to do battle in our new Tabernacle with that old enemy of the Church, the scarlet beast. Rome has built one of its batteries hard by our place, and there is one who styles himself ‘Archbishop of Southwark.’ Then we shall have another enemy, almost as our next-door neighbor,—infidelity. *There,* has been one of its special place, for display. Yet, comparatively speaking, infidelity is but a very puny adversary; it is not half so cunning as Popery, and hath nothing like its might. But worse than this, we shall have to deal with the indifference of the masses round about us, and with their carelessness concerning gospel truth, and with the prevailing sin. and corruption how shall we deal with all this? Shall we invent, some socialistic system of reform? Shall we preach up some new method of political economy? No! the cross, the old cross is enough; this is the true Jerusalem blade, that divides like the razor of old with which Tarquin’s augur cut the pebble. We will preach Christ as the sinner’s Savior, the Spirit of God as applying Christ’s truth to the soul, and God the Father in His infinite sovereignty saving whom He wills, and in the bounty of His mercy willing to receive the vilest of the vile; and there is no indifference so callous, no ignorance so blind, no iniquity so base, no conscience so seared as not to be made to yield, when God wills it, before the might of His strength. So again I pray, ‘Rise up, Lord, and let these Thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate Thee flee before Thee.’ ‘Rise up, *Lord!’*O God the Father, rise up! Pluck Thy right hand out of Thy bosom, and let Three eternal purposes be accomplished! O God the Son, rise up; show Thy wounds, and plead before Thy Father’s face, and let Thy blood-bought ones be saved! Rise up, O God the Holy Ghost; with solemn reverence, we do invoke Thine aid! Let those who have hitherto resisted Thee, now give way! Come Thou, and melt the ice; dissolve the granite: break the adamantine heart; cut Thou the iron sinew, and bow Thou the stiff neck! Rise up, Lord*Father,*Son, and Spirit,—we can do nothing without Thee; but if Thou wilt arise, Thine enemies shall be scattered, and they that hate Thee shall flee before Thee.”

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

At the. end of February, the program of the opening services announced that about 3,000 pounds was still required, and contained the following appeal and intimation:—“The Committee beg the renewed assistance of all their friends in this their crowning: effort, and they wish it to be distinctly understood that no persuasion will prevail upon their Pastor to us,—the building for public worship on the Sabbath until the whole of the liabilities are discharged. Shall the house be closed a single Sunday? We believe in our gracious God, and trust that He will so influence His people that, by the end of the second week, or before the Good Friday has passed away, all will be accomplished; in which case, we shall meet there for regular worship on Lord’s-day, March 31. The proceeds of collections, alter payment of contracted liabilities, will be needed for the completion of the front boundaries, the fitting up of the schools, furnishing the students’ class-rooms, and other works which the Committee have not as yet commenced. Feeling it to be highly objectionable to run into debt, they have left many matters to be finished when the funds shall be forthcoming, and they are sanguine that, before these preliminary meetings are over, this great temple of the Lord will have been finished in every department,” It was most appropriate that the noble building, which had been erected for a house of prayer, should be opened with a meeting for prayer. Accordingly, at seven o’clock in the morning of Monday, March 18, 1861, more than a thousand persons assembled in the Tabernacle. The Pastor presided, and among those who took part in the proceedings were representatives of the deacons and elders of the Church and students of the College. Fervency and intense earnestness marked every petition.

On Monday, March 25, at 7 a.m., Rev. George Rogers presided over the second prayer-meeting, and addressed the brethren in a sweet and savory manner upon “The House of God, the Gate of Heaven.” At three o’clock the same afternoon, the. first sermon in the Tabernacle was preached by the Pastor from Acts 5:42: “And daily in the: temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ;” and in the evening, Rev. W. Brock, of Bloomsbury Chapel, discoursed upon Philippians 1:18: “Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.” It was remarked at the time how well the two sermons were adapted to one another, although the ministers were quite unaware what text each had selected.

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

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

On “Good Friday,” March 29, the Pastor preached in the morning from Romans 3:24, 25: “Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood,” and in the: evening, from the Song of Solomon, 2:16: “My Beloved is mine, and I am His.” It was a fitting finale to these services to be able to announce that the whole sum required had been given, and the building, free from debt, was ready for Divine worship on the following Lord’s-day. That Sabbath evening, March 31, the Pastor preached from 2 Chronicles 5:13, 14; and 7:1-3; and speaking upon the glory of the Lord filling the house, uttered a prophecy which has been abundantly fulfilled in every particular:*—“*Let God send the fire of His Spirit here, and the minister will be more and more lost in his Master. You will come to think less of the speaker, and more of the truth spoken; the individual will be swamped, the words uttered will rise above everything. When you have the cloud, the man is forgotten; when you have the: fire, the man is lost, and you only see his Master. Suppose the fire should, come here, and the Master be seen more than the minister, what then? Why, this church will become two, or three, or four thousand strong! It is easy enough for God to double our numbers, vast though they are even now. We shall have the lecture-hall beneath this platform crowded at each prayer-meeting, and we shall see in this place young men devoting themselves to God; we shall find ministers raised up, and trained, and sent forth to carry the sacred fire to other parts of the globe, Japan, China, and Hindustan shall have heralds of the cross, who have here had their tongues touched with the Divine flame. Through us, the whole earth shall receive benedictions; if God shall bless us, He will make us a blessing to multitudes of others. Let God but send down the fire, and the biggest sinners in the neighborhood will be converted; those who live in the dens of infamy will be changed the drunkard will forsake his cups, the swearer will repent of his blasphemy, the debauched will leave their lusts,—

“‘Dry bones be raised, and clothed afresh,  
And hearts of stone be turned to flesh.’”

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

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

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

On Thursday evening, April 4, Dr. Octavius Winslow preached from the words, “It is finished;” on Lord’s-day, April 7, the Pastor occupied the pulpit both morning and evening, and presided at the first communion service held in the Tabernacle; the next night, a family gathering of our own church was held under the presidency of the Pastor’s father, Rev. John Spurgeon; and on the Tuesday evening, Rev. Hugh Stowell Brown, of Liverpool, preached on “Christian Baptism,” and the Pastor conducted the first baptismal service, concerning which Dr. Campbell wrote, in *The British Standard,*April 12:—

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

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

“The interest of the thing was overpowering. We doubt if it: was a whir inferior to that of taking the veil in the Church of Rome. There was the young orator, the idol of the assembly, in the water, with a countenance radiant as the light; and there, on the pathway, was Mrs. Spurgeon, a most prepossessing young lady,—the admiration of all who beheld her,—with courtly dignity and inimitable modesty, kindly leading forward the trembling sisters in succession to her husband, who gently and gracefully took and immersed them, with varied remark and honied phrase, all kind, pertinent to the occasion, and greatly fitted to strengthen, encourage, and cheer. Emerging from the water, there were two portly deacons, in boxes at the side of the steps, with benignant smile, to seize their hands, and bring them up, throwing cloaks over them; two other deacons received them at the top of the steps, and other two politely led. them backward to the vestry. It was quite an ovation, an era in the history of the neophytes. It had really not been wonderful if all the ladies in the plate had been candidates for such distinction. We have ourselves seen several who were there, whose heads seem completely turned. Paedo-Baptist ministers, whatever their piety or ability, have no chance with Mr. Spurgeon in multiplying members. They operate only in one element, he: in two: to him, the land and the water are alike productive. We shall not be surprised if, in seven more years, his church be doubled, and the Metropolitan Tabernacle prove insufficient to accommodate even the members and their families. The largest chapel in the world, it will have the largest church. What then?”

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

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

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

“‘But the carriage,’ says the correspondent. Well, the plain one-horse vehicle,—what of that? Living where his health requires him to live, a few miles in the country, in a very plain and far from commodious habitation, some conveyance is absolutely necessary to his great and unceasing toils. Is that to be denied him? To economize a little horse-power, would you abridge his leviathan labor’s for the cause of God and the souls of men? It is a curious fact that the miserable malignance of a former day brought it as a charge against Wesley and Whitefield, and in our own times against Collyer and Hill, that they kept a carriage! This suggests; the economist who wished the ointment to have been sold for the poor, ‘not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag.’ But enough: ‘Wisdom is justified of her children.’ All good and upright men ‘glorify God’ in Charles Haddon Spurgeon. They desire for him life and length of days, within a continuance of all his gifts and all his graces, and an increase of favor with God and man. He is still in the morning of life; and we trust he may have before him at least half-a-century of usefulness and honor ere he be called to the Upper World to take his place—among prophets, apostles, martyrs, and evangelists, who have turned many to  
righteousness,—to shine as a star for ever and ever.”

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

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

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

“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
The: following inscription, also in the Pastor’s handwriting’, is signed by himself, the deacons, the elders, and. a large number of the churchmembers, beginning with “Susie Spurgeon”:—

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

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

During the month of May, 1861, four more church-meetings were held, at which seventy-seven additional members were proposed, and at the communion service on June 2, a hundred and twenty-one persons were received into full fellowship. This large increase: was thus gratefully recorded at the church-meeting on June 18:—“It was unanimously resolved that a record of our gratitude to God for His graciousness toward us should be made in the church-book. With our whole hearts, as a highlyfavored church and people, we magnify and extol the lovingkindness; of our God in so singularly owning the Word proclaimed among us, by giving So many souls to be added to our number. To God be all the glory! Oh, that we may be more than ever devoted to His honor and service!” The Tabernacle is so well proportioned that many persons fail to realize its vast size. The building is a rectangle, measuring outside the walls 174 feet in length, and 85 feet in width; inside, the extreme: length, including the vestries, is 168 feet; the. main auditorium being 146 feet long, 81 feet broad, and 62 feet high. Estimates as to the seating accommodation of the Tabernacle’. have varied considerably; but the actual number of sittings that could be let, previous to the fire, was 3,600, and about 1,000 persons could occupy seats on the flaps in the aisles and other parts of the building. Many hundreds of additional hearers could find—and for thirty years did find—standing-room in the great house of prayer, so that the preacher had regularly before him, Sabbath by Sabbath, between five and six thousand immortal souls listening to his proclamation of the Word of lite. As an instance of the misleading notions that people have entertained concerning the: capacity of large public buildings, it may be mentioned, on the authority of The *Builder.*May 4, 1861, that the Surrey Gardens Music Hall, which was supposed to hold 10,000 or 12,000 people, had a sitting area of 19,723 feet, while that of the. Metropolitan Tabernacle was 25,225 feet!

At the annual church-meeting, on January 22, 1862, the Building Committee’s audited balance-sheet was presented and adopted. It showed that the total expenditure up to that time had been 31,332 pounds 4s. 10d., all of which had been met. The two largest items in the account were— purchase of land, 5,000 pounds; and contract for the main building, 20,000 pounds. Among the receipts, the highest amounts were—collectors’ accounts, 7,258 pounds 5s. 2d.; donations and subscriptions, 9,034 pounds 19s. 2d.; per Pastor C. H. Spurgeon, 11,253 pounds 15s. 6d.

After the Tabernacle was ‘built, an earnest endeavor was made to retain New Park Street Chapel for the Baptist denomination, and to make it, if possible, the abode of another church. For some years, preaching was carried on, a brother supported, and considerable expenses incurred; but it was clear that a self-sustaining interest was not to be gathered in the neighborhood. Mr. John Collins, now of Lymington, worked very hard, and enjoyed much of the Divine blessing; but those who were converted under him had a pardonable tendency to gravitate towards the motherchurch at the Tabernacle., and it became evident beyond all question that it was useless for us to retain so large a building in such a situation, and so near our own. The property consisted of the chapel, schools, and almsrooms; and it was agreed, and arranged with the Charity Commissioners, that it should be sold, and the proceeds used for new schools and almsrooms.

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

CHAPTER 61.

DEACONS AND ELDERS; PASTORS AND TEACHERS.

S INCE I came to London, I have seen the last of a former race of deacons,—fine, gentlemanly men, rather stiff and unmanageable, not quite, according to my mind, but respectable, prudent grandees of Dissent, in semi-clerical dress, with white cravats. The past generation of deacons is to be spoken of with reverence in all places where holy memories are cherished; but, out of them all, my friend, counselor, and right hand, was Thomas Olney. Never did a minister have a better deacon, nor a church a better servant. He was for sixty years a member, for thirty-one years a deacon, and for fourteen years treasurer of the church. He was ever remarkable for his early and constant attendance at the prayer-meeting and other week-day services. He had a childlike faith and a manly constancy. To believe in Jesus, and to work for Him, were the very life of his new and better nature. He was eminently a Baptist; but he was also a lover of all good men. The poor, and especially the poor of the church,, always found in him sincere sympathy and help. His name will be had in lasting remembrance.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

THOMAS OLNEY, as a consistent, useful, and beloved member of this church for the lengthened period of 51 years; and while to the: grace of God all the varied excellences of our brother are to be. ascribed, the Pastor, officers, and church-members cannot refrain from returning unfeigned and hearty thanks to our brother for his indefatigable labors as deacon for 22 years, and for his most valuable services as treasurer.

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

We trust that, in that: great house of prayer, over every stone of which he has watched so anxiously, he may be spared to see the largest wishes of his heart fulfilled in the gathering of immense assemblies, the salvation of many souls, and the daily increase of our numbers as a church.”  
(When “Father Olney” was taken home, in 1869, his much-loved Pastor was just recovering from an attack of small-pox, and therefore was unable to visit him in his last illness, or to conduct his funeral service, but had to be content with writing the following letter to his son, Mr. Thomas H. Olney:—

“Nightingale Lane,  
““Friday, Nov. 26, 1869.  
“My Dear Mr. Olney,

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

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

“My dear friend, I devoutly pray to God to incline your heart to be henceforth to me all that your father has been till he fell asleep. Not that you have not ever

been the soul of goodness; but now he is gone, you must undertake, more publicly the responsibilities which in private you re. ally have borne; and if the Lord accounts me worthy to have in Thomas Olney the same tender friend that I have had in Thomas Olney, sent my pathway in life will be smoothed, and my labor cheered. The Lord be with you! My devoutest wishes are for your best happiness.

“Yours most truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

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

“Westwood,  
“Beulah Hill,  
“Upper Norwood,  
“June 26, 1883.  
“Dear Friend,

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

“Yours most lovingly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
Fountain Court was Mr. Olney’s City address.)

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

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

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

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

One of my deacons made a remark to me, one night, which would have mortally offended a more sensitive individual than I am. It was the first Sabbath in the month, the preaching service was over, and we were just going down to the great communion in the Tabernacle. I inquired how many new members there were to be received, and the answer was, “Only seven.” In an instant, my good friend said, “This won’t pay, Governor; running all this big place for seven new members in a month!” He was quite right, although a Christian church is not *“run”*on exactly the same lines as a business undertaking; but I could not help thinking, at the time, that it would not have done for some deacons to. make such an observation to certain ministers of my acquaintance; or if the remark had been made, it would have been attended with very serious consequences. I know one pastor who is very decidedly of opinion that the Lord never made anyone equal in importance to a Baptist minister (that is, *himself);* but it so happened that one of his church-officers had the notion that a deacon is a being of a still higher order, so it was not very surprising that the time came when they could no longer work together harmoniously. On going into the Tabernacle, one day, I gave directions about some minor alterations that I wished to have made, not knowing at the time that I was canceling the orders given by the deacon who had the main care of the building resting upon him. When he arrived, in the evening, he saw what had been done, and at once asked who had interfered with his instructions. The reply was, “the Governor, sir.” The spirit of unquestioning loyalty at once asserted itself over any temporary annoyance he may have felt, and he said, “Quite right; there must be only one captain in a ship;” and, for a long while, that saying became one of our most familiar watchwords. I have often been amazed, at the devotion of our brethren; I have told them, many a time, that, if’ they would follow a broomstick as they have followed me, the work must succeed. To which Mr. William Olney, as the spokesman for the rest, has answered, “Yes, dear Pastor; but it is because we have such absolute confidence in your leadership that we are ready to follow you anywhere. You have never misled us yet, and we do not believe you ever will do so.”

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

I had one most touching proof- of a deacon’s loving self-sacrifice and generosity. During a very serious illness, I had an unaccountable fit of anxiety about money matters. There was no real ground for apprehension, for my dear wife and I were scrupulously careful to “owe no man anything,” and there was no pecuniary liability in connection with the Lord’s work under my charge which need have caused me the slightest perplexity. I had fallen into one of those curious mental conditions that are often the result of extreme pain and weakness, in which the mind seems to lay hold of some impalpable object, and will not let it go. One of the brethren came to see me while I was in that sad state, and after trying in vain to comfort me, he said, “Well, good bye, sir, I’ll see what I can do.” He went straight home, and before very long he came back to me bringing all the stocks and shares and deeds and available funds that he had. Putting them down on the bed where I was lying in great agony, he said, “There, my dear Pastor, I owe everything I have in the world to you, and you are quite welcome to all I possess. Take whatever you need, and do not have another moment’s anxiety.” Of course, as soon as I got better, I returned to my dear friend all that he had brought to me under’ such singular circumstances. Even if I had needed it, I could not have taken a penny of it, for it seemed to me very much as the water from the well of Bethlehem must have appeared to David. Happily, I did not require any part of the amount so freely placed at my disposal, but I could never forget the great kindness of the brother who was. willing to give all that he had in order to allay the groundless fears of his sorely-afflicted minister.

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

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

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

“Our Pastor, in accordance with a previous notice, then stated the necessity that had long been felt by the church for the appointment of certain brethren to the office of elders, to watch over the spiritual affairs of the church. Our Pastor pointed out the Scripture warrant for such an office, and quoted the several passages relating to the ordaining of elders: Titus 1:5, and Acts 14:23;—the qualifications of elders: 1 Timothy 3:1-7, and Titus 1:5-9;—the duties of elders: Acts 20:28-35, Timothy 5:17, and James 5:14; and other mention made of elders: Acts 11:30, 15:4, 6, 23, 16:4, and 1 Timothy 4:14.

“Whereupon, it was resolved,—That the church, having heard the statement made by its Pastor respecting the office of the eldership, desires to elect a certain number of brethren to serve the church in that office for one )rear, it being understood that they are to attend to the spiritual affairs of the church, and not to the temporal matters, which appertain to the deacon only.”

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

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

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

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

(One of the ministers who took part: in the services in connection with the opening of the Tabernacle was Pastor James Smith, whose portrait was given in Volume 2, page 3. Not many months afterwards, he was laid aside by serious illness. A letter of condolence and sympathy was sent to him from the church, in which it was said:—“ Many of us remember your useful and honored ministry when you went in and out before us, and sought to feed the flock; all of us know you by you: valuable writings, and to this day we hear of instances of conversion wrought by means of your sermons in our midst. We therefore all of us feel a true union of heart towards you, and devoutly pray that every covenant mercy may rest upon you and your family in this hour of affliction and sorrow.”

The venerable minister was greatly cheered by this token of love from his former church, He lingered for more: than a year, and in October, 1862, Mr. Spurgeon went to see him, and on the following Sabbath, thus reported to the friends at the. Tabernacle how he found him:—“ I saw, this week, one whom many of you greatly respect,—the former Pastor of this church, Mr. James Smith, of Chiltenham,—a name well known by his innumerable little works which are scattered everywhere, and cannot fail to do good. You will remember that, about a year ago, he was struck with paralysis; one half of his body is dead, but yet, when I saw him on the bed, I had not seen a more cheerful man in the full heyday of strength I had been told that he was the subject of very fearful conflicts at times; so, after I had shaken hands with him, I said, ‘ Friend Smith, I hear that you have many doubts and fears.’ ‘Who told you that?’ he inquired, ‘ for I have none.’ ‘Do you never have any?’ I asked. ‘Why, I understood that you had many conflicts.’ Yes! he said, ‘I have many conflicts, but I have no doubts; I have many wars within, but I have no fears. Who could have told you such a thing? I hope I have not led anyone to think so. It is a hard battle, but I know the victory is sure. After I have had an ill night’s rest,—of course, through physical debility,—my mind is troubled, and then that old coward, Satan, who would, perhaps, not meddle with me if I were strong, attacks me when I am weak. But I am not afraid of him; don’t you go away with that opinion; he does throw many fiery darts at me. but I have no doubt as to my final victory.’ Then he said, in his own quaint way, ‘I am just like a packet that is all ready to go by train,—packed, corded, labeled, paid for, and on the platform, waiting for the express to come by, and take me to glory;’ and he added, ‘I wish I could hear the whistle now; I had hoped I should have been carried to Heaven long ago; but, still, it is all right.’ He also said to me, ‘ I have been telling your deacon, George Moore, that I am not only *on*the rock, but that I am cemented *to*the rock, and that the cement is as hard as the rock itself, so there is no fear of my perishing; unless the rock falls, I cannot fall; unless the gospel perishes, cannot perish.’”

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

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

CHAPTER 62.

Deacons and Elders; Pastors and Teachers

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

It was very important that, during the short active lifetime of our savior,— a little more than three years,—He should confine His operation to a comparatively small district, so as to produce a permanent result there which would afterwards radiate over the whole world. He knew what was best for men, and therefore He restricted Himself to a very narrow area; and, my brethren and sisters, I am not sure that we are always wise when we want a great sphere. I have myself sometimes envied the man with about five hundred people to watch over, who could see them all, know them all, and enter into sympathy with them all, and so could do his work well. But, with so large a number as I have under my charge, what can one man do?—C. H. S., *in exposition of Matthew 15:21*.

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

November 24, 1862.—“Our Pastor stated that he thought it desirable that we should revive the: office of TEACHER, which had formerly existed in this church, but had fallen into disuse. In looking over our church history, he found that, during the pastorate of Mr. William Rider, Mr. Keach had labored in the church under the name and title of Teacher, so that, upon the decease of Mr. Rider, a Pastor was at once on the spot in the person of the mighty man of God who had for twenty years been recognized as a Teacher among us. Again, in the pastorate of Benjamin Keach, the church elected Mr. Benjamin Stinton to assist the Pastor as a Teacher, and it again happened that, on the removal of Mr. Keach, Benjamin Stinton succeeded to the pastorate, and the church was spared the misery of long remaining without a Pastor, or seeking some unknown person from abroad. The Teacher, without dividing the unity of the pastorate, would, in the judgment of our Pastor, be a valuable aid for the edification of the saints in the matter of word and doctrine. Our Pastor also remarked that, when the Holy Spirit manifestly made a man useful in the church, and bestowed on him the real qualifications for an office, it seemed but fitting and seemly that the church should humbly recognize the gift of the Lord, and accept the brother in the Lord’s name.

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

“Severed brethren having expressed their hearty concurrence in the remarks made by our Pastor, and also their confidence in our Brother Collins the church unanimously agreed to appoint John Collins to the office of Teacher. Our brother was then called in, and informed of the office he had been appointed to fill by the vote of the church, which he accepted with all humility, asking our prayers, and pledging himself anew to serve the Lord and His people.”

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

March 31, 1864.—“Our Pastor Stated that the office of Teacher had not been filled up since Brother Collins had been chosen Pastor of the church at Southampton, and that he was very desirous that it should be occupied by an efficient brother who would labor with aim in the gospel. The oversight of so large a church rendered some assistance necessary to thePastor, and he therefore proposed that our Brother Thomas Ness, towards whom he entertained the most affectionate regard, be appointed Teacher, to assist the Pastor by visitation and other work as need should arise. Several of the brethren expressed their hearty approval, and spoke in the warmest terms of Mr. Ness, and of his suitability for the office. It was therefore unanimously agreed to by the church, and our Brother Ness signified his acceptance of the office,”

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

These experiments having failed, in each instance because the brother was called away to another field of labor, nearly two years were allowed to elapse before any further effort was made to relieve the Pastor from part at least of his ever-increasing burden of labor and responsibility. On October 16, 1867, a special church-meeting was held, of which the: church-book contains the following record:—  
“For nearly fourteen years, we have, as a church, enjoyed a most wonderful and uninterrupted prosperity, so that our present number of members is now more than 3,500,—a number far too great for the efficient oversight of one man. Although our deacons and elders labor abundantly, yet there is much work which no one can do but the Pastor, and which one Pastor finds himself quite unable to perform. The mere examination of candidates, and attending to discipline, entail most laborious duties. Moreover, the Pastor’s labors in Exeter Hall, the Surrey Gardens Music Hall, our own large Tabernacle, and the Agricultural Hall, have been most exhausting, and yet he has taken little rest, being perpetually occupied in preaching the Word, having proclaimed the gospel throughout England, Scotland, and Wales, and having journeyed for the same purpose to Geneva, Paris, Holland, and Germany.

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

“The following resolution was then proposed by Deacon William Olney, seconded by Elder Dransfield, supported by Brethren Nisbet, Miller, and Stringer, and carried unanimously:—‘That, in the opinion of this church, the time has now arrived when some permanent help should be obtained to assist our beloved Pastor in the very arduous work connected with the pastorate of so large a church; also that we consider the most likely person to discharge this duty to the comfort of our Pastor, and the lasting benefit of the church, is our Pastor’s brother, the Rev. J. A. Spurgeon. It is therefore resolved that an invitation be. given to the Rev. James A. Spurgeon to give as much of his time as he can spare from his present engagements to assist our Pastor in any way considered by him most advisable for the advantage of this church, tot a period of three months, with a view to his being’ permanently engaged afterwards, if it is thought advisable at the expiration of that period; also that it be an instruction to our deacons to make any financial arrangement necessary to carry out this resolution.’

“It was also proposed by Deacon Thomas Cook, seconded by Elder Hanks, and carried unanimously:—‘That we desire to acknowledge with devout gratitude the goodness of our Heavenly Father in the rapid and continuous growth of our church, numbering now 3,500 members; also that our beloved Pastor has been enabled to discharge the duties of the pastorate without assistance for the period of fourteen years with ever-increasing zeal and devotedness. These matters claim at our hands adoring gratitude and renewed consecration to the work of the Lord.’”

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

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

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

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

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

“To the Rev. James A. Spurgeon,  
“Dear Sir,

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

“As we have now every reason to believe that you will be elected for a permanence with even greater cordiality, we, the officers of the church, are anxious, before the election, to communicate with you as to the exact position which you are invited to occupy. We write as the representatives of the whole church, and with the full concurrence of the Pastor, and we trust that no expressions which we may use will be regarded by you as for a moment implying the slightest distrust, or as meant to hamper you in your position among us; we write with the utmost affection and respect to you personally, but with the greatest plainness, in order to avoid questions in the. future. You will, we are sure, as a wise man, understand the importance of the step we are taking, and the need that everything should be done to secure the future peace and prosperity of the church. We will, with great brevity, define the modifications under which you are elected as Assistant-pastor of the church in the Metropolitan Tabernacle.

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

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

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

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

“Further, we affectionately and respectfully request you to agree that, should circumstances arise which, in the judgment of the Pastor alone, of the Pastor and the majority of the deacons and elders, or a majority of the whole of the church-officers, should render it desirable for you to cease from holding office among us, you will resign upon having twelve months notice, or the-immediate payment of one year’s stipend.

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

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

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

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

“(Signed for the deacons and elders.)”  
“The Pastor then read the following reply, which had been received from Mr. J. A. Spurgeon:—

“33, Elgin Crescent,  
“Notting Hill,  
“January 6th, 1868.  
“Dear Brethren,

“I heartily concur in your definitions of my future position, and accept them with the earnest prayer that I may in that post be greatly blessed to the building up of the church, and to the salvation of souls. Agreeable to your request, expressly state that I shall not consider myself entitled to any such power over the pulpit as is usually connected with the office of Pastor. After my desire to glorify God, my sole object in relinquishing my previous independent position is to aid my brother as he may desire me, and certainly in no wise to supersede him in anything.

“I think it is in my heart by nature, and I am sure: it is by grace, most cheerfully to give him that precedence which by birthright, talents, and position is so justly his due. I can yield to no one in my high esteem for him, and I feel that it is my privilege to be *first in love*to him, so that it is rather a joy than a fetter to be thus associated with him.  
“It is with trembling as well as rejoicing that I look forward to my future work with you. I am, however, cheered by the thought that I shall be sustained by your prayers, and shall find in sour counsels and brotherly love a growing’ strength and comfort. I believe that our aim and motive, our faith and Lord, are *one;*so may our action and spirit ever be, is the prayer of—

“Yours, to serve in the Lord,  
“JAMES A. SPURGEON.” “TO the Officers of the Church at the Metropolitan Tabernacle.”

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

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

In *The Metropolitan Tabernacle, its History and Work,*a chapter, written by Pastor J. A. Spurgeon, contains the following paragraph:—“ Amongst the officers of the church, foremost stands *the Pastor,*who, though its servant, is so to rule, guide, and discipline it as God shall help and direct by His Holy Spirit. In connection with the church at the Tabernacle, two such officers are now laboring.

It is a trite remark that, if two men ride a horse, one must sit behind, and he who is in the front must hold the reins and drive. Co-pastorships have been sources of discomfort: or blessing as this principle has been understood. Wherever it may have been disregarded, it is not (by the grace of God) likely to be so in the case in hand. Where one. of the two brothers has been so instrumental in creating the necessity for additional help, from the very fullness of blessing resulting from his labors; and is, moreover, so superior in talent, influence, and power, it is a privilege to follow in the order of nature and birth which God, from the first, had evidently designed.”

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

“Mrs. Bartlett was a choice gift from God to the church at the Tabernacle, and the influence of her life was far-reaching, stimulating many others besides those who by her means were actually led to the Savior. We miss her sadly, but her spiritual children are with us still; ‘they have stood the test of years, and the most searching test of all, namely, the loss of her motherly counsel and inspiring words. She did not build with wood, hay, and stubble, for the edifice remains, and for this let God be glorified.

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

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

“It pleased God to make our sister an eminently practical woman. She was no dreamer of dreams, but a steady, plodding worker. She never wasted two minutes of her Pastor’s time with marvelous methods, and miraculous plans; she instinctively saw what could be done, and what should be done, and she did it, looking to God for the blessing. Her class has raised large sums for the College, and has done actual service in more ways than we have space to tell, for she trained her disciples into a band of laborers, and kept them all at it to the utmost of their abilities. Her addresses were always practical; never speculative, or merely entertaining. She aimed at soul, winning every time she met the class, and that in the most direct and personal manner. In pursuing this object:, she was very downright, and treated things in a matter-of-fact style. The follies, weaknesses, and temptations of her sex were dealt with very pointedly; and the griefs, trials, and sins of her class were. on her heart, and she spoke of them as real burdens. Her talk never degenerated into story-telling, or quotations of poetry, or the exhibition of singularities of doctrine; but he went right at her hearers in the name of the Lord, and claimed their submission to Him.

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

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

“In affectionate memory of  
LAVINIA STRICKLAND BARTLETT,  
Who departed to her blissful home, August 21, 1875, in her 69th year.

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

CHAPTER 65.

MEMORABLE SERVICES AT THE TABERNACLE, 1861-1874.

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

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

Among the earliest of memorable services at the Tabernacle was the one held on Lords-day morning, December 15, 1861. Late on the previous night, the Prince Consort had been “called home; and in commencing his sermon, Mr. Spurgeon read a. few sentences which he had written with reference to that solemn event. His manuscript was preserved, and is reproduced in *facsimile*on the preceding page. He did not feel that he could at that time make further allusion to the Prince’s departure, as he had prepared a discourse upon quite a different topic; but the following Sabbath morning he preached, from Amos 3:6, —

“Shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?”

— a sermon which ‘was published under the title, “The Royal Death-bed.” The introduction contained the following noble tribute to the character and influence of Albert the Good: —

“The evil mentioned in the text is that of calamity, and we might read the verse, — ‘Shall there be a *calamity*in the city, and the Lord hath not done it?’ — a question exceedingly appropriate at the present time. There *has* been evil in this city; a calamity of an unusual and disastrous nature has fallen upon this nation. We have lost one who will today find a thousand tongues to eulogize him; a Prince whose praise is in the mouth of all, and who is in such repute among you that it is needless for me to commend his memory to your hearts. We have lost a man whom it was the habit of some to suspect so long as he lived, he could do little without arousing their mistrust; they were always alarmed by phantoms of intrusion and unconstitutional influence; but now that he has departed, they may sincerely regret that they could not trust where confidence was so well deserved. Not of lack of homage to his rank, his talents, or his house, could he complain; but from his tomb the. re might well come (he. still small w)ice of memory, reminding us of many causeless suspicions, a few harsh judgments, and one or two heartless calumnies. I was pleased by a remark made by the leading journal of the age, to the effect that the Prince Consort’s removal might suggest deep regrets for our thrifty homage and measured respect. He has deserved nothing but good at our hands. Standing in the most perilous position, his loot has not slipped; dwelling where the slightest interference might have brought down, a storm of animosity upon his head, he has prudently withheld himself, and let public affairs alone as much as possible. Looking upon the nature of our government, and the position of the throne in our constitution, I can but say, ‘Verily it is a heavy calamity for such a Queen to lose such a husband.’

“So dire is this evil, that our troubled hearts are shadowed with dark forebodings of other ills of which this may be the mournful herald; an earthquake has commenced, the mountain trembles, one great rock has fallen, ‘what may come next? We did reckon upon war, but we had no forewarnings of a royal funeral; we looked forward with some apprehension to strifes abroad, but not to losses at home. And now we feel that a corner-stone in the royal house has been taken away, and. we look forward with sorrow and teal’ to what may come next, and next, and next. We have great faith in our constitution, but had we not: even greater faith in God, ‘we might fear lest the removal of an eminent minister, the taking away of some great men who have stood prominent in our commonwealth, should leave us desolate, without earthly helpers. ‘Tis not the fall of yonder stately column which alone has caused us sadness; it is the prophetic finger pointing to other parts of the goodly pile, which has made us full of forebodings of the time when many a noble pillar must lie in the dust. Nor is this all, or the deepest sorrow. We feel this to be an evil upon the city, because of the taking away of a parent from his children, and such children, too, — princes, whom no man may venture to instruct as could a father, princes; into whose ears wise words will scarcely enter save through a father’s voice, — prince and princesses, who needed to have his prudent counsel to steer them through the various; trials of their minority, and to cheer them when they should come into the battles of life. He who, in concert with the Queen, has so well trained them, is taken away; and what his loss may be to their future characters, time only shall reveal. More than this, — and here we touch the tenderest string, and come nearest to the heart of the evil, — Her Majesty has lost her beloved husband, her only equal friend, her only confidant, her only counselor in her private cares. Save her children, she has lost all at a blow, and she is this day more widowed than the poorest widow in the land. The bereaved wife of the peasant is too often afflicted by the grasp of chill, penury, but she has some equals and friends who prevent the comer hand of regal isolation from freezing the very soul. In our tenderly-beloved Sovereign, we: see Majesty in misery, and what if I say, we behold the Empress of sorrow. Just as the mountain-peaks, the first to catch the sunbeams of summer, are the most terribly exposed to the pitiless blasts of winter, so the elevation of sovereignty, with all its advantages in prosperity, involves the maximum of sorrow in the hour of tribulation. What rational man among us would be willing to assume imperial cares in ordinary times; but what must they be now, when household bereavement wrings the heart, and there is no more an affectionate husband to bear his portiere of the burden? Brethren, we can only sympathize; we cannot console. Ordinary cases are often within reach of compassion; but the proper reverence due to the highest authority in the land renders it impossible for the dearest friend to use that familiarity which is the very life of comfort.

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

Singularly enough, the next discourse claiming special notice also related to a great public calamity, namely, the Hartley Colliery explosion. On Thursday evening, January 30, 1862, Mr. Spurgeon preached, from Job 14:14, — “If a man die, shall he live again?” — a sermon which commenced thus: — “Once more the Lord has spoken; again the voice of Providence has proclaimed, ‘All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field.’ O sword of the Lord, when wilt thou rest and be quiet? Wherefore these repeated warnings? ‘Why doth the Lord so frequently and so terribly sound an alarm? Is it not because our drowsy spirits will not awaken to the realities of death? We fondly persuade ourselves that we are immortal; that, though a thousand may tall at our side, and ten thousand at our right hand, yet death shall not come nigh unto us. We flatter ourselves that, if we must die, yet the evil day is far hence. If we be sixty, we presumptuously reckon upon another twenty years of life; and a man of eighty, tottering upon his staff, remembering that some few have survived to the close of a century, sees no reason why he. should not do the same. If man cannot kill death, he tries at least to bury him alive; and since death will intrude himself in our pathway, we endeavor to shut our eyes to the. ghastly object. God in ‘Providence is continually filling our path with tombs. With kings and princes, there is too much forgetfulness of the world to come; God has therefore spoken to *them.*They are but few in number; so one death might be sufficient in their case, that one death of a beloved and illustrious Prince will leave its mark on court; and palaces. As for the workers, they also are wishful to put far from them the thought of the coffin and the shroud God has spoken to *tzero*also. They were many, so one death would not be sufficient; it was absolutely necessary that there should be many victims, or we should have disregarded the warning. Two hundred witnesses cry to us from the pit’s mouth, — a solemn fellowship of preachers all using the same text, ‘Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel!’ If God had not thus spoken by the destruction of many, we should have said, ‘Ah! it is a common occurrence; there are frequently such accidents as these.’ The rod would have failed in its effect had it smitten less severely. The awful calamity at the Hartley Colliery has at least had this effect, that men are talking of death in all our streets. O Father of Thy people, send forth Thy Holy Spirit in richer abundance, that by this solemn chastisement higher ends may be answered than merely attracting our thoughts to our latter end! Oh, may hearts be broken, may eyes be mad,.’ to weep for sin, may follies be renounced, may Christ be accepted, and may spiritual life be given to many survivors as the result of the physical death of those who now sleep in their untimely graves in Earsdon churchyard!”

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

When Mr. Spurgeon was at Geneva, in 1860, he preached for Dr. Merle D’Aubigne as well as in the cathedral. It was therefore fitting that: the Genevan divine should speak to the congregation at the Tabernacle when the opportunity occurred. On Lord’s-day morning, May 18, 1862, the Pastor purposely made his discourse somewhat shorter than usual; and, in closing it, said: — “My dear friend, Dr. D’Aubigne, is here this morning, having been called by the Bishop of London, according to the order of our beloved Queen, to preach in the Royal Chapel of St. James. In a kind note with which he favored me, last week, he expressed a desire publicly to show his hearty fellowship with his brethren of the Free Churches of England, and I am delighted to welcome him in the Tabernacle, in the name of this church, and may venture to add, in the name of all the Free Churches of England. May the historian of the Reformation continue to be honored of the Lord his God.”

Dr. D’Auibigne said: — “When I heard your dear Pastor reading to us the 16th chapter of the Romans, I remembered those words which we find very often in the Epistles of Paul, — ‘love to the saints,’ and ‘faith in the Lord.’ In that 16th chapter, we. find a beautiful exhibition of love to the saints, the children of God. We see that it was written from the Church of Corinthus, in Greece, to the Church in Rome. Observe how many Christians that Church of Corinthus and the apostle Paul knew at Rome! We have a long catalogue of them, — Priscilla, Aquila, Andronicus, and others. I must confess, my dear friends, to my regret, that in this great assembly I know only two or three people. I know your Pastor and my dear friend, Mr. Spurgeon; I know the name, but not the person, of Mr. North, upon my left; and I know the friend who has received me in your great city, Mr. Kinnaird, — ‘Gaius, mine host,’ as the apostle says. But in this great assembly of six thousand men and women, and I hope brethren and sisters in Christ, I do not know anyone else. Well, my dear friends, I would ask you, do you know the names of many Christians in Geneva? Perhaps you do not know three; possibly, not two; perhaps, only one. Now, that is to me a demonstration that fraternity, or brotherly love, is not so intense in our time as it was in the days of the apostles. In the first century, for a man to give his name to the Lord was to expose himself to martyrdom; and Christians at that time formed only one household in the whole world, in Europe, Asia, and Africa. Let us remember that, and may we, by the Holy Ghost, say that *we,*who have been baptized with the blood and the Spirit of the Lord, have only one Father, one Savior, one Spirit, one faith, and we are only’ one house, the house of the living God, the house of Christ, one house of the Holy Spirit in the whole world; not only in Europe, Asia, and Africa, but in America, in Australia, one house, one family. O my dear friends, let us grow in love to the brethren!

“Then there is; another thing, faith in the Lord Jesus. There can be no love to the saved and the redeemed, if there is no true living faith and hope in the Savior and the Redeemer. Well, I suppose all of you in this great meeting would say, ‘We believe in the Lord, we have faith in Him.’ Yes, but that faith must be sincere, must be living, must come from the heart. I will tell you one word from Rome. Probably all these friends sent some messages by the apostle, but I will tell you one word that was said once in Rome, not in the days of Paul, but at the time of our blessed Reformation. There was, in the latter part of the sixteenth century, a man in Italy, who was; a child of God, taught by the Spirit. His name was Aonio Paleario. He had written a book called, *The benefit of Christ’s Death.*That book was destroyed in Italy, and for three centuries it was not possible to find a copy; but two or three years ago, an Italian copy was found, I believe, in one of your libraries at Cambridge or Oxford, and it has been printed again. It is perhaps singular, but this man did not leave the Romish Church, as he ought to have done, but his whole heart was given to Christ. He. was brought before the judge in Rome, by order of the Pope. The judge said, ‘We will put to him three questions; we will ask him what is the first cause of salvation, then what is the second cause of salvation, then what is the third cause of salvation?’ They thought that, in putting these three question, he would at last be made to say something which should be to the glory of the Church of Rome; so they asked him, ‘What is the first cause of salvation?’ and he answered, ‘*Christ’*Then they asked him, ‘What is the second cause of salvation?’ and he answered, ‘CHRIST.’ Then they asked him, ‘What is the third cause of salvation?’ and he answered, ‘CHRIST.’ They thought he would have said, first, Christ; secondly, the Word; thirdly, the Church; but no, he said, ‘Christ.’ The first cause, Christ; the second, Christ; the third, Christ; and for that confession, which he made in Rome, he was condemned to be put to death as a martyr. My dear friends, let us think and speak like that man; let every one of us say, ‘The first cause of my salvation is Christ; the second is Christ the third is Christ. Christ and His atoning blood, Christ and His powerful regenerating Spirit, Christ and His eternal electing grace, Christ is my only salvation, I know of nothing else.’

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

During the terrible distress caused by the Lancashire cotton famine, Mr. Spurgeon preached, on Lord’s-day morning, November 9, 1862, a sermon on “Christian Sympathy,” from Job 30:25: “Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? Was not my soul grieved for the poor?” In appealing on behalf of the people in need, the Pastor urged these five reasons why they should be generously helped: — (**1**) their poverty was not the result of their own fault; (**2**) the cause of their suffering was the national sin of slavery; (**3**) their heavy trials had been borne most patiently; (**4**) the distress was very widely spread; and (**5**) gratitude to God should move all who were able to give liberally to those who were in want. The appeal was most effective, for the congregation contributed 776 pounds 11s. 11d. towards the Famine Fund, — probably the: largest amount ever given from the Tabernacle to any outside object, and exceeding even the sum (700 pounds) realized by the Fast-day service at the Crystal Palace in aid. of the Indian Relief Fund.

March 15, 1863, was a memorable morning at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, for Mr. Spurgeon then delivered the discourse which, when published, became No. 500. The: text of it was, 1 Samuel 7:12:

“Then Samuel took a stone, and set it between Mizpeh and Sheri, and called the name of it Ebenezer, saying,  
Hitherto hath the Lord helped us;”

and the title was most appropriate, “Ebenezer.” It was both  
autobiographical and historical, and contained many interesting allusions; to the Lord’s gracious help to both Pastor and people. In the introduction, the preacher said: — “Looking at God’s hand in my own life, and acknowledging that hand with some record of thankfulness, I, your minister, brought by Divine grace., to preach this morning the five hundredth of my printed sermons, consecutively published week by week, set up my stone of Ebenezer to God. I thank Him, thank Him humbly, but yet most joyfully, for all the hello and assistance given in studying and preaching the Word to these mighty congregations by the voice, and afterwards to so many nations through the press. I set up my pillar in the form of this sermon. My motto this day shall be the same as Samuel’s, ‘Hitherto hath the Lord helped me,” and as the stone of my praise is much too heavy for me to set it upright alone, I ask you, my comrades in the day of battle, my fellow-laborers in the vineyard of Christ, to join with me in expressing gratitude to God, while together we set up the stone of memorial, and say, ‘Hitherto hath the Lord helped *us.’”*

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

Another reminiscence carried the thoughts of the congregation back to “the boy-preacher’s” first service in London: — “The greatness of our work compels us to confess that it must be of God, and of God alone. And, dear friends, we see that it must be so if we consider the little with which we began. Jacob said, as he came back to his own land, ‘ With my staff I passed over this Jordan; now I am become two bands.’ Surely, his becoming two bands must have been of God, for he had nothing but his staff. And do not some few of you, here present, remember one morning when we crossed this Jordan with a staff? Were we a hundred when first I addressed you? What hosts of empty pews! What a miserable handful of hearers! But God has multiplied the: people, and increased the joy, till we have become, not only two bands, but many bands; and multitudes this day are gathering to hear the: gospel preached by the sons of this; church, begotten of us, and sent forth by us to minister the Word of life in many towns and villages throughout the kingdom. Glory be to God, this cannot be man’s work! What effort, made by the unaided strength of man, will equal this which has been accomplished by God? Let the Name of the Lord, therefore, be inscribed upon the pillar of our memorial. I am always ‘very jealous about this matter; if we do not, as a church and congregation, if we do not, as individuals, always give God’ the glory, it is utterly impossible that He should continue to work by us. Many wonders have I seen, but I never yet saw a man who arrogated the honor of his work to himself, whom God did not leave sooner or later.”

The same note of humble, and hearty gratitude to God was very prominent in the discourse delivered in the Tabernacle on Lord’s-day morning, May 3, 1863, after the Pastor had returned from a preaching tour in Holland: — “ I ask for myself, this morning, as your minister, your thanksgivings to be mingled with mine in blessing God for the help which He has vouchsafed to me in the very arduous work of the,. last fortnight. Praise be to God for the acceptance which He gave me among all ranks of the people, in that country! I speak to His praise, and not to my own; for this has been a vow with me, that, if God will give me a harvest, I will riot keep even an ear of it myself, but He shall have it all. I found, in all the places where I went, great multitudes of people; — crowds who could not understand the preacher, but who wanted to see his face, because God had blessed his translated sermons to their souls; — multitudes who gave me the grip of brotherly kindness, and, with tears in their eyes, invoked, in the Dutch language, every blessing upon my head. I hoped to preach to some fifties and hundreds; but, instead of that, there were so many that the great cathedrals were not too large. This surprised me and made me glad, and caused me to rejoice in God, and I ask you to rejoice with me. I thank God for the acceptance which He gave me among all classes of the people. While the poor crowded to shake hands, till they almost pulled me in pieces, it pleased God to move the heart of the Queen of Holland to send for me, and for an hour and a-quarter I was privileged to talk with her concerning the things which make for our peace. I sought no interview with her, but it was her own wish; and then I lifted up my soul to God that I might talk of nothing but Christ, and might preach to her of nothing but Jesus, and it pleased the Master to help me, and I left that very amiable lady, not having shunned to declare to her the whole counsel of God. gratified indeed was I to find myself received cordially by all  
denominations, so that on the Saturday, at Amsterdam, I preached in the Mennonite Church in the morning, and at the Old Dutch Reformed Church in the evening; the next Sunday morning, in the English Presbyterian Church, and then again, in the evening, in the Dutch Free Church; sometimes in the great cathedrals, as in the Dom Kirk, at Utrecht, and in Peter’s Kirk, at Leyden, not having the poor only, but the nobility and the gentry of the land, who of course could understand English better than those who have had. little or no opportunity of learning it. While going from town to town, I fell: the Master helping me continually to preach. I never knew such elasticity of spirit, such bounding of heart in my life be. fore; and I come back, not wearied and tired, though preaching twice every day, but fuller of strength and vigor than when I set out. I give God the glory for the many souls I have heard of who have been converted through the reading of the printed sermons, and for the loving blessings of those who followed us to the water’s edge with many tears, saying to me, ‘ Do thy diligence to come again before winter,’ and urging me once more to preach the Word in that land. There may be mingled with this some touch of egotism; the Lord knoweth whether it be so or not. but I am not conscious of it. I do praise and bless His Name that, in a land where, there is so much philosophy, He has helped me to preach the truth so simply that I never uttered a word as a mere doctrinalist, but I preached Christ, and nothing but Christ. Rejoice with me, my dear brethren; my loaf of praise is, too great for me to e. at it all.”

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

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

Now that a whole, generation has passed away since the sermon was delivered, it is difficult to realize the sensation which was caused when it appeared in print, and became generally known. A hundred thousand copies of it were speedily sold, and the circulation was still further increased by the many replies to it which were before long preached and published. Three weeks after its delivery, Mr. Spurgeon preached from Hebrews 13:13, “Let us Go Forth;” and in quick succession followed two, more special discourses in continuation of the controversy, — “Children Brought to Christ, not to the Font;” and “‘Thus Saith the Lord;’ or, the. Book of Common Prayer Weighed in the Balances of the Sanctuary.” All of them had an immense sale, and as each one was issued, it elicited answers from the Church of England side. Mr. Spurgeon collected a hundred and thirty-five sermons and pamphlets, and had them bound in three large octavo volumes; and, doubtless, others gathered together similar signs and tokens of the fray. One such set afterwards came into the Pastor’s hands, and he found in it several contributions which were not contained in his own series. They were bound in two substantial volumes, and were evidently (he result of the sympathetic labors of an ardent admirer, who recorded his opinions concerning the controversy in the following Preface: — “ In 1864, the Rev. C. H, Spurgeon threw down the gauntlet of defiance to the Church of England upon the point of Infant Baptism and Regeneration; when, presto! such a theological battle ensued as; was never before seen or heard of. The whole religious worm of London flung itself into it; — the press groaned under the infliction; the pamphlets which followed, *pro,*and *con,*in prose and verse, serious and burlesque, being almost innumerable. Of these, I have collected about a hundred, — including twenty-eight in another volume; and, to commemorate this great baptismal war, I have here, for a frontispiece to my gathering, by a slight improvement, adapted this *Gulliverian* illustration, which, I submit, represents the great Nonconformist champion in repose, after his victory, but playfully offering his Brobdingnagian person to the collected attack of his Lilliputian opponents, smilingly conscious that the slightest farther movement on his part — a kick out — or an upraised arm — would annihilate them!”

That Mr. Spurgeon’s clerical critics were by no means Lilliputians, is manifest from a glance at the documents they produced in reply to his discourses. The names of many of them are quite unknown to the present generation, but others are remembered as among the doughtiest defenders of the Establishment, including Dean Goode (of Ripon), the Revs. Hugh Stowell, M.A. (Manchester), Hugh Allen, D.D., Joseph Bardsley, M.A., Charles Bullock, Francis Cruse, B.A., and J. H. Titcomb, M.A., together with Paedobaptist Nonconformists, such as Rev. A. McAuslane and many others. Mr. Spurgeon was by no means left to fight the battle alone, for ranged side by side with him were Dr. Brock (of Bloomsbury Chapel), Dr. Landels (of Regent’s Park Chapel), Dr. Haycroft (of Broadmead Chapel, Bristol), and Revs. W. Barker {Hastings), T. W. Medhurst (Glasgow), Arthur Mursell (Manchester), A. A. Rees (Sunderland), Burlington B. Wale (Plymouth), D. Katterns (Hackney), J. W. Genders (Wandsworth), R. A. Bellman, Edward Leach, and Henry Varley, and many others whose names may not have been so well known. In the Free Trade Hall, Manchester, Mr. Mursell gave, in most incisive language, a scathing criticism of an article on “The Anabaptist Caliban,” *in the Saturday Review.*That paper at various times assailed Mr. Spurgeon with such virulence that, on one occasion, he made the following significant declaration: — “I always like to have. the hatred of *The Saturday Review* and the love of God. No movement can ever hope to be established until it has had both.” Remembering the character of many of the attacks made in its pages upon the Tabernacle Pastor in his early days, it is hardly surprising that one of his artist friends altered the word “Saturday” into “Satanic” in the accompanying cartoon.  
It was a surprise and a disappointment to many friends of Mr. Spurgeon to find that his protest against the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration was, to some extent at least, weakened by a published letter from the Hon. and Rev. Baptist Wriothesley Noel, M.A., who had himself left the Church of England, and become Pastor of the Baptist Church meeting in John Street Chapel, Bedford Row, and whose *Essay on the Union of Church and State* contained quite as vigorous a condemnation of the clergy as appeared in the sermon to which he objected. It is generally supposed, and was officially stated, on the authority of Mr. Arnold, the late Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, that Mr. Spurgeon’s withdrawal from that body was the result of Mr. Baptist Noel’s letter; but the following paragraph in *The Sword and the, Trowel,*March, 1870, puts the matter in its true light:—

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

Happily some few years afterwards, Mr. Spurgeon saw his way to rejoin the Alliance, and he remained a member of its Council until he was “called home” in 1892. On many occasions, he spoke at meetings arranged in connection with the Alliance, the moat memorable being the great gatherings at Exeter Hall and the Mildmay Conference Hall, in 1888, for united testimony in regard to fundamental truth, just: at the time when the “Down-grade” Controversy was at its height, and thousands of lovers of Evangelical doctrine felt the need of a clear and emphatic “declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us.” It is also noteworthy that, in the circular concerning the formation of the Pastors’ College Evangelical Association, Mr. Spurgeon wrote: — “As a convenient summary of faith, we have adopted, with certain alterations and additions, the basis of the Evangelical Alliance, accepting it with the more readiness because so many believers of various churches have been content thus; to set forth the main points of their agreement.”

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

The service at the Tabernacle, on Lord’s-day evening, July 31, 1864, was a memorable one to Mr. Spurgeon and two of his hearers, and afterwards to many more when be related a singular circumstance which occurred in connection with his sermon that night. A man, living in Newington, had been converted through the Pastor’s preaching, and he became a regular worshipper at the Tabernacle. His wife, a very staunch member of the Church of England, strongly objected to his going; but he continued to attend notwithstanding all that she said. One Sabbath night, after her husband had gone to the service, her curiosity overcame her prejudice, and she herself determined to go to hear Mr. Spurgeon. Not wishing to be known, she tried to disguise herself by putting on a thick veil and a heavy’ shawl, and sought still further to avoid observation by ascending to the upper gallery. She was very late in reaching the building; so, just as she entered, the preacher was announcing his text, and the first words that sounded in her ears were strikingly appropriate to her case, especially as she declared that Mr. Spurgeon pointed directly at her as he said, “Come in, thou wife of Jeroboam; why feignest thou thyself to be another?” This singular coincidence further impressed her when, in the course of his sermon, the Pastor said: — “While thus speaking about the occasional hearer, an idea haunts ray mind that I have. been drawing somebody’s portrait. I think there are some here who have had their character and conduct: sketched out quite accurately enough for them to know who is meant. Do remember that, if the description fits you, it is intended for you; and if you yourself have been described, do not look about among your neighbors, and say, ‘I think this refers to somebody else.’ If it applies to you, take it home to yourself; and may God impress it upon your conscience, so that you cannot get rid of it!...I do not suppose there *is* anybody here disguised as to dress tonight, though such a thing has happened before now; but, whoever, you may be, disguised or not, it is no use: to try to hide your identity where God’s gospel is preached, it is a quick discerner, and will find out the thoughts and intents of the heart. It will search you out, and unmask your true character, disguise yourself as you may.”

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

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

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

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

On Thursday evening, April 16, 1868, Mr. Spurgeon preached at the Tabernacle the annual sermon for the Young Men’s Association in aid of the Baptist Missionary Society. His text was, Acts 2:17: “Your young men shall see visions.” As a young’ man, speaking to young’ men, the preacher claimed his right to see visions; and amongst the rest was this one of a very practical character:— “Suppose that there should be a number of young men here who know each other very well, young men who have been trained in the same sanctuary, nurtured in the same church, who should meet together tomorrow, or at such other time as shall be convenient, and say to one another, ‘ Now, we are in business, we have just commenced in life, and God is prospering us, more or less; we are taking to ourselves wives; our children are coming around us; but, still, we trust we are never going to permit ourselves to be swallowed up in a mere worldly way of living; now, what ought we to do for missions?’ And suppose the inquiry should be put, ‘Is there one amongst us who could go and teach the heathen for us?’ As; we, most of us, may not have the ability, or do not feel called to the work, is there one out of twelve of us young men, who have grown side by side in the Sunday-school, who has the ability, and who feels called to go? Let us make it a matter of prayer, and when the Holy Ghost saith, ‘Separate So-and-so to the work,’ then we, the other eleven who remain, will do this, —we will say to him, ‘ Now, brother’, you cannot stop at home to make your fortune or to earn a competence; you are now giving yourself up to a very arduous and difficult enterprise, and we will support you; we know you, and we have confidence in you; you go down into the pit, we will hold the rope; go forth in connection with our own denominational Society, but we will bear the expense year by year among ourselves! Have you faith enough to go trusting’ that the. Lord will provide? Then, we will have faith enough, and generosity enough, to say that your wants shall be our care; you preach for Christ, we will make money for Christ; when you open the Bible for Christ, we will be taking down the shop shutters for Christ; and while you are unfolding the banner of Christ’s love, we will be unfolding’ the calicoes, or selling the groceries;; and we pledge ourselves always to set aside your portion, because, as our brother, you are doing our work.’ I wish we had such godly clubs as these, — holy confederacies of earnest young men who thus would love their missionary, feel for him, hear from him continually, and undertake to supply the means for his support. Why, on such a plan as that, I should think they would give fifty times, or a hundred times, as; much as ever they are likely to give to an impersonal Society or to a man whose name they only know, but whose face they never saw. I wonder whether I shall ever live to see a club of t that kind; I wonder whether such an association will ever be formed by members of this church, or of any of the churches in London. If it shall be so, I shall be glad to have seen a vision of it.”

Happily, the Pastor did live to see something closely resembling the realization of his vision. In 1875, the leader of one of the Tabernacle Bibleclasses—Mr. Stephen Wigney — undertook the responsibility of raising 50 pounds a year towards the support of Mr. G. F. Easton, in connection with the China Inland Mission; and year after year, down to the present time, the teacher and his class have continued to raise that amount. More recently, by the introduction of the system of “Missionary circles” and “Carey’s penny” the number of Tabernacle missionaries thus maintained has been considerably increased.

Many who are no longer young can recall a notable Tuesday evening, March 2, 1869, — when Mr. Spurgeon preached in the Tabernacle to several thousands of children. It was remarkable as being one of the very few occasions on which the young people of the congregation and of the Sunday-schools were assembled specially by themselves. The text was, Psalm 71:17: “O God, Thou hast taught me: from my youth;” and the sermon was one that boys and girls could easily understand and remember. It contained an unusually large number of anecdotes and illustrations, and in the course of it Mr. Spurgeon put several questions to his youthful auditors, which they answered promptly, and on the whole accurately. A brief extract will show the style of the sermon: — “Why should we go to God’s school early? I think we ought to do so, first, because *it is such a happy school.*Schools used to be very miserable places; but, nowadays, I really wish I could go to school again. I went into the Borough Road School, the other day, into the Repository, where they sell slates, and pencils, and books, and all such things. The person who was there opened a box, and said to me, “Do you want to buy any of these things?’ I said, ‘What are they? Why, they are toys, are they not?’ He answered, ‘No, they are not toys: they are used for the lessons that are taught in the kindergarten school.’ I said, ‘Why, if I were to take them home, my boys would have a game with them, for they are only toys.’ ‘Just so,’ he replied, ‘but they are what are used in the kindergarten school to make learning the: same as playing, so that little children should play while they are learning.’ Why, I thought, if that were so, I should like to go at once! Now, those who go to God’s school are made much more happy than any toy can make children. He gives them real pleasure. There is a verse, — I don’t know how many of you can repeat it, —I will say the first line; you say the second, if you can.

“M R. SPURGEON: — ‘’Tis religion that can give’ —  
“THE CHILDREN: — ‘ Sweetest pleasures while we live;’ —  
“MR. SPURGEON: — ‘’Tis religion must supply’ —  
“THE CHILDREN: — ‘Solid comfort when we die.’

“MR. SPURGEON: — Yes, we made that out very well between us. Then, let us be off to Gods school early, because it is such a happy school.”

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

***“I lay my sins on Jesus,  
The spotless Lamb of God.”***

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

Towards the close of the sermon, Mr. Spurgeon related to the children this interesting reminiscence of his boyhood: “Now the last wish is, — ***“‘I long to be with Jesus.’***

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

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

***“To be with Jesus,  
Amid the Heavenly throng.”***

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

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

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

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

Many other memorable services were held in the Tabernacle during the period covered by this chapter, some of which may be mentioned subsequently; but space can only be spared here for a brief notice of the discourse which was delivered by Mr. Spurgeon on June 14, 1874, — the Sabbath before his fortieth birthday. The text was, Deuteronomy 2:7:

“For the Lord thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand; He knoweth thy walking through this great wilderness: these forty years the Lord thy God hath been with thee, thou hast lacked nothing;”

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

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

Not only were great crowds of hearers attracted, but the Word preached was blessed to very many of them, some of whom joined the neighboring churches, while others; found a spiritual home at the Tabernacle. The text on the first morning was Matthew 21:28-32, and in introducing his subject, the preacher said: — “The sight of this vast arena, and of this crowded assembly, reminds me of other spectacles which, in days happily long past, were seen in the amphitheaters of the: old Roman Empire. Around, tier upon tier, were the assembled multitudes, with their cruel eyes and iron hearts; and in the center stood a solitary, friendless man, waiting till the doors of the. lion’s den should be uplifted, that he might yield himself up a witness for Christ and a sacrifice to the popular fury. There would have been no difficulty then to have divided the precious from the vile in that audience. The most thoughtless wayfarer, who should enter the amphitheater, would know at once who was the disciple of Christ and who were the enemies of the: Crucified One. There stood the bravely-calm disciple, about to die, but all around, in those mighty tiers of the Colosseum, or of the amphitheater of some provincial town, as the case might be, there sat matrons and nobles, princes and peasants, plebeians and patricians, senators and soldiers, all gazing downward with the same fierce, unpitying look, vociferous in the joy with which they beheld the agonies of a disciple of the hated Galilean, ‘butchered to make a Roman holiday.’

“Another sight is before us today, with much more happy associations; but, alas! it is a far more difficult task this day to separate the chaff from the wheat. Here, in this spacious arena, I hope there are hundreds, if not thousands, who would be prepared to die. for our Lord Jesus, if such a sacrifice were required of them; and in yonder crowded seats, we may count by hundreds those who bear the Name and accept title gospel of Jesus of Nazareth; and yet, I fear me that, both in these living hills on either side, and upon this vast floor, there are many enemies of the Son of God, who are forgetful of His righteous claims, who have cast from them those ‘cords of a man’ which should bind them to His throne, and have never submitted, to the mighty love which showed itself in His cross and in His wounds. I cannot attempt the separation. You must grow together until the harvest. To divide you were a ‘task which, at this hour, angels could not perform; but which, one day, they will easily accomplish, when, at their Master’s bidding the harvest being come, they shall gather together first the tares in bundles to burn them, and afterwards the. wheat into Jehovah’s barn. I shall not attempt the division, but I ask each man to make it for himself in his own case. I say unto you, young men and maidens, old men and fathers, this day examine yourselves whether you be in the faith.

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

CHAPTER 66.

SOME REMINISCENCES OF FOREIGN TRAVEL.

BY MRS. C. H. SPURGEON.

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

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

***“Look through nature up to nature’s God.”***

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

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

One ten minutes of time, on the St. Gothard Pass, will never be forgotten. I had walked alone, in advance of the carriage, — my beloved and Mr. Passmore being too comfortably idle to leave their seats, — and, at a turn of the road, I came in sight of the grandest part of the route, the Devil’s Bridge.

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

Twice we visited Venice together, and all the dreamy delights of our sojourn there return with their old fascination, by an effort of the will, or a glance at the pages of Mr. Ruskin’s *Stones of Venice.*

The glory of “the Queen of the Adriatic” was even then beginning to fade away’, but enough remained to win our ardent admiration, and fix its pathetic beauty on our hearts. We were spared the sight of much of that poverty and decay which has overtaken the glorious city in the present day, and “the Bride of the, Sea” is enshrined in my memory as a creation of exceeding loveliness, glowing with the prismatic hues of a gorgeous sunset, and enwrapped in a veil of golden mist, just as I last saw her when, returning from a trip to the Land of Liddo, on whose shores we had spent a most enjoyable day.

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

There was a most interesting voyage to Hamburg and Heligoland (which Mr. Spurgeon described in detail in the Sword*and Trowel*for 1867), and a memorable visit to Geneva, where we saw the good Merle D’Aubigne in his own home, and my beloved preached in the cathedral, standing in Calvin’s pulpit, robed in the black Genevan gown (see Vol. 2). Oh, there was at least one wife who was proud of her husband that day! In after years, during the long lonely months occasioned by my ill-health, memories of our fours were always fresh and fragrant, and one of the compensations

of my sickness; was to go over again in thought all the difficulties:, and dangers, and delights we had. met with in our travels; and this pleasure would be doubled when my husband could spend a little time by my couch, and the talk turned to these sunny Clays, and we together recalled our most amusing adventures, and laughed heartily at the blunders and mistakes we either made. or mastered. Ah! there were some strange tales to tell; I think I could fill a volume with the memories of those delightful journeys.

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

It was in this same valley of Gressonay, some few days after our uncomfortable entry into it, that a singular and unique testimony to the beauty of Christian character, as seen in dear Mr. Spurgeon, and his travelling companions, was spontaneously offered from a very unexpected quarter. We had found a comfortable resting-place in an hotel at the foot of the Col, and having quite recovered from our late fatigue, we made an excursion, one lovely morning, up the valley, *en route*to the Lys Glacier, guided by our host, M. Delapierre, and his son Ferdinand. We were in the highest possible spirits, delighted with the safe and easy going on a wellpaved mule-path, and enjoying to the full the glorious scenery and the fine, bracing air of this valley, 4,530 feet: above the sea. My husband, Mr. Passmore, and Mr. Morgan, were riding on in front; and, if I remember rightly, Mr. Spurgeon began to praise God for all the loveliness with which we were surrounded, and called upon us to join him in thanksgiving. This we did, and M. Delapierre, who was leading my mule, regarded his guests with wonder, and turning to me, said, “*Mats, Madame, ces Messieurs ne sont pas des hommes, ce sont des anges*!” (“But, Madam, these gentlemen are not men, they are angels!”) I asked what made him think so, and he waxed eloquent in praise of their gentle; and gracious conduct, so different, he said, from the behavior of all the other travelers he had seen. They had not done or said anything particularly heavenly, but their consistent and Christian spirit had shone out so clearly and brightly, during their stay at the hotel, that this man could not refrain from speaking of the impression it had made upon him. I believe he was perfectly honest in his surprise and admiration, for we were waited upon by him and his sort with as much consideration and reverence as if we had truly been celestial visitants in the guise of humanity. We left the place with great reluctance and regret on both sides, promising ourselves to return some day for a prolonged sojourn; but, though this desire was never fulfilled, the hotel at St. Jean de Gressonay was ever after the symbol to us of all that was most delightful and enjoyable in foreign travel.  
As I write, the: striking of a. cuckoo clock reminds me of its faithful service during almost the whole period of our married lite, for we bought it at Schaffhausen on our first trip to Switzerland, and it has sung out the hours ever since! I do not know that; *“Westwood”*contains a more cherished relic of the blessed days that are past than this pretty cuckoo clock, and it certainly bears testimony to somebody’s good workmanship forty years ago.

Mr. Spurgeon was a most observant traveler, deeply interested in all he saw, and keenly’ appreciative of Nature in all her moods and humors. He had, too, a great gift for turning to account everything that would help to illustrate or interpret the message which he, as an ambassador for God, had to deliver to sinful men. His capacity for storing incidents and experiences was marvelous; we used jokingly to tell him that he had shelves in ibis head,, where he laid up all these things, assorted and labeled, and ready for use on the first opportunity! And we were not far wrong; “there’s many a true word spoken in jest.” It was an education to accompany him in any of his wanderings, and a perfect delight to listen to his conversation, whether grave or gay.

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

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

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

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

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

After this incident, we arrived safely at Varallo for the Sabbath; and, as usual, spent a quiet and restful day. Dear Mr. Spurgeon Went alone to the Sacro Monte; and, as he once, when preaching, recalled his impressions of the singular place, I insert them here: —

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

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

“Passing on, I came to a structure where our Lord’s ascension was represented. On the summit of the hill was a large church, into which I entered. No one was there, yet the place had for me a marvelous interest, High up in the ceiling there swung a roughly-hewn figure of the Lord Jesus Christ, and round it were statues of the prophets, all with their fingers pointing up to Him. There was Isaiah, with a scroll in his left: hand, on which was written, ‘ He is despised and rejected of men; a Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.’ Further on stood Jeremiah, and on his scroll was written, ‘ Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow, which is done unto Me.’ All round the church I read, in great letters that were large enough to be seen, though they were painted on the top of the ceiling, ‘ Moses and all the prophets spoke and wrote concerning Him.’ It was a remarkable sight, one which I shall never forget it did my heart good to see all these witnesses doing homage to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the Savior of men.”

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

After a few days of great enjoyment in this place, we decided to go on further to the Eggischhorn. To carry out this plan, we had to descend to the Great Aletsch Glacier, traversing its frozen waves, and crossing its huge moraines, — those wonderful accumulations of *debris*and dirt, which always disfigure the *surface*of the glacier, but are never allowed to sink into its spotless substance, or soil the underlying crystal by a shadow of impurity.

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

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

Its shores were strewn with huge blocks of ice, other mighty masses were floating on its calm cold surface like miniature icebergs;; but the most magical effect was produced by the cliffs on one side, — pure, clear walls of ice rising sheer out of the dark waters to a height of fifty feet! It was an Arctic wonderland,’ a most unearthly vision; and a very small amount of imagination would have transformed those cliffs into the Ice King’s palace, and peopled the whole region with snow sprites and frost fairies. I was very sorry my beloved did not see the strange sight, for he would have found treasures of illustration where I could only see a unique exhibition of Alpine marvels, it ‘was considered a very easy walk of two hours to this surprising lake, yet it took us a much longer time than that to reach it, for we were but poor mountaineers, and thought it a long and difficult way; so, as the day was dying soon after we re. ached our goal, we had to hasten back, and my weary feet ‘were quickened by the desire I had to, share the joy of the journey with my husband. We had, however, a very humiliating experience at the end. Footsore and exhausted, we came in sight of our resting-place. Mr. Spurgeon, Mr. Morgan, and other visitors were grouped round the door watching for our return, and we hoped, to conceal our extreme fatigue, and appear to be coming back with flying colors; but, alas for us! there was a short and sharp descent to the plateau on which the hotel was built, and, essaying to run down. it, first one, and then the other, slipped and fell prostrate almost at the feet oil the amazed spectators! ‘What sorry and crestfallen creatures we must have looked for about a minute and a-half when we were helped to our feet! But when it was found that no bones were broken, everybody had a hearty laugh, and my dear husband found no end of amusement in recalling the incident for many a day afterwards.  
There came a day, however, when my beloved fully shared in all the delights of Alpine travel. We had a memorable journey across the Wengern Alp, when he seemed to bring all his previously-gathered strength into use, and to exercise all the powers of mind and body which he possessed. He walked without weariness, and at such a pace that we could scarcely keep up with him; never before: or since did I see him so active and full of physical energy. He descended the Little Scheideck with the utmost ease and pleasure, using his alpenstock as a vaulting-pole, singing or talking all the way, and delighting us by his stores of knowledge, and his keen appreciation of the wonders by which we were surrounded, Higher up the mountain, we had sat for a while to watch the ice-avalanches, which ‘were to be seen quite plainly, across an intervening valley, falling every now and then from the great snow-ridges of a mountain opposite to us. They looked, from that distance, like harmless cascades of snow, but their true character was revealed by the thunderous noise of their fall. The sight greatly impressed him, and lifted his spirit Heavenward, and both mind and body answered to the holy influence in a remarkable fashion. He shall tell, in his own words, something of his inner experience at that ever-to-beremembered time: —

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

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

***~~“Yon Alps, that lift their heads above the clouds, And hold familiar converse with the stars,  
Are dust, at which the balance trembleth not,  
Compared with His Divine immensity.~~***

***~~The snow-crown’d summits fail to set  
Him forth, Who dwelleth in eternity, and bears, Alone, the Name of High and Lofty One.  
Depths unfathom’d are too shallow to express  
The wisdom and the: knowledge of the Lord.  
The mirror of the creatures has no space  
To bear the image of the Infinite.~~***

***~~‘Tis true, the Lord hath fairly writ His Name,  
And set His seal upon Creation’s brow;  
But, as the skillful potter much excels  
The vessel which he fashions on the wheel,  
E’en so, but in proportion greater far,  
Jehovah’s self transcends His noblest works.~~***

***~~Earth’s ponderous wheels would break, her axles snap, If freighted with the load of Deity.  
Space is too narrow for the Eternal’s rest,  
And time too short: a footstool for His throne.~~***

***~~E’en avalanche and thunder lack a voice  
To utter the full volume of His praise.~~***

***~~How then can I declare Him? Where are words  
With which my glowing tongue may speak His Name? Silent I bow, and humbly I adore.”~~***

On another occasion, Mr. Spurgeon thus recorded for future use his thoughts when admiring some remarkable rainbows which typified to him those described by the apostle John in the Book of the Revelation: —

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

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

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

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

***“‘Of colors changing from the splendid rose,  
To the pale violet’s dejected hue;’—  
but we were on a journey,  
and ‘were summoned to advance.”***

One more retrospect may ‘well conclude these mere outline sketches from the tablets of memory. ‘We were travelling in Italy, and when driving along the roads, in a certain part of the country, were continually pained by the sight of the superstitious aids to devotion supplied by the Roman Catholic Church to her votaries. Here, was a tiny chapel to the Virgin; — there, a. shrine for an idolatrous image; — in many cases, a niche with a crucifix and a lamp burning before it, where prayers might. be purchased for the souls supposed to be enduring purgatorial fires. Generally, there were accessories of the coarsest and rudest kind, which we could not look on without repulsion; they all seemed such a dreadful mockery of “our most holy faith” that we tried not to see them as we passed along. But, one day, we came to a place where was a huge cross by the: side of the highway, and on it hung a life-sized, fearful representation of the Beloved of our soul, who poured out His precious blood for our redemption. No harrowing detail of the mighty Sacrifice of Love was omitted, no item of agony forgotten; — I dare not describe the awful sight, it horrified and shocked us, and we turned aside from the revolting spectacle, but not until Mr. Spurgeon had noticed the superscription, — SPES UNICA, — in large letters over the bowed head of the figure on “the shameful cross.” He caught eagerly at the light thus gleaming through the darkness. “Here,” he said, “is truth emblazoned on an idol! Yes, truly, Jesus, our once crucified, but now exalted Lord, is the sole and *only hope*of man. O blessed Christ, Thou art ‘Spes Unica’ to our soul! We have found a diamond in the mire of superstition; does it sparkle any the less?” So we went on our way, sorrowful, yet praising God for the preciousness of those two words; and, soon, one might have heard us softly’ singing, as we drove along, —

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

CHAPTER 67.

THE ABSENT PASTOR’S CARE FOR HIS FLOCK

W HENEVER the Pastor had to be away from his people, seeking necessary rest after arduous toil, or restoration after painful affliction, he gave them constant proofs that he still bore them upon his heart as much as when he was laboring in their midst.

Some of the choicest letters he ever wrote to the church and congregation under his charge were sent home from foreign lands, whence his thoughts flew back to the much-loved house of prayer where he was wont to keep holy clay with the great assembly. Many of these pastoral epistles have been. preserved; and one set of them — written early in the year 1874, — may be regarded as a fair specimen of tint: way in which Mr. Spurgeon continually manifested his earnest desire for the spiritual welfare of all who came within the sphere of his influence.

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

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

“Bel Alp,  
“Canton Valais.  
“My Dear Mrs. Bartlett,

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

*“To those of them who are saved,*will you present their Pastor’s kindest remembrances, and say,. — I beseech you to walk worthy of your high calling? Watchfulness is to be our daily spirit; we must not sleep in an enemy’s land. Those who go near the brink of precipices may one day fall over them, and familiarity with sin may, sooner or later’, lead to the commission of it;; and our God alone knows the misery which a fall may cause to you and to those who love your souls. Our sisters form a numerous and influential part of the church; and when their hearts are in a thoroughly spiritual condition, they have a wonderful power for good. We want no better band of missionaries than the godly daughters, sisters, wives, and mothers in our midst. When it is ‘well with you, pray for me, and let this be your prayer, — that I may return to you ‘ in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.’ I am now writing far up in the mountains; the air is cold and bracing, the view is wide and lovely; the high hills, with their snowy heads, seem just: on a level with me; all is still and calm, and my body and soul are both growing well and strong. Now, in spiritual matters, I want you who belong to dear Mrs. Bartlett’s class to, live: on the mountain, high up, near to God, far from the world, where your view of Divine truth will be clear and wide; and I want you there to grow strong and healthy in Heavenly things, that you may do wonders in Christ’s Name.  
*“To those who are unsaved;*how shall I write? I must first pray, — O God, deliver them from their sins, and from Thy wrath! Last night, the lightning seemed to set the mountains on a blaze; it flashed from peak to peak, and made the clouds appear like great thrones or furnaces of fire; the terrible God was abroad, and we were awed with His presence. I could look on cheerfully:, and say, ‘My Father does it all; but what must it be to have this God for your enemy? Young friends, I beseech you to consider your condition as having an omnipotent God full of anger against you for your sins. May you realize your danger, and seek His face before you feel the terror of His hand! What a sweet short sentence is that, ‘ God is Iowa’! Think it over. If Satan tempts you to despair, hold it up before his face. If sins or doubts prevail, remember that ‘ God is love.’ But do not forget that He is*c*onsuming fi*re.*He will either consume you or your sins, — you or your self-righteousness. Jesus felt His Father to be a consuming fire in the day when the Divine wrath fell on Him to the uttermost; if He had to endure it, what will those feel who live and die in sin? May you be led to trust Jesus with your’ souls *now!*May you all be saved! May we all meet in glory to part no more! Till then, I am,—

“Your earnest minister,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

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

“Paris,  
“Jan. 16.

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

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

“Your anxious friend,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

M ENTONE, AS SEEN FROM DR. BENNETGARDEN.  
“Mentone,  
“Jan. 23.  
*“My*Dear Young Friends,

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

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

He leads the soul. Look to Him.  
Oh, look to Him; to Him alone; to Him simply; to Him at once! “Your anxious friend,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**  
“Mentone,  
“Feb. 5.  
“Dear Young Friends,

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

“I have just limped up a high hill into the cemetery here, and there I saw a text which struck me. ‘ *But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him.’*Noah was her rest, as

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

“Your loving Pastor,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**  
“Mentone,  
“Feb. 12.  
“Dear Young Friends,

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

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

“Yours heartily,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

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

“Mentone,  
“Saturday evening, January 24th, 1874.  
“Dear Boys,

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

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

“Mr. Chylesworth will, on my behalf, give you a couple of oranges all round, and I will pay him when I come home.  
“Your loving friend,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**  
One letter was addressed to the Bible-classes conducted by Elders Perkins and Bowker:—  
“ Mentone,  
“Feb. 5.  
“Beloved Brethren,

“Peace be. to you and the dear friends who conduct your meetings! 1 am hoping to see a great revival of religion throughout our church and all its agencies, and I want your two classes not only to partake in it, but to lead the way in promoting it.

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

“Begin by doubling your own numbers, which I believe could be done if you laid it to heart, and resolved each one to introduce, at the least, one newcomer. Make each meeting All of life, power, prayer, love, and zeal. I confess I am sorry that the Catechism is not still your text-book, for I believe it is a good groundwork, and keeps you near the most important subjects. Discussions upon the new theories of the day drive away the Spirit of God; the old wine is the best.  
“Your leaders are men of experience, and have my fullest confidence, and, what is more, my most sincere love. Always support them, and back dram up; and then let your motto be, *‘Advance.’*Push into the unconquered regions. There ought to be more work done close at home around the Tabernacle. The time for outdoor services will soon be upon us; see what you can do beyond what is yet done. Sunday-schools in many places are ping for want of teachers, and Ragged-schools still more: so. Where there is a gap, fill it.

“The Lord be with you!  
Please pray for me, that I may return strengthened in spirit, and soul, and body.  
“With Christian love,  
“Yours very heartily,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**  
Another letter was written to Mrs. Bartlett’s class: —  
“Meltone,  
“Saturday evening.  
“Beloved Friends,

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

***“‘Way should the children of a King  
Go mourning all their days?’***

Yours it is to wear a girdle of joy; ‘ for the joy of the Lord is your strength.’ See to it that your lives are consistent with your high callings, for it ill becomes the daughters of Zion to demean themselves like the children of earth. ‘ Let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ.’ Be watchful for the souls of others, and support by your prayers the earnest efforts of your beloved leader, Mrs. Bartlett.

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

“Yours lovingly, for Christ’s sake,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**  
The students of the College had this choice epistle from their ever-beloved President:  
“Mentone,  
“Saturday evening.  
“Beloved Brethren,

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

“Brethren, for our Lord’s sake, maintain a high degree of spirituality; may the Holy Spirit enable you so to do! Live: in God that you may live for God. Let the church see that her students are her picked men. I rely upon you, in my absence, to help in all meetings for prayer or revival to the utmost of your ability. Nothing would give me greater joy than to hear that. while I am away, the Lord was moving some of ‘you to make up for my lack of service.

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

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

“Your loving’ friend,  
**“C. H SPURGEON.”**  
Last:, but not least, the Pastor wrote to his church and congregation the closing epistle of the special series in 1874:—  
“Mentone,  
“Feb. 12.  
“Beloved Friends,

“By the time this letter is; read to you, I shall, if the Lord will, be on my way back to you; and my prayer is that I may return ‘ in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.’ Very greatly have I been cheered by hearing of your prayers for me, and still more by the news of the: good and great work which the Lord is doing in your midst. It is glad tidings indeed. How grateful I am that dear brethren among you at home have been so highly honored that God has worked by them so abundantly! I rejoice in their joy. The report of conversions in the families of the members is peculiarly refreshing. God grant that not one family may be unblessed! “I am myself greatly better, and very thankful that it is so, for I long to be an eye-witness and a partaker in the revival work. Oh, that it may go, on till not one hearer shall remain unsaved!

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

“Yours in Jesus,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

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

“Mentone,  
“Feb. 13, *1877.*  
“Beloved Friends,

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

“To those who are thus earnest for the Lord’s glory, I send my heart’s gratitude, and for those who are nor. as yet aroused to like ardor, I put up my fervent prayers that they may no longer lag behind their brethren. Our children are growing up around us, our great city is; daily adding to its enormous bulk, and our cemeteries are being gorged with the dead; so long as one soul remains unsaved, and in danger of the unquenchable fire, it behooves every Christian to be diligent to spread abroad the healing savor of the Redeemer’s Name. Woe unto that man who conceals the Light while men are stumbling in the darkness! Woe unto him who keeps back the Bread of life in the season of famine! Beloved, I am persuaded better things of you, though I thus speak.

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

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

“May those who have heard the gospel among us, but have not as yet felt its power, be found by the Lord. during the services which have been held in my absence! If they have escaped the net when I have thrown it, may some brother-fisher of souls be more successful with them! It is very hard *to think*of one of our hearers being lost for ever, but how much harder will it be for them to endure in their own persons eternal ruin! May the great Lover of men’s souls put forth His pierced hand, and turn the disobedient into the way of peace!  
*“I*am most grateful to report that: my health is restored, my heart is no longer heavy, my spirits have revived, and I hope to return to you greatly refreshed. Loving friends in Christ, I beg to be continually remembered in your prayers. I send my love to my Co — pastor and true helper, to the deacons, elders, and every one of you in Christ Jesus.

“Yours heartily,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.’**

CHAPTER 68.

THE PASTORS’ COLLEGE, 1861 — 1878.

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

W HEN the Tabernacle was opened, the students migrated from Mr. Rogers house to the class-rooms in the new sanctuary, and the Pastor took an early opportunity of bringing the work of the College more distinctly before his church and congregation than he had previously done On Lord’s-day morning, May 19, 1861, in reminding his hearers of the object for which the collection had been announced, Mr. Spurgeon said:*— “*It has been thought desirable that I should state a few particulars relative to our Institution for training young men for the ministry. Some five or six years ago, one of the young men of our church gave promise of being a successful minister if he could but have a good education. With the assistance of two friends, I resolved to take him under my charge, send him to a suitable tutor, and train him for the ministry. So useful was that brother, that I was induced to take another, and another, and another. Hitherto, I have been myself committee, secretary’, treasurer, and subscriber. I have not, except in one or two instances, even mentioned the matter to anyone; but have been content to spare everything that I could out of my own income, beyond that which is necessary for the support of my household, in order to educate any suitable young men who came in my way, that they might become ministers of the cross of Christ. There are now sever settled out,. all of whom. have been eminently successful. They are probably not: men who will become great or brilliant, but they have been good and useful preachers. I think there are not other seven in the whole Baptist denomination who have had so many converts during the years that they have been settled. They have been the. means, most of them, in the hands of God, of adding many members every year to the churches of which they are pastors; and most of those churches are not in provincial towns, but in villages. I have therefore been led still further to increase my number of students, and I have now about sixteen young men wholly to support and train. Beside these, there is a very considerable number of brethren who receive their education in the evening, though they still remain in their own callings. With the wider sphere we now occupy as a church, I propose so to enlarge my scheme that all the members of this church and congregation, who happen to be deficient in the plain rudiments of knowledge, can get an education — a common English education, for themselves. Then, if they display any ability for speaking’, without giving up their daily avocations, they shall have classes provided for higher branches of instruction. But should they feel that God has called them to the ministry, I am then prepared — after the use of my own judgment:, and the judgment of my friends, as to whether they are fit persons, — to give them ‘two years’ special tutorship, that they may go forth to preach the Word, thoroughly trained so far as we can effect it in so short a time. I know I am called to this work, and I have had some most singular interpositions of Providence in furnishing funds for it hitherto. At the day of judgment, the world shall know that there has never lived a man upon the face of the earth who ha.’; less deserved the calumny of ‘seeking to enrich himself than I have I shall say no more upon that matter; let the world slander me if it will. I want the money to-day, not for myself in any respect;.. I give my services and my time freely, and of my own income all that I can spare. I only want my friends, who feel interested in this work, to assist me, that we may provide men who shall preach the gospel to multitudes who are longing to hear it fully and faithfully proclaimed.” In addition to the public collection for the College, generous gifts were contributed privately, and on July 1, a church-meeting was held, of which the church-book contains the following account:—

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

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

To Believers in our Lord Jesus Christ,  
“Dear Friends,

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

“This remark is made at the outset, not because I undervalue the sympathy of my brethren in Christ, but to show that the work rests on a firmer foundation than the approbation of men, and is carried on in another spirit than that which depends upon an arm of flesh. Resolute perseverance, based upon a conviction of special call, is not to be overcome unless the Divine power which it invokes should refuse its aid. Questions about the necessity or the propriety of the Institution will, of course, be asked, and. the writer is far from denying that liberty to any man; but, meanwhile, that inquiry has long ago been so abundantly answered in the conscience of the person most concerned therein, that the work continually goes on, and will increasingly go on, whatever may be the decision of other minds. When the Lord withholds His aid, the. work will cease; but not till then. Faith grows daily, and rests more and more confidently upon the promise and providence of God; and, therefore, the work will rather increase than come to a pause. I do not, therefore, pen these lines because I would look to man, or feel a need of human aid to buttress the Divine. The Institution was newer so flourishing as now, and it is. no necessity which urges me to tell my brethren what is being done. Whether men, money, or churches, be required, the Lord will surely supply them; and just: now they are brought to us in superabundance, so that there is no need for me to beg for aid.

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

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

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

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

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

**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

The list of students in the College, at about the time this letter was written, contained the names of men of God who have left their mark upon the age, and whose work as preachers and soul-winners, or as teachers of others, is only second to that of the beloved President himself. Four of those names stand out conspicuously, — David Gracey, who was “called home” one year after Mr. Spurgeon; Frank H. White (now of Talbot Tabernacle, Notting Hill); Archibald G. Brown (now of West Norwood); and Charles Burr Sawday (the present Assistant-pastor at the Metropolitan Tabernacle). At the annual meeting of the Pastors’ College in i898, Mr. Archibald Brown thrilled the audience with his graphic description of a scene of which he was one of the eye-witnesses six-and-thirty years before.

“At that date,” said Mr. Brown, “the clear Governor — he was always ‘ the dear Governor’ to us, — held his Friday afternoon class in the newlycompleted ladies’ room at the Tabernacle. One day, as he entered, we noticed that he had brought with him a tall, pale. young man; and, as soon as the cheering, which always greeted his arrival, had. subsided, he said to us, ‘ Here, brethren, is a student who knows more than the whole lot of us put together. He is quite able to teach us all, yet he would not let me rest until I promised to take him into the College; give him a hearty welcome.’ That pale young man,” added Mr. Brown, “was dear David Gracey.” This gifted and gracious brother had been brought up as a Presbyterian; but, while yet a youth, he became a Baptist. Having received a good education in his boyhood, he passed into Glasgow University to be prepared, unconsciously, for the great work which God had in store for him. Brilliant as a student, he would, doubtless, have distinguished himself in the scholastic world, had not higher aims taken possession of his heart. In the providence of God, it happened that Mr. Frank White was sent by Mr. Spurgeon to Glasgow, just about that time, at the request of Mr. John’ Anderson, to conduct a week’s special evangelistic services. Respecting this mission, Mr. White writes: — “ I preached every night in large cold ‘ churches’ with varied success. I was; too much advertised, and the people: expected too much from me, and looked for a sensation, which I neither could nor sought to produce. I believe, however, that souls were saved. It was then that I met and talked long with our dear Mr. Gracey, who was greatly exercised in mind concerning his position. He inquired much about the Pastors’ College, which he seemed desirous to enter, and I strongly urged him to do so.”

Mr. Spurgeon humorously conferred upon Mr. White, while in College, the title of “Professor of Button-hole Theology,” — in allusion to his constant endeavor to “button-hole” individuals, and lead them to the Savior; — and among the hundreds of men whom the beloved President helped to prepare for the Christian ministry, there were none who stood higher in his estimation than the two of whom he always spoke as “Frank White and Archibald. Brown.” It is noteworthy that the *“Fraternal.”*with which Mr. Spurgeon was identified, during the last year or two of his earthly service, was called by him “the Whitey-Brown brotherhood” because of the active part taken by these two brethren in its initiation and development.

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

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

The letter of invitation is before me now.  
*“*Dear Mr. White,

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

Not to have you with me, would grievously afflict —  
*“‘*Your loving friend,  
**“‘ C. H. SPURGEON.’**  
“‘Breakfast at Nightingale Lane at 8; — bound to me till Saturday evening; — may reach home by 6 on that evening.’”

*“Think*whether a poor, worn-out, hard-worked student — such as Archibald Brown, or myself,. — would be glad to receive such a command, or not. I must leave it to an abler pen than mine to describe those drives from day to day; but to me, they were indescribably joyous. The very trees of the field clapped their hands; and ‘are were closely examined as to their nomenclature, and then most delightfully instructed as to their peculiarities and characteristics. I wish I could recall some of the dear Governor’s conversations as we rode along; but I do remember one thing that he said. We were close by the spot where the Bishop of Winchester fell from his horse,, and was killed; and Mr. Spurgeon said that he had just received a letter from a clergyman, who informed him that his bodily sufferings were a judgment from God upon him for speaking against the Church of England. In replying to his unfeeling correspondent, he had asked, — If a swollen hand or foot was to be regarded as a mark of Divine displeasure, what was to be said concerning a broken neck? Needless to say, that question remained unanswered.”

PASTOR ARCHIBALD G. BROWN.

Mr. Brown has preserved the following letter inviting him to form one of the party on another of those memorable driving tours: — “Nightingale Lane,  
“Clapham,  
“May 23.

“Dear Friend,

“‘Will you go out with me and others, on June 15, for a week, or two weeks, or three weeks, or a few’ days, or whatever time you like? We feel that we should like your company’, and we think we might do you good. You are very dear to us; to *me*especially. We shall be very quiet, and jog along with the: old greys.

“I pray the Lord to bless and comfort you.  
“Yours so heartily,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

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

“Nightingale Lane,  
“Clapham.  
“Loving Brother,

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

*“Yours*ever lovingly,  
**“C. H. S.”**

“Nightingale Lane,  
*“Clapham,*  
“January 29th.

*“*Three cheers for you, my true-hearted comrade! The story of your

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

“I hope we shall have a good meeting on Friday week. It is oil to my bones to see you all.  
“Yours always lovingly,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON,”**

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

“Clapham,  
“April 12th, ‘62.  
“My Dear Sir,

“I scarcely wonder at your preference of Regent’s Park College for your son, but I think you labor under some mistake, for it happens that the ground of your choice is, just one of the evils which my Institute seeks to remedy.

“The residence of a number of young men in one house encourages and necessarily generates levity; their separation from common social life is a serious injury, and tends to unfit them for the wear and tear of future work among ordinary mortals. When a young man resides in a Christian family, not only is he under the most vigilant oversight, but he never leases to be one of the people. We are far from putting our men into the way of temptation; on the other hand, we think our arrangement is the most effectual method of preservation. I merely write this because your brief acquaintance with our systems may allow me to suppose that this view of the case has no: suggested itself to you.

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

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

“Yours most truly,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

Mr. Sawday sends this explanation of the letter, and also mentions how the difficulty was happily overcome: — “ my dear father was prejudiced against Mr. Spurgeon; and, in his anxiety for me to receive an efficient training for the Baptist ministry, had arranged for my admission to Regent’s Park College. But I had heard Mr. Spurgeon several times at the Tabernacle, and I pleaded with my father not to insist on my going to Regent’s Park, and with Mr. Spurgeon to admit me to the Pastors’ College. In those early days, it was no wonder that my father, whose whole religious life was spent among the Wesleyans, should have been unwilling for his son to be,. associated with so pronounced a Calvinist as Mr. Spurgeon was, and he had conscientious objections against contributing towards my support. The dear Pastor met us both, one Sunday morning, after the service., and ended the matter by saying, ‘Well, Mr. Sawday, your son is set on entering my College, and he shall be trained, if necessary, at my own expense.’ It is not surprising, therefore, that I feel that I have more cause than many of our brethren for holding in grateful love the memory of our now glorified President.”

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

***“Moves in a mysterious way,  
His wonders to perform.”***

CHAPTER 69.

PASTORS’ COLLEGE, 1861 — 1878 *(CONTINUED.)*

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

T HE following account, in Mr. C. Spurgeon’s own words, was always regarded by him as *“the*best history” of the Pastors’ College; and it is, for that reason, the most suitable record to appear in his “Standard Life.” With the particulars and portraits published in Vol. II., Chapter 46, and the further reminiscences supplied here and in the previous chapter by former students, it furnishes the fullest: and most reliable information concerning the important Institution which the peerless President often called “his firstborn and best beloved.”

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

Two friends, Mr. Winsor and Mr. W. Olney, both deacons of the church, promised aid, which, with what I could myself give, enabled me to take one student (Mr. T. W. Medhurst),, for whom I sought to find a tutor. In Mr. George Rogers, then the Pastor of the Independent Church, Albany Road, Camberwell, God sent us the very best man. He had been preparing for such work, and was anxiously waiting for it. This gentleman, who remained until 1881 our principal tutor, is a man of Puritanic stamp, deeply learned, orthodox in doctrine, judicious, witty, devout, earnest, liberal in spirit, and withal juvenile in heart to an extent most remarkable in a man of his years. My connection with him has been one of uninterrupted comfort and delight. The most sincere, affection exists between us, we are of one mind and of one heart; and what is equally important, he has in every case secured not merely the respect but the filial love of every student.

Encouraged by the readiness with which the first students found spheres of 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 1600 to 1800 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 pretense to go into debt. On one occasion, I proposed the sale of my horse and carriage, although these were almost absolute necessaries 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 meager as to be hardly worth calculating upon. I was brought to the last pound, when a letter came from a banker in the City, informing me that a lady, whose name I have never been able to discover, had deposited a sum of £200, to be used for the education of young men for the ministry. I-tow did my heart leap for joy! I threw myself then and henceforth upon the bounteous care of the Lord, whom I desired with my whole heart to glorify by this effort. Some weeks later, another £100 came in from the same bank as I was informed, from another hand. Soon afterwards, a beloved deacon of the church at the Tabernacle began to provide an annual supper for the friends of the College, at which considerable sums have from year to year been contributed. A dinner was also given by my liberal publishers, Messrs. Passmore and Alabaster, to celebrate the issue of my five hundredth weekly sermon, at which £500 were. raised and presented to the funds. The College grew every month, and the number of students rapidly advanced. Friends known and unknown, from far and near, were moved to give’, little or much to my Work, and so the supplies increased as the need enlarged. Then another earnest deacon of the church, espoused as his is special work the weekly offering, which has been, for many years, a steady source of income. There: have been, during this period, times of great trial of my faith; but, after a season of straitness, never amounting to absolute want, the Lord has always interposed, and sent me large sums (on one occasion, £1,000) from unknown donors. When the Orphanage was thrust upon me, it did appear likely that this second work would drain the resources of the first, and it is very apparent that it does attract to itself some of the visible sources of supply; but my faith was firm that the Lord could as readily maintain both Institutions as one, and He has done so.

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

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

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

*“Friday afternoon*came at last. The old, familiar clock pointed to three; the door opened on the stroke: of the hour, the beloved President appeared, and walked up to the: desk, — Dr. Gill’s pulpit, — while hands clapped, feet stamped, and voices cheered, till he had to hold up his hand, and say: ‘Now, gentlemen, do you not think that is enough? The floor is weak, the ceiling is not very high, and, I am sure, you need all the strength you have for your labors.’

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

“Soon the floods of his, pent-up wisdom poured forth; the flashes of his inimitable wit lit up every face, and his. pathos brought tears to all eyes. It was an epoch in student-life to hear him deliver his *Lectures to my Students.*What weighty and wise discourse he gave us on the subject of preaching! How gently he corrected faults, and encouraged genuine diffidence! What withering sarcasm for all fops and pretenders! Then came those wonderful imitations of the dear brethren’s peculiar mannerisms, — one with the hot dumpling in his mouth, trying to speak; an. other, sweeping his hand up and down from nose to knee; a third, with his hands under his coat-tails, making the figure of a water-wagtail. Then the one with his thumbs in the armholes of his waistcoat, showing the ‘penguin’ style of oratory. By this means, he held the mirror before us so that we could see our faults, yet all the while we were almost convulsed with laughter. He administered the medicine in effervescing draughts. “After this, came the wise: counsel, so kind, so grave, so gracious, so fatherly; then the prayer that lifted us to the mercy-seat, where we caught glimpses of glory, and talked face to face with the Master Himself. Afterwards, the giving out of the appointments for the next: Lord’s-day took place; the class was dismissed for tea, and then came the men who wanted advice. Some were in trouble, others in joy; and the President: listened patiently to all their tales; anon he would laugh, and then he would weep. At last, he is through, ‘weary in the work, but not weary of it.’ His cheery voice gradually dies away as he ascends the stairs to his ‘ sanctum.’ We did not grieve as we parted from him; for we knew that, God willing’, on the next Friday afternoon, we: should once more see his bright, genial face, and hear his wit and wisdom again.”)

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

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

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

One brother I have encountered — one did I say? — I have met ten, twenty, a hundred brethren, who have pleaded that they were quite sure that they were called to the ministry — because they had failed in everything else! This is a sort of model story: — “ Sir, I was put into a lawyer’s office, but I never could bear the confinement, and I could not feel at he, me in studying law. Providence clearly stopped up my road, for I lost my situation.” “And what did you do then?

Why, sir, I was induced to open a grocer’s shop.” “And did you prosper? Well, I do not think, sir, I was ever meant for trade; and the Lord seemed quite to shut up my way there, for I riffled, and was in great difficulties. Since then, I have done a little in a life-assurance, agency, and tried to get up a school, beside selling tea; but my path is hedged up, and something within me makes me feel that I ought to be a minister.” My answer generally is, *“Yes,*I see; you have failed in everything else, and therefore ‘you think the Lord has especially endowed you for His service; but I fear you have forgotten that the: ministry needs the very best of men,, and not those who cannot do anything else.” A man who would succeed as a preacher would probably do right well either as a grocer, or a lawyer, or anything else. A really valuable minister would have excelled in any occupation. There is scarcely anything impossible to a man who can keep a congregation together for years, and be the means of edifying them for hundreds of consecutive Sabbaths; he must: be possessed of some abilities, and be by no means a fool or a ne’er-do-well. Jesus Christ deserves the best men to preach His gospel, and not the empty-headed and the shiftless.

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

One young gentleman, with whose presence I was once honored, has left on my mind the: photograph of his exquisite self. That face of his looked like the title-page to a who’ be volume of *conceit*and *deceit.*He sent word into my vestry, one Sabbath morning,, that he must: see me at once. His audacity admitted him; and when he was; before me, he said, “Sir, I want to enter your College, and should like to enter it: at: once.” “Well, sir,” I said, “I fear we have no room for you at present, but your case shall be considered.” “But mine is a very remarkable: case, sir; you have probably never’ received such an application as mine before.” “Very good, we’ll see about it; the secretary will give you one of the application papers, and you can see me on Monday.” He came on the Monday, bringing with him the questions, answered in a most extraordinary manner. As to books, he claimed to have read all ancient and modern literature, and after giving an immense list, he added, *“This*is merely a selection; I have read most extensively in all departments.” As to his preaching, he could produce the: highest testimonials, but hardly thought they would be needed, as a personal interview would convince me of his ability at once. His surprise was great when I said, “Sir, I am obliged to tell you that I cannot receive you.” “Why not, sir?.. I will tell you plainly. You are so dreadfully clever that I could not insult you by receiving you into our College, where we have none but rather ordinary men; the President, tutors, and students, are all men of moderate attainments, and you would have to condescend too much in coming among us.” He looked at me very severely, and said with dignity, “Do you mean to say that, because I have an unusual genius, and have produced in myself a gigantic mind such as is rarely seen, I am refused admittance into your College?.. Yes,” I replied, as calmly as I could, considering the overpowering awe which his genius inspired, “for that very reason.” *“Then,*sir, you ought to allow me a trial of my preaching abilities; select me any text you like, or suggest any subject you please, and here, in this very room, I will speak upon it, or preach upon it without deliberation, and you will be surprise, d.” *“No,*thank you, I would rather not have the trouble of listening to you.” “Trouble, sir! I assure you it would be the greatest possible pleasure you could have.” I said it might be, but I felt myself unworthy of the privilege, and so bade him a long farewell. The gentleman was unknown to me at the time, but he has since figured in the police court as too clever ‘by half.

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

From quite the early days of the College, I arranged for a regular course of lectures on physical science; and many of the brethren have thanked me, not only for the knowledge thus imparted, but also for the wide field of illustration which was thereby thrown open to them. The study of astronomy, as illustrative of Scriptural truth, proved specially interesting. The science itself was very helpful to many of the students. I remember one brother who seemed to be a dreadful dolt; we really thought he never would learn anything, and that we should have to give him up in despair. But I introduced to him a little book called T*he Young Astronomer,’*and he afterwards said that, as he read it, he felt just as if something had cracked inside his head, or as if some string had been snapped. He had laid hold of such enlarged ideas that I believe: his cranium did actually experience an expansion which it ought to have undergone in his childhood, and which it did undergo by the marvelous force of the thoughts suggested by the study of even the elements of astronomical science. Another student:, who evidently had not paid very special attention to the lecturer, wondered whether that star, which always hung just over his chapel,, was Jupiter! Of course, the result of his foolish question was that “Jupiter” became his nickname ever afterwards, even though he was not “a bright particular:” star in our College, - constellations.

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

I have often noticed one thing in some who have seemed unable to understand even the elements of science; the Holy Spirit has taught them the Word o{ God, and they are clear enough about that(. When we have been reading a chapter out of some old Puritanic book, or when we have been diving into the depths of theology, those brethren have given me the smartest and sharpest answers of the whole class. When we have been dealing with things experimental and controversial, I find that those men have been able to vanquish their opponents at once, because they are deeply read in the Word of God. The Spirit has taught them the things of Christ, if He has not taught them anything else.

One night, Mr. Selway, in the course of the experiments with which he enlivened his lectures, playfully turned a little jet of water on to one of the students, little dreaming what would be the consequences of the harmless pleasantry which had amused successive batches of the men who had listened to him in the room just at the back of the lower platform in the Tabernacle.’. In an instant, the young man, who was sitting not the table on which stood the glass tubes, jars, and other apparatus used by the lecturer wept the whole mass to the floor in a terrific crash before anyone could be aware of his intention, much less prevent him from carrying it: into effect. It was a sad exhibition of an ungovernable temper which, I greatly fear, in after years, cost the student far more than the price of the destroyed apparatus which he was required to replace. Mr. Selway, who was a singularly calm, self-possessed individual, simply said, “That young *gentleman*will some’.: day be sorry for what he has done;” and then proceeded with his lecture, — of course, without any more experiments that evening!

Bad as this display of passion was, there was one student who did something which, in certain aspects, was worse, for there was an element of deliberation about it: which was absent on the other occasion. It has long been our rule that each brother should read in the College at least one discourse which he has himself coreposed, and which his comrades are expected to criticize. Any attempt at plagiarism would, therefore, be manifestly unfair; and, if detected, would meet with well-merited condemnation. One man, when it came to his turn, was actually reckless and foolish enough to take one of my printed sermons, — I suppose condensed, — and to read it as though it had been his own composition; and he had to thank his brethren that he was not instantly expelled from the Institution, Several of them at once recognized the discourse; and, as soon as the time for criticism arrived, proceeded to pull it to pieces most mercilessly.

They found fault with the introduction, the divisions, the subdivisions, the illustrations, the application, — with everything, in fact, except the doctrine;.. I think that was a right! I was so pleased with the critical acumen displayed that I forgave the offender; but I lot it be distinctly understood that, for the: future, any student repeating the offense, whether with my sermon or anyone else’s, would be forthwith dismissed in disgrace.

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

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

Occasionally, I have given the students a little exercise in extempore speaking, in order to develop their facility of utterance if unexpectedly called upon for a sermon or address, Various topics are written on slips of paper, these are placed in a hat, and each brother is expected in turn to draw one out, and to speak straight off on the subject stated Of all these efforts, the most successful that I remember related to the word Zacchaeus, which fell to the lot of one who, as soon as he had glanced at: it, said: — ” Mr. President and brethren, my subject is Zacchaeus, and it is therefore most: appropriate to me; for, first, Zacchaeus was little of stature, so am I; secondly, Zacchaeus was very much ‘up a tree,’ so am I; thirdly, Zacchaeus ‘ made haste, and came down,’ and so will I;” and thereupon the speaker resumed his seat. The students called to him to go on; but I said, “No; he could not add anything to such a perfect little speech without spoiling it.” Certainly, he was a better judge of the suitability of a subject: than another of the students, who went to preach at Portsmouth shortly after the training ship *Eurydice*went down off the Isle of Wight with over three hundred souls on board. Thinking that he would “improve the occasion,” he announced, as the theme of his discourse, Psalm 107:30: “So He bringeth them unto their desired haven.” A more inappropriate text, under the circumstances, could scarcely have been selected; but even a good man, with right intentions, may make blunders which, to other people, are utterly unaccountable.

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

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

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

The officers of a small church in the country applied to me for a minister; but the salary they were prepared t,:, pay was so small that, in reply to their request, I wrote: — “ The only individual I know, who could exist on such a stipend, is the angel Gabriel. He would need neither cash nor clothes; and he could come down from Heaven every Sunday morning, and go back at night, so I advise; you to invite him.” The corresponding deacon of another church, which was needing a Pastor, sent me such a long list of the qualifications that must be possessed by the man whom they could look up to as their leader, that I recommended him to take a large sheet of brown paper, and cut out a minister of the size and shape desired, or else to seek to secure the: services of the eminent Dr. So-and-so, who had been for a good many years in glory, for I could not think of anyone else who could fulfill the conditions that such an important church and diaconate seemed to regard as indispensable Like one of the other deacons, he also wrote again; and his second letter being more reasonable than the first, I was able to recommend a brother with whom the church appeared to be perfectly satisfied.

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

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

Several students, at different periods in the. history of the College, on being sent out as pioneers to start new churches, received this singular charge: — “ Cling tightly with both your hands; when they fail, catch hold with your teeth; and if they give way, hang on by your eyelashes!” Mr. Saville went to Carlisle with these words ringing in his ears, and he obeyed them all too literally. With true heroism, he would not let his dear President know the hardships he was enduring for Christ’s sake and the gospel’s;; but someone, who discovered the plight he was in, wrote about his trials and sufferings; and as; soon as the tidings reached Mr. Spurgeon, substantial help was sent to him.

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

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

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

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

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

Until the year 1865, no statistics were collected from the brethren educated in the College; and even since that time, it has not been possible to get all the ministers to send in returns regularly, so that the figures tabulated have been below instead of above the: truth. To the end of 1878, over five hundred students had bee. n trained in the Institution, of whom twenty-five had been “called home.” Of the four hundred and fifty then engaged as Baptist pastors, evangelists, and missionaries, less than three hundred filled up the statistical forms, which showed that, during the year, they had baptized 3,600 persons; and during the fourteen years there had been a net increase to the churches of 33,319 members. The sons of the College had already found their way into all the four quarters of the globe, and the be loved President’s prayer that the missionary spirit should be increased among the brethren was being graciously answered, for some,, of them had gone forth to India, China, Japan, Africa, Spain, Italy, the West Indies and South America, beside a considerable contingent in the Australasian and Canadian colonies and the United States.

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

“Nightingale Lane,  
“Clapham,  
“Beloved Brethren, “September 11th, 1865.

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

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

“I am, dearly-beloved brethren,  
“Your affectionate brother,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**  
The next epistle is as timely and important now as when it was penned, during the dear President’s small-pox illness: —  
“Clapham,  
“Dec. 2, 1869.

“My Dear Friend,  
“Being debarred from serving the Lord by my own public ministry, it has been laid upon my heart to endeavor to stir up my brotherministers to use increased diligence while they a. re permitted the great pleasure and privilege of preaching; the Word. I pray that every word I write may be approved of God, and may be, by the Holy Ghost, rendered serviceable to you.

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

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

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

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

*“Our*private prayers, my brother, must be more frequent and fervent. Could we not, as members of the same College, as well as brethren in the one family in Heaven and earth, enter into a brotherly compact to mention each other in our prayers at least once every day? Could not the months of January and February be specially marked by our reminding our people of our brethren and their labors, that they may join ‘their prayers with ours? The next three months would be a season to be remembered it: there should be unusual activity in all our churches, and prevalent intercession: from all our members. Brother, what doth hinder us from receiving a great blessing? We: are not straitened in God; let us not be straitened in our own bowels. For the love of our Lord Jesus, and the honor of His Name, let us plead, and labor, and agonize, and believe; and the blessing will come, it shall not tarry.

*“Receive*assurances of nay’ purest and warmest love, and believe me ever to be,  
“Your brother and servant for Jesus’ sake,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**  
This letter was written to the College men laboring in foreign hinds: — “Clapham,  
“‘ Sept. 30th, 1873.  
“Beloved Brother,

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

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

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

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

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

The blessing of the Triune God be with you, dear brother! “Yours for ever heartily,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.**  
The students in the College in 1875 received these earnest words from their suffering President: —.  
“Dear Brethren,

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

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

Be not content till Pentecost is repeated among you.  
“Yours very heartily,

**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**  
“THE KING OF THE COLPORTEURS.”

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

CHAPTER 70.

MEN THAT THE BOOKS.”

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

In August, 1866, Mr. Spurgeon published, in *The Sword and the Trowel,* an article which he had written, entitled, “The Holy War of the Present Hour.” Thai: paper was destined to be more memorable than probably even the writer of it anticipated, for not only did it become the means; of the formation of the Colportage Association and the Stockwell Orphanage, but it contained such a striking forecast of his position in “The ‘ Down-grade’ Controversy” that, after he was “called home,” it was reprinted as “A Chapter of Autobiography.” In the article, after describing the “disguised Romanism” which was even then making rapid advances in the country, Mr. Spurgeon showed how he had done what he could to combat the evil by means of the preachers trained in the College, for whom he asked his readers’ prayers and support, and then added:. — “Next to this, we would urge the propriety of a very large distribution of religious literature bearing upon the Puseyite controversy. Very’ little has been done in this respect. Tractarianism owed its origin to tracts, as its name,, implies; why may not its downfall come from the same means, if well used? If several millions of copies of forcible, Scriptural testimonies could be,. scattered over the land, the results might far exceed all expectation. Of course, controversy would arise out of such a distribution; but this is most desirable, since it is only error which could suffer by the question being everywhere discussed. We should like to see the country flooded, and even the walls placarded, with bold exposures of error and plain expositions of truth. We will take our own share in the, effort if any (fiends should be moved to work with us; at the same time, we shall be equally glad if they will do the work alone; only let it be done, and done well, and at once. If the expense of the tracts should involve a sacrifice, it will be sweet to the true heart to serve the Lord with his substance, and none will desire: to offer to Him that which costs them. nothing.

Brethren in Christ, by the love you bear to the gospel of Jesus, be up and doing for the Lord’s cause in the land. If not in these ways, yet by some other methods do meet the enemy of souls, and seek to tear the prey from between his jaws. If every hair of our head were: a man, and every man had a thousand tongues, every one should cry out against the Anglican Antichrist. No greater plague can break forth among our people than the plague of Puseyism. If there be any human means unused, by which the flood of Popery may be stemmed, let us use it; and, meanwhile, with heart and soul let us approach the throne of grace, and cry unto the Lord to maintain His own truth, and put His enemies to confusion.”

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

During the first few months, or perhaps years, the work was necessarily very much of an experiment, and every effort was made to find out the best methods of procedure. At the. outset, it was intended to conduct the. Association upon Baptist lines, only having agents whose denominational views were akin to those of the Tabernacle members. It was soon found, however, that this restriction was not a wise one’ and, within a year, it was decided to have an undenominational basis, with the proviso that all the colporteurs engaged should be men of sterling Christian character, firmly holding the great Evangelical doctrines. In the beginning, it was proposed to can try on the enterprise with honorary officers only, the responsibilities of the different departments being shared amongst the Committee but it was speedily discovered, that the undertaking was too heavy to be properly carried out by gentlemen who were occupied in their various callings during’ the day, and, almost within the first twelve months, the appointment of the first paid officer of the Association was contemplated. It is a somewhat remarkable coincidence that the only name selected for nomination at that period was that of the present secretary, Mr. Stephen ‘Wighey, who, was unaware of the fact until more than thirty years later when, in the providence of God, he was called to fill that important position. Ultimately, in 1872, Mr. W. Corden Jones was elected, and he remained the secretary until he resigned in 1894. On the completion of the Pastors’ College, the Colportage d*epot*was transferred to the: room still occupied in that building.

From the date of its formation until the death of Mr. Boustead, that gentleman was by far’ the largest contributor to the work, and in his will he left a very considerable amount for the same purpose. Through his generosity, at one period in the history of the Association, colporteurs were sent to several districts which could only guarantee £20 a year; but this was merely at temporary arrangement, and in later years it has been found needful to require £40 or £45 to ensure the services of a colporteur. That amount, of course, does not cover the cost of the good man’s labor; the deficiency is met by’ the profit on the books he sells and by contributions to the General Fund of the Association.

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

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

Describing a poor fallen woman, who had been brought to at sense of her sinfulness in the sight of God, and who was afterwards in a despairing condition, the brother said: — “ I drew her attention to many of the promises and invitations of the gospel, sold her Mr. Spurgeon’s sermon on ‘The Gentleness of Jesus,’ and asked the Lord to bless the reading of it to her soul. If I could find language sufficiently expressive, I would describe my visit to her on the following day. Holding the sermon (No. *1,147)*in her hand, her voice tremulous with emotion, and her face radiant with happiness, she read upon page 703 the following words: — ‘ Hearts are won to Jesus by the silent conviction which irresistibly subdues the conscience to a sense of guilt and by the love which is displayed in the Redeemer’s becoming the great substitutionary sacrifice for us, that our sins might be removed. In this way, conversions are wrought; — not by displays of human zeal, wisdom, or force: “:Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.”’ Then, still holding the sermon in her hand, she said to me, ‘ Blessed be the Lord for ever, I have found Him; or, rather, He has found me! I am saved, pardoned, forgiven, accepted, and blessed, for Christ’s sake. Now I know what the poet means, —

***“‘Nothing in my hand I bring;  
Simply to Thy cross I cling.’***  
“‘Yes, yes; Jesus died for me, and I live through Him.’”

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

The words were hardly uttered before the pack was transferred to the table, opened, a suitable book selected, and the man began addressing the chairman: — *“Dear*Mr. Spurgeon, — I have a work here that I can very highly recommend you to buy. I can speak well of it, for I have read it, and derived great benefit from it. The author is a particular friend of mine, and he is always glad to hear that the colporteurs sell hi:; books, for he’. knows that they are full of the gospel. The title of the volume, is Trumpet*Calls to Christian Energy,*the author is C. H. Spurgeon, and the price is 3s. 6t.; will you buy it?”

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

On November 1, 1866, the first agent was appointed; two months later, three were at work; hut, for a while, so slow was the rate of progress that another year elapsed before three more men were engaged From 1873 to 1878, the date at which the present volume of Mr. Spurgeon’s “Standard Life” ends, — the advance was rapid and continuous: in the latter year, 94 colporteurs were: engaged, their sales for the twelve months amounted to £78,276, and they had, during that period, paid 926,290 visits. The accompanying illustration represents about one-third of the men then employed, as they had assembled at the Stockwell Orphanage in preparation for their annual Conference.

CHAPTER 71.

A HOME FOR THE FATHERLESS.

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

*in Preface to “Sword and Trowel” volume for*1867.

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

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

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

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

Mr. Spurgeon’s name had been introduced to Mrs. Hillyard in an extraordinary way; the incident does not appear to have ever come to his knowledge, and it was not made public until some years after he was “called home.” Speaking at the Orphanage, in June, 1896, Professor Henderson, of Bristol Baptist College, said: — “ Mrs. Hillyard and two friends of mine — a husband and wife, — were sitting together here in London; and, in the course of their conversation, Mrs. Hillyard said to my friend, ‘ I have: a considerable sum of money that I want to employ for beneficent purposes, but I am not competent to administer it myself; I wish you would take this £20,000, and use it for the glory of God.’ My friend, who was a very sensible man, replied, ‘ I am quite unfit to administer that large amount.’ It was pressed upon him, but he resolutely declined to accept the charge of it; whereupon Mrs. Hillyard said to him, ‘Well, if you are not willing to take it, will you advise me as to the disposal of it?’ The recommendation he gave was, that the money’ should be put into the hands of a public man, all of whose acts were known to people generally, one who was responsible to the public, and whose reputation depended upon the proper use of any funds entrusted to his keeping. This counsel was approved by Mrs. Hillyard; and now comes the remarkable part of the story. You know that she did not hold quite the same views that we: do, and the gentleman to whom she was speaking did not share our intense admiration for Mr. Spurgeon, though he had a kindly feeling towards him, and a high regard for his integrity and uprightness. When Mrs. Hillyard said to him, ‘ Will you name somebody who fulfils the conditions you have mentioned? he told me that the name. of SPURGEON leaped from his lips almost to his own surprise. Mrs. Hillyard wrote to Mr. Spurgeon about the matter, and you all know what followed from their correspondence.”

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

*“4*Warwick Villas,  
*“Spencer*Street,  
*“Canonbury*Square,  
“Islington,  
“Sept. 3rd, 1866.

“My Dear Sir,

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

“I have now about £20,000, which I should like (God willing) to devote to the training and education of a few orphan boys. Of course, bringing the little ones to Jesus is my first and chief desire’. I doubt not that many dear Christians would like to help in a work of this kind, under your direction and control; and should such an Institution grow to any large extent, I feel sure there would be: no cause to dear the want of means to meet the needs of the dear orphans, for’ have they not at rich Father? I shall esteem it a great favor if you can call and talk the matter over with me on Thursday next, between the hours of 12 and 4, as you kindly propose; and —

“I remain, dear sir,  
“Yours truly obliged,  
**“ANNE HILLYARD.”**  
“P.S. — I would leave this matter entirely in the Lord’s hand; not desiring to go before, but to follow His guidance.”

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

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

“4, Warwick Villas,  
“Spencer Street,  
“Canonbury Square,  
“Islington,  
“Sept. 17th, 1866.

“My Dear Sir,

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

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

*“I*remain, dear sir,  
*“Most*truly yours in our Lord,  
***“ANNE*HILLYARD.”**

A preliminary notice was inserted in *The Sword and the Trowel*for October, 1866; in the following January, the site at Stockwell was purchased; funds commenced to come in, one of the first large contributors being Mr. George Moore, of Bow Churchyard, who gave £250. The sum of £500 was given by Mrs. Tyson, of Upper Norwood, — a lady who long and generously aided both College and Orphanage, and who, in her will, left £25,000 to the latter Institution, and so became its greatest helper. As the £500 was a present from Mr. Tyson to his wife on the twenty-fifth anniversary of their marriage, the house built with it was called *“Silver*wedding House;” the next one, given by Mr. James Harvey, was named *“The*Merchant’s House;” the third, presented by Mr. W. Higgs and his workmen, was entitled *“The.*Workmen’s House;*”*then came *“Unity* House,” the gift of *“Father*Olney” and his sons, in memory of Mrs. Unity Olney; “The Testimonial Houses,” erected with funds contributed by the Baptist churches of the United Kingdom as a proof of the high esteem in which they held the President; “The Sunday-school House,” given by the Tabernacle Sunday-school; and *“The*College House,” a token of low: from brethren educated in the Pastors’ College. The head-master’s house, dining-hall, play-hall, and infirmary, completed the boys’ side of the Institution; and, at a later period, a corresponding portion was erected for girls, of which an account may more properly appear in the concluding volume of this; work.

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

Monday, God should have influenced mother to give six hundred pounds! When I told you of that, at the next prayer-meeting, you did not think, perhaps, that the Lord had something else in store, and’. that, the following Tuesday, another friend would come with five hundred pounds! It was just the same in the building of this Tabernacle. We were a few and poor people when we commenced; but, still, we moved on by faith, and never went into debt. We trusted in God, and the house was built, to the eternal honor of Him who hears and answers prayer. And, mark you, it will be so in the erection of this Orphan Home. We shall see greater things than these if only our faith will precede our sight. But if we go upon the old custom of our general Societies, and first look out for a regular income, and get our subscribers, and send round our collectors, and pay our percentages, — that is, do not: trust God but trust our subscribers, — if we go by that rule, we shall see very little, and have no room for believing. But if we shall just trust God, and believe that He never did leave a work that H e put upon us, and never sets us to do a thing without meaning to help us though with it, we shall soon see that the God of Israel still lives, and that His arm is not shortened.”  
Many notable interpositions of Providence have occurred in connection with the building and maintenance of the Institution. One of the earliest and most memorable took place on November 20, 1867, concerning which Mr. Spurgeon wrote, several years afterwards, among his other personal recollections of Dr. Brock: — “ We remember *when,*being somewhat indisposed, as is, alas! too often our’ lot, we went to spend a quiet day or two at a beloved friend’s mansion in Regent’s Park. We were dining, and Dr. Brock was one of our little company. Mention was made that the Stockwell Orphanage was being built, and that cash for the builder would be needed in a day or two, but ‘was not yet in hand. We declared our confidence in God that the need would be supplied,, and that we should never owe any man a pound for the Lord’s work. Our friend agreed that, in the review of the past, such confidence was natural, and was due to our ever-faithful Lord. As we closed the meal, a servant entered, with a telegram from our secretary, to the effect that A. B., an unknown donor, had sent £1,000 for the Orphanage. No sooner had we read the words than the Doctor rose from the table, and poured out his utterances of gratitude in the most joyful mariner, closing with the suggestion that the very least thing we could do was to fall upon our knees at once, and magnify the Lord. The prayer and praise which he then poured out, we shall never forget; he seemed a psalmist while, with full heart and grandeur both of words and sound, singularly suitable to the occasion, he addressed the ever-faithful One. He knew our feebleness at the time, and while he looked upon the gift of God as a great tenderness to us in our infirmity, he also seemed to feel such perfect oneness with us in our delight that he took the duty’ of expressing it quite out of our hands, and spoke in our name as well as his own. If a fortune had been left him, he could not have been more delighted than he was at the liberal supply of our needs in the Lord’s work. We sat around the fire, and talked together of the goodness of God, and our heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord. Among the very latest things we: spoke of, when we last met on earth, was that evening at our friend’s house, and the great goodness of the Lord in response to our faith. While we write the record, our heart wells up with new gratitude for the choice benefit. Surely, if in Heaven the saints shall converse together of the things of earth, this will be one of the subjects upon which two comrades of twenty years may be expected to commune.”

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

In November, 1869, when the President was suddenly laid aside by an attack of small-pox, a friend, who knew nothing of his illness, called and left £500 for the Orphanage and, a few days later, an anonymous donor, who also was unaware of Mr. Spurgeon’s affliction, sent £1,000 for the same purpose. At one meeting of the Trustees, the financial report was, *“all*bills paid, but only £3 left in hand.” Prayer was offered, and the stream of liberality soon began to flow again. On another occasion, the funds were completely exhausted, and the Managers were driven to special supplication on behalf of the work. That very day, nearly £400 was poured into the treasury, and the hearts of the pleaders were gladdened and encouraged.

The President’s usual plan, when supplies ran short, was first to give all he could; and ask his fellow-Trustees to do the same, and then to lay the case before the Lord in the full belief that He would incline His stewards to send in all that was required. As long as he was able to do so, Mr. Spurgeon presided at the meetings of the Trustees; and, afterwards, he was kept informed of their proceedings by copies of the Minutes, while, the most important items of business were decided “subject to the approval of the President.” In the earlier days, he used personally to see the: applicants, — an experience which often proved expensive, for he could not listen to the sad stories of the poor widows without temporarily relieving their necessities, whatever might be the decision concerning the admission of their children. Sometimes, there was a humorous side to the situation, and he was quick to notice it. One day, a woman came with quite a little tribe of boys and girls; and, in reply to the inquiries put: to her, said that she had been twice left a widow, and her second husband, whom she had recently lost, had been previously married; and then, separating the children into three groups, she said, “These are his, those: are mine, and these are ours.” In relating the story afterwards, Mr. Spurgeon used to say that he did not remember any other instance in which possessive, pronouns had proved so useful!  
In January, 1869, the President wrote, in *The Sword and the Trowel: — “* At the Orphanage, we are still set fast for want of a master. The Lord will, we trust, guide us to the right man; but, out of many applicants, not one has seemed to us to be suitable.” Two months later, however, Mr. Spurgeon was able to report*: — “*Mr. Charlesworth, assistant-minister to Mr. Newttan Hall, of Surrey Chapel, has accepted the post of master to the Orphanage. He called in — as we are wont to say — by accident, at the very moment when a letter was handed to us from the previously — elected master declining to fulfill his engagement. Our disappointment was considerable at the loss of the man of our choice; but when we found that this dear friend had been thinking of the work, and was ready to undertake it, we were filled with gratitude to the over-ruling hand of God.”

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

Mr. Spurgeon never had occasion to regret the choice of Mr. Charlesworth for the position which he still holds; and he might have said, at any later period of his life, what he wrote in The *Sword and the Trowel*for March, 1873: — “Our dear brother, Mr. Charlesworth, fills the place of master to our great joy, and to the evident benefit of all the boys;.” That number of the Magazine also contained the following interesting announcement: — “On Monday, February 24, five of the youths educated at the Orphanage were baptized at the Tabernacle, together with our friend, Mr. V. J. Charlesworth, the master, who gave an address explaining his reasons for being baptized as; a believer.” Many others of the orphans have followed this example, or united with other branches of the Church of Christ, and are actively engaged in Christian service. Of those who have entered the ministry, three — Messrs. R. S. Latimer, C.W. Townsend, and John Maynard, — were still further indebted to Mr. Spurgeon for the training they received in the Pastors College. The last-named of the three — the “little Jack” of the Orphanage — went from the College to the Congo, and so took the short route to Heaven. The tablet to his memory, on the house in which he lived while in the Institution, must be, to the boys who read it, a continual reminder of one of their number whose influence, even as a lad, was of a most. gracious character. It is a tact also worthy of mention that another of the inmates of the Orphanage in its early days — Mr. F. G. Ladds — after serving for a time as a teacher, has been for twenty years the esteemed and efficient secretary of the Institution.

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

Everyone at all acquainted with the inner working of the Orphanage knows with what affection, mingled with reverence, the children at Stockwell always regarded Mr. Spurgeon. He was indeed a father to the fatherless; and, while no boy ewer presumed upon the tender familiarity which the beloved President permitted, every one of them fully prized the privilege of his friendship. There was no mistaking the ringing cheer which greeted his arrival; everybody on the premises instantly knew what that shout meant, and passed round the cheering message, “Mr. Spurgeon has come.” In the “In Memoriam” Stockwell Orphanage Tract, issued in 1892, after Mr. Spurgeon was *“called*home,” Mr. Charlesworth wrote, concerning the. “promoted” President:*— “*The children loved him; and his visits always called forth the. most boisterous demonstrations of delight. His appearance was the signal for a general movement towards the center of attraction, and he often said, ‘They compassed me about like bees!’ The eagerness with which they sought to grasp his hand, often involved the younger children in the risk of being trampled upon by others; but, with ready tact and condescension, he singled out those who we. re at a disadvantage, and extended to them his hand. At the Memorial Service, conducted by the head-master, it: was ascertained that every boy present had shaken hands with the dear President, — a fact of no small significance! Every visit cost him as many pennies as there were children in the Orphanage. Proud as they were to possess the coin for its spending power, it was regarded as having an augmented value from the fact that it was the gift of Mr. Spurgeon.”

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

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

The narrative, of course, brought “little Bob” a plentiful supply of pocket money, and was the means of helping others of the orphans who, like him, were motherless and fatherless; and it also served Mr. Spurgeon many a time as an illustration of the way in which a personal appeal might be made effectual. One of the best pleas for the Institution that the beloved President ever issued was dictated to his secretary under the olives at Mentone. It was addressed, “To those who are happily married, or hope to be:” and after allusion to the bliss of a true marriage union, and the consequent sorrow when one of the twain should be removed by death, the writer showed how, often, poverty made the bereavement even more painful, and then pointed out the blessing that a home for the fatherless became to the poor struggling widow suddenly left with a large family. The article contained special references to the Stockwell Orphanage; and it was, in due time, published in T*he Sword and the Trowel.*As soon as it appeared, one gentleman sent £100 as

a thank offering from himself and his wife for their many years of happy married life, and other donors sent sinner amounts. The “plea” commenced thus: — “We do not write for those people who are married but not mated. When a cat and a dog are tied, together, they seldom sorrow much at the prospect of separation. When marriage is *merry-age,*it is natural to desire a long life of it; but when it is *mar-age,*the thought of parting’ is more endurable. ‘ Mr. and Mrs. Naggleton will be sure to put on mourning should one or other of them decease, but the garb of sorrow will be all the sorrow he or she will know; the black will soon turn brown, if not white, and the weeds will probably give place to flowers. We address ourselves to those who have the happiness of being joined together by wedded love’, as well as by wedlock.” It was a source of much amusement to Mr. Spurgeon to receive, among the other contributions for the Orphanage, as the result of his appeal, a donation “fix Mr. and Mrs. Naggleton,” who did not, however, give their real name and address!

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

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

CHAPTER 72.

THE NEW “HELENSBURGH HOUSE,” NIGHTINGALE LANE.

W HILE Mr. Spurgeon was so diligently, and in such self-denying fashion, caring: for students and colporteurs, widows and orphans, some of his friends thought it was time for a little more comfort to be provided for himself and his household. Many hallowed associations had endeared the old house at Nightingale Lane to its happy inmates; but they were not blind to the disadvantages of their ancient, dwelling, and all greatly rejoiced when, in 1869, it was; pulled down, and the new “Helensburgh House” was erected in its place. The large amount expended by the dear owner in his many departments of service for the Lord would have made it impossible for him to meet the necessary outlay,, so a few of his most liberal and de. voted helpers determined to defray the principal part of the cost, as a token of their loving appreciation of his public ministry and private friendship. The work: was entrusted to the charge of Mr. William Higgs, and the plans were drawn by his eldest son, the present Deacon William Higgs, who greatly prizes the volumes given to him by Mr. Spurgeon in recognition of his labors.

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

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

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

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

“The time *of your love.*During my life; — not like the poor philosopher, who was starved to death, but who afterwards had a pillar erected in his honor. This house will be a monument of your generosity, and so it will be a double memorial. Your own presents made it needful. I am like the man who received a white elephant as a gift from his; prince, and, with it, a sufficient sum of money to enable him to keep it. The damp and decay in the old house rendered a new one necessary; the other was ‘ a pleasant place to live out of.’

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

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

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

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

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

“Not long after that, I was moved to Brighton, there to pass a crisis in my life, the result of which would be a restoration to better health, — or death. One evening, when my dear husband came from London, he brought a large package with him, and, uncovering it, disclosed a cage containing a lovely *piping bullfinch!*My astonishment was great, my joy unbounded, and these emotions were. intensified as he related the way’ in which he became possessed of the coveted treasure. He had been to see a dear friend of ours, whose husband was sick unto death and, after commending the sufferer to God in prayer, Mr. T\_\_\_ said to him,’ I want you to take my pet bird to Mrs. Spurgeon, I would give him to none but her; his songs are too much for my poor husband in his weak state, and I know that ‘ Bully’ will interest and amuse Mrs. Spurgeon in her loneliness while you are so much away from her.’ Dear Mr. Spurgeon then told her of my desire for such a companion, and together they rejoiced over the care of the loving Heavenly Father. who had so wondrously provided the very gift His child had longed for. With that cage beside him, the journey to Brighton was a very short one; and when ‘Bully’ piped his pretty song, and took a hemp seed as a reward from the lips of his new mistress, there were eyes with joyful tears in them, and hearts overflowing with praise to God, in the little room by the sea that night; and the dear Pastor’s comment was, ‘ I think you are one of your Heavenly Father’s spoiled children, and He just gives you whatever you ask for.’  
“Does; anyone doubt that: this bird was a direct love-gift from the pitiful Father? Do I hear someone say, ‘ Oh! it was all “chance” that brought about such coincidences as these? Ah, dear friends! those of you who have been similarly indulged by Him *know,*of a certainty, that it is not so. He who cares for all the works of His hand, cares with infinite tenderness for the children of His love, and thinks nothing which concerns them too small or too. trivial to notice. It our faith were stronger, and our love more perfect, we should see far greater marvels than these in our daily lives.

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

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

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

“My Own Dear Sufferer,

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

“I have been quite a long round to-day, — if a ‘ round’ can be ‘long.’ First, to Finsbury, to buy the wardrobe, — a beauty. I hope you will live long to hang your garments in it, every thread of them precious to me for your dear sake. Next, to Hewlett’s, for a chandelier for the dining-room. Found one quite to my taste and yours. Then, to Negretti & Zambra’s, to buy a barometer for my very own fancy, for I have long promised to treat myself to one. On the road, I obtained the Presburg biscuits, and within their box I send this note, hoping it may reach you the more quickly. They are sweetened with my love and prayers.

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

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

“Yours to love in life, and death, and eternally,  
**“C. H. S.”**

There was a very small room, by the side of Mr. Spurgeon’s study, which was specially fitted up for his dear wife’s use; and nothing had been forgotten which could, in any way conduce to the comfort of an invalid almost entirely confined to her couch. Never will the rapture with which he welcomed her home: be forgotten, nor the joyful pride, with which he pointed out all the arrangements he had made so that her captivity should have every possible compensation and alleviation. There was a cunninglycontrived cupboard in one corner of the room, into which he had gathered all the details of his loving care for her. When the doors were opened, a dainty washing apparatus was disclosed, with hot and cold water laid on, so that no fatigue in ascending and descending the stairways should be necessary, and even the towels were embroidered with her name. He had thought of *everything,,*and there were such tender touches of devoted love upon all the surroundings of the little room that no words can describe her emotions when first she gazed upon them, and afterwards when She proved, by practical experience, their exceeding usefulness and value.

Even when the new house was finished, Mrs. Spurgeon was still detained at Brighton, and her dear husband had, for a while, to occupy it without her. He used often to say, during that time of loneliness, that he and the cat (old *“Dick*“ — whose portrait was given in Vol. 2, page 294,)went up and down the stairs m*ewing for the mistress.*One day, during that period of waiting, the muse took another form, and Mr. Spurgeon wrote this merry effusion, which he called, —

“A RIGMAROLE, FOR A DEAR OLD SOUL.  
*“Sweetest*and best of the daughters of Eve, —

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

*“It’s*a very line clay; at least, it has tried, but the rain has said, ‘Nay,’ and the clouds have denied. Mr. Passmore has been up in the study, his eyes are not bright, and his cheeks are not ruddy. He seems pleased to be asked to stay with the Queen,, and on Tuesday, at Brighton, we hope to be seen. I rode up to London, with our Mr. Hood; he shortened the: journey, and solid me good. I am sound as a bell, right hearty and well, and I’m off to my place, the gospel to tell.  
“Pull both the boys’ ears, and give: them a kiss; as they grow up in years, may they ripen for Miss! And now: my sweet wile, the joy of my life, wagon-loads of sweet love, and ton weights of affection, all language above, for I love to perfection. May you mend every hour till, in fullness of power, you climb up the hills, forgetting all ills; with a clean bill of health, more precious than wealth, live long to delight my heart and my sight:! So earnestly prays your lonely old man, who is counting the days, until see you he can.”

This rhyming epistle was evidently written in great haste, and without any premeditation, just to while away a few minutes, and amuse her whom he “loved to perfection.” It may be fittingly followed by a *facsimile*o! the first post card used by Mr. Spurgeon, which has a double interest; first, from the up-and-down way in which it had to be read; and, next, because it is a little love-letter intended *pro bono publico.*

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

“WARRANTY OF TABLE.  
“Clapham,  
“November 26.

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

**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

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

The garden was rearranged under the direction of Mr. Shirley Hibberd, who very ingeniously made the most of a. comparatively small area, so that it formed a still more delightful retreat for the oft-weary preacher and toiler when he could steal away for a brief respite from his almost incessant service. Among other alterations, a new lawn was specially prepared, where father and sons, and a few favored visitors, might play at the old Puritan game of “bowls.” It was a healthy and not too tiring exercise; but the chief attraction of it probably was that it had been the favorite amusement of the great uncrowned king of England, Oliver Cromwell, and some of the mightiest masters of theology that the world has ever seen. Mr. Spurgeon used frequently to say that the expression;’ the bias of the will” must have been connected in their minds with “the bias of the bowl,” and that he would have greatly prized the privilege of witnessing the game as it was played by the Lord Protector and such notable divines as Thomas Goodwin, John Howe, Thomas Manton, John Owen, and other eminent preachers of that golden age of England’s civil and religious history.

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

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

“In the depth of winter, at a time when I had a balcony to my study, I put some crumbs out upon it, and there came a robin redbreast first, who pecked and ate all he. could. I do not know his language, but I fancy I can tell what he said, for he went away, and presently returned with ever so many sparrows and other birds. He had no doubt said to them, ‘There are crumbs up there; come with me, and get them.’ So they followed him, and they came in greater numbers every day, and I do not know how it was except that they’ told one another. One day, whether it was the robin or the sparrows, I cannot say, but some of them told a blackbird, and he was a bigger fellow than any of them; when he came, he stood near, for I should think, a minute, and then he spied me inside, and he flew away, for he thought,’ That good man does not like blackbirds.’ But he did not know me; for I was pleased to see him, and I should have liked to see a lot of such birds. So the robin went up to him, and told him that he had been there for the last three or four Clays, and I had never even threatened him; and then, after being persuaded a little,’ the blackbird came back, and the robin seemed to me to be quite pleased to think that he had converted his big companion, and brought him back, for they dropped down together on the crumbs, and they had such a joyful feast that they returned to the balcony again and again as long as the wintry weather lasted.

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

The loving relationship existing between the dear father and his twin-sons is not specially referred to here, as it will be fully described in later Chapters written for the present volume by Pastor Charles Spurgeon, and in another, or others, by Pastor Thomas Spurgeon, which will (D.V.) appear in Vol. 4. The accompanying illustration will, however, show how one of the boys employed some of his time, while the f*acsimile*of Mr. Spurgeon’s handwriting will let all see how pleased he was with “Son Tom’s” early display of the artistic talent which was afterwards to be turned to such good account for the benefit of readers of The *Sword and the Trowel.*

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

“There is a Divine discipline always going on in the Church of Christ, of which, sometimes, we are not fully aware. I remember one terrible: instance, which occurred years ago, of a man who often tried to annoy and offend me; but that is not a thing that can be done so easily as some suppose. The individual to whom I refer had long attempted it,, and failed; At last, One Sabbath, when he had been peculiarly troublesome, I said to him, ‘ Brother So-and-so, will you come and see me tomorrow morning?’ In a very surly tone, he replied, ‘I have got my living to earn, and I can’t see you after five. o’clock in the morning.’ ‘Oh!’ I answered, ‘ that will suit me very well and I will be at your service, and have a cut: of coffee ready for you to-morrow morning at five o’clock.’ I was at the door at the appointed time, ready to let him in; his temper: had led him to walk all those miles out to my house that he might tell me of his latest grievance. It appeared that he had lost £25 for something or other that he had done, he said for the church, but we all felt that it was his own private speculation, and we were not responsible. However, he told me that he could not afford to lose such a large amount, so I counted out five £5 notes, and gave them to him. He looked at me, and asked me this question, ‘Do you give me this money out of any of the church funds?’ ‘No,’ I replied, ‘I feel that you cannot afford such a loss, and though it is no concern of mine, I willingly give you the money.’ I noticed a strange look come over his face, but he said very little more, and I prayed with him, and he went away.

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

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

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

“I do not think that ‘eternal life’ means merely eternal existence; nor do I believe that existence and life are the: same thing, any more than I believe that death and annihilation are: the same thing. I believe that a person may exist in perpetual death, and that he may not really be living at all and yet be continually existing. In that familiar passage in John in. 36, ‘ He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life’ and he that believeth not the Son shall not see lite; but the wrath of God abideth on him,’ there: is no notion of mere existence in the word life, otherwise the whole passage would become meaningless. I never confuse the idea of existence with that of life; but many do, even among those whom one might expect to know better. A tree has a measure of life, an animal has another measure of life, a man has a still higher measure of life, and God has a yet higher measure of life, even that eternal life which He has given to all who believe on His Son, Jesus Christ.

“Mr. Ruskin came to see me one day, many years ago, and amongst other things he said that the apostle Paul was a liar, and that I was a fool! ‘Well,’ I replied, ‘ let us keep the two things separate; so, first of all, tell me how you can prove that the apostle Paul was a liar.’ ‘ He: was no gentleman, and he was a liar, too,’ answered Mr. Ruskin. ‘Oh, indeed!’ I rejoined, ‘ how do you make that out?’ ‘Well,’ he: said, ‘ there was; a Jewish gentleman came to him, one day, and asked him a polite question, “How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?” (1 Corinthians 15:35.) Paul began by saying to him, *“Thou*fool,” — which proved that the apostle was no gentleman; and then he continued, “That which thou sowest is not quickened except it die,” — which was a lie.’ ‘No,’ I answered, ‘ it was not a lie; Paul was speaking the truth.’ ‘How do you prove that?’ asked Mr. Ruskin. ‘Why,.’ I replied, ‘very easily. What is death? Death is the resolution, into its original elements of any compound substance which possessed life:.” Mr. Ruskin said, ‘ That is the most extraordinary definition of death that I ever heard, but it is true.’ ‘Yes,’ I replied, ‘it is true; and that is what happens to the seed when it ties it is resolved into its original elements, and the living germ which is within it becomes the center and source of the new life that springs from it.’ “Ellen,’ asked Mr. Ruskin, ‘ what do you mean when you talk of the death of the soul?’ ‘I mean,’ I replied, ‘ the separation of the soul from God; it: was original), with God, and when it is separated from Him, it dies to God, that is its death, but that death is not non.-existence. The separation of the soul from the body is the separation from itself of that which quickened it, and it falls back into its original condition.’ ‘Well,’ said Mr. Ruskin, ‘ you have proved that Paul spoke the truth, but you have not proved him to be a gentleman.’ ‘ At all events,’ I answered, ‘ the apostle was as much a gentleman as you were just now when you called me a fool.’ ‘ So you are,’ said Mr. Ruskin, ‘ for devoting your time and talents to that mob of people down at Newington when you might employ them so much more profitably upon the intellectual and cultured few, like that Jewish gentleman who came to Paul, and others whom I might name.’ I replied, ‘ I always like to be the means of saving people whose souls are worth saving, and I am quite content to be the minister of that “mob” down at Newington, and let those who wish to do so look after the cultured and refined.’“

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

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

Another time, the same gentleman was in rather a different mood, and hethen said to the dear Pastor, “I don’t believe in shutting myself up with a lot of people in a stuffy’ building; I like plenty of fresh air, and I worship the God of nature.” “Yes,” replied Mr. Spurgeon, who knew that his neighbor had a skittle-alley, “your god. is made of wood, is he not; and his worship is carried on with a great deal of noise, isn’t it? I hear you at your little game before I start for the Tabernacle on a Sunday morning.” Nightingale Lane seems to have been a favorite route for other so-called “worshippers of the God of nature,” for, in one of his discourses, the Pastor thus referred to them: — “ Those. men who talk about natural religion, as far as I know them, have: no religion at all. I have noticed that the people who say, ‘We can worship God without attending any religious service, or believing in Jesus,’ do not really do so. I have sometimes had an opportunity, on a Sunday, of seeing many worshippers of the God of nature’ come down the lane where I reside. They consist, for the most part, of men who carry cages in which they try to catch birds on the common. There is another very respectable confraternity of men, who go to a place: somewhere in that region, where they spend the Sabbath in the bowlingalley, and in pugilistic encounters. These might adopt the cry of our genteel sinners, ‘We don’t need to go into a church or chapel; we spend our Sunday in the worship of the God of nature.’ And very fine worship it is! I usually find that those people who say that they worship ‘ the God of nature’ really worship the god of *fallen*nature, — that is, the devil; not the God of the glorious nature which is spread before us in the roaring sea, the rolling flood, and the verdant meads; — no, for the most part, the men who talk in that fashion know, in their own conscience, that the god they worship is their belly, their own lusts; and they glory in their shame. Do not believe the nonsense you hear from the Sunday League advocates, when they talk about ‘ worshipping the God of nature.’ Do they do it? Follow any of them into their privacy, and see: whether any of this fine devotion of theirs hands any existence whatever.”

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

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

There still stands, on Clapham Common, an ancient tree under which Mr. Spurgeon preached to ten thousand persons on Lord’s-day afternoon, July 10, 1859.

A fortnight before the above-mentioned date, a violent storm passed over the South of London. The tree here represented was struck by lightning, and a man, who had sought shelter beneath it, was killed. Mr. Spurgeon was greatly impressed by the solemn event, and resolved to preach on the fatal spot, and to make a collection for the widow of the man who had been killed. This arrangement was duly carried out, a wagon beneath the tree serving for a pulpit, and the congregation contributing £27 10s. 4d. for the poor bereaved woman. The sermon appears in full in The *Sword and the Trowel*for May, 1897. The text was taken ‘from Luke 12:40, “Be ye therefore ready also;” and in commencing his discourse, the preacher said: —  
“Happily for us, it: is not often that men are struck dead by lightning.

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

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

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

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

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

“Old George,” as he was long called, would have been kindly mentioned if his dear master had been spared to complete the present record, and this chapter may fitly be concluded with some particulars concerning Mr. Spurgeon’s faithful servant for so many years. After the funeral of Mr. Thorne (father of Mrs. Spurgeon’s companion), his buffer said to the Pastor, “Ah, sir! I closed my old master’s eyes, and now Pilgarlic’s occupation is gone.” “Well, George, what do you say to coming to take care of me? Do you really mean it, sir?.*.*Yes, of course I do.”. *“Oh!*then I’ll dance for joy, for nothing would please me more, and I’ll serve you faithfully as long as you will let me stay with you.”

Mr. Spurgeon often said that George reminded him of Mr. Pickwick’s Sam Weller, and he certainly had many quaint sayings which that worthy might have uttered. If anyone asked him his name, he answered, “George Lovejoy. Don’t you know what the apostle says, ‘ The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy ‘?.. You’re a rum ‘un, George,” his dear master often said to him; and he would reply, “Yes, sir; there were only two of us came over in three ships, and the other one was drowned.” “Well, George, how are you this morning?” was often Mr. Spurgeon’s inquiry; and the invariable answer was, “First-rate, sir; as fresh as a salt fish.” A glance at the accompanying portrait will shove that George’s hair was much darker than his beard and moustache, which his master playfully suggested was the result of having used his jaws more than his brains; and, on one occasion at least, Mr. Spurgeon said that his name could be properly spelt without using one of the right letters,. — thus, *Jawj.*

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

CHAPTER 73.

A TRAVELER’S LETTERS HOME.

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

**INTRODUCTION, BY MRS. C. H. SPURGEON.**

I N 1868, my travelling days were done. Henceforth, for many years, I was a prisoner in a sick-chamber, and my beloved had to leave me when the strain of his many labors and responsibilities compelled him to seek rest far away from home. These separations were very painful to hearts so tenderly united as were ours, but we each bore our share of the sorrow as heroically as we could, and softened it as far as possible by constant correspondence. “God bless *you,” he*wrote once, “and help you to bear my absence. Better that I should be away well, than at home suffering, — better to your loving heart, I know. Do not fancy, even for a moment, that absence could make our hearts colder to each other; our attachment is now a perfect union, indissoluble for ever. My sense of your value, and experience of your goodness, are now united to the deep passion of love which was there at the first alone. Every year casts out another anchor to hold me even more firmly to you, though none was needed even from the first. May my own Lord, whose chastening hand has necessitated this absence, give: you a secret inward recompense in soul, and also, another recompense in the healing of the body! All my heart remains in your keeping.”  
It is marvelous to me, as I survey the yearly packets of letters ‘which are now such precious treasures, how my husband could have managed, amidst: the bustle and excitement, of foreign travel, to have written so much and so often. I many times begged him to spare himself in this matter, but he constantly assured me that it delighted him to do it; he said “Every word I write is a pleasure to me, as much as ever it: can be to you; it is only a lot of odds and ends I send you, but I put them down as they come, so that you may see it costs me no labor, but is just a happy scribble. Don’t fret because I write you so many letters, it is such a pleasure to tell out my joy.” Every day his dear messages came to me, except, of course, when a long railway journey intervened; — and, sometimes, as an unexpected gladness, he’. would post two in one day, that I might be comforted concerning him. On an important tour, like the one recorded in the following chapters, the letters would be illustrated by many amusing pen-and-ink sketches, of people, costumes, landscapes, trees, wells, or anything which particularly struck him. Plans of the rooms he occupied in the various hotels were very frequent, and enabled me better to imagine the’. comfort or otherwise of his surroundings. At one house at Nice, there was a delightful little platform or terrace opening out: of his bedroom, and of this; he sent a most elaborate sketch, so that I might share his pleasure in such an unusual addition to a sleeping apartment. “I am like Peter on the housetop,? he wrote, “and though no sheet is let down to me, yet: }nave I learned much that the sheet taught the apostle, and I count nothing common or unclean, no view unhallowed, no scenery to be avoided lest it should turn me away from communion with God. He has sanctified sea and mountain, housetop and street to me; and when my heart is devout, all these are helps and not hindrances to fellowship with Himself. I can little sympathize with those ultra-spiritually-minded people, who are so unspiritual that only the closed eye can enable them to think of their God.”

I have said that the letters were “illustrated “, but I think *illuminated*would be a better word to use; for, looking at them after these many years, with overflowing eye. s, the little sketches seem to bear a rainbow light within them, and to sparkle with colors which only a devoted love could have blended. They remind me of the patient care bestowed upon the Psalters and Missals of the Middle Ages, when the hand of some pious man toiled day after day to decorate the vellum pages, — simply to prove the love of his heart, and witness to the truth of his devotion. My beloved himself must have entertained some such feeling; for, at the end of a series of droll representations of women’s head-gear which he had noticed in the streets of Botzen, he thus writes, “Now, sweetheart, may these trifles amuse you;! *count it a holy work to draw them,*if they cause you but one happy smile.” That I smiled on them then, and weep over them now, is but a natural consequence of the more complete separation which God has willed for us,-he, dwelling in the land of glory, — I, still tarrying amid the shadows of earth; — but I verily believe that, when I join him, “beyond the smiling and the weeping,” there will be tender remembrances of all these details of earthly love, and of the plenitude of blessing which it garnered in our united lives. Surely we shall talk of all these things, in the pauses of adoring worship and of joyful service. There must be sweet converse in Heaven between those who loved, and suffered, and served together here below. Next to the rapture of seeing the King in His beauty, and beholding the face of Him who redeemed us to God by His blood, must be the happiness of the communion of saints, in that place of inconceivable blessedness which God has prepared for them that love Him. As Bishop Bickersteth finely puts it, in his description of Heaven,

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

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

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

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

**EXTRACTS FROM MY HUSBAND’S LETTERS.**

Our party met punctually at Victoria, and our journey to Dover consisted of parentheses of sunshine and paragraphs of mist. The woods look as if they were expiring atom the tears of nature. The sea was not like either sort of the prophet’s figs, but was inclined to be irritable without having vigor enough to work itself into actual passion. Many suffered much from the marine malady; and, though we escaped it, yet we were glad to be again on the land which was meant for man; the sea is evidently only designed for fishes and sailors. We were asked our names at Calais; and, having answered to that first question of the Catechism, we were allowed to tread the soil of Republican France. We were soon satisfactorily “restaurated”, and en *route*for Brussels, *rid*Lille, Tournay, etc. The whole land is like a neatly-kept garden, from which the tillers derive all the produce possible. We had a good journey, reached our hotel at six o’clock, dined, then walked down to the Arcade which you will remember, and are now in our rooms, cozy and comfortable. The weather is delicious; — bright, clear, and balmy; — no fires needed; in fact, I am too warmly clad. The atmosphere is; dry and light, and gives me new life. It seems very selfish to be writing thus to my dear prisoner at home, yet she loves me so much that the surest way to make her happy is to prove that I am enjoying my holiday. All my love I send thee; may the everlasting arms encompass thee, even the arms of my God and thine!

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

This morning, I was up at six o’clock, revising a sermon. It is now raining for the first time since we left home; and this is convenient, for it makes it easier to remain indoors at work. Thus far, all has gone well, and we are grateful. To love God when all is smooth and sweet, is but the love of swine who know their feeder. The true test is to be able to bless His smiting’ hand, and cry, “Though He slay me yet will I trust in Him.” You, my darling, have been enabled to do thin; and though the weary, weary pain bows you down, you will be able to possess your soul in patience even unto the end. The Lord will comfort you with His choice consolations in the day of your afflictions. Some of those well ripened apples which housewives bring forth amid the chill, leafless days of winter, God hath in reserve for time; wherefore, be of good courage, my sweetheart!

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

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

‘This is; an artistic city in all ways, a certain Greek-art appearance strikes one everywhere; not a sham, but a real reproduction of antiquity. We have been to the Glyptothek, a fine museum of statuary; but, really, after one has seen a few thousand nude figures, one feels content without any more anatomical models in stone:. Thence, we visited a large picture-gallery, — which I think almost equal to the Louvre, — full of masterpieces of most of the ancient schools. We have been into a marvelous basilica, with pillars of the richest marble, and a ceiling of golden mosaic; also to the cathedral, 1:o see the tomb of a German Emperor, a boy of the olden time, who has a bronze memorial of the noblest fashion. Then we entered the studio of a renowned sculptor, and saw the plaster -casts, the stone being chiseled, and the finished statues, — very interesting this. There is enough left for two or three days’ enjoyment, but we must have it; and I scarcely regret this, for’ the weather is very damp and depressing. After all inquiries, I find we are compelled to go to-night at 11 o’clock, and pursue our weary way over the pass in the dark. Horses would require two days, and the roads are said to be in bad condition. “What can’t be cured, must be endured;” so I say, “Southward He! at any price.” My heart flies to my wifely; I have just kissed my hand to her. God bless her! Loads of love I telegraph by the soul-wire.

The Brenner is passed. We had some very uncomfortable experiences; the first part of the way, the guard wanted a coupon from us about e. very hour, and at Kuffstein we were hauled out of our nest, marched into the Austrian custom-house, made to wait, shivering, about thirty minutes;, and then packed into a poor seedy carriage:., cold and-miserable, to continue our journey. Botzen was reached at last, but we were all so weary that we were glad to go into our rooms to rest till dinner. Since then, we have: walked round the old-fashioned town, and under its long-arched lines of shops. We have also heard service in the cathedral opposite to our hotel; and very fine was the music, and very quaint the sight of a great crowd in the dark, except where a few had candles to see to read their mass-books. Do you remember this oh! inn (Kaiser Krone), where Emperors and Popes have lodged? It is a singular building; our rooms are on the same floor as the *salle,*but we have to go up, and then down to them, I am weary, and am looking forward to to-morrow’s rest.

Sabbath eve. — This has; been a very gracious, happy, restful clay. Did I but know that you are better, I don’t think I should have more to wish, except your company. We had a delicious morning service together; — read Psalm 22., and sang, “Come, let us sing the: song of songs.” and “Where God doth dwell.” It was indeed a season of refreshing. Then we saw a service at the cathedral. Large and devout congregations assemble here at each hour from five a.m. to five p.m. I have never seen any Romish place so well attended. Every person in the town seemed to go to one of the: hourly services, and very attentive and earnest they appeared to be. We looked in several themes, and twice heard a: kind of litany in German, by the whole congregation,, led by a layman in common dress. It reminded me of a prayer-meeting’ after service, for mass was over, and the altarlights were put out, and then prayer broke out among all the people. After dinner, we walked up a mountain’s side in the bright sun’s genial warmth, and what a view we had! Snow)’ Alps, and dark forests, and then, lower down, the meadows and the terraced, vines, and lower yet, the plain of the Adige and its villages. Our path led us by a series of shrines, similar to those at Varallo, but smaller, and at the end of the path was a “Calvary.”

We had sweet communion together here, and great enjoyment of God’s presence. I am so much better in mind; I feel more elastic, light, and clear of forebodings. I now expect good news from my darling, whereas before I have felt sure of gloomy tidings.

Hotel Barbesi, Venice. — God be thanked for even the twinkling stars of better news in the letter I have just received from your dear self! It has poured with rain all day; indeed, they say it has rained for three whole weeks in these, parts. We left Botzen at six o’clock, driving through mist, cloud, and deluges above, and through wide, far-reaching floods upon either side. We only stayed two hours at Verona, but I had the joy of receiving your letter there. On to Venice, found it better, but still very bad and wet. Had a gondola. Our rooms are very good, but an evil smell pervades the place; whether it is the canals in general, or these rooms in particular, we cannot tell. A waiter, who has just come up, says it is the *tapis,*which is new; this is possible, but the nuisance is none the better for that. Alas! the rain changes all things, and. Venice looks sad in her sodden state. We must hope for improvement.

After a splendid night’s rest, I awoke at six o’clock, full of good spirits, and revised a sermon. After breakfast, we had a gondola, and went along the Grand Canal.

Glorious! About eleven, the tide turned, and rain began again, so we went to St. Mark’s, and. saw the grand old. cathedral, which is the same as ever, but needs sunshine to perfect it. Thence to the Doge’s Palace, — you know all the details of these, places. The rain poured down when we got under the black over of the gondola; but it was a delightful experience to be so sheltered, and yet to be moving through the floods. We went to the Jesuits’ Church, that fine marble one in the poorer part of the city; — you remember the curtains and carpet all reproduced in marble. Then we explored a glass manufactory, this was very interesting; they make mosaics, and mirrors, and chandeliers of the fine Venice glass, very wonderful to look upon. Still it rained, and the water was over St. Mark’s Square in front of the cathedral Nevertheless, we visited Santa Maria Gloriosa, where is Canova’s pyramidical tomb, and marble enough to stock a city; and then to Santa Maria del Salute, opposite to our hotel. I have seen all these before, yet was still very much interested.

It is pitiable, to see the poor people look soaked and only half-alive. Only the pigeons of St. Mark’s are gay; they fly as a cloud, and swarm on the windows, and even enter the rooms of the houses all round the square; one might almost’ tread on them, they are so tame. The unhappy vendors of shells and miniature gondolas will, I fear, be half-starved, and the flowergirls look very downhearted. The water now is over the parks, and up to the doors; yet Venice is not a bad place in wet weather, since you can keep dry in your gondola, and can look out through the windows.

6 a.m. — I awake grateful for another night’s peaceful rest, only to find myself very badly bitten by mosquitoes. A mosquito is the most terrible of beasts. A lion delights; in blood, but he does not suck it from living animals; he does not carefully prolong their tortures. A viper poisons, but he is generally content with one: use of his fangs; but these small-winged serpents bite in scores of places in succession. My hands are a series of burning mountains. The creatures are as nearly omni. present as Satan, which means that, though a mosquito cannot be everywhere, yet no mortal can be sure: that he is not near him, or tell where he is not. Curtains are a delusion, pastilles are a snare; the little enemies are irritated by such attempts to escape their malice, and give you double punishment. O Italy! I have shed my blood for thy sake, and feel a love of thee (or something else) burning in my veins! The sooner I am away from thee, O fair Venice, the better, for thou dost deluge me by day, and devour me by night! I wonder how my two companions have fared; I shall go, by — and-by, and look for their remains! I have opened my windows, and the pests are pouring in, eager and hungry’; but, as I am up and dressed, there will be no more of me available for them at present.

To-day has been charming, and we have been in the gondola most of its lovely hours. The sights we saw were nothing compared with the delicious rowing in the city itself. Could you but have: been there, it would have been as much of Paradise as this earth can ever yield. Venice decays, but her autumn is fair. The fear is, lest the “restorers” should come and deface her. We went to the Arsenal, but models of ships and guns would not interest you. Then to the Greek Church, and the Carmelites’, and the Academy of Arts; — saw hosts of Madonnas and St. Sebastians, I am quite weary of them. The outside of Venice is the treat, the beauty, the enjoyment.

We are off to. morrow very early for Florence; the air is; loaded with mosquitoes, and my hands are “a mask of sores,” as Mrs. Gamp would say, and both Mr. Passmore and suffer much. Venice cannot be endured with these torments.

We left Venice at *7.50,*and proceeded to Bologna, which was reached by 12. 10, after an uninteresting ride among perpetual trees festooned with vines, — muddy earth, — flooded fields, — and disconsolate maize-stalks. From 120 to 5 o’clock, we were traversing the mountains between Bologna and Pistoia, and a more marvelous road it has never been my lot to see. It was up, up, up, by the side of a torrent, which the rail crossed and recrossed, with rugged scenery of a sublime character on either hand. Then, in commencing the descent, we saw Pistoia, and the great plain of the Arno far below, like a raised map. It was a truly wonderful view, but was soon gone; and we rushed down zigzags, and saw it again, and lost it every few minutes. It is almost miraculous that a train can keep to the rails upon such descents. Down below at Pistoia, we found that the floods had done great damage; but the railway was all right:, so we reached Florence about seven o’clock. All this is very uninteresting to read, but it was pleasant to experience, while good companionship and the sunshine made the whole journey’ enjoyable. Though wearied by the long hours of travelling, I an in every way’ more fresh and free from depression. May the Lord enrich me also in spiritual blessings, and send me back more capable of serving Him than I have ever been! We are off early to-morrow, so now, my darling, may God watch over thee, bless thee, and keep thee, and restore me to thee in joy and peace! Oceans of love, and as many kisses for you as the. sand on the sea-shore. My next letter will be from *“the*city of the seven hills,” if all is well, We are in Rome. Let a man say what he will, there is a thrill passes through his soul, at the thought of being in Rome, that he cannot experience anywhere else, except in the city of our Lord, — Jerusalem. There are interests and associations that cluster about “the eternal city” that a man must feel, if he has any soul at all. You remember that, last year, we started off for our first day’s sight-seeing without a guide, and wandered about without knowing whither we went; this time, I can act as guide and interpreter, and am able to observe much which, on a former occasion, I had not noticed. To-day, we went down the Corso, and up the Capitol.

There are new excavations at its toot. We passed down the other side to the Forum, where they are still digging. Rome of the olden time is buried beneath itself, under its own ruins, and the Forum lies some ten, fifteen, and in some places thirty feet of earth below the present level. I soon found myself on what I knew to be the Via Sacra, along’ Which the triumphal processions passed when the great generals returned from war, and climbed the Capitol in state; and it was a memorable thing to stand before the Arch of Titus., and gaze upon its bas-reliefs. There is Titus returning from the siege of Jerusalem, with the seven-branched golden candlestick, and the silver trumpets and, while these things stand there, it is idle for infidels to say that the Bible is not true. It is good history. Nobody doubts what is written in stone upon the Arch of Titus, but the same story is found in the Book; and the more discoveries that are made of ancient cities, especially in Palestine, the more will the truth of the Book be confirmed, and the record upon stone will be found to tally with what is written on the tablets of God’s Word.  
Then we came to the Colosseum. What a place it is ! Two-thirds of it are gone, and yet enough remains wherewith to build a great city! I climbed to the very top. Under an arch of one of the great corridors we sat down, and sang, “Am I a soldier of the: cross?.. I’m not ashamed to own my Lord,” and “Jesus tremendous name.;” and then I preached a little sermon from the text,” Come, behold the works of the Lord, what desolation’s He hath made: in the earth;” then we prayed, and sang, “Ashamed of Jesus?” just then, two persons went by, and said, in broad American, “Don’t let us disturb you.” To which I answered, “Come and join,” but they replied, *“Our*time is too short,” so we sang the: Doxology, and went on. Pretty bold this, in such a public place, but very sweet to be remembered. “Boylston’:’ rolled along the vaulted tunnels like a battle-song.

We went down to the Appian Way, and on to the baths of Titus. By a mistake, I took the party up a lane, and through the wrong gate; but, after all, this was fortunate, for it brought us to the top of the immense structure; and, looking down, we saw the rooms which before I had only seen from below, and this view gave us a better idea of their vastness and mystery. The building is a huge ruin, built upon a ruin. Nero had a golden palace here, but when Titus came into power, he buried it. Its roof was made of great arches, massive and strong, so he bored, holes through them, and poured in rubbish till the place was filled up, and then he built his baths on the top of all. *His*work is ruined; but now, part of the palace, below has been dug out, and they have found gems of art, enough to fill hundreds of museums. Getting’ to the right entrance, we came across the custodian, an old wounded soldier, who showed us over the whole’, place, as far as practicable, telling us all he knew, pointing out every fresco, and putting a delightful zest into it for us all. It is a place of marvels! Its passages and rooms are countless, vast, weird, and most impressive; one could spend a week there, and then begin again. The excavations have brought to light treasures of porphyry, marble, and statues; and the paintings and frescoes of eighteen hundred years ago are as fresh as if they were painted yesterday. Your guide has a long pole, into which he screws another long pole with a lighted candle at the end, this he holds up as high as possible, and you see the paintings off the roof of Nero’s palace. There are said to be two hundred rooms still unexcavated, and no one knows what treasures of art they may conceal. Strange to say, there is yet another house beneath this golden palace, for Nero built over the house of Mecaenas, the friend of Horace; and, after digging deep down, they’ have come to the mosaic pavements of the first structure erected on this extraordinary pot. I want a bigger head, to take all these wonders in, and hold my thoughts!

After all this, we went a little further, to the Palace of the Caesars, which is a mile and a-half round, and is being excavated. All is ruined, but it is so far opened up as to show the lower rooms, and the first, or Imperial floor. It consisted of many palaces, and would take a month to explore. In one part, I saw rooms just dug out, as fresh as when originally decorated, and remarkably like the Pompeian house in the Crystal Palace. There was Caesar’s great hall, the place of his throne, the bath of the harem, the library, the academy or residence for philosophers;, and the rooms for the Pretorian guard. In fact, the whole: Palatine Hill is a palace; and as they dig down, they come to vast chambers and corridors which seem endless. One of these, quite as long as our Nightingale Lane, has its mosaic pavement all complete; we looked down from a great height upon it, and there were opened places far below that. The walls rare usually even to ten feet thick, so the work must be very heavy. I should think all kinds of marble in the world can be picked up here; it is just a vast quarry! What heaps of broken win. e-jars, — the champagne bottles of the Caesars! It is a mountain of ruins of porphyry, alabaster, and all precious things! From its top you see other great ruins of temples, basilicas, palaces, and theatres!

Then the guide said, “Now you must come and see the baths of Caracalla.” I was bewildered, lost, confounded; but I went, and found a building more than a mile in length, which beat all we had seen before, and made me feel as if my senses would give way. These enormous baths could accommodate 1,600 persons at a time; they were in tiers, one for men, another for women, the third for slaves. There were hot baths, cold baths, steam baths, swimming baths; and all these were floored with mosaics which we saw uncovered as we stood there. The roof was destroyed by the Goths; and when it fell in, it smashed the floor; but here and there great portions — as big as our lawn — are left intact, and one could see the lovely patterns of the mosaic, — each room different. The huge brick walls still stand, but the marble facing is almost all gone. I think no living man can conceive what the place must have. been in its glory. I needed to go to bed, to sleep off my stupor of wonder! I am foolish to try to write about it. It is like a tadpole describing a sea! The: Farnese family have taken the fine statues and other treasures to Naples; but there are acres yet to be dug out, in which, doubtless, many more are buried, but it is too great, an expense to dig away very fast.  
I had one delicious half-hour during the day. I sat down alone opposite to St. Peter’s, and felt as if in Elysium. The snow gone, the sun shining, and on the great obelisk I saw words which cheered my soul; they were these, “Christ conquers, Christ reigns, Christ rules, Christ defends His people from all evil.” The Lord be praised; this is; true, and the Pope and all the world shall know it! I love my love amidst all these great thoughts. She is my palace, my throne, my empress, my Rome, my world; yet I have more, my Savior, my Heaven! Bless you, my own!

To-day is the Sabbath, and has been up till now most sweetly calm and happy. We had our little service, with breaking of bread, and the Lord was with us. I read a sermon, and our song and prayer were “in the spirit.” May it please the Lord of peace to give the like holy rest to my beloved! We then walked on the Pincian, where there are few people during the day, but lovely groves, and beds of roses, with seats in every corner, and all Rome at one’s feet. It was truly Sabbatic. All that nature and art can do, is to be seen in these gardens, where the loveliest statues look down upon you, and fountains ripple to tunes of peace, and aromatic trees breathe perfume. A statue of Jochebed laying Moses in his ark of bulrushes among the reeds, struck me as charming to the last degree. It stood as the center of a fountain., reeds and water-lilies grew at the rocky base, and the ripples of the little hidden jets; made wavelets round the ark. can you imagine it? Nothing in modern at has pleased me more, — perhaps nothing so much. This has been a blessed day to me,. and I have been feeling so well; I almost tremble lest it should be too good to continue.

Another day of wonders! This; morning, ‘we drove to the great: amphitheater of Marcellus, which once held 20,000 persons, and is far older than the Colosseum. It is buried for fourteen feet, and much built over and hidden; around it: is a market for the poor, where I saw baskets full of cigar-ends which had no doubt: been picked up in the street, and were being sold to be smoked in pipes. What ‘would Marcellus have thought of this? Then we saw the long covered way which led from the theater to the baths of Agrippa, — a great: colonnade, of which some pillars are visible, and others are built into the houses of the street which occupies its place. From thence to, the Jews’ quarter, where the same use of old stones is apparent; capitals, friezes, cornices, and all sorts of marbles are let into the walls of the dwellings. Ah! the: cruelties the Jews have suffered in that Ghetto, the barbarities which have there been inflicted upon God’s ancient people! Their district is often flooded by the Tiber; and, on one occasion, when they made an appeal to the papal authorities, because their houses were ten or twelve feet under water, the only answer they received was that the water would do the Jews good! There was a law in Rome, only lately repealed, that a hundred men and fifty women from the Jewish quarter must go to the Church of St. Angelo every Sunday, and they were driven there with whips; and if one of them went to sleep, there was a whip to wake him up, that he might hear himself and his forefathers bitterly abused. On certain days of the Carnival, the. Jews; were obliged to run races in the Corso, stripped of almost all their clothing, and then the people showered execrations and curses upon them. Time would fail to tell of their sufferings and privations, besides which they were forced to pay large sums of money to their oppressors. Matters have mended somewhat lately’, and they are relieved from many of the most cruel persecutions of former days; but they are oppressed still, and I was greatly moved when, in the Church in the Ghetto, I saw this message from the Lord plainly set forth before them, “All day long I have stretched forth My hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.”

To-day we went several miles along the Appian Way. What bliss ever to see it! On both sides, for many miles, it is skirted by tombs, temples, *columbaria,*and ruins of villas in continuous; lines. It is a British Museum ten miles long! I felt a strange joy’ in walking along the same road which Paul trod, when the brethren from Rome came to meet him. From it can be seen Tusculum and Tivoli, and the long line of the Claudian aqueduct, on arches all the way from the mountains into Rome, as also the temple of Romulus, and the great circus of Maxentius. What a world of wonders! WE went as far as the Casale Rotundo, a round tomb so large that, being full of rubbish, there’s a house, and stables, and. an olive garden on the top. We wanted to investigate, so climbed up, and were rewarded by the sight of a family of very scantily-clothed children; their mother and an old woman were baking maize bread in a hole in the wall of ‘the tomb. They had kneaded it in a wheelbarrow, and the children looked as if they needed it, too. Bo*no joko!*

On our way back, when nearly as far as the old walls, we turned down a lane to visit the catacombs of Calixtus. Candles were provided, and we went down to the second tier; there are five of these, one below another. I do not know how far we went, but it seemed miles;; — passages just wide enough for me to pass through, opening into rooms every now and then, and with many cross-roads where one could soon be lost. Here were.’ countless graves, here and there skeletons, emblems, places for lamps, frescoes of ancient date, and many interesting memorials. It was a new scene to me, but deeply solemn and touching. Think of it, — that this was only one set of chambers and passages;, and that there was one above, and three deeper down! There are from five to six graves, one above the other, in each passage, and the whole place is full right along. These tombs are open in most cases, for the doors or stones which closed them are taken away to museums. This is the best and most convenient catacomb for tourists to see; but there are, I believe, sixty others. They have no Popery in them, and I would sooner live and die in them than live in this city of Babylon. It is nothing less than what the Bible calls it; it is full of idols, filthy rag, bone, and rubbish worship of the most abominable kind. I have cursed it all, as Paul did those who preach “another gospel.”

Then we drove to St. John Lateran, “the mother of all churches,” and I shall here only dare to write of one thing which, to my dying clay, I shall never forget. I do not know that I ever felt my blood boil so with indignation or my heart melt so much with pity as when I saw the Santa Scala, clown which our blessed Lord is said to have come from Pilate’s hall. It was a pitiable sight to see old people, grey-headed men, young women, and little children with their mothers, crawling up and down this staircase on their knees, kissing the bottom step, and touching it with their forehead, and doing likewise to the middle and top steps, because they say our Savior fainted at those places. As I stood there, I could only pray that another Luther might arise, and thunder forth the fact that men are not justified by works, but by faith alone. It was an awful thought to me that all these poor creatures should believe that they gained a hundred days’ indulgence and the pardon of their sins every time they crawled up that staircase, and that every stop their knees kneeled on meant so many days less of purgatory for the. to. The stairs are covered with wood, which has been three times renewed, having been worn away by the knees of the votaries! My heart feels all on a blaze with righteous anger. O miserable, world, thus to dishonor the ever-blessed Lamb! O infinite mercy, which permits such insulters to live! I have seen them adoring thigh-bones, skulls, arms, and hands; — yes, actually a*doring*these things as if they were Divine! Pagan Rome never went this length.

We went to St. Peter’s to finish the day with music, and it was fine indeed; but I was jostled in a crowd of people so highly perfurmed with garlic, that I soon made my escape to the outskirts to have another look round the great joss-house. Here I learned some English history, for I saw Canova’s tomb to the memory of James III., Charles III., and Henry IX., Kings of England! Ask the boys if the. y ever read of them. They were the last of the Stuarts; — the Pretender, — his son, Charles Edward, or *“bonnie*Prince Charlie,” — and his son. What hundreds of other things I have seen this day’, cannot now, and perhaps; never will be told. I have stayed up late to put this d. own for fear of forgetting it, and also because it may be I shall have less time to-morrow when preparing to preach. God bless thee, dearest, and be thou glad, with me, that no “strong delusion to believe a lie” has fallen upon us. To-day has taught me. a year’s learning. The Lord make it useful to His Church!

I send a picture of the Pope’s coachman. What a swell he is! I think you will like the portrait of a brigand’s wife. It is very well executed, and if you like it too much to part ‘with it, be sure to keep it. The fellow in red is awful; these *confratelli*are in all colors according to the degree, of the buried person. They are good fellows, who bury the dead “pour l’amour *de Dieu,”*and they belong to all ranks in Rome. They cover themselves up in this manner to avoid recognition, and escape praise. They are universally respected, but look horribly ugly. I think they will make a sensation in the magic-lantern.

Yesterday morning, when I preached in the Presbyterian Chapel, all was quiet and delightful; but at night, in Rome, while, my words were being translated by Mr. Wall, we were. stopped the questioners. It was requested that they would reserve their inquiries till the end of the service, but the opponents ‘were impatient. A paper was passed up from a Catholic lady, to say that a secular priest was present, a man of great ability, and a personal friend of the Pope, and that he was sent on purpose to discuss. So, presently, a man of unprepossessing appearance began to assail us with arguments from a skeptical standpoint, upon which he received such an answer that he shifted his ground, and declared that none had any right to teach save “the Church.” Mr. Wall replied to this, and the man changed his tactics again. Then, up rose a Waldensian minister, who spoke so well that the people broke out in cheers and clapping. This was suppressed, and again the enemy thundered forth his threats. He. was answered, by several, and told that he had shifted his ground, and was a priest; and Mr. Wall challenged him to a public dispute at any place he chose to name. This he declined, and seeing that the people grew warm, he wisely withdrew. One word from us, and he would have been put out of the. window. The incident pleased Mr. Wall, for it created excitement, and will bring more to hear; but I was far’ from happy about it, and would gladly have been spared such a scene. Glory be to God, there is a living church in Rome, and the way in which they have gained converts has been by opposition; the notoriety which it has given them has brought many to hear the gospel. Bravely the work goes on, and the baptized lead the way. The leaders are two good fellows, pronounced Baptists, believing firmly that their church is that of the catacombs, and the only true Church of Christ in Rome; the others, they say, are the churches of Luther, and Knox, and Wesley, and Waldo, — theirs is the only old original. I gently combat their restrictiveness, but do not wonder at it.

We have been to another catacomb, one not often visited. It is named after St. Ponzianc, and is situated outside Rome, in a vineyard, a good. way from the walls, and though truly ancient, it is not very far opened up, but you have to go down very deep. A man, who calls himself “the dove of the catacombs” (he must mean *“bat*“), took us down. We went a long, long way, each of us carrying a taper, and at last: we came to a place, where some eight roads meet underground. Seven of these were. closed, but we found what we had specially come to see. This was a baptistery. It was full of sweet, clear, running water, about four feet deep, and above it: was a painting in fresco of our Lord standing up to his waist in the water, and John putting his hand on the sacred head, that it, too, might be immersed;.. he was not *pouring*the water on him. Here we stood, and prayed to the blessed One into whose Name we had been buried by baptism. It was a solemn moment. Here also were two other frescoes of our Lord, — very beautiful faces; and the Alpha and Omega, and Christian monogram symbols, which are so plain and natural that they do not come under the head of superstition. There were, however, bones in plenty, and the place was very hot and close, so ‘we were glad soon to escape into the open air, for even holy dust is not the best purifier, or the best provender for living lung.

You would have liked to have been with us when we: went to see the *columbaria,*near the St. Sebastian gate. We visited two of them; they are singular places, like vast dovecots, but they are not for doves. It is strange to look upon the spot where thousands upon thousands of Rome’s wealthy citizens have for many ages lain in little heaps of ashes. The bodies, of the dead were burned, and the dust was preserved in small urns which were kept in these curious places. Some persons had a family *columbarium;*in other cases, companies were formed for their construction, and they were then let out in portions as required. The niches are like small vaulted chambers, and there will be in them, sometimes an urn, some-times a lamp, or a small bust, while frequently the name and age of the deceased will be found on a slab of marble over the recess. In each of these small spaces, there are two holes sunk to receive the ashes if’ an urn is not used, and these have lids to cover the remains. These great square buildings contained many hundreds of these ‘“ nests” for the dead, and a visit to them leaves a strangely-solemn impression on the mind.

I had two such precious letters from you this morning, worth to me far more than all the gems of ancient or modern art. The material of which they are composed is their main value, though there is also no mean skill revealed in its manipulation. They are pure as alabaster, far more precious than porphyry or verd antique; no mention shall be made of malachite or onyx, for love surpasses them all. We are off to Naples to-day.

CHAPTER 74.

A TRAVELER’S LETTERS DOME (CONTINUED)

T HIS morning, we drove through Naples for, I should think, six or seven miles or more. It is a crowded city, full of stirs, full of business, and full of pleasure. Horses seem innumerable, they are decorated profusely, and the: carriages are very comfortable; but, I am sorry to say, the men drive furiously, and make me very nervous. Old women are numerous and hideous, beggars pestiferous, and dealers intensely persevering. But what a bay! What a sea and climate! No one ought to be in here.

We have been over the museum, — full of frescoes from Pompeii, gleanings from the catacombs, pickings from the Appian Way, stealings from the baths of Caracalla and other places. Naples has taken away from Rome the best of the ancient statuary and treasures, and prepared a vast museum for the spoils. We saw thousands of precious things, enough for a year’s inspection; but the Pompeian remains were the most important. There were surgical instruments exactly like those of the present day; — cottage-loaves of bread, stewpans, colanders, ladles, and all cookery things just like our own. The safes for money were just like old plate-Chests. There were cotton, silk, and thread, in skeins and hanks, and large knitting and netting needles. Indeed, the people then had all we have now; even earthen money-boxes with a slit in the top, such as the: children have in our country villages. There were plenty of proofs that the people were sinners, and of a scarlet dye, too. It: was curious to see: the colors in a painter’s shop, the bottles and drugs of a Chemist, and the tools of other traders. We saw also a splendid collection of ancient gems and cameos, most costly and lovely. I never saw so many gathered together before.

We drove from the museum to the site: of a new field of lava, which flowed down from Vesuvius last April. It is just beyond the houses of suburban Naples, and was very different from what I had expected. It had crossed our road, and passed on through a vineyard, — this was one tongue of the stream. Then we crossed a second by a road made near it, and came to a village through which the largest stream had burned its way. It is a huge incandescent sea of the outflow of the volcano men were blasting and using pickaxes to open up the road which the flood had completely blocked. We were soon upon the lava; it has a surface like a heap of ashes, supposing that every ash should weigh a ton or two. It is still hot, and in some places smoking. I should have investigated it carefully, and with interest, only a horde of children, beggars, and women with babies gave us no rest, but continued crying, and imploring alms, and offering us pieces picked out of the mass. Much of *the*strange material is far too hot to hold, and our feet felt: the heat as we walked across the surface. The stream has partly destroyed several houses, and cut the village in two; people are living in the half of a house which stands, the other half being’ burned and filled up with the molten substance. Vesuvius, high above us, is only giving out a little smoke, and seems quiet: enough. As I could never climb up to the crater, I think we shall be content to have seen this lava torrent.

Our hotel here is vast and empty; we have excellent rooms, and are thoroughly comfortable. There is music continually, and very fair music, too, though not so sweet as silence. Everybody makes all the noise possible, and quiet dwells beyond the sea. Rome is a sepulcher, this city teems with life. You are: not out of the door a moment before you are entreated to have a carriage, buy fruit, fish, pictures, papers, or something. The side-streets swarm with people, who appear to live in them; there they eat:, cook, work, catch fleas;, hunt over each other’s heads like so many monkeys, etc., etc. It is like living in a museum; but as to the beauty and gracefulness of which we read so much, I cannot detect it, though really looking for it. Persons over forty look worn out, and females at that age are haggard; over that period, ‘they are. ghastly and mummified. Macaroni hangs out, in some quarters, before the doors on lines to dry; and the flies, which are numerous upon it, give it anything but an attractive appearance. To-morrow, we hope to go to Pompeii. I am now thinking about next: month’s Magazine, and devoutly wish I could light upon a subject for an article, — but my brain is dull.

We have seen Pompeii. We drove there, and it took us three hours, almost all of it between long lines of houses, like one continuous street. At the town of Resina, we passed Herculaneum, but did not enter it, as Pompeii is more worth seeing. Then we went through a town which has, I think, been seven times destroyed by Vesuvius, and is now crowded with people. There we saw the lava by the side of, and under the: houses, hard as a rock; and the roads are generally paved with great flags of the same material. Though driving by the shore of the bay, we seldom saw the water, for even where there was no town, there were high walls, and, worst of all, off the stones the white dust was suffocating, and made us all look like millers. However, we reached Pompeii at last, and I can only say, in a sentence, it exceeds in interest all I have seen before, even in Rome. I walked on, on, on, from twelve to four o’clock, lost in wonder amid the miles of streets of this buried city, now silent and open to the gazer’s eye. To convey a worthy idea of it to you, would be impossible, even in a ream of paper.

We entered at the Street of Tombs, which was outside the gate. In it were houses, shops, taverns, a fountain, and several tombs. The house of Diomed greatly interested us. ‘We went upstairs and downstairs, and then into the cellars where were still the amphorae, or wine-bottles, leaning against the wall in rows, the pointed end being stuck into the ground, and the rows set together in dry dust, in exactly the same way as we: place articles in sawdust. In the cellars were found eighteen skeletons of women who had fled there for shelter, The photograph I send shows the garden, with covered walk round it, and tank for live fish. In this street were several places for seats in the shade, made in. great semicircles, so that a score of persons could rest at once. Near the gate: was the niche where the soldier was found *who*kept his watch while others fled. We could not think of going up and down all the streets; it would need many days to see all. The city was, I should think, a watering-place for the wealthy. No poor class of houses has yet been discovered. It was paved with great slabs, of stone, which are worn deeply with cart or chariot wheels. Across the streets were huge stepping-stones, just wide enough to allow wheels to go on each side; but either they had no horses to the cars in these streets, or else they must have been trained to step over. In some places were horsinng-blocks, in others; there were holes in the kerbstone to pass a rope through to tie up a horse. The houses are many of theta palaces, and contained great treasures of art, which are now in museums, but enough is left in each case to show what they were. Frescoes remain in abundance, and grottoes, and garden fountains, and marble terraces for cascades of water. It is a world of wonders, In one part of the city, a noble owner had let the corner of his house to a vendor of warm wines, and there, is his marble counter, with the holes therein for his warming-pots. Stains of wine were on the counter when it was first uncovered.  
We saw (he back parlor of a drinking-shop, with pictures on the wall of a decidedly non-teetotal character. There: we. re several bakers’ shops with hand-mills, the tops of which turned round on a stone, and ground well, no doubt. In one, we saw the oven, with a water-jar near it, — in this place were found 183 loaves of bread.

In the doctors’ and chemists’ shops, when opened, they saw the medicines as they were when entombed, and even pills left: in the process of rolling! In the custom-house were standard weights and measures. Soap factories have their evaporating-pans remaining. Oil vessels abound; and in one, made of glass, some of the oil may still be seen. Cookshops had in them all the stewpans, gridirons, and other necessities of the trade. We saw jewelers’ shops, artists’ studios, and streets of grocers’ and drapers’ shops, many with signs over their doors.

The baths impressed me much, to they had been newly built when the awful tragedy took place, and look as if they were opened yesterday; — a fine cold plunge-bath, with water carried high for a “shower”, a dressingroom with niches for brushes, combs, and pomades, — all of which were there, but have been removed to museums; — and a. great brazier in green bronze, with seats round it for the bathers to dry themselves; — a warm bath, and a vapor bath all perfect, and looking ready for use to-morrow.

The Forum was vast, and had in it the. facades of several magnificent temples, the remains of which reveal their former glory. The pedestals of the statues of the eminent men of the town remain with their names upon them. We saw the tragic and comic theatres, and the amphitheater which held 20,000 persons, in which the people were assembled when the eruption came, and from which the. y escaped, but had to flee to the fields, and leave their- houses for ever.

In the Temple of His, we saw the places where the priests were concealed when they made the goddess deliver her oracles! We saw the lady herself in the museum, with a pipe at the back of her head, which was fixed in the wall, and served as, the secret speaking-tube. The priests of His were found dead at her shrine; one of them with an axe had cut through two walls to get out, but had not succeeded. Poor creature!

In a money-changer’s house, we saw his skeleton, lying on its face, with outstretched arms and hands much money was found near him. In the barracks were sixty-three persons, soldiers’ and officers’ wives. Here were the stocks which had been used for the punishment of refractory soldiers.

In the Street of Mercury is a triumphal arch, on which stood a statue of Nero, found nearly perfect. Here, too, we noted a drinking-fountain, and a house with its exterior richly adorned with red frescoes. In a ‘vast Hall of Justice were cells under the magistrates’ bench; and in these, three prisoners were found, inside an iron ring which went round their waists. They were, perhaps, waiting to be brought up before the aldermen for some misdemeanor, and expecting to be fined *“five*shillings and costs,” but they perished like: their betters, and were summoned before a higher tribunal.

Out of so great a city, I suppose comparatively few were destroyed; so, as the bodies of these are found, they are preserved, especially if anything remarkable is to be seen in connection with them.

We saw the: digging still going on, and the mounds of removed, rubbish were like high railway embankments. No roofs remain, but spouts for the rain-water are there in great abundance; they are in the. form of dogs’ and lions’ heads and other quaint devices. No stables have yet been uncovered; but the carts, which stood at the inn doors, have left their iron tires, the skeletons of the horses, and their bits, to bear witness to their former existence. Skeletons of dogs and cats were there, and in a pan was a sucking pig prepared and just ready for roasting! I saw also a pot-on a tripod, or trivet, which, when discovered, actually had water in it! I feel ashamed to write so badly on such a theme, but I cannot do better. It is too vast a task for me, and I fail to:, recollect a tithe of it. I must cease writing to-night, but I continue to breathe loving assurances to my sweet wiley.

We: have been in a steamer to the Island of Capri, calling at Sorrento on the way; — a glorious excursion, but we failed in our great object, which was, to see the Blue Grotto. The sea was too rough to permit entrance, as the opening is only three feet high, and no one can get: in except during smooth water, and when the wind is from a certain quarter. However, vie stayed a couple of hours on the island, which is precipitous, so I did not climb, but sat on a balcony, enjoying the marvelous, scene. We reached Naples late, for the boat was slow; but first the sunset, and then the moonlight, gave us two charming effects, to which Vesuvius added by booking almost continuously. This little trip served as a pleasant rest and refreshment after the toil and the (lust of Pompeii.  
To-day, we have had a long and splendid drive to the other side of the bay. First along the quay, then through a tunnel almost half a mile long, and then skirting the bay, by road to Puteoli, where Paul landed; — we saw the spot (as is supposed), and the commencement of the Appian Way which he followed till he reached Rome. At Puteoli, we first went into the crater of the Solfatara, a semi-extinct volcano, which has not been in eruption since 1198, when it destroyed ancient Puteoli. It is grown over with shrubs and small trees. A man throws down a big stone, which makes it all sound, and shows you that the whole vast area is hollow. You are fed to a great hole in the side of the hill, whence pours out, with the roar of an engine blowing off steam, a great quantity of sulphureous vapor. All around is; brimstone, and with a long kind of hoe a man rakes oat pits from the mouth of the huge oven. The ground is very hot, and an odor, which is anything but dainty, prevails. You can go right up to it with perfect ease and safety. The vapor is; said to cure gout, but one must stand in it some time every day for a month! When Vesuvius is Furious, Solfatara subside so there seems good evidence that the two, though twelve miles apart, are vents of the same fires. We looked down on the Temple of Serapis; it has been up and down, and in and out of the sea several times, as; the restless coast hats risen or fallen. It is now out of water, but is remarkable rather for its history than for its present beauty.

We drove on by the crater Of Monte Barbaro and that of Monte Nuovo. This last volcano sprang up in a night in 1538, covered a village, stopped a great canal, and did no end of mischief; but since then it has been quiet, and allowed itself to furnish soil enough for brushwood, which makes it look like a green pyramid. On the other side: of this hill is the famous lake of Avernus, of which ‘Virgil wrote, and by the side of which he placed the entrance to Hades. The dense woods which smothered it: have been cut down, and it has by no means a repulsive appearance now; but it is a channel for the escape of noxious gases, and is, no doubt, the crater of a volcano. We did not enter the Sybil’s Cave, or otherwise inquire of Pluto and Proserpine; but drove on, through the ruined city of Cumae, to the lake of Fusaro or Acheron, another circular basin. Here oysters were cultivated till the lake gave out mephitic vapors, and killed the bivalves. The water has become pure again, and the industry has recommenced. Passing by Virgil’s Elysian fields;, and manifold wonders, we came to Misenum, and the village of Bacoli. Here we left: the carriage, and ascended the hill to see what is called the Piscina Mirabilis, — a vast underground reservoir, which once contained water brought by the Julian aqueduct from some fifty miles’ distance. It is dry now, and we descended a long flight of steps to the bottom. It: has a roof supported by forty-eight huge columns; it is 220 feet long, and 82 feet broad. There are traces of water having filled it up to the spring of the arches, and the place where the. water entered is very plainly to be seen. There are great openings in the root; down which hang festoons of creeping plants. The place was very chilly, and coming up forty steps out of it seemed like leaving a sepulcher. Yet it was a sight to be remembered to one’s dying day. We descended through the foul and loathsome village street, where cholera may well rage in summer. We could not explore villas of Julius Caesar, prisons of Nero, villa of Agrippina, and other places, for we were tired, and I felt afraid of more: vaults and their horrible damps. So we went- into Baiae, and entered a queer little *osteria,*or inn, and had some poor’ would-be oysters, bread and butter, and green lemons, freshly gathered from the tree. The view was glorious indeed, nothing could excel it; great ruined temples and villas were everywhere, and made a picture of exceeding beauty.

The drive home was by the sea, and we could perceive buildings down at the bottom, under the clear blue water. These have been brought down by the depression of the land upon which they stood, owing to earthquakes. We crossed a lava torrent which had come from Monte Nuova, and then we went on by our former road though Puteoli, till we left it to return to Naples without traversing the tunnel. This road took us up on one side of the promontory of Posilippo, whence we saw Ischia, Puteoli, Baize, and Misenum; and then we went down the other side, with Capri, Sorrento, Vesuvius, and Naples, all in full view. We were quickly down among the grand equipages which fill the Riviera di Chiaia; and, dashing:: along as fast as any of them, we were soon at the hotel door; and, since *table d’hote,*I have been writing this long narration for you. The air here is balmy, the atmosphere dry, the heat great in the sun, but bearable in the shade. Mosquitoes are fewer and less voracious than in Venice. Everything is restorative to the system, and exhilarating. Eve. n the beggars seem to be happy. None are miserable but: the,. old women and the priests. Organs are far too. plentiful, and music of all sorts is *ad nauseam.*Of religion, I have only seen one trace, namely, the towing down of everyone when “the host” was being’ carried under an umbrella to some sick person, Beggar’s swarm, and dealers in little wares assail you at all points, and will not cease their importunities, To-morrow will be the Sabbath, and in this I rejoice, for rest is sweet, and sweetest when made “holiness to the Lord.” I send tons of love to you, hot as fresh lava. God bless you with His best blessings!

It is the Sabbath, quiet and restful. We have had a delightful service, and I have written for my note-book and the Magazine; so there will be: a little less for my dear one, but there is nothing new to tell. I have been so grandly well all this time that I do not know how to be grateful enough, and my heart is light because you are better; my soul is at rest, my spirit leaps. I am indeed a debtor to Him who restoreth my soul. Blessed be His holy Name for ever and ever! We are very quiet, for there, ‘,are no other visitors in the house; we have the best rooms, nice beds, well-curtained from mosquitoes. There is a house between us and the sea, but we can see the bay on each side of it, and Vesuvius if we go out on the balcony. The climate is like Heaven below, and cannot but be a medicine to the sick. I send you a photograph of a slave who was found in Pompeii close behind his master, and carrying a bag of money, both of them endeavoring to escape. It is a perfect model, covered with incrustations.

I have also sent the photograph of a grotto, or rather, ancient fountain in mosaic, which is in one of the houses. They used to put a lamp inside the grotesque heads. Water fell in a little cascade down the steps. It seems in odd taste, but there are: several such in the gardens of the buried villas.

To-morrow we hope to be travelling; God be with thee, mine own, and give thee peace: and healing! My heart is everywhere and ever thine.

Again in Rome. Waking somewhat early this morning, I have risen to write to mine own darling wife. The fact is, I am afraid there will be a gap in the correspondence, and I shall be very sorry if it turns out to be so. Just as we left Naples, the rain began to descend, the warmth was gone, and we had a cool, if not a cold journey here. The fall in the temperature seemed to affect me, and I had a very’ disturbed and uncomfortable night. I am, however, so grateful for my long spell of rest, night by night, that this does not depress me, although I hoped that I was getting beyond the reach of such restless hours.

Yesterday was wet every now and then, but I had to devote the day to the Magazine, and therefore it mattered not. I stole out to the Pantheon, and the Lateran, and then again. Not being in harness, I worked slowly, and the matter came not until the mind ha,-I been much squeezed! How much more pleasant is the outbursting juice of the grape when it yields its streams to the lightest pressure of the vintner’s hand! Yet duty had to be done, and I did it; but have more yet to do. Three dear letters awaited me here. “Not worth sixpence,” did you say? They are worth a mint to me; they are mosaics of which every little bit is at Fern. Naples has been a great treat; how I wish you could have been there, but I Should not like you to see how horses are treated, it would make you’ quite unhappy. The Neapolitans load up their carriages most cruelly. I never saw so many horses, mules, and donkeys in my life before in proportion to the people. Everybody drives or rides, and they are all in a great hurry, too. Now, my hand, this brings great galleons of love to you, and a cargo of kisses lies under the hatches. Just pull them up, and let the creatures fly in the air; innumerable they will be as the clouds of doves which flew over the olive gardens of Judaea in the olden time, and every’ one has its own tender voice. God give thee still thy daily patience while lie sees fit to send the-e pain; but, oh! may He remove the affliction, and send healing to thee, and brighter days to us both! Nevertheless, His will be done!

Florence. — By an unfortunate mistake as to train, we were prevented from leaving Rome early this morning, so we have done a little morel sightseeing. One of our party is of the Mark Tapley school, and always persuades us that any hitch in our plans is a capital thing, and could not have happened better. We went off to Santa Maria Maggiore, and there saw the various chapels, and precious stones, and rare: marbles, and bronzes, etc., etc. The old verger was so eloquent, in Italian that I made out nearly all he said. Then we went to the Borghese Palace:, and saw long’ rooms of pictures, mostly saints; and virgins. In these rooms were two sweet little fountains of water, and glasses; for the visitors to drink from. This is a private palace, but: the public are always welcome. Then we found our way to the Jesuits’ Church, Where there was uncovered a silver statue of Loyola, of price, less value for the gems set in it, and the masses of l*apis lazuli.*Afterwards, we sat on the Pincian till the rain came, and it: has poured down ever since, making our journey to this place a more weary one than usual. Everything is shrouded in mist, mildewed and funereal, except the young waterfalls, which leap like lions’ whelps from Bashan, and laugh:, and fling themselves about in their glee.

Genoa. — We left Florence on Friday, and the day was fine, so that we greatly enjoyed the journey over the mountains to Bologna. Then it is a dull road to Alessandria, which we reached about six o’clock. Thence to Genoa should take two hours and a-half; but, in ascending the Maritime Alps, there was snow, and the engine crawled along, and at last stopped altogether. Think of it, — going up hill, and stopping! The steam was put on, and the wheels revolved, sending out a shower of sparks, but the train did not: stir. Then came men with spades to clear away some snow, and after a while the carriages moved, we gained the top of the hill, and ran down all right, getting into Genoa about 10 p.m. A long, tiresome day. Here:, where we: were so comfortable last year, we were marched up four sets of stairs, and then shown into rooms which had a most offensive smell. The house was full, the waiter said, and they could give us no other rooms. We: replied, “Very well, then, we will go somewhere else;” and when we had carried all our luggage to the door, apartments were found for us on the first floor!

This morning, expecting to leave for Mentone at twelve o’clock, we hear that the line is broken in four places, and no train goes except at eight am., so we are here till Monday. It rains, and has rained all night in torrents. We: must wait, and then go on in great uncertainty and sure discomfort. Never mind! it will serve me for illustration, no doubt. Dr. Jobson, a Wesleyan minister, has had an hour’s happy chat with me, and very much interested me. He is a holy, liberal-hearted soul, and ‘we enjoy a conversation together, so it is not all dullness. It is beginning to clear up while I am writing, so perhaps we may get a walk. I have had restful nights this week, and. am still really much better, but the damp and cold try me a good deal.

Sabbath.. — This day, which we have been forced to spend here, has not been an unhappy one, but: a sweet day, most calm and bright. The rain cleared off yesterday about four o’clock, enabling us to wander through the narrow streets of Genoa la Superba, and to enter several of the churches. My indignation was stirred beyond measure when, upon looking into the confessional boxes, I read the directions to the priest as to the questions he should ask: the penitents. These were printed in Latin, and referred ‘to those unmentionable crimes which brought fire upon Sodom, and are the: curse of heathendom. To see young maidens kneel down to be asked such questions as ‘these, made me wish that every priest could be cut off from the face of the: earth as unfit to live, and I most deliberately invoked upon them all the righteous vengeance of an insulted God! Since I came away, my more sober reflections fully endorse my indignant wrath. How can the Lord endure all this? Truly, His patience is great. To-day we had our breaking of bread, and Dr. Jobson and his wife joined us. The good old man spoke most sweetly, and prayed for you with great pathos, and much faith that the Lord would yet heal you. He shamed me by his faith, and I blessed him for his tender affection. The Lord was with us, and the season will be memorable to us all. Then I revised a sermon, which is not quite finished yet; but the *table d’hote*bell is ringing, so I must needs pause a while, and allow the body to feed in its turn. Today is; fine and bright, and has been warm in the: sun. We have large leads to walk on, and I have had a little turn there while the others have gone up on the heights for a walk. To-morrow, I hope, will be equally clear, and then we shall not mind the getting out and in where the railway is broken.

*Table d’hote*is now over, and I have had the old Doctor in for a talk, though I wanted to be alone, and go on with my sermon and letters. However, the good soul is gone now, and I can get to my dear work of communing with my darling by the pen. Every memory of you is full of joy, except your illness; and that makes me love you all the more, by adding sympathy. I am afraid I am still a rough, forgetful being, so apt to get absorbed in my work, and to think too little of you; but this is not in my heart, but is in my nature; and I suppose, if it were not there, I could not do my work so successfully. You know and love me too well to judge as others would. We have to be off early in the morning, so I must close this note.

Mentone. — We came here: yesterday from Genoa, and a very interesting journey it was. We left Genoa at eight o’clock, and went on all right till ten, when we all had to get out, for the road was destroyed. We walked down a lane, then over a bridge, then down on. the other side, and up the embankment, and got into another train. In this case, the bridge of the railway was broken by a torrent:, and a break indeed it was. In due time, we went on; but, in an hour or so, came: to a dead halt, and had to get out again. This time the walk ‘was long, and the way went through a vineyard, and up a steep bank. Crowds of men and boys clamored for our luggage, and followed us all the half-mile we had to trudge. We had to wait forty minutes till another train came; and then, when We scrambled in, they quietly shoved us out of the way:, and made us sit still for forty minutes more. We went on at little, only to stop again; and, at last, at Porto Maurizio, we had the carriages pushed by men over a dangerous place, and then hooked on to another train. However, we reached Ventimiglia safely at about seven o’clock, and then had an hour to wait to have dinner. We left there at 8 p.m., and arrived here at 7:20 p.m., this last being the greatest feat I ever performed! To travel for twenty minutes, and then to find the clock forty minutes behind the time at which you started, is a gain not to be despised; — the explanation is that: Roman time is used at Ventimiglia, and Paris time at Mentone. The day was fine, and though the way was long, the adventures made the hours pass away merrily, and our Mark Tapley friend was quite in his element. We are at a most comfortable hotel, and everyone tries to please us. The landlord knew me at once, and shook hands heartily, saying, “How do you do:, reverend? I am very glad to see you!”

To-day, while I was lying on the beach, and. Mark Tapley was slyly filling our pockets with stones, and rolling Mr. Passmore over, who should walk up but Mr. McLaren, of Manchester, with whom I had a long and pleasant chat. We are to go to Monaco to-morrow together. He has three months’ holiday. I am glad I have not:; but I should wish I had, if I had my dear wife with me to enjoy it. Poor little soul! she must suffer while I ramble. Two clergymen have had a long talk with me this evening. It began by one saying aloud to the other, “I hear Mr. Spurgeon has been here.” This caused a titter round the table, for I was sitting opposite to him. Mentone is charming, but not very warm. It is as I like it, and is calculated to make a sick man leap with health. How I wish you could be here!

We have had another (lay here of the sweetest rest. We drove to Monaco and back, and saw to perfection the little rocky’ Principality. Its lovely gardens and promenades are kept up by the profits of the gaming-tables, which are in a far more sumptuous palace than those at Baden-Baden, which we saw together years ago. We had Mr. McLaren with us. and went in and watched the players. One gentleman monopolized our attention; he was a fine-looking Englishman, like an officer. He lost a pile of money, and went out apparently most wretched and excited. Soon, he came in again, and changed bills for 3,000 francs, and began playing heavily. He won, and got back his bills; and when we left, we saw him come out; I could only hope’, that God had delivered him, and that he would be wise, and never go to the table, again. It is a vortex which sucks in a vast number of Victims day by day. What moths men are if the candle be: but bright enough!

The two parsons here: are High Church and Low Church, and I have had a talk with both. Just before dinner, who should go by but the Earl of Shaftesbury, with whom I had half-an-hour’s converse, tie was very low in spirit, and talked as if all things in the world were going wrong; but I reminded him-that our God was yet alive, and that dark days were only the signs of better times coming’. He is a real nobleman; and man of God. Everybody in the hotel is courteous and kind, and I have quite a circle of acquaintances already. I have enjoyed the rest very much; but young married couples remind me of our early days, and the cloud which covers us now. Still, He who sent both sun and shade is our ever-tender Father, and knows best; and if it be good for us, He can restore all that He: has withdrawn, and more; and if not, He designs our yet greater good. There is nothing more to write, except the ever true and never tiresome message, — my perfect love be with thee, and the Lord’s love be over thee for ever! In a few more days I shall see thee, and it will be a fairer sight than any my eyes have rested on during my absence.

Yesterday, Mr. and Mrs. in tiller went with me to Dr. Bennet’s garden, and I had a most profitable conversation with him, one to be remembered for many a day with delight. Dr. Bennet came up, and I was amused to hear Muller teaching him the power of prayer, and recommending him to pray about one of the terraces which he wants to buy’, but the owner asks a hundred times its value. Dr. B. thought it too trifling a matter to take to the Lord; he said that Mr. Muller might very properly pray about the Orphanage, but as to this terrace, to complete his garden, — he thought he could not make out a good case about it. Mr. M. said it. encouraged people in sin if we yielded to covetous demands, so he thought the Dr. might pray that the owners should be kept from exorbitant claims; but Dr. B. said that, as ignorant peasants, they were very excusable for trying either to keep their land, or to get all they could from an Englishman whom they imagined to be a living gold mine! The spirit of both was good; but, of course, the simple, child-like holy trust of Muller was overpowering. He is not a sanctimonious person; but full of real joy, and sweet peace, and innocent pleasure.

Nice — In this; place we have been put up four flights of stairs, and, alas! into very cold rooms. I woke in the night, and felt as, it I were freezing in a vault, and my ankles were in great pain. I was much cast down; and, on getting out of bed, found the carpet and floor both very damp. I had a very bad night, and am now in much pain in the left foot. Yet I believe I shall get over it soon, and I mean to have no more of these climbings up stairs, and sleeping in horrid cells. Nice is a very grand place, and I am sorry we left Mentone to come to it. But I must not write in a grumbling vein. Here have I had nearly five weeks of good health, and have grown stronger every day; why should I care for one little relapse? We will be off to Cannes and Hyeres, and. see what God has in store for us. He will deal graciously with me: as He has ever done.

Cannes — I was too ill yesterday to write. After the deadly chili of Thursday night at Nice, I felt the gout coming on, but resolved to escape from that inhospitable hotel. An hour brought us here, but it rained mercilessly, and all around was damp and chill. I got upstairs into beautiful rooms, but had to go to bed, which I have only’ left for a moment or two since, while it was being arranged. My left foot is badly swollen, and the knee.-joint is following suit. I have had very little sleep, and am very low; but, oh, the kindness of these friends! They sit up with me all night by tums, and cheer me with promises. I hope I shall get home in time for Sunday, but have some fears of it. Do not fret about me, I may be well before this reaches you; and if I am, I will telegraph and say so. I have every’ comfort here but home, and my dear wifey’s sweet words. I am sad that my journey should end so, but the: Lord’s will be done!

Two days later. — I have had a heavy time of pain, my dearest, but am now better. God has changed the weather; — yesterday was warm, to-day is hot, so we think it best to hurry on, and, if possible, have a *coupe-lit* right through to Paris. I feel well in myself, but the knee will not bear me, though I think I should be as strong as a horse after a day or two of this weather. How much I have to thank the Lord for! Such kind friends! They have proved their love beyond all praise. I was never alone. Even the *femme de chambre*pitied *“pauvre monsieur,”*and did her best for me. I hope now to get home in time for Sunday. My soul loves you, and longs to see you.

Paris. — In the hope ‘that one more letter may reach you before I come personally, I give myself the delight of writing it. The telegram will have told you that, at the very prudent advice of the doctor, I left Cannes at 3. 15 on Tuesday in a *coupe-it*to travel direct to Paris. It has proved a very wise step. A lady lent her Bath-chair to take me to the station, and porters lifted me into the carriage. There I had a nice sofa-bed and every convenience. I lay there with great comfort till we reached Marseilles; then came the night, and I had hoped to sleep, but the extreme oscillation of the train quite prevented that. Once only I dozed for a few minutes, yet I was kept restful till six ()’,:lock, when my dear friends got me some warm soup, and I had a refreshing wash. Then, all day long:, I was at peace till 6 p.m. From Lyons, the. country is flooded all along the road; we seemed to ride through a vast river. I naturally felt the chill of this, and my knees complained. Near Paris it rained hard, and at Paris heavily. After much stress and difficulty, I was put into a cab, and we drove to this hotel. I went to bed immediately, and slept on, on, on, till eight o’clock the next morning, awaking then refreshed, and, happily, none the. worse for the long journey. I meant to stay in bed all day, and sent my friends out, so that I might not always be a drag upon them; but, at about noon, I rose and dressed, and when they came in, I had flown, — to a sitting-room and a sofa by a cozy fire! I can walk now a little, and hope to be all right for Sunday. Bless the Lord, O my soul; and may He bless thee, too, my dear heart of love! I hope to have a *coupe,*and to-morrow lie down again while travelling, and so home to my tender wifely. Who could hope to escape rheumatic pains when all the world is wet through to the center? It must not: grieve you that I suffer, but you must rejoice that I escaped so long. Why, even rocks might feel this marvelous, long-continued wetting! I am indeed grateful to God for His goodness; still, “there’s no place like home.’ This brings great loads of love all flaming. God bless thee ever!

Carriage at Victoria at *5.45, Friday*!

CHAPTER 75.

MUTUAL LOVE BETWEEN PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

What a grand set of men some of the preachers of the past age thought themselves to be! I trust those who played the archbishop have nearly all gone to Heaven, but a few linger among us who use little grace and much starch. The proud divines never shook hands with anybody, except, indeed, with the deacons, and a little knot of evidently superior persons. Amongst Dissenters it was almost as bad as it is in most church congregations, where you feel that the good man, by his manner, is always saying, *“I*hope you know who I am, sir; I am the rector of the parish.” Now, all that kind of stuckupishness is altogether wrong, one man can do good that way; and no benefit that all comes of assuming superiority over our fellows. I often regret that I have so large a congregation. Perhaps you ask, “Why? Well, when I had a smaller company of hearers at New Park Street Chapel, there were many even then, yet I did get a shake: of the hand with every member sometimes; but now there are so many of you that I can scarcely recollect you all, good memory as I have, and I seldom have the pleasure of shaking hands with you, wish I had it much more frequently. If there is anybody in the wide worm whose good I long to promote, it is yours; therefore I want to be at home with you and if ever I should affect the airs of a great man, and set myself up above you all, and by proud manners cease to have sympathy with you, I hope the Lord will speedily take me down, and make me right in spirit again. C. H. S., *in sermon at the Tabernacle, May*3, 1868.

I like to see the people coming here on the Lord’s-day or on a week-night; I often say that, as I am driving to the Tabernacle, I can tell the members of my congregation, for they have a way of walking and a happy look quite different from those who are going to some places of worship that I might mention. Those other folks are so solemn and sad, as if they were going to an execution. They look so grave, as if it were an awful work to serve God, as bad as going to prison to attend a service, and as disagreeable as the pillory to, stand up and bless the Lord. But I notice that you come here with joy, tripping along gladly as if you were pleased to crone, and as if you came to enjoy yourselves, as I believe you do. That is how God would have you worship Him, in the spirit of freedom, and not in the spirit of slavery. Does He want slaves to grace His throne? To rule over free men, should be the ambition of a monarch; and God will rule: over spirits that love Him, that delight in Him, that are perfectly free, and that: and their freedom in doing His will. — C. H. S., *in sermon at the Tabernacle.*

I sat:, one day, by the bedside of one of my old members. I went to comfort her, for I heard that she was ill: but, instead of doing so, she set about comforting me, and I came away rejoicing. She began speaking to me in this fashion, “My clear Pastor, I shall never be able to tell to any soul what I owe to you, both personally arm relatively.” I

said, “Now, my dear sister, do not talk about that.” She replied, “But I will, for my former Pastor, Joseph Irons, once preached a sermon upon the words,’ Thou, O Solomon, must have: a thousand, arm those that keep the fruit thereof two hundred,’ and that clear man of God said, ‘ Give Solomon his thousand; that is, render to the Lord all the glory that is due unto His holy Name; ‘but let His ministers, who are the keepers of the vineyard, have their two hundred; that is,, give them all the encouragement you can.’ Now,” said she, “that sermon did me great good. I used to be afraid to cheer ministers, by telling them what God had done for me through their preaching; I feared that I might make them proud; but, from that sermon, I !-earned that it was God’s business to keep them humble, and nay business to encourage them all I could.” I bless the Lord that, that-e have had many who have tried in discourage me, I have always had many more who have been ready and pleased to give me words of encouragement and cheer. — C. H. S.

O N the 9th of that month, he went, for the first and only’ time, to the Lord Mayor’s banquet, and immediately afterwards he was attacked by that trying; complaint, though happily not in its worst form in later years, whenever he was invited to the great City feast, he always playfully replied that he had only once been in such high society, and then he had caught the small-pox, so he had determined never again to form one of that company. When his very special friend, Sir William McArthur, became London’s chief magistrate, he: tried hard to induce Mr. Spurgeon to join the: festive throng, but his pleading was all in vain; and, a few months afterwards, when the Lord Mayor took the chair’ at the annual supper in connection with the Pastors’ College Conference, the President: humorously repeated the story of the banquet of 1869, to the great delight both of the assembled guests and the genial chairman.

During the Pastor’s illness, his church-officers sent the following letter to cheer him; the manuscript shows that it was composed by Elder ‘W. Dransfield, concerning whom Mr. Spurgeon wrote, when he was “called home,” in 1872, “he was one of the holiest and happiest Christians it was ever our privilege to know:”—

“Metropolitan Tabernacle,  
*“Nov.*22nd, 1869.  
*“Beloved*Pastor,

“With more than usual pleasure, by desire of the elders and deacons, I sit down. to write you a few lines, in concurrence with which, I have no doubt, they will cordially sign their names. When we first heard the serious; nature of your affliction, and especially when ‘we considered dear Mrs. Spurgeon’s very delicate state of health, a deep gloom seemed to fall upon our spirits, and we did indeed very sincerely sympathize with you both under the heavy trial. But when we were told that the attack was not of a virulent nature and that the Lord was dealing very gently with you, the gloom was dispersed, the heavy load was removed from our minds, and gave place to a holy confidence that God, being very merciful, would restore you to us again with renewed health and vigor.

“Beloved Pastor, the very striking providence’s which have taken place, in connection with the Orphanage, within the last few days, have made a deep impression upon our minds, and have afforded us a double pleasure, knowing the cheering and exhilarating influence they will have upon your spirits in your sick-room. Truly may you say, with the psalmist, ‘ I will praise Thee for ever, because *Thou* hast done it.’

“And now for the Coilede, which is so dear to you, be assured that we will rally round it, and support it by our prayers, by our influence, and with all the help that is in our power. May the Divine blessing continue to rest upon its President, its tutors,, and the dear young men who are training in it for the Christian ministry!

“Our Co-pastor, your beloved brother, is laboring among us, during your absence, with indefatigable zeal and increasing success. He is daily growing in our affection and esteem; and we bless God for providing you with such a faithful coadjutor in the work: He has given you to do. You will be pleased to hear that all the services; at: the Tabernacle continue to be well attended, that our ‘supplies’ for the last two Sabbaths were very acceptable and profitable, that the spirit of prayer is ill no way diminished, but is in as full efficiency as ever, and that God is in the most of us indeed and of a truth. If the laying aside of Pastors, for a time, be sent to test their people’s love, then we are sure there never was a period in your ministry when you were more cordially and universally loved than you are at the.

“And now, beloved Pastor, we leave you, with many prayers, in the hands of your Father and our Father. May He have you in His safe keeping preserve you from lowness and depression of spirits, cheer you with the light of His countenance, strengthen and sustain you by His gracious Spirit, and, in His own good time, bring you again to your beloved Tabernacle ‘ in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.’ This is our fervent prayer.”

(Signed by the deacons and elders:)

In the year 1871, Mr. Spurgeon had a long and painful illness, the course of which can be traced in the following letters to the congregation at the Tabernacle: —

“Clapham.  
“Dear Friends,

“The furnace still blows around me. Since I last preached to you, I have been brought very low my flesh has been tortured with pain, and my spirit has been prostrate with depression. Yet, in all this, I see and submit to my Father’s hand; yea, more, I bless Him that His paternal low’. has been more: than ever clear to me. ‘With some difficulty, I write these lines in my bed, mingling them with the groans of pain and the song’s of hope.

“The peace of God be with every one of you, my beloved! My love in Christ Jesus beside you all! I rejoice that my very dear friend, Mr. Hugh Stowell

Brown, is with you to-day. May his; words be marrow and fatness to your souls!

“It must, under the most unfavorable circumstances, be long before you see me again, for’ the highest medical authorities are agreed that only long rest can restore me. I wish it were otherwise. My heart is in my work, and with you; but God’s will must be done. When I am asked to move, I must go away. I try to cast all my cares on God; but, sometimes, I think that you may get scattered. O my dear brethren, do not wander, for this would break my heard I might also feel deep anxiety for my great: works,, but I am sure my Lord will carry them on. It is, however, my duty to tell you what you can do, and what is needed. The Orphanage funds are lower just now than they have been these two years. God will provide, but you know that you are If-t is stewards.  
“You do pray for me, I know; but I entreat you not to cease your supplications. I am as a potter’s vessel when it is utterly broken, useless, and laid aside. Nights of watching, and clays of weeping have bee. n mine, but I hope the cloud is passing. Alas! I can only say this for my own personal and light affliction; there is one who lies nearest my heart whose sorrows are not relieved by such a hope. In this relative trial, a very keen one, I again ask your prayers. The Lord be with you evermore! Amen. So prays, —

“Your suffering Pastor,

**“C. H. S.”**  
“May 13th, 1871.  
“Dear Friends,

“Yesterday finished a long six weeks of pain and weakness. I made a desperate push for the sea-side, and reached it; but I am in great doubt whether I shall not be obliged to go home again, for I am so very weak. Please pray for me, that the Lord would restore to me my strength.

“I beg to thank the Lord, in your assembly, for graciously permitting me to live, and for giving me some hope that I shall yet again be among you in rigor. It must be long first; but you will have much patience, and your loving prayers will greatly help me to mend.

“Dear friends, be sure to carry on every part of the Lord’s work with earnestness. If there has ever been any neglect, let there be none now; but all of you combine to make up for the lack of my service. I. et the prayer-meetings be better attended than ever, and may the petitions be still more intense! May God bless the brethren who minister among you in my place! I send my love to the deacons, elders;, and all friends.

“During last week, very age help came in for the Orphanage, for which I bless the: Lord.  
“Yours truly,  
*“Clapham,*  
“June 4th, 1871.  
“Beloved Friends,

“I write you these little notes because I am told that you are pleased to hear from myself the state of my health, and certainly it would be very wrong if I did not write now; for I was not silent in my mourning, and therefore I dare not refrain now that I am able to rejoice. Thank God, the healing One:, with me, for, during this; week, I have each morning awakened refreshed, feeling that I was better than on the preceding day. The pain is gone, but extreme weakness remains. I am as feeble as a child; but each day I gather a little’, strength, and I hope I shall be able to preach to you on the 25th of this month. I cannot be sure, but this is my hope: and prayer; and, moreover, I desire to come among you with a sevenfold blessing, that we may all love Jesus more, do more for His glory’, and see greater think so than ewer done for the Kingdom. Shall Satan triumph over my twelve. silent Sabbaths? Will not the Lord bring good oat of evil by leading us on to some higher service and greater work? The Lord be richly with you today! May He smile on the Sabbath-school, send the dew of blessing on Mrs. Bartlett’s class, and did the Heavenly wind breathe upon all the Bible-classes! May’ the saints be fed with manna, and have the appetite, to enjoy it! May the unconverted among you be visited by the Holy Ghost, and renewed in heart, and that speedily’!

“Accept my loving thanks to those especially who have: remembered me and my work by their deeds. Do not think that I am unmindful of your weeldy liberality., I know you give as unto the Lord’, but to me also you say, in language more powerful than words ‘ Do not feel any anxiety; we will not forget your work; and when you are: not with us;, we will be as faithful as when we hear your voice.’ The Lord reward you! Le:: not your prayers cease or be diminished. Prayer can have anything of God.

With the utmost hove, —  
“Yours until death,

*“Clapham,*  
“June 11th, 1871.

“Beloved Friends, — whom I have in constant and affectionate remembrance, — “I am obliged again to take up the note of mourning, for I have been all the week suffering and the. most of it confined to my bed. The severe weather has draw me back, and caused a repetition of all my pains. Nevertheless, the Lord’s will be done! Let Him have His way with me. For He is love. I have be. en wearying to preach again; but it may be that my dumb Sabbaths are appointed for my chastisement, and their number is not yet fulfilled. We must work for God while we can, for not one of us knows how soon he may be unable to take a share in the sacred service. At the same time, how unimportant we are God’s cause goes on without us. We all need Him, but He needs no one of us.

“Beloved, hitherto I have had much solace in hearing that the Lord’s work among you goes on. I pray you, make earnest intercession that this may continue. I hope the. wee. k-night services will not droop. If you stay away, let it be when I am the r, but *not now.*May the deacons and elders find themselves surrounded by an untiring band of helpers at every meeting for worship! May abundance of grace rest on you all especially on the sick, the poor, and the bereaved!

“Pray keep me, I entreat you. Perhaps, if *the church*met for prayer, I should be speedily” restored. I know thousands do pray, but should not the church do so *as a church*? I must give up all hope of preaching on the 25th; but I trust the Lord will be merciful to me, and send me among you on the first Sabbath of July.

“With deep Christian love from —  
“Your suffering Pastor,  
**“C. H. S.”**

The Pastor’s suggestion, that the church should meet: for prayer, was speedily carried into effect, and: the result was thus chronicled in the next letter: —

“Clapham,  
“‘June 15th, 1871.  
“My Beloved Friends,

*“As*soon as the church had resolved to meet for special prayer for me, I began rapidly to recover. It pleased C, H. S. to turn the wind at the beginning of this week, and the change in the temperature has worked wonders. We may truthfully say of the Wednesday meeting: for prayer, that the Lord fulfilled this Word: ‘ Before they call, I ‘will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.’ For all this great goodness, I pray you to unite with me in sincere and intense gratitude to the Lord our God.

“I feel bound publicly to express my happiness of heart. This week has furnished me with the. liveliest proofs of your true love. I have been deeply touched with the various ways in which the affection of so many of you has sought to find expression. I value this, not only for my own sake:, though it is very sweet to be the object of such. hearty love, but because I see in it the evidence that our union has been cemented by years, and the earnest of future years of united effort, if God spares us;. The absence of unity is weakness; its indisputable, presence is strength.

“On the losing day of my thirty-seventh year, I find myself the Pastor of a beloved flock, who have borne the test of twelve Sabbaths of their minister’s absence, and the severer test of more than seventeen years of the same ministry, and are now exciting more love to him than ever. I bless God, but I also thank you, and assure you that I never felt happier in the midst of my people than I do now in the prospect of returning to you. I am still weal,:, but the improvement in strength this week has been very surprising. I hardly dare speak of the future; but I earnestly hope we shall look each other in the face on the first Sabbath of July.  
“Peace be with you, and the Lord’s own anointing! May those who speak to you to-day be filled with the. Spirit! May the soft South wind or’ the Spirit’s love be among you, and nay you pour forth praise as flowers breathe perfume!

“Yours very truly,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON,”**

The dear sufferer’s expectation was realized, for he was able to preach at the Tabernacle on the morning of July 2. His subject was Psalm 71:14: “But I will hope continually, and will yet praise Thee more and more.” In the course of his sermon, he thus referred to his illness and restoration:— “I know one, who has been long privileged to lift up his voice in the choir of the great King. In that delightful labor, none ‘were more happy that he was; the longer he was engaged in the world, the more he loved it. Now, it came to pass that on a certain day, this songster found himself shut out of the choir; he would have entered to take his part, but he was not permitted. Perhaps the King was angry; perhaps the songster had sung carelessly; perhaps he had acted unworthily in some other matter; or possibly’ his Master knew that his song would, grow more sweet if he were silenced for a while. How it was, I know not; but this I know, it caused great searching of heart. Often, this chorister begged to be restored; but he was as often repulsed, and somewhat roughly, too. I think it was for nearly three months that this unhappy songster was kept in enforced silence, with fire in his bones, and no vent for it. The royal music went on without him; there was no lack of song, and in this he rejoiced, but he longed to take his place again, I cannot tell you how eagerly he kinged. At last, the happy hour arrived; the King gave His permit, he might sing again. The songster was full of gratitude, and I heard him say, you shall hear him say it, ‘My Lord, since I am again restored, I will hope continually, and will yet praise Thee more and more’”

Preaching at the Tabernacle, later in the same year, Mr. Spurgeon thus described how he wrestled in prayer, and prevailed with the Lord, in what proved to be the crisis of that season of suffering: — “ I have found it a blessed thing, in my own experience, to plead before God that I am His child. When, some months ago, I was ‘racked with pain to an extreme degree, so that I could no hunger bear it without crying out, I asked all to go from the room, and leave me alone; and then I had nothing I could say to God but this, ‘ Thou art my Father, and I am Thy child; and Thou, as a Father, art tender and full of mercy. I could not bear to see my child suffer as Thou makest me suffer; and if I saw him tormented as I am now, I would do what I could to help him, and put: my arms under him to sustain him. Wilt Thou hide Thy face from me, my Father? Wilt Thou still lay on me Thy heavy hand, and not give me a smile from Thy countenance?’ I talked to the Lord as Luther would have done, and pleaded this Fatherhood in real earnest. ‘Like as a

further pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear Him.” If He be a Father, let: Him show Himself a Father, — so I pleaded; and I ventured to say, when they came back who watched me,’ I shall never have such agony again from this moment, for God has heard my prayer.’ I bless God that case came, and the racking pain never returned. Faith mastered it by laying hold upon God in His own revealed character, — that character in which, in our darkest hour, we are best able to appreciate Him. I think this is why that prayer, *‘ Oh! Father*which art in Heaven,’ is given to us because, when we are lowest, we can still say,’ Our Father,’ and when it is very dark, and we are very weak, our childlike appeal can go up, ‘Father, help me! Father, excuse me!’

This experience made so to an impression upon Mr. Spurgeon’s mind and heart that he never forgot it. Those who are. familiar with his writing’s must have noticed how often he referred to it, and how he urged other tried believers to do as he: had done. On one occasion, when he was speaking at the Mildmay Park Confidence Hall, he narrated this incident with very telling effect.

The Tabernacle church make a special record of this trying period and of the Lord’s gracious answer to the united supplications of his people. At the church-meeting, on July 4, 1871, it was resolved that the following statement should be entered on the Minute: —

“It having pleased our Heavenly Father to lay His afflicting hand upon our beloved Pastor, he: was compelled to cease his; public labors in our midst on the 2nd of April, and for a period of twelve Sabbaths we were deprived of his Githful ministrations. During this time he addressed to us several letters, which we insert upon our records as a proof of the: close mutual love and esteem which link us together as Pastor and people. Our public prayers have been many, and our private supplications have been unceasing. On June 14th, we met *as a church*for special prayer, and God was pleased to hear his cry, and once more to restore His servant to some part of his wanted strength, so that he preached on the morning of July 2nd. We therefore met to give thanks to God on Wednesday, July 5th, when it was resolved:—

“That his church desires, to leave upon record its sense of gratitude to Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, for having restored our beloved Pastor to so much of health, as permits him again to minister in our midst, and we: pray that he may speedily regain his accustomed vigor, and enjoy still more of the comfort and preciousness of the: truth he so eloquently and faithfully preaches. We implore for him at yet fuller measure of the Holy Spirit, and enlarged success in all the many labors to which he has set his hand and whilst thus recording our thanks and petitions, we also desire to convey to our beloved Pastor our expressions of sincerest sympathy with him ill his; severe and protracted illness. We have learned to prize more highly than ever those loving ministrations under which so many of us have been savingly blessed, and all of us have been greatly helped. We rejoice exceedingly that he can again occupy his accustomed place, to which he is welcomed by a people more than ever prepared to co-operate with him in all his labors, and to love him, aver with a pure heart fervently. Our prayers shall still mingle at the private and public altar that himself, his dear wife, and their sons may be long spared to enjoy that blessing which our covenant God alone can bestow.”

The next special manifestation of the love of the people for their Pastor commemorated three notable events in his history. The Minutes of the annual church-meeting, held at the Tabernacle on January 8, 1875, contain the following entry: —

“Proposed by Brother William Olney, seconded by Brother John Ward, and carried unanimously. That we desire, as a church, to record our devout gratitude to our Heavenly Father on the completion of the 21st year of our Pastor’s ministry amongst us. We also desire to present our hearty congratulations to him that he has been. privileged to Complete the 20th volume of his printed sermons, and also, during the past year,, to accomplish the erection of the New College Buildings. We feel it desirable that a permanent record should be made of these important events, and therefore agree that it shall be entered in our church-book, and that a suitable address, handsomely framed and beautifully illuminated, shall be presented to our Pastor as an expression of our loving sympathy with him, which was never felt by us to a greater degree than at the present time.”

At the. church-meeting, on April 1, 1875, Pastor J. A. Spurgeon reported that a meeting of the church and congregation had been held, on Tuesday, March 30, to welcome the senior Pastor, on his return from the Continent, after an absence from the: pulpit for eleven Sabbaths, and at that gathering the testimonial authorized by the church had been duly presented. A reduced *facsimile*of it is reproduced on the following page.

A reference to the letter of Mr. William Olney, in Volume I., page 346, will show that one of the reasons he: mentioned in urging “the boy-preacher” at Water-beach to accept the invitation to the pastorate at New Park Street Chapel was, that he hoped his brother Henry would be converted through the young minister’s preaching, which had even then greatly impressed him. This result happily came to pass, and dear old *“Father*Olney” had the joy of seeing all his sons members of the church of which he had so long been a deacon. In October, 1875, Mr. Henry P. Oh my was “called home;” and, as soon as the news reached

Mr. Spurgeon, he wrote the following letter to Mr. Thomas H. Olney: —

“Nightingale Lane,  
“Clapham.  
“(October, 1875.)

“Dear Friend,

“I could not say much to Mr. Macgregor, for I felt stunned by the tidings of your brother’s death, and could not realize it; indeed, I cannot now.

*“God*bless you, beloved brother; and as; He comes so very’ near in solemn deeds, may He come just as near in love} Peace be to you in the hour of sore amazement!

“I send my deepest sympathies to the bereaved wife. I can do no better than pray that she may now be very graciously sustained. If she can calmly bow before the Lord, it will be for her own good. Grief so natural, and so likely to prove excessive:,., must be re. strained for the sake of herself and babes. God help her, poor soul! What a loss is hers!  
“Yours lovingly,

**“C. H. SPURGEON,”**

When Mrs. Bartlett was *“*called home,’; in August, 1875. the members of her class desired her son Edward to take his mother’s place. This arrangement met with Mr. Spurgeon’s full approval, and was; accordingly carried out. The annual meeting of the class was, for many years, the occasion for presenting to the beloved President of the College the contributions and collections of the members in aid of his much-heaved work. In the course of twelve: years, no less than 1,346 was thus received. The Pastor was particularly anxious to be present at the first anniversary under the new leadership, but he was unable to be there, and had to be content with writing the: following characteristic epistle: —

“Nightingale Lane,  
“Clapham,  
“Feb. 22, 1876.

“My Dear Mr. Bartlett, and Class,

*“If*it were not that it is *the Lord*who has put me out of the way for a day or two, I should be very rebellious. All yesterday, I was weeping and sneezing, till I could not see out of my eyes. To-day, I feel that the turning-point has come, and that I shall soon be better; but it would be the utmost folly to leave my bedchamber as I now am.

“This is a terrible disappointment to me as well as to your young friends, and I want you to tell them how sorry their Pastor is. I am glad they cannot see him, for he has, an awful nose, and such eyes! Also let them know that he is very fond of Mr*s.*Bartlett’s class, and would sooner have disappointed the Queen than have been absent from the meeting to-night. Besides, he wanted to thank M*r.* Bartlett, and to say’ some kind things which are due all round.

*“I*am anxious to do all I can to mitigate this trouble, and therefore I propose, (**1**.) that you enjoy yourselves all you can tonight; (**2**) that I invite you all to tea another evening as soon as possible; or, (**3**) that I come to the class some Sunday afternoon; or, (**4**) that we do all the three thing.  
“May God bless you all! You are so good to keep together, and work on, and pray on. I hope we shall have hundreds of souls saved this year; let us aim at such a result. Dear Mr. Bartlett has my unfounded confidence and esteem. May every blessed abound towards him and you!

*“Don’t*be alarmed about me. I have about 49 colds all at once. and lumbago into the bargain; but all will go in a day or two, I hope. I cannot tell how I could have got into such a sneezy, freezy, droppy, skivery, watery, coughy, fevery state’ I hope I shall soon get: out of it.

“Yours ever lovingly,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

In the earlier days, when the dear Pastor was able more frequently to preside at the: Tabernacle church-meetings than he could in his litter years, he used to make brief but very interesting entries in the church-book. Sometimes, they would be humorous, as when he wrote concerning the quality of the pens and ink supplied for use in the lecture-hall; occasionally, they were very sad notes, when some turned aside to sin or to error, and so pierced his heart through with many sorrows; but, more often, the comments were of a grateful and jubilant character, like the throwing, which was written at the: first meeting of the members after the communion service on Lord’s.-day evening, March 5, 1876: —

“It is worthy of special note that four children of our beloved deacon, William Higgs, were added to the church on one evening, while others of his family have preceded them. As; he was the builder of the Tabernacle in which we meet, we rejoice that the Lord’s-day blesses his household.”

While Mr. Spurgeon never neglected the: comparatively few weaklier members of the church and congregation, he was; always accessible to their poorer sisters and brethren, and he constantly proved, in a most practical way, his sympathy with them, and his personal interest in their temporal and spiritual welfare, conspicuous instance of this manifestation of kindly feeling is thus recorded in the report of the annual church meeting at the Tabernacle on January 10, 1877*: —*

“Before proceeding to the business of the evening, the Pastor stared that, in his own name, and on behalf of the church, he desired that some note should be taken of the fact that the Lord had spared to the church, for a period of 70 years, our aged sister, Miss Fanny Gay, during the while of which time she had been a usefulled consisted: member. The Pastor then handed to her a copy of 52, *enlcrfireler,*containino,’ the: following inscription: —

“Presented to Miss Fanny Gay, upon completing her seventieth year of membership with the church ‘which now worships *in*the Metropolitan Tabernacle, with the love of the Pastors and members.

The Lord bless thee and keep thee.

“C. H. S PURGEON.  
“January 10, for February, 1*877.”*

The good sister lived until early in 1886; and when she was “called home,” Mr. Spurgeon wrote concerning her: — “The church at the Tabernacle has recently lost Miss Fanny Gay’, who has for many years been the first on the roll of membership. She joined the church in the year 1807, and had thus been a member nearly eighty years, and was within a few hours of ninetyseven years of age when she was called home. She was a great: sufferer for most of her long life, but her afflictions were patently, and even cheerfully, borne; and for many years she had been one of the happiest inmates of the Almshouses connected with the Tabernacle.”

The Tabernacle: church has long been a mother of churches; and, usually, when the brethren and sisters have been drafted off to found a new cause:, the Pastor has written a special letter to accompany the formal transfers. When the church at James Grove, Peckham, was about to be constituted, no less than 75 members received their dismission from the Tabernacle, and the Pastor gave them his parting blessing and his wise and loving counsel in as hearty and genial a fashion as if he had been resolving that large contingent of adherents instead of losing’ them.

“Metropolitan Tabernacle,  
“September 9th, 1878.  
“Beloved Brethren,

‘The Church of Christ at the Metropolitan Tabernacle has heard with pleasure of your wish to be turned into a separate community, and we hereby grant an honorable dismissed, to you all with that view. You are such beloved and useful members that ‘we should have been grieved to part with you under any other circumstances; but now we send you out as a father sends ore: his full-grown son to found another house, and to become himself the center of a family. W~.’ wish you every blessing. It is bur joy to see our Lord’s Kingdom increased; and, as we believe that your being gathered into it new church will tend to that grand design, we gladly part with you, wishing you the power and presence of the Lord henceforth and for even

*“Brethren,*be of one heart and one mind. Suffer no ‘root of bitterness’ to spring up among you. Sustain your excellent Pastorelect; and, by your prayers, gird him with the power of the Highest. Watch over your own personal walls, and let the world see what grace can do In you and by you. Do not forget to pray for the mother-church and its officers. We wish you the like blessings with us; what more could we desire for you? May the ministry among you be full of Divine power, and may thousands be thereby called out of darkness into light! Abound in confidence in God, and in His gospel. He is able to surpass your loftiest thoughts. Believe great things of God, and expect great things from God. To the Eternal Trinity we commend you by Christ Jesus.

“Yours, on behalf of the whole church,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

This chapter may be appropriately closed with Mr. Spurgeon testimony to the piety and the unity of the’ Tabernacle church, together with a solemn warning as to what would happen if such a highly-favored company of people should ever prove unfaithful: — ‘I thank God that we have a great many very warm-hearted, earnest Christians in connection with this church, — I will make bold to say, such true and lovely saints as I never expected to live to see. I have beheld in this church apostolical piety revived; I will say it:, to the glory of God, that I have seen as earnest and as true piety as Paul or Peter ever witnessed. I have marked, in some here present, such godly zeal, such holiness, such devotion to the Master’s business, as Christ Himself must look upon with joy and satisfaction. God has been pleased to favor us with profound peace in the church. We have been disturbed by no word of false doctrine, by no uprising of heretics in our midst, or any separations or divisions. ‘This is a blessed thing; but: still, Satan may make. it a dangerous matter. We: may begin to think that there is no need for us to watch, that we shall always be: as we are; and deacons, and elders, and Pastor, and church-members, may all cease’, their vigilance, and then the ‘root of bitterness’ may spring up in the neglected corner that gets to deeply rooted for us to tear it up again. Though we: are not free from ten thousand faults, yet I have often admired the goodness of God which has elmbled us, with a hearty grip, to hold each other by the hand, and say, ‘ We love each other for Christ’s sake, and for the truth’s sake, and we hope to live in each other’s love: till we die:, wishing, if it were possible, to be buried side by side.’ I do thank God for this, because I know there is more than enough of evil among us to cause, distensions in our midst. We who bear office in the Church have the same nature as there; and therefore, naturally, would seek to have the supremacy, and every mail, if left to himself, would indulge an angry temper, and find many reasons for differing from his brother. We have all been offended often, and have as often offended others. We are as imperfect a band of men as might be found, but we are one in Christ. We have each had to put up with the other, and to, before and forbear; and it does appear to me a wonder that so many imperfect people should get on so well together for so long. By faith, I read over the door of our Tabernacle this text, ‘ When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?’ When some of our members were first taken into the church, I received a. very suspicious character with them. It was said, ‘Well. if Mr. Spurgeon accepts such-and-such a man, he has been so great a trouble in our church, that he will be the. beginning of wars at the Tabernacle.’ But those very persons, who came with that doubtful character, have become the most zealous of our working community; and, instead of differing and disagreeing, they have felt that there was so much to do that it would be a pity to spend one grain of strength in quarrelling with other children of God. If a man thinks himself to be some great one, his importance vanishes as soon as he joins our vast host. I have been warned, sometimes, by fellow-ministers ‘who have had a member who has proved troublesome to them, and who wished to come into our midst. I have been told that I must watch him very carefully, for he would be sure to be: a cause of anxiety to me; but I have answered, ‘No one ever troubles me; I do not let him.’ Many of these people, who are supposed to be so dangerous, only want something to do; they have too much energy to be unemployed. I set them to work, and they are no longer troublesome; if that does not cure them, I give them still more work to do. They have too much vigor for small places, and need to be where their powers can have full scope, for then they have less time to notice, things with which they do not wholly agree. Possibly, my brethren, many of! you do not sufficiently prize the peace which reigns in our church. Ah! you would value it if you lost it. Oh, how highly you would esteem it if Strife and schism should ever come into our midst! You would look back upon the happy days we have had together with intense regret, and pray, ‘ Lord, knit us to, gather in unity again; send us love to each other once more;’ for, in a church, low: is the essential element of happiness.

“If we as a church, prow.’ unfaithful; if we leave our first love; if we do not plead in prayer, and seek the conversion of souls, God may take away His presence from us as tie has done from churches that were once His, but which are not so now. The traveler tells you that, as in, journeys through Asia Minor, he sees the ruins of those cities which once were the seven golden candlesticks, wherein the: light of truth shorn: brightly. What will he now say of Thyatica? Where will he find Laodicea? These have passed away, and why may not this church? Look at Rome, once the glory of the Christian Church, her ministers many, and her power over the world enormous for good; and now she is the place where Satan’s seat is, and her synagogue is a synagogue of hell. How is this? Because she departed from her integrity, she left her first love, and the Lord cast her away. Thus will He deal with us also if we sin against Him. You know that terrible passage: ‘ Go ye now unto My place which was in. Shiloh, where I set My Name: at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of My people Israel.’ God first of all had the tabernacle, pitched at Shiloh, but it was defiled by the sin of Eli’s sons, so the tabernacle, was taken away, and Shiloh became a wilderness. So may this flourishing church become. If justice should thus visit you, you may held your prayer-meetings, — probably those will soon cease, — but of what avail will your formal prayers be? You may get whom you will to preach, but what of that? I know what you would do, if some. of us were,, fallen asleep, and the faithful ones buried,-if the Spirit of God were gone, you would say, ‘Well, we are still a large and influential congregation; we can afford to pay a talented minister,, money will do anything; and you would get: the man of talents, and then you ‘would want an organ and a choir, and many other pretty things which we now count it our joy to do without. Then, if such were the case, all these vain attempts at grandeur would be unsuccessful, and the church would ere long become a scorn and a hissing, or else a mere log upon the water. Then it would be said, ‘We must change the management, and there would be this alteration and that; but if the Lord were gone, what could you do? By what means could you ever make this church, or any other church, revive again? Alas! for the carnal, spasmodic efforts we have seen made in some churches! Prayer-meetings badly attended, no conversions, but still the people have said, ‘ It is imperative upon us to keep up a respectable appearance; we must collect a congregation by our singing, key our organ, or some other outward attraction;’ and angels might have wept as they saw the folly of men who sought almost anything except the Lord, who alone can make a house His temple, who alone can make a ministry to be a ministration of mercy, without whose presence the most solemn congregation is but as the herding of men in the market, and the most melodious songs but as the shoutings of those who make merry at a marriage. Without the Lord, our solemn Clays, our new moons, and our appointed feasts, are an abomination such as His soul hideth. May this church ever feel her utter, entire, absolute dependence, upon the presence of her God, and may she never cease humbly to implore Him to forgive her many sins, but still to command His blessing’ to abide upon her! Amen.”

CHAPTER 76.

A HOLIDAY DRIVE TO THE FOREST.

On our public rests for porters in the City of London you may read the words, *“Pest,*but do not loiter;” and they contain advice worthy of our attention. I do not call the *dolce far niente*laziness; there is “a sweet doing of nothing’ which is just the finest medicine in the world for a jaded worker. When. the mind gets fatigued, and out of order, to rest it is no more idleness than sleep is idleness; and no man is called lazy for sleeping the proper time. It is far better to be industriously asleep than lazily awake. Be always ready, however, to do good even in your resting-times, and in your leisure hours; and so be really a minister, and there will be no need for you to proclaim that you are one. — C. H. S., in *“Lectures to my Students.”*

I went, the other day, to St. Cross Hospital, near Winchester, which some of yea may know. There they give away a piece of bread to everybody who knocks at the door; so I knocked, as Bold as brass. Why should I not? If they gave the oleic away to everyone, why should not I have my share? In due course, the hatch was opened, and I and the friends who were with me received our portion. It was a dole to be given to everybody who came, so I did no: humble myself, and make anything special of it; it was meant for all, and I therefore, as one of the people who were willing to knock, was not refused. Now, even so, if the gospel is to be preached to every creature, why do you stand higgling and haggling when you want the Bread of life? Why should you waste time in raising question after question when you only need to take what Jesus freely gives? I will warrant that you do not raise such quibbles against yourselves in money matters. If an estate is bequeathed to you, I am sure that you do not employ a solicitor to hunt for flaws in the title, or to invent objections to the will. Why do men raise difficulties against their own salvation, instead of cheerfully accepting what the infinite mercy of God so graciously provides for all who, with broken hearts, and willing minds, are ready to take what God the Ever-bountiful is so pleased to give? — C. H. S, *in a sermon at the Tabernacle.*

A minister should be like a certain chamber which I saw at Beaulieu, in the New Forest, in which a cobweb is never seen. It is a large lumber-room, and is never swept; yet no spider ever defiles it with the emblems of neglect. It is roofed with chestnut; and, for some reason, I know not what, spiders will not come near that wood ‘by the year together. The same thing was mentioned to me in the corridors of Winchester School. I was told, “No spiders ever come here.” Our minds should be equally clear of idle habits. — C. H. S., *in “Lectures to my Students.”*

I was sitting, one day, in the New Forest, under a beech tree. I like to look at the beech, and study it, as I do many other trees, for every one has its own peculiarities and habits, its special ways of twisting its boughs, and growing its bark, and opening its leaves, and

so forth. As I looked up at that beech, and admired the wisdom of God in making it, I saw a squirrel running round and round the trunk, and up the branches, and I thought to myself, “Ah! this beech tree is a great deal more to you than it is to me, for it is your home, your living, your all.” Its big branches were the matra streets of his city, and its little boughs were the lanes; somewhere in that tree he had his house, and the beechmast was his only food, he lived on it. Well, now, the way to deal with God’s Word is not merely to contemplate it, or to study it, as a student does; but to live on it, as that squirrel lives on his beech tree. Let it be to you, spiritually, your house, yore’ home, your food, your medicine, your clothing, the one essential element of your soul’s life: and growth. — C. H. S., *in a sermon at the Tabernacle.*

O NE of my dear husband’s most congenial recreations consisted in spending a ‘long day in the country; — driving over hill and dale, and through the lanes and pretty villages of our charming county of Surrey. Many sweet days of rest have thus been snatched from weeks of heavy toil, and a furlough of a few hours has helped to restore and refresh the overworked brain and heart. He would go out in good time, taking with him some choice companion, or, perchance, another weary worker; and, driving slowly, they would jog along till noon, when, at a pleasant wayside inn,. they would rest the. horse, and have their luncheon, returning in the cool of the evening for high tea at home at six or seven o’clock.

Such rest Mr. Spurgeon found very delightful; but this was surpassed and completed when a fortnight on similar days could be linked together to form a perfect holiday. Then, instead of driving back in the sunset, he would go forward; and the trip would extend itself to many towns, and bring him into pleasant acquaintance with new objects of interest, and novel impressions of places and people. It: was amusing, at these, times, to note that his ideas of comfort, and his disregard of external appearances,, were equally conspicuous. He liked a cozy seat, and easy travelling; but he cared nothing for the style of his equipage; — an old horse — most inappropriately named “Peacock” — and a shabby carriage were matters of perfect indifference to him, so long as they were safe and trustworthy, and carried him out of the noise, of the crowded world, into the stillness and beauty of nature’s quiet resting-places.

I well remember — aye and with a present thrill of regret that I ever laughed at it, — his purchasing, for these: jaunts, a vehicle of so antiquated a pattern, and of such unfashionable proportions, that it was immediately dubbed “Punch’s coach,” and ever after bore that name. Its mirthprovoking aspect was increased when it was packed and prepared for a journey, for there was an arrangement behind, which supported a board for luggage, and added exceedingly to its grotesque and inelegant appearance:. However, this convenient provision was, in the dear owner’s estimation, one of its; chief advantages, if not the very climax of its beauty and though I laughed afresh at every glimpse of it, I loved him so dearly that I even learned to appreciate “Punch’s coach” for his sweet sake. As I write, and the memories of the old days surge over my mind like the billows from a distant shore, I rejoice to know that his slightest wishes were tenderly indulged, and that his beaming, loving, satisfied face, as he started off on one of these country tours, is far more deeply impressed on my heart than the remembrance of his unsightly holiday caravan! Never was he more happy and exultant than when making excursions of this kind and those who were privileged to accompany him, saw him at his social best,, and with one accord they have testified to the grace and charm of his companionship.

From the pages of his daily letters to me, on one of these notable, occasions, I haw’. woven the story of his holiday drive into this single bright chapter; which, in consequence, possesses all the attractiveness of a personal narrative, and I think it well sets. forth some traits in his lovely character which could in no other way have: been so naturally revealed; — his intense delight in the works; of God, — his fine appreciation of the minute or half-concealed lovelinesses of nature, — his care for all living creatures, — his calm and contented spirit, — his devotion under all circumstances to his Master and His work; — all these are brought into distinct relief by the lively touches of his own vigorous pen and pencil.

Perhaps, out of respect for the “old horse” previously mentioned, — and which made so many delightful journeys for my beloved, — I ought to explain that the “noble greys” referred to in the opening sentences of the letters were owned and driven, in this particular instance, by a member of the party; — but they had to draw “Punch’s coach” for all that!

Alton. June, 1873. — I am having a grand time. The horses are noble greys; the Carriage, with my luggage-basket behind, most comfortable. We go along with an ease and dignity seldom equaled, and never surpassed. From Guildford, we drove to the foot of Martha’s Chapel, and climbed to the very summit. What a view! Then down, and back to Guildford, and up the Hog’s Back. Mistaking the route, we went up an old deserted Roman road, immensely broad, and all green. What a piece of country! The road itself was a sight, and the views on either side were sublime. So on to Farnham, where we dined, and went into the Bishop’s park, which you will remember, with its deer, and avenue of elms. From Farnham to Alton is pretty and fruitful, but there were no incidents. I revised part of a sermon last night, and went to bed at 11:30; fell asleep at once, and neither stirred nor dreamed,, I awoke at 6, then got up,, and finished the sermon. Already, I am so much better that I feel able to go to work again, — quite. We’. go to Selborne this afternoon. How’ I wish you were with me} But you shall know anything I see which can help you to realize where I am, and what I am doing. By the way, this morning we went into the church here, and saw an old door which was riddled by the Parliamentarians; we were: also regaled with a superabundance of organ music which a young gentleman volunteered. The church is restored very beautifully, and in good taste.

Same day, later. — The drive was delicious, and I feel so well, Selborne is a little heaven of delights. It is Switzerland in miniature, where every turn changes the scene. It! it were in a foreign land, all the world would crowd to it. We were all charmed; who could be otherwise? Well might White write so prettily upon so choice a subject. Hill, dell, bourne, hanger, down, lane, and wood, — one has them all within a very small compass, and with endless variety. We have returned to Alton to sent off some of our party; and now, at a council of war, we have decided to visit Selborne again tomorrow, and see more of that gem of a village.

Selborne. — What a grand morning we have had! Up the Hanger above the village we climbed by a zigzag path, and had a very extensive view. 1 t was delicious to ramble among the tall beeches, and peep down upon the village, and then to descend into the place itself by winding paths. We went to Whites house, and were received very kindly by Professor Bell and his wife, both very aged persons. We were soon known, and had in honor. The poor complain of the parson’s neglect of them, and their lack of anything to hear which they can understand. We rambled about as; in a paradise, and then were off to Almsford. What enjoyment I have had, and what health is upon me! I never felt better in my life. We are all so happy with the scenery, that we do not know how to be grateful, enough. Oh, that you were here! One of these days, I hope and pray you may be able to come.

From Alresford, we have driven here (Winchester), along the beautiful valley of the Itchen, and your dear note was all I wanted to make me full of joy. Letters had accumulated here up to Wednesday. I have already’ answered twenty-five, and Mr. B... many others; so we: are keeping the work under.

Winchester is a rare old place. We went: first to the Hospital of St. Cross, and had a piece of bread, and a cup of beer. The cups are of horn, with five silver crosses on them; and my trio of friends bought one for me as a *souvenir,*and present for my coming birthday.

I noticed that *poor*men took a hunch of bread, while gentlemen were satisfied to receive a mere mouthful; and I thought, — Ah! none feed on Christ so fully as the poor and hungry. The dole is exhausted about noon, but the mercy of God continues to the eleventh hour.

Having tasted of the hospitality of St. Cross, we passed into its rectangle, under the arch of the Beaufort Tower. It is here that the dole is given, and here we saw some of the old brethren in their gowns with crosses; there are thirteen of these old pensioners, and they get two quarts of beer to drink every day, and on “gaudy days” gin. and beer hot! indeed, these old Saxon institutions appear to have regarded beer as the grand necessary of life! We walked and talked, and then sat down on the steps leading up into the dining-hall, and quietly looked on the curious scene. In the days when, the place was built, chimneys were a new invention, and therefore they are all *external,*and have: a grotesque appearance. On one side are the cloisters, and at the further end is a noble church, in which service is performed twice a day.

Our next visit was to St. Catherine’s Hill, but as I could not pretend to climb it, we. kept along the river-bank till we reached the cathedral. Here, a most intelligent guide made a couple of hours pass away as if they had only been so many minutes. I know more about architecture now than I had ever imagined I could learn, and am able to talk quite fluently about Early English. Decorated, Norman, etc., etc. It was strange to see the chests in which were the bones of Edgar, Ethelwulf, and all those old Saxon kings, and the sarcophagus of William Rufus. There is a kaleidoscopic window, all of the true old material, but no design, order, or arrangement; it reminded me of some men’s theological knowledge, — their system is of the “anyhow” character. The thing which pleased us; most was a pulpit, into which I ascended. The whole place was full of interest, even down to the crypt, into which we ventured. cathedral, we visited the famous school of William Wykeham, where After the “tunding” took place. It is like one of the Cambridge Colleges, and very quaint are its ways. The photograph I send you shows the tower of the school-chapel, and the Quakers’-meeting-looking place in front is the French school. We saw the dining-hall, and the great buttery hatches through which the meat and *beer*are passed, of which the boys have as much as they choose; — Saxon again! Near the kitchen, is the ancient painting of “the faithful servant,” which seems to be held in high repute at Winchester but I think it a very’ poor thing. I have also been up St. Giles’ Hill, above Winchester, and watched the setting sun, and have seen the lamps lit one after another all along the hill. It was very beautiful indeed, and the evening was so cool and calm it did me a world of good.

Salisbury. — To-day has been very dull and wet. Our drive through Hursley to Romsey was all very well; but from Romsey here, there was a constant downpour, and it got to be rather wearisome. It rains still, and I feel very tired; but a sunny day to-morrow will set me up again.

I don’t like big hotels in towns like dear old  
“Hatches” and the blessed trees.

Amesbury. Sabbath. — Last evening, we went into the grounds of the Abbey Park, the property of Sir Edward Antrobus. The river Avon runs through the domain, in many ‘windings, branchings, and twistings. The grounds are thickly wooded, but so little frequented that we heard the hoarse crow of the pheasant, the coo of pigeons, the cry of waterfowl, the song of countless birds, and the plash of leaping fish, but no sound of man’s profaning footsteps. We sat on an ornamental bridge, and listened to the eloquence of nature, while the river hastened along beneath us. The family being away, we had leave to wander anywhere, and we enjoyed the liberty very much. I was up this morning at six o’clock, dressing slowly, and meditating; then I came down, and had an hour’s work at *The Interpreter. I*do not mean to preach to-day, except with my pen; and it is a great pleasure to me to use that instrument when thought flows freely. May you also have a quiet day, and gather strength! May the Lord God of Israel bless my own best-beloved, and cause His face to shine upon her!

We had a nice little service yesterday morning, and after dinner, we went into the woods again. How I wished you could have been with me! Imagine a series of cathedrals of beech trees; the pillars, all of silver, and the roof of emerald lacework and twinkling stars of sunlight; the walls, of dense yew trees, and the floor ankle-deep of red and brown leaves, softer than a velvet carpet. Rain fell; but, under the yews, we only heard it patter; and as we lay still, we could, hear the wild ducks on the stream, far down below, making love, — and war. Presently, the sun came out, and we walked through the grand avenues up to a hill, which stood as a cliff’ above: the Avon, with the Abbey House full in view, and Beacon Hill and the Wiltshire range of Downs with plentiful *tumuli.*Here again we saw pheasants in the mead on the other side, one white one among them, and wild ducks and coots on the river, diving, swimming, and flying after one another. Swallows were all around us. Wood-pigeons came every now and then, and some were in the trees cooing constantly. Hawks poised themselves in the air, flocks of starlings flew overhead, like November meteors, thrushes and blackbirds sang; and, last of all there came, on downy yellow pinions, white-breasted and round-faced, your friend the owl, who sped into the wood, and was soon followed by another, whose soft course, on noiseless broad-sailing wings, would have made you nestle up to me for joy, and whisper, “Oh, husband, how lovely:!” All the while, the fish leaped as if they were quite at home, for we were as high above them and all the other things as if’ we were on a church spire. We then walked down green alleys, and started the rabbits in families; and, as we stood still, we saw their gambols, and marked the hares sitting upright, so that, seeing only their backs, they might have been mistaken for stumps of trees, if it had not been for their ears. I send you a sketch of them. A sneeze made them run, or rather, leap away. Then we came on young partridges and hen-coops, which we left at once, for fear of offending; and so came in to tea, walking along the river-bank, and smelling the newmown hay. It was a sweet Sabbath. To-day and yesterday:. I have done twenty-four pages of *The Interpreter,*and have sixteen more to do when I can. Love as deep as the sea and as broad, I send thee, my dear one

Lyndhurst. — Three dainty notes have I devoured; real delicacies, flavored with the love I prize above all earthly things. This place is so beautiful that, to linger here for a week or two,. will be delightful, and better than going elsewhere. On the way here, we drove to Broadlands, and had a good view of the interior. There is as fine a collection of pictures as I ever saw,, distributed over a house replete with comforts and conveniences. The Temples and Palmerstons were set forth in noble portraits, but there were many works of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Sir Peter Lely, Wouwerman, and other great masters; many Dutch pictures, and a large number full of interest, and truly instructive works of art. A mile further, we saw Emly Park, where Miss Nightingale was born, and another four or five miles brought us into the forest amid the wildest scenery, and boundless wildernesses o: shade. Here we came upon Rufus Stone, of which I send you all three sides. I bought them of a poor boy’ in smock-frock, on the spot. “Mother paints ‘em, Sor,” was the answer of this youth to my question, *“Where*do you buy them?” What are the Selbornians after to have no photographs of their sweet village? Evidently, this “Mrs. Hodge” of the New Forest is an advanced woman! How vivid history becomes when such memorials are before one’s eyes! The top of the iron pillar is grated, so that we could look in, and see the stone which it encases. Here it began to rain, but we had only about tour miles to drive to Lyndhurst, so we went along very gently in alternate shower and shine.

So ends this week’s chronicle. I do not think more could well I have been seen; certainly’, more could not be enjoyed by any living man in the absence of a dear wife to share his pleasure. How I should have loved you to have seen ‘the partridges, and rabbits, and birds of all kinds, and. forest trees and cedars, and roses and honeysuckles! It may yet be. The Lord cheer thy heart, thou dearest among women! Accept my most fervent love, hot from my inmost heart!

Yesterday morning, we went for a ride through *“The*Manor’,” and there we came upon a very *Atlantic of rhododendrons!*Huge billows of these: flowers dashed up into the trees, or sank into deep hollows, and that for a mile or so in length, and a quarter of a mile in depth. The azaleas and rarer rhododendrons are past, but enough remained to make a matchless sea of color and beauty. How I wished you were there! Thence we drove to Castle Malwood, where Rufus slept the night before he was; shot. It stands on a round hill, and the owner has cut out openings in the wood, so as to give a series of glorious views. It is like a circular picture-gallery; for, looking through a frame of green, you see the towns and villages far away. None but a man of taste would have thought of such a thing, and carried it out so well. Some of the views are wonderful; no artist could copy them, they are so far away, yet so large and so full of detail. In the afternoon, clouds hung low, there was no air, all was close and thundery; our heads ached, and though we went out for a walk, we could scarcely breathe.

**Sabbath.** — I have been to the little Baptist Chapel, and have been much refreshed with a plain sermon from ‘:’ Master, carest Thou not that we perish?*”*  
We then walked in the wood, and talked and meditated. It is a grand thing to be lost in the. forest within five minutes of coming out of a meetinghouse!

**Monday.**— This morning, we have been in the forest again from ten till twelve. There are: great masses of beech in one place, then oak, then underwood and small trees. Amid these are green lawns, and verdant valleys, glades, dells, hills, and vales. Some. times, trees disappear, and all is common, with gorse, heather, and low bushes. Cottages surprise you everywhere, in nooks as secret as the haunts of fairies. Cattle with bells create an Alpine tinkling, horses and hogs go in troops. Everything is picturesque, and the space seems boundless. One night soon be lost, for the roads, and tracks, and mere trails, are countless. Birds and insects abound, and wild flowers and mosses. It is a world of beauty, I can say no less. The trunks of the stately tree:;, all aglow with lichen and moss, are loveliness itself; and the weird oaks are sometimes grotesque, and at other times solemn. Lyndhurst is only a village, but: it is in the forest, and that is its charm. You can ramble where you will, and no man can threaten you for trespassing. We hoped to see some of the fallow deer, and the squirrels; but have not succeeded as yet. We tracked a little brawling brook this morning; and if ever perfect beauty has existed on earth since the Fall, we saw it. What with foxgloves on the banks, and rare ferns at the river’s brim, and the rippling waters among mossy mole-mounds, and thymebearing knolls, and the red floor beneath the temple of beech shade, — it was matchless! I am as happy as half a being can be without the other half! It would be bliss indeed if you were here to share my joys.

**Tuesday.** — An evening drive has been supremely delightful from its coolness, and from the. shadows and the gleams of glory from the setting sun, which here and there lit up the tree-tops, blazed among the: old roots, and gilded the lofty forest columns. I feel as peaceful as serenity itself. No place upon earth could so fitly minister to a wearied brain by giving such perfect rest. It is better than cities, pictures, or even mountains, for all is peace, and there is not even sublimity to excite the emotions of the mind. One rests, and gazes on a spider’s web all silvered o’er, and set with diamonds of dew; a beetle flying heavily; a dragon-fly dashing forward like a cavalier charging the foe, then hesitating and irresolute until another fit of energy seizes him; a foal frisking with delight at its mother’s side; a snake rustling hurriedly away among the red leaves, or a partridge scurrying across the heather! Thank God for such peaceful scenes!  
We have been through Bolder Wood and Mark Ash, and seen the most wonderful forest scenery I have ever beheld or even dreamed of. The huge beeches and oaks are so fantastic as to seem grotesque and wizard-like. They are beyond measure marvelous, and one could visit them twelve times a day, and yet not see half their beauties. The most singular thing of all is the flying buttress of the beech trees, which I never observed before. A long bough will be supported by another Which joins it from lower down, and grows into it, so as to hold it up. This habit in the: beech leads to great curiosities of growth, for there are sometimes threefold bracings, and great branches will be thus locked together,, while, in other instances, one bough will curl under another in order, apparently, to hold it up. There are shapes most unshapely, and twistings most queer and unexpected, but the one object appears to be to buttress one another, and contribute to each other’s strength by this strange interlacing. Just so should believers aid one another; are they not all branches of one tree?

Another place we: have visited during the week is Beaulieu Abbey, which is all in ruins, but some remarkable parts remain, and the foundations of the buildings are marked out on the turf by a sort of stone edging, so that one can, in imagination, restore the whole structure. We amused ourselves by trying to decipher the inscription on a broken memorial stone, but could not succeed. What a blessing to have a *complete*Revelation, or we should be spelling out the meaning of what we could see, and losing ourselves in endless speculation as to what might have been written on the lost fragment! I am better and better, and all the ocean of my love is yours.

*June*19, 1873. — This is my thirty-ninth birthday, and I desire to bless God for sparing and blessing me, and for giving me, as one of His choicest gifts, my own dear, precious wife. May we be spared to one another for many away, and dwell together for ever hereafter! Thank you for your dear fond letter. Truly, it is sweet to be so dearly loved, and to love., in return with an eagerness which could understand limping expressions, much more the tender words which you employ. God bless thee! It has rained all day, so we have all been to be photographed, gratifying our vanity, since we could not indulge our observation. I am promised a copy of the group tonight before this is posted, though it will not have been long enough in water to prevent its fading; but if it pleases you for a. moment, it will answer my purpose.  
What do you think of your old “hub” in the forest? Does he not look calm and happy?

I think the old log just suits him, and the shabby old coat, too! I like the photograph better than any portrait ever taken of me; I wonder if you will?

After I wrote to you yesterday, I worked a little while at The *Interpreter,* but soon felt one of my old attacks coming on, so we set off for a long walk, and at some time past ten o’clock at night we lost our way in the thick of the forest, only we knew the direction of Lyndhurst by the chimes. After breaking through the long grass, brambles, bracken, and underwood, we came to the edge of the dense enclosed wood in which we had been wandering, but a ditch and a pond barred our way’. However, there were some rails of fencing across, and over this; we climbed, and went along it above the water. We landed in a field of high grass, and made tracks for a cottage, got into the garden, down the path, and out at the front gate, nobody challenging us. This adventure did me good, and procured me a fair nightsleep.

To-day, we have been to lock at the scene of our night wandering, and to find out where: we missed our way. We have roamed in the wood for two hours, and have never seen a soul. Birds, rabbits, flies, ants, and spiders have been our only company, save the ONE with whom we have held sweet converse, and of whose Word we have spoken to each other.

We have been for a drive to Lymington was charming to pass through the forest. Each road has its own character, and there is no sameness. I had a fine supply of tracts, and sowed the region well. Lymington is quite a considerable place, but I could not get a good photograph of it for you. We went down to the quay, and took the steamboat to Yarmouth in the Isle of Wight. It was about thirty minutes’ steaming, and we saw Hurst Castle and the Needles to the right of us. Yarmouth is a poor little place, but we walked along the beach, and sat down for a while, and enjoyed the lovely view. Fine yachts went sailing by, and porpoises were in great plenty’. After being kept in by the wet, the lovely weather of to-day is doubly pleasing. Returning to Lymington at seven o’clock, we then drove back to Lyndhurst, where I found a very specially sweet note from my beloved awaiting me. I am so glad you like the photo. It gives me real delight to afford you pleasure. I feel wonderfully well. My precious one, may the Lord give thee restoration also, and make thee happy with me in journeys yet to be planned! How I should rejoice to show you about this grand forest, the noblest in all England!

Yesterday afternoon was spent most deliciously. We drove along the Christchurch Road, and took the photographer and his apparatus with us, hoping to secure some charming pictures. Our purpose was, however, thwarted by the absence of the sun, for he kept behind a cloud. We then sent back the carriage, and followed on foot the little brook called the Millifont, in all its winding ways. Ah! my darling, what choice bits we came across! Here, the water had worn out the earth from under fine trees, and left bare a watering of roots; there, in another place, clustered the waterlilies, and the green leaves with which they paved the brook. At one moment, we were on a sand island in the middle of the rivulet; at another, the bank was high above the water, like the Rhine hills, in miniature, above that mighty flood. Strange moths and dragon-flies frequented the pools and lakelets, and here and there a fish leaped out, while shoals of minnows flashed away when our shadows fell upon them. We crossed the current upon a single fir tree, rough and unsquared; if we had tumbled into the water, it would not have mattered much, except that: we could not quickly have changed our clothes. All this walk was in solitude,, among great trees. It was so singular to sit down in the silence, broken only by’ the warble of the brook’s liquid notes, or by the noise of a moving bird, or the scream of a water-fowl, or the surprise of hearing a great crack, such as furniture will give in certain weathers. A dog saluted us with pertinacious, barking, and we found his mistress, an artist, sitting down on a sandbank in the stream, sketching. The dog evidently felt that he was her protector, but I do not think we should have seen the lady’ if he had not called our attention to her presence. Oh! it was delicious to lie on a bed of moss, beneath a shady beech, with ferns and foxgloves all around, and the water rippling at one’s feet! It was balm and cordial to me.

Bishops Waltham. — We left delightful Lyndhurst at about nine o’clock this morning’, and drove along a charming road till We reached Southampton, and crossed by the horse-ferry to go to Netley, and explore the ruins of its Abbey. Certainly, no place could be more congenial for an hour or so c f rest. One can clamber up to the top in some places, especially in the South transept, where there is a walk on a sort of narrow ledge under the arches below the window. I was greatly interested, but could only keep on saying to myself, “How I wish my dear wiley were here!” From there we went to see the Victoria Hospital driving along by the edge of Southampton Water, — such a fine drive! The Hospital is the longest building in England; I should think it is nearly half a mile long. Then we went over the hills to Botley, where the views are boundless, and so on to this queer old town. We have been wandering among the ruins of a castle-palace, where Henry II. and Coeur-de-Lion have feasted in the days gone by. It has been a cool, lovely day, and the way splendid.

Liphook. — We left Waltham this morning, and drove along a ridge, which gave us glorious views. We turned off the good roads, and made for Winchester Hill, — a great Roman or British earthwork upon an eminence. The tradition is that Winchester once stood here, but I cannot believe it. On the vast Down there are several *tumuli;*indeed, in the region we traversed to-day, *tumuli*a. re as plentiful as blackberries. What air we breathed! How fresh it blew up from the sea! It was a fair requital for the puffing which it cost me to climb the hill! Then we came down to East Meon, where is an ancient church, and then we traversed a long valley between two great ranges of Downs. Such exquisite views! Nobody need go to Switzerland for the sublime! At Paltersfield, I found a sweet note from my darling. May all God’s blessings ‘be heaped upon her! As the way had been too short for a day’s journey, we came on to Liphook this evening, and saw gems of views, which filled us with admiration. Here is a great inn, of ancient date, stately and roomy. It is mentioned by old Pepys; but since the coaching days, its glories have departed, though it still remains comfortable and wist. I am now looking forward to my work, and hope to keep on for a long time.

Ockley. — We strolled into the park, and sat on a fallen tree. Presently, a squirrel came and peeped at us, and not knowing our faces, he scudded away, and went up a been. Anon he came down again, waving his tail on high, and passed us to another tree. Then came a doe and fawn, and stood and stared; and others followed, and in Indian file went slowly off. It became cold, so we trotted in to tea; and this done, I pen a line to my darling, almost the last she will get before my return.

A dear little note has just come from you, and rejoiced my heart. What joy to meet my beloved again, and find her better! On Sunday, we went and sat with the Quakers, and created an event. A portly female was moved to speak, and also to admonish us against water-baptism! She was one of the old school, and evidently relieved her soul by her exhortation. In the afternoon, we had a fine storm and refreshing rain, and I revised a sermon, and wrote on a Psalm. Receive a great flood-tide of love from my heart to yours. May God bless us in returning to each. other’s beloved society, and spare us for many years to one another!

CHAPTER 77.

MEMORIES OF MY FATHER.

BY PASTOR CHARLES SPURGEON.

‘That is a very precious Name which Christ puts into our months when He bids ‘us say to God, “Our Father, which art in Heaven;” and there is a wonderful sweetness when we come to know that we may call Him our Husband. I do, not like to compare the two, and say which ‘title is to be preferred, — whether Husband or Father; — they are both unutterably sweet when they are enjoyed to the full. — C H. S, *in sermon preached at the Tabernacle, March 1,*1883.

M Y dear mother has told, and is; telling, in the sweetest manner possible, much tender interest concerning her beloved husband. She records, in her own inimitable fashion many touching incidents in the life of him who is so dear to her heart; and her charming writing proves unutterably sweet,” enjoyed to how because the full,” the title “my husband” is to her. There is only one other who can write the words “my lather ‘: alter the illustrious name of Charles Haddon Spurgeon;.. and. such a father! Blessed be his dear memory! Oh, for “the tongue of the learned,” and “the pen of a ready writer,” for then could I hope to speak and write love’s eulogy on one whose like we cannot hope to see again. Never had any son a kinder, wiser, happier, holier, or more. generous sire; and I count it one of the highest honors of my life. to be permitted to place within the already wellstored casket, a few gems which memory has preserved through that sweet relationship, which, in God’s great goodness, I, as one of my father’s sons, was privileged to enjoy.

There was one trait in his noble and godly character, which, among many others, always shone with a luster peculiarly its own. His humility was of a Christlike character, and it demands heartiest commendation from those who speak or write about him. Words of eulogy concerning himself were ever painful to him, his motto in this, as in all other matters, being, *“not*I, but Christ;” yet, from his own loving child some need. of praise may surely come, and the son would fain render all due honor to the. best of fathers. His blameless example, his holy consistency, his genial love, his generous liberality, his wise counsel, and his fearless fidelity to God and His truth, are all on a par with his fatherliness; and in my heart, as in all those, with whom he came into contact, these qualities have been enshrined. The matchless grace and. goodness, manifested in the home, found their counterpart in his public career, and proved how completely the spirit of the Master permeated the whole, life of His servant. What my father was to me, to the Church of Christ, and. to the world at large, none can ever fully estimate; but those who knew him best understood the secret of his magic power, for they felt that he *“had*been ‘with Jesus,:’ and that Jesus lived in him.

The earliest recollections of my dear father, which I have retained, are, naturally, those associated with my childhood; and my heart is filled anew with joyful pleasures as I think again and again of the doings of the: days gone by. I must have been a very small boy when I capered about, with great delight, because my father had provided., for the entertainment of the natives of Walton-on-the-Naze, a firework display on the sands; and, among the visitors for a season, at the then slightly-known and out-of-theway watering-place, little Charlie was made glad by looking at sky-rockets, and. listening to the bang of squibs. This may seem a small matter to report, but it is indicative,, of a prominent feature in my father’s character, inasmuch as he constantly rejoiced in giving pleasant surprises wherever he could; nor was this the only time when, to give his children some fun, he made the fifth of November an excuse for indulging in works of fire.

I well. remember, too, how an improvised swing had been hung between two trees for’ the amusement of the boys; but an untimely fall of one of the twins precluded all further use: of this out-door gymnasium. Father felt, however, that athletic exercises were conducive to the health of growing lads, so he arranged for the erection of a substantial horizontal bar and swing for their use, thus giving evidence of his thoughtful love and sympathetic consideration for their well-being.

I can seem to see, as if it were but yesterday, his bright face beaming with smiles, as he gave his would-be carpenter-sons a present:, in the form of a basket of tools and a box of nails. All the implements needed for the full equipment of a master in the trade were to be found within that workman’s basket; and I shall never forget how father watched and waited for us to discover, among the tools, a neat roll of rag:! While we were puzzling our brains to find out why this was included, he laughingly explained that, in all probability, when we had cut our fingers, we. should find out ‘the use of it. The providing of the bandage for wounded amateurs, exemplified his power’ of forethought, and also his profound common sense.

I still have in my possession a silver medal, bearing the following inscription:

***~~“Presented to  
MASTER CHARLES SPURGEON~~***

***~~by the  
United Kingdom Band of Hope Union,  
January, 1865,”~~***

It calls to mind a notable occasion when the Tabernacle was crowded with a vast audience gathered to hear the famous lecture on “Sermons in Candles” delivered by my dear father; and well do I remember coming forward to receive, from Mr. W. R. Selway, a broad band of blue ribbon, to which was attached this medallion of membership; and how; after he had placed it around my neck, with trembling voice I acknowledged the kind gift, and expressed the hope that I might be a teetotaler all my life.

What a wonderful light the lecturer threw upon his subject! It can well be imagined with what interest the little lads, in their ninth year, looked and listened, as the different candles were lighted, and the sermonettes sparkled. Most vividly do I recollect how daintily my dear father walked across the platform, — as if to avoid the pools of water and heaps of refuse to be found ‘in the streets of an Oriental city, — bearing in his hand a small cane, at the end of which hung a colored paper lantern, thus illustrating Psalm 119:105: “Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path” I must confess that I had, even then, a wish to do the sell-same thing,, little dreaming that, in after-lite, the dear father, whom I was watching with such intense delight, would make over to me, as a love-gift, the whole of the apparatus he had used, with a bound copy of the lecture, saying, “There, Charlie, my boy, you can go on giving it.”

Two other illustrations fastened themselves upon my youthful mind; the first being the one in which the lecturer’s assistant represented the tempter discovering the weak place in the Christian’s character. Watching for the defective spot in the lantern, the helper,, by the use of a pair of bellows, soon put the candle out.  
The other emblem which I specially noted was the one described by dear father as “the greatest display of our fireworks.” Suspended from the: roof of the Tabernacle was a massive candelabrum which, to the young onlooker, was most attractive for its brightness and beauty; and, though one of such tender years could hardly appreciate all that was then said concerning *“the*Church of Christ in its multiplicity, variety, and unity,” he cannot forget the harmless mirth, expressed in guileless laughter, which followed the lecturer’s remark that one strong old Baptist had assured him that the “Dips” gave the best light!

These are: only a few of my happy memories of that memorable stand of Hope meeting.

I prize immensely the first letter I ever received from my beloved father. It is written to a little boy, and has, therefore, on the top of the note-paper, a colored view of Heligoland. I feel constrained to treat the publication of the letter in the same manner as age has treated the original, and to give it in pieces.

It runs thus: —  
“My Dear Charlie,

“I am very glad that you wrote a nice little note to your dear mother, and I hope it is a sign that you are always going to be diligent and thoughtful, and this will be a glad thing indeed.. I am delighted to hear that you are doing so well at College. Give my love to all the students, and tell Mr. Rogers that it always cheers me to know that the brethren bear me up in their prayers.

*“On*this little island, there is a lighthouse; you see it at the top, on the left OF the picture. It is much needed, for many vessels are wrecked here. We live down below, on the beach, near the square tower with a flag on it; that is a bathhouse. Steamers come every two days, and then we can send letters; at other times, we are far off from everybody, alone in the wide, wide sea. We have sheep’s milk, for there is no room for cows. Fish is very plentiful, and very good.

*“My*Clear boy, I trust that you will prove, by the whole of your future life, that you are truly converted to God.’ Your actions must be the chief proof. Remember, trees are known by their fruit, and Christians by their deeds. God bless you for ever and ever!

Mother sends her kindest love, and so does  
Your loving father,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

The reference to *“doing*so well at College,” needs just this explanation. One of the students was, for a time, our tutor; and, naturally, dear father took a deep interest in our educational progress. Pastor Harry Rylands Brown, now of Darjeeling, was the good brother who had us in training; and, from that day to this, teacher and pupil have been close friends. This first letter to his firstborn exhibits the tender love that: the President always had for the College, which he often termed, among his many works for the Lord, *“his*firstborn and best beloved.”

Among’ the. many gifts we received from father, I recall one occasion, when a piece of gold was bestowed, as a birthday present, upon his two boys, who thereby became the proud possessors of a magic-lantern and a few comic: slides. When the toy was brought home, the kind donor gave instructions to the cook to allow the boys to show their pictures, as often as they liked, in that portion of the kitchen which would not interfere with culinary arrangements, saying, at the same time, “It won’t last long, they’ll soon be tired of it.” This prophecy was quite sufficient to set up, within the minds of the purchasers of “this very pretty thing,” a strong determination that they would not get tired of it. By the combined efforts of the two brothers, further pictures were produced upon glass, which necessitated the constant use of the lantern to test their artistic qualities; and, secretly, it was resolved that a special series should be prepared so that, during the coming Christmas,, the services of Messrs. C. and T. Spurgeon might be requisitioned for the entertainment of the children who would frequent Yule-tide parties. Several engagements of this nature having been secured, and professional fees attending the lecturing exhibition having been received, they were able to hand over to the President: of the Pastors’ College the: sum of ten guineas; and, in doing so, perhaps somewhat saucily reminded their beloved father that “they weren’t tired of the magiclantern yet.” This little episode greatly charmed the heart of the original donor of the ten shillings, and proved the possibility of making a small capital bring in large interest.  
When I was about twelve years of age, I was riding home with my dear father, in the brougham, after an evening service at the Tabernacle. It was “blowing great guns.” there was a heavy downpour of rain, and a keen East wind, with a cutting edge, was driving it upon the pavement. It was a dark, dreary night; and, as we came. to a point where cross-roads met, father’s quick eye discerned a person, whom he judged to be a poor woman, hurriedly rushing across the: stones through the. storm. ‘With her skirt gathered over her head, she’. looked a weird spectacle; and, in a moment, his heart was moved with compassion toward her. tie cried out, “Charlie,. stop the coachman; jump out, and see if there is anything wrong with that poor creature, and find out whether you can help her.” Of course, I sprang out of the carriage at once; but I wondered what I was going to say to the woman. I overtook her, and said, “Excuse me, but is there anything the matter? Are you in trouble?” She replied, “Oh, dear, not I have been to see a friend, and have been caught in the storm. I came out without an umbrella, so I am running home as fast as I can.” On repeating to hear father what she had said, he exclaimed, “That is a relief to me!” But what would he have done if she had been in distress? He was glad that she was; all right:; but I remember thinking, as I sat there by his side, “Dear me! that woman is nothing to him, yet his heart went out towards; her in pity and sympathy.” It went out after everyone who was in need and distress; and if his hand could help, its bounty speedily followed the leadings of his great heart of love.

While my brother and I were at Mr. Olding’s school at Brighton, I wrote to tell my father that we had started a little., prayer — meeting, in the master’s; drawing-room, among our school-fellows. In reply, he wrote: — “ Dear boy, — One of my sweetest joys is to hear that a. spirit of prayer is in your school, and that you participate in it. To know that you love the Lord, and are mighty in prayer would be my crowning’ joy; the hope that you do so already, is a happy one to me. I should like you to *preach;*but it is best that you pray; many a preacher has proved a castaway; but never one who has truly learned to pray.”

I understand that, in the first chapter on “A Traveler’s Letters Home,” father describes the very tour concerning which he wrote to me in this interesting fashion:— “I have had a very happy journey, and am very much better. You can trace my trip thus, — I have been in stately Brussels, sniffed in odoriferous Cologne, slept in Rhine-washed Mayence, inspected regal Munich, rested in rustic Botzen, floated in palatial Venice, eaten sausage in Bologna, tarried in flowery Florence, and roamed in imperial Rome.”

This reference to various places on the Continent reminds me of the great enjoyment: dear father gave his two sons, in August, 1871, when he took us to Antwerp. As. we went through the different churches there, he seemed to know all about every picture, each pulpit, and even the tombs; and he could tell us about the famous artists, sculptors, and carvers, upon whose works we were gazing in boyish wonderment. It was a treat to hear him describe the “Calvary” outside St. Paul’s Church. Some persons, unacquainted with my father, have said that he was no artist; but if they had known more of him, and heard him dilate upon the noblest works by the best: Flemish masters, they would have thought otherwise. He found sermons while, he looked upon “The Elevation of the Cross” and “The Descent” from it, by Rubens; and with equal facility drew lessons from the masterpieces of Vandyck and Snyders. It needs a true connoisseur to discover the hidden meaning of the artist’s, mind, as portrayed upon the canvas, and thus to revel in the spirit of the picture such a gift was his. Standing before the magnificent pulpit in St. Andrew’s Church, he pointed out the cross which bears the apostle’s name, and then gave as an exquisite sermonette upon the miraculous draught of fishes illustrated by the carved figures of Christ and Elis two disciples, with their fishing-boat and the nets containing the unprecedented ‘take.” I well remember, too, how father’s righteous indignation was kindled as we stood in the famous cathedral, and witnessed the absurdities connected with the funeral obsequies of some great personage. No sooner had the gloomy *cortege*quitted the building, to a slow and solemn dirge rendered by’ the chorister monks, than a gorgeous wedding procession, with all the; joyous accompaniments of marriage festivities, took its place; and thus the whole scene was quickly changed, and the mournful “miserere” was succeeded by the nuptial *“jubilate.”*The experienced preacher extemporized a brief discourse upon the ever-varying vicissitudes of human life, as set forth by the two events; and the truths he thus inculcated, still abide, as we remember that our joys and sorrows are not so far apart as we are apt to think, for sunbeams and shadows are closely allied, after all. *Sic est vita.*

It has been my privilege to accompany dear father, on many occasions, to *“the*land o’ cakes” and the county of lakes; and never had any tourist a more excellent guide. He was a veritable walking Encyclopaedia; so full of information, and so gracious in imparting it, that a holiday spent with him was as instructive as a term at school, and to me, far preferable. It sometimes became amusing to see how eager folks were to show any little kindness to him. On one occasion, we were passengers on Mr. Duncan’s yacht, *Farina,*and had made the passage of the Caledonian Canal, as tar as Loch Etive, where, in one of the sheltered and picturesque bays, we had anchored for the night. Next morning, when breakfast was being prepared, the steward discovered that the supply of milk had run short, and that he must needs visit the shore to replenish the store. Standing on deck, I watched the progress of our caterer as he climbed the hillside, and made application at a small cottage on the border’ of the wood which covered the slope. Presently, a woman made her appearance, and then it soon became evident that she and the steward were having a somewhat lively conversation. In a few minutes, the man returned; but, alas! minus the milk.

He told us, when he came back, that the lady of the house would only supply it on condition that he would let her see Mr. Spurgeon, whose name he had used as his last argument. Upon my dear father learning that his appearance was required for this purpose, with his usual readiness to supply “the milk of human kindness,” he came up on deck, and waved his hand in the direction of the cottage. The woman at once recognized him, and commenced a “Scotch reel” of delight. The steward had, meanwhile, again pulled to the shore; he soon disappeared within the house, and, in a few seconds, he came out, ‘bearing a huge jug, brimful of pure milk, tot which the worthy dame would not accept even twopence a quart:!

At another time, I was staying; with my father in a much-loved, and oftfrequented spot, in dear old Surrey, where his presence was always looked upon as a high honor. The villagers had been successful in securing a fine large carp from the pond which skirted the green, and they thought that such a good catch should at once be sent to their notable visitor; so. with great ceremony, a deputation of rustics was, appointed to wait upon him. The best that any could give to him, was never reckoned too good for the man they loved; and though, in both these instances, the gifts were small, they were sufficient to prove the affectionate regard in which he was held by multitudes of people of all classes. Testimonials, amounting to thousands of pounds, have been presented to him by admiring adherents and while the plaudits of enthusiastic crowds have greeted him as the hero of the hour,, he has, in grateful terms, acknowledged the Grouts showered upon him, and, while passing on the praises to the Lord, he has handed over the purses and their contents to the service of his Master. Never did a more liberal soul, nor a more grateful marl, breathe, than my father.

It was a memorable period in my history when, upon leaving school, in 1874, I decided to enter upon a commercial career of every son, upon commencing’ his life’s battle, received such a letter as the following, there would probably be fewer defeats sustained, and more victories gained: —

“Winchester,  
June 26th, 1874.  
“My Dear Charlie,

“Your kind letter was very pleas-me to me, and made my birthday much happier. I am right glad to see that you intend putting on the armor in earnest for the battle of lift, into which you must now enter. \¥e have to carry babies; but it: is always a glad occasion when they run alone. After that, comes another period of carrying on a larger scale; and then comes (as now,) the time for another running alone, as to manly, serious, earnest, industrious life-work. We do not expect you to run, in this sense, all at once; and we shall not be surprised if there are some stumbles mitt failures; but we shall hope to see you an upright man, capable of any honest achievement, and bending all your strength to accomplish an honorable lifework. I am full of hope about you; and it I feel any anxiety, it is because I love you so well that I want you to be a greater success than other young men. I believe you love the Lord, and that is the main thing; the next: is, stick *to it.*Leave childish things once for all, and buckle to the work. It will not be pleasant, and it may even become irksome; but the harder you work, at first, the less you will have to do in later life. The times are so pushing that you must put out all your energies; and, above all, you must be careful, and very persevering; and then, with God’s blessing, you will soon take a position to which your father and mother can point with pleasure. If you do not preach the gospel, you must help me to do it, and make money for Jesus. With my two sons; at my side, I shall be able to do marvels, if the Lord be with us.

“Letters; from your dear mother are encouraging. Do not write to me here, as I am flitting.  
“Your loving father,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

CHAPTER 78.

MEMORIES OF MY FATHER (CONTINUED).

BY PASTOR CHARLES SPURGEON.

O NE of the most notable events, of which I still have vivid recollections, was the occasion of my baptism. An entry in the Tabernacle church-book, dated September 14, 1874, reads as follows:—

“Charles and Thomas Spurgeon, of Nightingale Lane, Clapham, were proposed for church-membership, and Brother Payne was “Charles and Thomas Spurgeon came before the church, and gave a satisfactory statement of the work of grace in their souls, and the messenger reporting favorably, it was agreed that, after baptism, they should be received into communion with the church.”

On the following Lord’s-day morning, dear father preached at the Tabernacle, from Isaiah 8:18, a sermon to which he gave the title, “I and the Children.” The next evening, September 21, he baptized his twin-sons, who had, on the previous day’, celebrated their eighteenth birthday. As the beloved Pastor had not, for a long time, been able to baptize, and also, perhaps, because the candidates were his own sons, the great edifice was crowded with an interested concourse of people who had come to witness the solemn ceremony. Dr. Brock, of Bloomsbury Chapel, was present, according to promise, and delivered a forcible address, which was emphasized by some of father’s telling utterances. In connection with this joyful occurrence, an illuminated address (of which a facsimile appears on pages 288 and 289,) was presented to my dear mother, who had also been an eye witness of her sons’ confession of faith in the Scriptural fashion. We received the right hand of fellowship, at the Lord’s table, on the night of October’ 4; the motto text my father then gave me was, “Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price;” and many a time since ‘has it been a source of spiritual inspiration to me. When it was put into my heart to serve the Lord, and to begin to speak for Him, I of course sought my father’s counsel. He was then laid aside with a painful illness at Brighton, but he wrote: to me thus:—

“My’ Own Dear Son,

“I think it very kind and thoughtful of you to write to your father, and appointed messenger to the fellowship the more so because the time you have: to yourself is not very long. I am glad you desire to do something for the Lord, and shall be still more pleased when you actually set: about it. Time flies;; and the opportunity for doing good flies with it. However diligent you may be in the future, you can only do the work of 1875 in 1875; and if you leave it undone now, it will be undone to all eternity. The diligent attention which you give to business, the careful purity of your daily life, and your concern to do common things in a right spirit, are all real service for the Lord. The hours in which your earthly calling is industriously followed for Christ’s sake, are really hours of work for Jesus but, still, this cannot satisfy you, or, at least, I hope it cannot. As redeemed by the precious blood of Jesus, you feel that you belong to Him, and you long to show your love to Him by actions directly meant to extend His Kingdom, and gather in sinners whom He loves to bless. When once such efforts are commenced, they become easier, and a kind of hunger to do more seizes upon the heart. It is not toil, but pleasure; and if God blesses what we do, it rises from being a common pleasure to become a sacred delight. ‘Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.’ It is not for me to suggest ‘what form your service shall take, that must be left to yourself; and half the pleasure of it will lie in the exercise of a sacred ingenuity in discovering the work for which you are best adapted.

“I was very thankful to read that you rejoiced in prayer; may it always be so, and yet more and more; for nothing gives us such strength, or affords us such guidance. The Lord bless you there, and all must be well. I have always hoped to see you a leader in the host of God. How it will be, I know not; but that so it may be, is one of my increasing prayers. Dear son, may all blessings abound towards you; you know I love you very dearly. It is a very dull Sabbath here, as to weather; I hope you are having a ‘bright and happy day at home.  
“Your loving father,

**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

This admonition well sets forth what kind of father “my father” was. With such words as these to encourage and direct me, it was not long before I decided to begin work for the Lord Jesus Christ, feeling sure also that he, who had written thus to his son, would pray even more earnestly than before that the humble worker might be richly blessed. The special service which was laid upon my heart ultimately resulted in the building of a small chapel in Chatham Road, Wandsworth Common; and I sought the. re to glorify God in the faithful discharge of “my Father’s business,” while I was also not slothful in the business of my earthly master, the. late John Sands, Esq., of 50, Old Broad Street, City. The following note will show the interest my father took in both enterprises: —

“Mentone.  
“My Dear Charlie,

“Your conduct gives me the greatest pleasure when I think of it, for you have stuck to work right heartily, and I am sure God will open up your way. Live near to Him,. and for Him; and He will give you, of His grace, happiness here and hereafter. May your good endeavors, at Bolingbroke be crowned with success, and may you ere long see some souls; led to Jesus! I must give you some substantial help for the new chapel. Receive your father’s fondest love, and remember me. very heartily to Mr. Sands.

“Your affectionate father,  
**“C. H. S.”**

On one occasion, when dear father was preaching in the Tabernacle, he thus joyfully referred to several stages in the spiritual experience of his twin-sons: — “Did not our hearts overflow, as parents, when we first discovered that our children had ‘;ought the Lord? That was a happy night, a time to be remembered, when we were called up to hear their tearful story, and to give them a word of comfort. We were not half so glad at their birth as we were when they were born again. Have we not, since then, often rejoiced as we have seen them useful in the service of the: Savior? It was an exquisite pleasure to hear them speak for the first time in the Redeemer’s Name; and it has been a greater pleasure to know that God has owned their ministry in the conversion of souls. All parents have not that particular form of joy; but it has been mine to a high degree, and for this I bless the Name of the Lord. All of you have had great delight in your converted children, when your boy has stood out against temptation, or your girl has remained faithful when thrown among worldlings. No one can recount the mutual joys of the various members of a believing: household; they rejoice in each other, and then. they all rejoice in God. How cheering it is for you as a parent to live again in your children, and to march once more to the holy war in. the vigorous zeal of one whom you still call ‘‘My boy “! O friends, I feel, at this time, in my own case, that my joy is up to the brim of my life-cup. Pardon me if I pause to magnify the Lord. I have seldom been long without affliction; but no man who has ever lived could have been more highly favored in domestic happiness than I have been.,”

On June: 27, 1878, when nine persons from Chatham Road Chapel were admitted to membership at the Tabernacle, their names were entered in the usual way in the Tabernacle church-book, and then the following resolution was added: —

“The church, having received the foregoing persons into fellowship, desire to record its gratitude to our Heavenly Father for this evident blessing resting upon the labors of our Pastor’s two sons, Messrs. Charles and Thomas Spurgeon. As these are the first fruits of their ministry, since the erection of the new chapel, we earnestly and heartily pray that abundant prosperity may continue to rest on the work carried on at Chatham Road.”

During the period I spent as a student in the Pastors’ College, my dear father was always interested, not only in my own welfare, but in that of all the brethren. Perhaps at: no time in the history of the Institution was he better acquainted than he was then with the whole of the men, and the internal work and hidden life of our “Alma Mater.” It was not looked upon as “telling tales out of school” when the son answered the inquires of the sire. On two occasions, I was privileged to receive from him letters containing’ sermon-notes, which he desired me to read to all the brethren. No less than eleven outlines of discourses were given in the following letter; but space can only be spared here for one or two specimens: —

“Mentone.  
“Beloved Brethren,

“Always make hay while the sun shines, and store up notes of sermons when your mind is fertile, for there are seasons of famine as well as of plenty, and every Joseph should lay up a store against the time of need. I fear I am not just now in the right order for sermonizing; but, if ‘ silver and gold have I none,’ ‘ such as I have give I you.’ By the way, that would not be a bad subject, — What we would give if we could, not half so valuable as what we can bestow if ‘.we will. Or, (1.) Talents we do not possess; are not to be the source of repining, of sloth, or of indifference to men’s wants; (2.) Talents we do possess are to be used for the good of men, in faith, in the Name of Jesus, to the glory of God.

“Turn to Acts 29., which is rich in texts. Verse 8. ( **I**.) The characteristic of a useful ministry: “he spoke boldly.’ (**II.**) The subject of such a ministry: ‘persuading the things concerning the Kingdom of God.’

“(1) The consistency of it with the Old Testament.  
“(2) The binding character of its claims.  
“(3) Its; blessedness.  
“(4) Its immediate requirements.”

At the: earl of the eleven skeletons of sermons, dear father wrote:—

“This is all I can do to-day. I am much better, and send my love to you all, and thanks for capital letters, all of which are beyond criticism.

“Yours ever heartily,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

Those ever-memorable Friday afternoons produced many rich seasons for storing up homiletic hints and outlines. This exercise seemed to be a recreation to the President, for if ever there was a brief interval that needed filling in between a bracing talk and a brilliant exposition, he would quietly make some: such remark as this’. — “ Here’s a good text’ ‘ HE restoreth my soul,’—  
“(**1.**) To life, by regeneration.

“( **2.**) To hope, by the revelation of His Son.  
“(**3.**) To strength, by being my food.  
“(**4.**) To wealth, by being my Father.  
“(**5.**) To a Kingdom in Christ.  
“(**6.**) To Paradise with Christ.”

As my College course was drawing to a close, my father wrote to, me: — “ Your time will soon be up, and I should like you to begin in some sphere, not too large, nor too small, from which you may step into a life-longposition. I think you will maintain a good congregation; and, by God’s blessing, will be useful. We must not push or strive to get you a position, but wait on the Lord, and He will do better for you than I can. When Bishops look out for livings for their sons or nephews, we condemn their nepotism, so we must not fall into the same evil ourselves. You will be patient and believing, and the right door will open.”

When the time came for me to settle in the ministry, my father’s counsel was a great factor in helping me to decide to accept the “call” from the members of South Street Baptist Church, Greenwich, and it afforded me no little joy to have him as the preacher on the occasion of my recognition as Pastor. A striking injunction, from the discourse he then delivered, stands Out vividly in my memory, and has been a constant inspiration to me. Leaning over the pulpit rail, and looking down upon me, as I sat on the lower platform, he said, in tender, yet thrilling tones, “Preach up Christ; my’ boy! Preach HIM up!!”

Among my father’s letters that I treasure beyond the price of gold, are those which relate to the help rendered to him in times of sickness. Some of them look almost like hieroglyphics, because they were hurriedly scribbled, when his poor hands were swollen with gout, on a Sunday morning, and sent to Greenwich by a special messenger, asking me to take his service. Here is one: — “ I am too full of pain to preach this morning; will you go to Tabernacle? I telegraphed Dunn to go to you, but if you have anyone else available, let him be ready. Your poor father, — C. H. S.”  
The first time that ever it was my honor to stand in his place, and thus occupy the pulpit in the Metropolitan Tabernacle on the Lord’s-day, called forth from him the following loving letter: —

“Nightingale Lane,  
“Balham,  
“Surrey,  
“December 14, ‘78.

“My Dear Son,

“I pray earnestly for you under the solemn responsibility of tomorrow. May your father’s God lift you out of yourself, giving you lowly dependence on His Spirit, and pleading earnestness that men may come to Christ! I am very ill, or I would be in my pulpit. I am ready to weep on being still away; but, dear son, the Lord is so good in giving me you, that I dare’, not think of repining. Only lean thou wholly: on Him, and be nothing before Him. He has been my stay these many years.

“Tell the people that, night and day, I am full of pain; and as these three times I have promised to be with them and have failed, I fear to hope any more. Only they will be all sure that it will be my highest joy to be back among them, to see their loving faces, and to speak to them the good Word of God. I am an exiled prisoner, and the iron enters into my soul; but the Lord is good, and in His Name do I hope.

“With best love from your dear mother, and —  
“Your poor lather,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

The deep interest he ewer took in my work at Greenwich, and his ardent affection for my beloved mother, are set forth in many of his letters, such as the following: —

“Mentone.  
“My Dear Son,

“May you, some quarter of a century hence, enjoy the pleasure of having your son Charles to preach for you! It is a great delight to me to receive such loving letters from the Bishop of Greenwich, who is also my son and heir; and it is even more joy to see that God is prospering you, and making your work successful. I think you have made specially good progress in the time. Stick to your studies;. Read Matthew Henry right through, it’ you can, before you are married; for, ‘after that event, I fear that Jacob may supplant him. Remember me to Mr. Hunthey, and all the: good people.

“I have not yet ‘.had this week’s letter from the Tabernacle, and therefore have not read the eulogiums on your sermons. I am better and better. It is forty-two days since we had any rain; and, all along, the fine weather has been unbroken. I am so grieved about your dear mother, and my impulse, is to come home at once; but then I reflect that I can do her no good, and should do her harm by becoming the second invalid to be waited on. Dear Charlie, do not get the rheum’s or the gouts; but spin-away on your skates or your cycles. Don’t go too much over the bridge; but you may give my love to Him. The sermon was capital; thank you much.

“With heartiest love and all good wishes from —  
**“YOUR OWN DAD.”**

The gentle hint, towards the close of this. letter, shows that it was penned during the period of my courtship. At my marriage, on April 11, 1881, both my dear parents were. present; the happy ceremony was performed by my father, and I can even now recall some of his words after the legal portion of the service had been completed: — “.As this ring is round, so may your love be endless! As it is made of pure gold, so may your affection be pure.” Continuing to say all manner of nice, kind things, he added: — “ It is exceedingly necessary that a minister, especially a young minister, should have a wife. The duties a minister’s wife has to fulfill are very important, for she is expected to be a combination of all impossible virtues; in fact, altogether a wonder.” Glancing lovingly at dear mother, he. ‘said: — “I know one minister’s wife who has greatly strengthened her husband in the Lord.” Never shall I forget the beautiful prayer in which he commended “the happy couple” to God; the answers to those: petitions we continue to receive even to this day.

He was again in the sunny South when he wrote the following letter: — “Grand Hotel,  
“Mentone.  
“My Dear Son,

“Your note was a real joy’ to me. What a good fellow you are! I live twice in seeing you so firm in the faith of God’s elect. I do not wonder that the chickens flock around the man who gives them real corn, and not mere chaff. The Lord keep you evermore true to the truth, and you will see His hand with you more and more! “your little notice-s of books are first-rate;’-short and pithy, better than half a page of long-winded nothings. You may do as many as ever you like, for nobody can do them better, nor as well. You charm me as I think of your interesting your dear mother with your lantern and views. It is most sad to have her at home when I am here enjoying myself. What can we do but try to cheer her up and pray the Lord to give her journeying strength?

“I am right glad to hear of the growth and advancement of the little girl. God bless her, and her mother, too! I am having a true holiday; not idle, but restful.

Love evermore to you and yours, from —  
“Your happy father,  
**“C. H. S.”**

There are one or two matters of interest alluded to in the above correspondence, which recall happy memories of my father. The reference to my “notices of books” recalls a slight service which I sought to render to the overtaxed Editor of The Sword and the Trowel, by reading some of the lighter literature sent to him for review, and giving him my opinion of the books. One day, at dinner, a friend thanked my father for his racy review of an interesting little work; whereupon, with evident delight, he drew the speaker on to say more about the criticism, and then, with that merry twinkle in his eye, which always told how he relished harmless fun, he said, “Well now, it so happens that I did not write that notice in the Magazine; there is the: dear boy opposite who wrote it.”

Father paid many visits to my flock at Greenwich, for it has ever been my delight — a delight fully shared by my people, — to help him in the many good works to which the Lord had moved him to set his hand. As these visits were paid upon my birthday are used the occasion to make him a present on behalf of either

College, Orphanage, or Colportage.  
His appreciation of my filial affection is expressed in the following letter: —  
“Dear Son,

“You are. ever a well of joy to your father. On this occasion, you greatly refresh me by helping the orphans. Checks for £58 15s. 6d. do not come in so very often; but when they do, I praise. God with all my heart. Will you thank all those good people for me? I am very grateful to them. God bless them!

“Chiefly, may a blessing rest on the church of God over which He has made you overseer! To that church I render grateful thanks for furnishing the occasion for this love-token, — this sacrifice of sweet smell.

“All the blessings that God can give be yours evermore! So prays —  
“Your loving father,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**  
In acknowledging some pecuniary help, sent on behalf of the College, in connection with the Annual Conference, he wrote: —  
“Dear Son,  
“You are always helping me and ray work. May the Lord bless you; and, one day, give you such joy in your family as I have in you! “I met, last week, with another soul converted under your last Tabernacle sermon.  
“Your loving father,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

How he delighted in recounting cases of conversion! He liked me to go out driving with him; and, as I sat silently listening, he would tell of recent instances of blessing which he had been permitted to see as the result of his own preaching. In this way, I learned much of the holy art of dealing with anxious inquirers, an art of which he was indeed a master.

I must relate an incident which, at the time, afforded my father a large amount of pleasure; and which is, I should think, unique in ministerial life. He had been announced to preach on behalf of a small Baptist church in the East End of London, and the Congregationalists had kindly lent their large place of worship for the occasion. Long before the appointed hour of service, a great crowd had gathered both within and around the building, so that, when the preacher entered the pulpit, many hundreds were still seeking admission. Turning to me, as I sat just behind him, he asked me whether I would take an overflow meeting in. the sanctuary opposite. I readily assented; whereupon he rose, and told the people to pass word on to those outside, “that his dear son Charles would preach just over the way, in the Baptist Chapel.;’ He continued his own service, and I retired to fulfill my promise, and had a crowded audience in the smaller building. It had been arranged that I should preach, in the evening, in the Baptist Chapel; and it turned out that the experience of the father was to be repeated with the son, for the place was filled in every part, and a large number in vain sought admission, so I dispatched a pencilled note to the great preacher of the afternoon, asking him if he would kindly come and take my overflow in the schoolroom opposite! As we journeyed home together, he said, “Well, Charlie, I do not suppose it has ever happened before, that father and son should be preaching opposite to one another at the same time; but, thank God, dear boy, not in opposition.”

I remember, too, in connection ‘with this visit, that, as we passed through the great meat-market at Smithfield, he called my attention to the immense quantities of provisions, remarking, as he did so, “Whatever will become of it all?” But we had not gone far Clown the Mile End Road, before the ever-moving mass of humanity caused another inquiry to rise to mind and lip, which was expressed in the Scriptural question, “From whence can a man satisfy these?” The conversation, which might very naturally have taken the form of a discussion upon the law of supply and demand, and such kindred themes as social and political economy, was, however, diverted into the higher Channel of talk about the gospel amply meeting the spiritual needs; of the masses, — a truth which was shortly after to receive its exemplification through the ministry of father and son.

On another occasion, it was my high privilege to preach to some three or four thousand people, who were the residue of a congregation numbering one thousand, gathered to hear my father in at church at Pollockshaws. The intense joy, which seemed to ripple over his face, and sparkle in his eyes, when he learned that his son had the larger’ audience, increased the already large measure of happiness which delighted my heart. The crowds surged round him, blocking the thoroughfare, and rendering it impassable, until “the good man” had shaken hands with his Scotch friends; and joyous cheers rang out again and again as the carriage conveyed the two preacher.’; away from the place of their joint ministry.

It was a very memorable day to me when I had to take my father’s place in Exeter Hall, — the building which is inseparably associated with some of the greatest triumphs of “the boy-preacher’s” history.

The letter summoning me to this service was as follows: —  
“Dear Son,

“Alas! I may be unable to preach on Sunday at Exeter Hall. Can you serve: me yet again? All would be content.  
I am better; but can barely hold a pen, and have two rheumatic arms. Ah, me!  
“Love to my dear son and his, — my comfort and joy.  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

Birthday billets down and New Year’s notes are among ‘my special treasures: A specimen of each may serve as; a pattern for those who would fain express their loving wishes to dear ones. Here is the birthday epistle: —

“Westwood,  
“September 20, 1888.

“My Dear Son,  
“The Lord, Himself, bless you! Long may your useful be continued and growing blessings be given to you, and be scattered by you! It is always a joy, to me, even to think of you. In all things you cause me comfort and delight, specially for the grace manifested in you. The Lord remember, in His infinite love, your dear’ wife and children, and make them ever your joy!

“I could, not tell what birthday gift to send. you; so I thought I would ask you to serve in ‘by taking upon yourself the trouble of laying out the enclosed little cheque for something which would give you pleasure.

“I have been to Wotton, to see Mr. Evelyn, and have rested finely. I feel that my candle has been snuffed.  
“Your loving father,

**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

The New Year’s greeting runs as follows: —  
“Mentone.  
“Dear Son,

“I wish to you and yours, one and all, a happy new year. The Lord bless you in your person, your household, your ministry, and your church! Peace be to you within, and prosperity’ without! The blessing on your father has been great, and long may it rest upon you to a still larger degree! I breathe a joyful prayer for you and your below, d, to whom, remember me.

“Your own loving father,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

A large book could be written concerning the experiences of persons who had the honor and delight of meeting with my dear father during his visits to different parts of the country. I often wish that I had had it in my power to preserve, more securely than in mere. mental jottings, many of the wise sayings reported to me by those who remember their interviews with him. To a friend, who had called upon him, he said, “I was looking at myself in the glass, this morning, when the words of the psalmist came to my mind: ‘ Who is the health of my countenance, and my God.’ I saw no signs of health upon my countenance, and thought that they were far away; but my heart was comforted by the latter portion of the text, for none can rob me of ‘my God,’“

To the same friend, he said, “I am going to preach, one clay, upon ‘bad lodgers.’ You get them here, for they come into your house to eat the food that you provide, and spoil the furniture in your home, and then leave without paying. I am not going to talk about this class of lodgers; but shall try to answer the question, ‘How long shall thy vain thoughts lodge within thee?’“ He was as good as his word, for he preached in the Tabernacle from Jeremiah 4:i4, and the sermon is published under the title, “Bad Lodgers, and How to Treat them.”

On one occasion, it was my lot to have to go some distance, from a countryside station to the village where I was to conduct some special services. A horse and cart: were in waiting to convey me:: to my destination, the driver being a local farmer. We had not gone very for upon the road before his rustic voice broke the silence. “So you be Mr. Spurgeon, be you, the son of the great man in Lunnon? I bin once in Lunnon, and heard him. I was up at the cattle show, and went over to his big chapel, and he preached about sheep. Bless you, he knew more about sheep than I do; and little bin a farmer all my life!” The conversation did not lack in vivacity for the rest of the journey, as my newly-found acquaintance gave his town friend some agricultural, education, secondhand, his tutor having been the worthy Pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle! Dear father was a living “Enquire Within upon Everything.” All who ever heard him can well understand how his almost universal knowledge furnished him with striking simile, matchless metaphor, forceful figure, and instructive illustration.

Entering, only the other day, an establishment which, in years long gone by, was frequented by both father and son, — as the former sought after some old Puritan, to add to his library, and the latter interested himself in conning picture-books, which were lying all around, — I fancied I could see the form of my father, sitting, as was his wont, in a particular corner of the shop, (and he would sit in no other place,) and I could hear him say, “Well, friend Smith, haw.’ you any new old books, — something rich and rare?” And the proprietor of the store would speedily bring forth from his treasures ‘;’ things new and old.”

Following in my father’s footsteps, I had betaken myself to this market of material for the mind; and, naturally, memories of former visits made me desirous to have a little talk with the worthy proprietor, who is now well on in years. With thoughtful mien, and moist eye, he recounted to an attentive listener several personal reminiscences of his dear friend. He told me that he once journeyed to London, to see the great preacher, and upon entering the precincts of the Tabernacle, my dear father turned to the caretaker of what is now, the Jubilee House, and gave the following restructions, “Please get dinner for two at one.” In due course,’ the bookseller and the bookreader returned to partake of the ordered meal, when, to their dismay, they found the table bare. Summoning the good woman into his presence, the following explanation was forthcoming, “Why, sir!” said she, “you ordered dinner for one at two.” The mistake caused great merriment to the would-be host and his guest; and, while waiting for the repast to be prepared, the dear Pastor discovered others whose expectations had not been realized. A number of old women had gathered in one of the rooms at the Tabernacle, in the hope of receiving gifts from the Benevolent Society; but the ladies in charge of that agency were: not present, as some mistake had been made in the day and hour. The “fellow-feeling.” that always made him ‘“wondrous kind,” moved him to thrust his hand into his; pocket, to bring forth a number of shillings, and to bestow one upon each of the erstwhile disappointed applicants, saying as he did so, “Theres a trifle for you, so you haven’t had quite a lost journey” His benevolence was one of the best and brightest traits in his beautiful character. There are secrets, concerning’ his generous gifts, and the self-sacrifice they often entailed, which ‘will never be revealed on earth; I do not know whether they will be unveiled even in Heaven.

When the Good Shepherd was pleased to take a little lamb from my household, the hearts of the sorrow-stricken parents were greatly comforted by the following letter: —

“Westwood,  
“September 11, 1890.

“My Dear Children,  
“The Lord Himself comfort you! Think of that dear little creature being taken away yet it must be right, it must be good! Our Father is never mistaken, nor unkind. You are acting wisely in not bringing the little one from the place? You will be setting example of common sense, which is greatly needed in an age which is as sentimental as it is false-hearted. If you would like a wreath from me:, kindly order it in H — B —, and send the bill to me; but, if you are not going so have any, I should be setting and example by sending one.

“I feel sure you will both find a secret strength poured into your souls, and in t-his also faith shall have the victor. I shall never forget this day. Your dear mother, to our intense delight:, was able to go with me to the Orphanage, and she greatly enjoyed the visit. As soon as we reached home, we received your telegram, — the bitter herbs with our feast. To you, it must be a sharp cut; but the Great Physician will apply the healing balm.

“Your loving father,  
**“C. H. SPURGEON.”**

I know of no one who could, more sweetly than my dear father, impart comfort to bleeding hearts and sad spirits. As the crushing of the flower causes it to yield its aroma, so he, having endured so much in the: longcontinued illness of my beloved mother, and also constant pain in himself, was able to sympathize most tenderly with all sufferers.

It was my unspeakable pleasure frequently to see him, during the last few years of his earthly service, hardly a week passing without a drive being enjoyed together; and during the critical period of his last long illness, when the prayers of God’s people, undoubtedly brought him back to life, it was my sad pleasure to visit him every day, Sundays only excepted. Those seasons will ever remain fixed upon my memory. The secrets of the chamber of “the shadow of death” lie deeply hidden in a fondly-loving heart; and, especially, the emotions experienced when, with my dear mother, we stood at his bedside, and listened, as we thought, to his parting blessing,

The last kiss I ever received from his dear lips was bestowed upon me ere he left the waiting-room at Herne Hill station, and the last look I had at him was from the furthest extremity of that platform, as the train bore him away, and he, with waving hand, bade me adieu. It was with great joy (for his sake,) that I hailed the day when he started for the sunny South. After so many weeks, which told up to months in the class-room of suffering, he went forth, like a scholar freed from his lessons for a while, out into the sunshine and sea breezes. We were all pleased that there was such a beautiful retreat, a spot on earth which he so dearly loved, where he could tarry, for a few bright weeks, as in veritable Beulah Land, ere he crossed the river, and entered the Celestial City, to go no more out for ever.

Pages could be filled by my pen in writing of my beloved father; but I must close with a brief tribute: of love. If ever a man was sent of God, he was; a true apostle and a faithful ambassador of Jesus Christ. Although my judgment may be deemed very’ partial,. I venture to express the opinion that, since the days of Paul, there has not lived a greater or more powerful exponent of the doctrines of grace, or a more able and successful preacher of the “saying” which is “worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” There was no one who could preach like my father. In inexhaustible variety, witty wisdom, vigorous proclamation, loving entreaty, and lucid teaching, with a multitude of other qualities, he must, at least in my opinion, ever be regarded as the prince of preachers. From the days when, as a little boy, I sat behind the platform, in the highbacked and well-cushioned seat in the cleat’ old Tabernacle, with silver pencil-case and neat pocket-book, to take notes of my beloved father’s sermons, until this present time,. I have looked upon him as “the prime minister of England.” Those who believe eloquence lies in reaching hearts, rather than in tickling ears, will not hesitate to place him amongst orators of the highest order. It was his delight to travel on foot, rather than to soar like the eagle; but this did not hinder him from reaching altitudes loftier than Pisgah; and while he could always feel something solid under his feet, he was, like a brave mountaineer, leading his listeners to peaks which glistened with the glory of Patmos.

Both for quantity and quality, and each was of the best, there never has been one to equal him; and, for forty years, he preached the same old gospel. He never turned aside to the foolish vagaries of “modern thought”, or ran after the will-o’-the-wisp of “the new theology”; the ancient covenant of grace, and the inspired Word of God, were. the Alpha and Omega of his preaching. The ease and grace of his delivery were noteworthy; his preaching was a very kaleidoscope of ever-changing beauty, for each part of his speech fell into its right place with perfect aptness, and made a complete and charming pattern. When once he began to speak, you felt sure that each succeeding wave of expression would wash up some new and hitherto-hidden truth, or make. the common facts of every-day life glisten afresh, like. the silver sand lately laved by the ocean’s wave; and while listening to the matchless; voice, there seemed to steal over you the low murmur of another, which told you that he was declaring the very oracles of God. None can exaggerate the boundless generosity, tender sympathy, practical sagacity, and Christlike zeal displayed in the manifold agencies of which he was both head and heart. His works do follow him, and are living monuments to the memory of a great man; — great, because the grace of God made him good. As a teacher and author, his works speak volumes; and while the wonderful voice silenced by death, one cannot but rejoice that thousands of his discourses are preserved in the printed sermons, and these shall, for many a year to come, still continue to bring forth fruit. Shall we not all humbly pray that the memory of his gracious and noble life may be a daily incentive and inspiration to us, and that grace may be given to us to follow him as fully as he followed the Lord?

CHAPTER 81.

PURE FUN

The whole Church will be indebted to Dr. Stanford for having protested against the superstition which regards wit and humor as deadly sins. He has not only set forth the propriety of simple, natural mirth, but has well-nigh shown the duty of it. We knew that our beloved friend had a sly twinkle in his eye, and said things which sparkled with a subdued and chastened fun; but we hardly believed that he would become the defender of our faith in wit, and the avenger of those fierce assaults which have been made on humor. ‘This book ought to shut the mouths of those melancholy critics who think that everything solemn should be sad, and that anything approaching to pleasantry must be wicked. The chapter upon “What have Christians to do with Wit and Humor.’:’ gives us the utmost delight. The argument is as irresistible as the laughter which it provokes; and both the argument and the laughter are as wholesome and as holy as anything we have ever read. We are tempted to make copious quotations, but we had rather mr friends should get the book for themselves; in fact, they will have to do so, for everybody will be forced to read it. We hope these wise and genial pages will work a revolution in the idea:; of thousands who now blush when they smile, and put down an honest laugh in the category of things to be repented of, — C. H. S., *in review ode Dr. Charles Stanford’s volume,*“The *Wit and Humor of Life.”*

It is a sort of tradition of the fathers that it is wrong to laugh on Sundays. The eleventh commandment is, that we are to love one mother: and then, according to some people, the twelfth is, “Thou shalt pall a long face on Sunday.” I must confess that I would rather hear people: laugh than 1 would see them asleep in the house of God; and I would rather get the truth into them through the medium of ridicule than I would have it neglected, or leave the people to perish through lack of reception of the message. I do believe, in my heart, that there may be as much holiness in a laugh as in a cry; and that, sometimes, to laugh is the better thing of the two, for I may weep, and be murmuring, and repining, and thinking all sorts of bitter thoughts against God; while, at another time, I may laugh the laugh of sarcasm against sin, and so evince a holy earnestness in the defense of the truth. I do not know why ridicule is to be given up to Satan as a weapon to be used against us, and not to be employed by us as a weapon against him. I will venture to affirm that the Reformation owed almost as much to the sense of the ridiculous in human nature as to anything else, and that those humorous squibs and caricatures, that were issued by the friends of Luther, did more to open. the eyes of Germany to the abominations of the priesthood than the: more solid and ponderous arguments against Romanism. I know no reason why we should not, on suitable’, occasions, try the same style of reasoning. “It is a dangerous weapon,” it will be said, “and many men will cut their fingers with *it.”*Well, ‘that is their own lookout; but I do not know why we should be so particular about their cutting their fingers if they can, at

the same time, cut the throat of sin, and do serious damage to the great adversary of souls. — C. H. S., *in “Lectures to my Students.”*

G LEAMS of Mr. Spurgeon’s ready humor have been visible at intervals all through this and the preceding volume, but it was felt that the record of his happy life would not: be complete unless at least one chapter was filled with specimens of that pure fun which was as characteristic of him as was his “precious faith.”

All who were brought into the closest contact with him know that his wit was as abundant as his wisdom; indeed, full often, the wisdom found its most: effective utterance by means of the witty words which gained an entrance for the message which might otherwise have been rejected. His fun was always pure, with an emphasis; and he showed how it was possible for the highest: spirituality to find a fitting-:; exemplification in the brightest and cheeriest character. Some of his most intimate friends have: often said that there was not the slightest incongruity, after one of his brilliant witticisms which had set the whole company laughing, in hearing him say, “Let us pray,” for both the merriment and the: devotion were sanctified. He had no sympathy with the hymn-tinkerer who altered even the glorious ‘hundredth Psalm by putting “fear” instead of “mirth” in the third line of the: first verse; and he always; sang it according to the authorized version, as it appears in. Our Own *Hymn-Book,—*

***“All people that on earth do dwell,  
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice;  
Him serve with m*irth, *His praise forth tell;  
Come ye before. Him, and rejoice.”***

In making a rather rough classification of Mr. Spurgeon’s pure the, as manifested under various aspects throughout his long public career, first: may be placed a few incidents associated with a matter which he always regarded as of great importance,—

**PUNCTUALITY**

Everyone who was acquainted with him knows how scrupulously punctual he was; at all services and meetings, and that, unless something very unusual had detained him, he was ready to commerce either the worship or the business proceedings at the exact minute fixed. In the New Park Street days, he was unavoidably late on one occasion when he was to meet the venerable deacons represented on page 15. One of them, the most pompous of the whole company, who was himself noted for his punctuality, pulled out his watch, and held it up reproachfully before the young’ minister. Looking at it in a critical fashion, Mr. Spurgeon said, “Yes; it’s a very good watch, I have no doubt, but it is rather oldfashioned, isn’t it?”

He had often to suffer inconvenience and loss of time because’, those who had asked for interviews with him were not at the place arranged at the appointed hour.

Frequently, after allowing a few minutes’ grace, he would go away to attend to other service, leaving word that, as those he:: expected had not come according to the arrangement made, they must wait until he could find some other convenient opportunity of meeting them. This was to, him an amusing method of giving a lesson which many greatly needed. “Punctuality is the politeness, of kings;” yet some who are “kings and priests unto God” are sadly deficient in that particular virtue. Sometimes, the Pastor would laughingly say that perhaps those who came so late were qualifying to act as lawyers, whose motto would be, “Procrastination is the hinge of business; punctuality is the thief of time.”

“General” Booth once sent an “ *aide-de-camp”*to Mr. Spurgeon to ask for an interview for himself. The hour for him to come was named, but it was several minutes past the time ‘when he arrived. Mr. Spurgeon, though sympathizing with the efforts of the Salvation Army, never approved of what he called their “playing at soldiers,” so he said, in a tone of gentle: irony, “Oh, General! military men should be punctual!” It appeared that the object of “General” Booth was to ascertain if’ the. Tabernacle could be lent to the Army for some great gathering; but he would not ask for the loan of the building until the Pastor gave him some sign that, if he did make. such a request:, it would be granted. There the matter rested.

The Pastor once had occasion to see Mr. Gladstone at Downing Street. Having asked for an interview of ten minutes, he arrived punctually, and, having transacted the business about which he had called, rose to leave directly the allotted time. had expired. “The grand old man” was not willing to allow his visitor to go away so quickly; — though he said he wished others who called upon him would be as prompt both in arriving and departing; — and “the two prime. ministers,” as they were often designated, continued chatting for at good while longer. It was during the conversation which ensued that Mr. Spurgeon suggested to the: great Liberal leader a grander measure of reform than any he had ever introduced; — his proposal was, that all the servants of the State, whether in the Church, the Army, the Navy, or the Civil Service, should be excluded from Parliament, just as the servants in a private family are not allowed to make the rules and regulations under which the household is governed. Possibly, archbishops, bishops, generals, admirals, noble lords, and right honorable gentlemen might imagine that this suggestion was a sample of Mr. Spurgeon’s pure fun, but he introduced it to Mr. Gladstone with the utmost seriousness, and he often referred to it as a plan which would greatly and permanently benefit the whole nation, and which he believed his fellow-countrymen would adopt if it: were laid before them by the great statesman to whom he submitted it.

The caricature on page 34-3, reproduced from *Figaro’s*phrenological cartoons, shows one of the many instances in which Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Spurgeon were pictorially and amusingly associated, and it may therefore appropriately introduce a brief series, of —

**POLITICAL PLEASANTRIES**

On one of Mr. Spurgeon’s visits to Mentone, a lady, who ‘was a great admirer of Mr. Gladstone, asked the Pastor to guess the word which would explain the following riddle: —

( **1**) What Mr. Gladstone likes;  
(**2**)what he does not like;  
(**3**) what he. would like to do; and  
(**4**) where his enemies would like to put him.

When Mr. Surgeon learned the solution of the puzzle, he was so pleased with it that he passed it on to other friends.

The answers were, —  
(**1**) Reform;  
(**2**) a Tory;  
(**3**) to reform a Tory; and  
(**4**):in a reformatory!

During a Genera; Elections, it was; discovered, one Monday morning, that the front gates and walls of” Helensburgh House” had been, in the course of the night, very plentifully daubed over with paint to correspond with the colors; of the Conservative candidates for that division of Surrey. In speaking, at the Tabernacle, the same evening, concerning the disfigurement of his premises, Mr. Spurgeon said, “It is *notorious*that I am *no Tory,*so I shall not trouble to remove the paint; perhaps those who put it on will take it off when it has been there long enough to please them;” and, in due time, they did so.

The mention of a General Election recalls a characteristic anecdote which Mr. Spurgeon delighted to tell. He had gone to preach for his friend, Mr. John Offord, and, contrary to his, almost universal practice, was a little late in arriving. He explained that: there had been a block on the road, which had delayed him; and, in addition, he had stopped on the way to vote. “To vote!” exclaimed the good man; “but, my dear brother, I thought you were a citizen of the New Jerusalem!” “So I am,” replied Mr. Spurgeon, “but my’ old man’ is a Citizen of this world.” “Ah! but you should mortify your ‘ old man.’.. That is exactly what I did; for my ‘ old man’ is a Tory, and I made him vote for the Liberals!”

At another General Election, it was widely reported that Mr. Spurgeon had declared that he would vote for the devil himself if he were a Liberal; and so many inquiries with regard to the statement came from all parts of the country, that a large number of post cards had to be printed and sent in reply. Those who had started or circulated the falsehood were probably somewhat ashamed when they read Mr. Spurgeon’s emphatic denial: “I certainly should not vote for the devil under any circumstances, nor am I able to conceive of him as so restored as to become a Liberal. I think he has had a considerable hand in the invention of many a story which has of late been published concerning me.”

When the Tabernacle was about to be opened, tickets of admission to the various gatherings were printed. The one intended as a pass to the first service seemed to Mr. Spurgeon so unsuitable to the occasion that he ‘turned it into a sweep’s advertisement by annotating the front of it in this humorous style: —

He also wrote on the back the comments and queries here reproduced in *facsimile. —*and sent the card to Mr. Passmore, who preserved it with the other epistolary curiosities that we. re published in Vol. 2, Chapter 47. One matter that always afforded Mr. Spurgeon the opportunity of poking a little, good-natured fun at his esteemed publishers was the non-arrival of proofs for which he was looking. Frequently, at Mentone, or at some other place where the beloved author was combining rest and work, Mr. Passmore or Mr. Alabaster would be. asked about the “Cock Robin shop” that he had left for a while. (A “Cock Robin shop” is; the trade designation of a small printing-office where cheap booklets, such as *The Death of Cock Robin,*are issued.) It was a theme: for perennial merriment, and no protestations of the publishers availed to put an end to it. If sermon or magazine proofs were delayed, the invariable explanation was, “Perhaps they have had another order for *Cock Robins,*so my work has had to wait.”

On one occasion, Mr. Spurgeon and his secretary had gone to Bournemouth for a week; and, not knowing beforehand where they would be staying, the printers were instructed to send proofs to the Post Office, to be left till called for. On inquiry, the officials declared that they had nothing for Mr. Spurgeon, so the following telegram was dispatched to London: — “When you have finished *Cock Robins,*please forward proofs of sermon and magazine.” It turned out that the fault was with the postal authorities, for they had only looked for letters, whereas the printed matter was in the office all the while in the compartment allotted to book-post packets.

At one of the meetings when contributions for the new Tabernacle were brought in, the names of Knight and Duke were read out from the list of subscribers, whereupon Mr. Spurgeon said, “Really, we are in grand company with a knight and a duke!” Presently, “Mr. King, five shillings,” was reported, when the Pastor exclaimed, “Why, the king has actually given his crown! What a liberal monarch!” Directly afterwards, it was announced that Mr. Pig had contributed a guinea. “That,” said Mr. Spurgeon, “is a guinea-pig.”

The propensity of punning upon people’s names was often indulged by the dear Pastor; and, doubtless, many readers of this chapter will recollect instances that have come to their own knowledge. Mr. Spurgeon could remember, in a very remarkable fashion, the faces and names of those whom he had once met; and if he’. made any mistake in addressing them, he would speedily and felicitously rectify it. A gentleman, who had been at one of the annual College suppers, was again present the following year. The President saluted him with the hearty greeting, “C-lad to see you, Mr. Partridge.” The visitor was surprised to find himself recognized, but: he replied, “My name is Patridge, sir, not Partridge.” “Ah, yes!” was the instant rejoinder; “I won’t make game of you any more.”

A lady in Worcestershire, writing to Mrs. Spurgeon concerning a service at Dunnington, near Evesham, says: — ” Mr. Spurgeon shook hands with *seventy*members of one family, named Bornford, who had gone to hear him. One of our deacons, a Mr. Alway, was at the same time introduced to him; and, in his own inimitable and ready way, he exclaimed, ‘ Rejoice in the Lord, Alway!’“

Dr. John Campbell was once in a second-hand bookseller’s shop with Mr. Spurgeon, and, pointing to *Thorn on Infant Baptism,*he said, “There is ‘ a thorn in the flesh’ for you.” Mr. Spurgeon at once replied, “Finish the quotation, my brother, — ’ the messenger of Satan to buffet me.’“

During the Baptismal Regeneration Controversy, a friend said to, Mr. Spurgeon, “I hear that you are in hot water.” “Oh, dear no!” he replied; “it is the other fellows who are in the hot water; I am the stoker, the man who makes the water boil!”

**MINISTERIAL MIRTH**

Mr. Spurgeon made a very sparing use of his wit in the pulpit, though all his wits were always utilized there to the utmost. To one who objected to some humorous expression to which he had given utterance while preaching, he replied, “If you had known how many others I kept back, you would not have found fault with that one, but you would have commended me for the restraint I had exercised.” He often said that: he never went out of his way to make a joke, — or to avoid one; and only the last great day will reveal how many were first attracted by some playful reference or amusing anecdote, which was like the bait to the fish, and concealed the hook on which they were soon happily caught.

At the last service in New Park Street Chapel, the Pastor reminded his hearers that the new Tabernacle, which they were about to enter, was close to “The Elephant and Castle,” and then, urging them all to take their own share of the enlarged responsibilities resting upon them as a church and people, he said, *“Let*every elephant bear his castle when we get there.” This was simply translating, into the dialect of Newington, Paul’s words, *“Every*man shall bear his own burden,” and, doubtless, the form of the injunction helped to impress it upon the memory of all who heard it.

No student of the Pastors’ College, who listened to the notable sermon delivered in the desk-room by the beloved President, would be likely ever to forget the text of the discourse after it had been thus emphasized:*— “* Brethren, take care that this is always one of the Newington Butts. — ‘But we preach Christ crucified.’ Let others hold up Jesus simply as an Example, if they will; ‘ but *we*preach Christ *crucified.’*Let any, who like to do so, proclaim ‘another gospel, which is not another;’ ‘ but we preach *Christ crucified.’“*

Among the most memorable sermons ever preached by Mr. Spurgeon was the one on behalf of the Baptist Missionary Society, in Exeter Hall, on April 27, 1881, from Isaiah 51:2, 3- After setting forth the noble personality of Abraham, concerning whom the Lord said, “I called him alone,” the preacher, by using a word in two senses, revealed the’ contrast between the father of the faithful and his time-serving nephew, — “ Lot, — a poor miserable lot he was, — costing his noble uncle more trouble than he ever brought him profit.”

On one occasion, when Mr, Spurgeon was to preach in a Nonconformist “church” where the service was of a very elaborate character, someone else had been asked to conduct “the preliminaries,” The preacher remained in the vestry until the voluntary, the lessons, the prayers, and the anthem were finished, then entering the pulpit, he. said, “Now, brethren, let us *pray;*” and the tone in which the last word was uttered indicated plainly enough what he thought of all that had gone before.

When Mr, Cuff was minister at Providence Chapel, Hackney, one of the College Conference. meetings was held there. The President presided, and in the course of his speech, he pointed to the organ, and said, “I look upon that as an innovation; and if I were here, I should want it to be an outovation, and then we would have an ovation over its departure. I was once asked to open an organ, — I suppose the people wanted me to., preach in connection with the introduction of the new instrument. I said that I was quite willing to open it at; Simple Simon opened his mother’s bellows, to see where the wind came from, but I could not take any other part in the ceremony.”  
Preaching at a chapel in the country, Mr. Spurgeon gave out Dr. Watts’s version of the 91st Psalm, —

***“He that hath made his refuge God,  
Shall find a most secure abode;”—***

and then added, “We’ll sing it to the tune ‘Refuge.’“ The organist leaned over from the gallery, and whispered to the preacher, *“It*is not in our tunebook, sir.” “Then it ought to *be,”*answered Mr. Spurgeon, “no tune-book is complete unless ‘Refuge’ is in it;” and, turning to the congregation, he said, *“The*last time I was here, you people praised God for yourselves, but now you have a machine to do the praising for you. If it can’t play ‘Refuge,’ we’ll have it all the same, and I’ll start it myself”

Relating to his students some of his experiences in his early ministerial days, the President said: — “ I remember going to a little village to preach; the forms had no backs to them, and on the front bench were: seated some ancient dames, each wearing a cloak and hood, like Little Red Riding Hood’s, which made me feel that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these:. After the service had commenced, the front seat gave way with a crash, and down came all its occupants. This was. too much for my gravity, and it was no use to go on with the sermon from the selected text, so I made the inquiry, ‘Where did that form come from? Was it borrowed from the Established Church?’ ‘No, sir,’ replied someone; ‘it came from the Wesleyan Chapel.’ ‘Well then, you see, dear friends,’ I said, ‘Dissenting forms are no safer than those used by the Church of England, so I would advise you not to trust to any forms or ceremonies, but to the Lord Jesus Christ, for He alone can save. you.’ That accident gave me a subject on which I was able to speak with freedom, and I hope with profit also, to my rustic hearers, who would probably long recollect my warning against borrowing any mere formal religion from either the Church or Dissent.”

**MATRIMONY AND MERRIMENT**

Mr. Spurgeon was, even on ordinary occasions, so happy and joyous, and the means of communicating so much pleasure to others, that it is not surprising that his services were in great demand when his friends were about to be married. Some of the sweetes: reminiscences of the loving couples who have survived him are associated with the brightness that his presence and counsel imparted to their wedding-day. Naturally, the addresses given on such occasions bore considerable resemblance to one another, although there was always something special in each case. The earliest marriage service conducted by Mr. Spurgeon, of which the record has; been preserved, was; that of Pastor T. W. Medhurst and his first wife, Miss M. A. Cranfield. The wedding took place on May 26, 1859, at Kingston-on-Thames, where the first student of the Pastors;’ College had been ministering for more than two years. Mr. Spurgeon announced, at the commencement of the proceeding’s, that he was not going to perform the ceremony as if he were reading the burial service, nor as if he were about to thrust his two young friends into prison, and make their feet fast in the stocks. He. also said that he hoped their wedded life would not be like the Church of England marriage service, which begins with “Dearly-beloved” and ends with “amazement.’: He trusted that they would both be “dearlybeloved” not only at the beginning of their united career, but all through to the end, and then for ever and ever; and that, while their sorrows would be mutually shared, their joys would all be multiplied. In expounding Ephesians 5:23, the Pastor, addressing the bride, said, “According to the teaching of the apostle, ‘The husband is the head of the wife.’ Don’t you try to be the head; but you be the neck, then you can turn the head whichever way you like.”

At another marriage service, many years afterwards, Mr. Spurgeon, commenting on the same passage, said to the bridegroom-., another of “our own say,” “My dear friend, don’t you begin to feel proud because Paul says that the husband is the head of the wife. Solomon says that ‘a virtuous woman is a crown to her husband;’ and the- crown is the top of the: head. Still, the governing faculty should rest with the head; and the family will never be ordered aright unless we each keep our proper place.” On the same occasion, he thus humorously described the difficulties and privileges of a pastor’s wife: — “ If I was a young woman, and was thinking of being married, I would not marry a minister, because the position of minister’s wife is a very difficult one for anyone to fill. Churches do not give a married minister two salaries, one for the husband and the other for the wife; but, in many cases, they look for the services of the wife, whether they pay for them or not. The Pastor’s wife is expected to know everything about the church, and in another sense she is to know nothing of it; and she is equally blamed by some people whether she knows everything or nothing. Her duties consist in being *always at home*to attend to her husband and her family, and being *always out,*visiting other people, and doing all sorts of things for the whole church! Well, of course, that is impossible; she cannot be at everybody’s beck and call, and she cannot expect to please everybody. Her husband cannot do *throat,*and I think he is very foolish if he tries to do it; and I am certain that, as the husband cannot please everybody, neither can the wife. There will be sure to be somebody or other who will be displeased, especially if that somebody had herself half hoped to be the minister’s wife! Difficulties arise continually in the best-regulated churches; and the. position of the minister’s wife is always a very trying one. Still, I think that:, if I was a Christian young woman, I would marry a Christian minister if I could, because there is an opportunity of doing so much good in helping him in his service for Christ. It is a great assistance to the cause, of God to keep the: minister himself in good order for his work. It is his wife’s duty to see that he is not uncomfortable at home; for, if everything there is happy, and free from care, he can give all his thoughts to his preparation for the pulpit; and the godly woman, who thus helps her husband to preach better, is herself a preacher though she never speaks in public, and she becomes to the highest degree useful to that portion of the Church of Christ which is committed to her husbands charge.

Wedding breakfasts naturally afforded Mr. Spurgeon the opportunity of making many kind and witty remarks. He was very fond of saying to the bridegroom, “I really cannot compliment you upon your great discrimination in choosing your bride;” and then, when the poor fellow was blushing to the roots of his hair, and the (guests all round the table (!if they had nor- previously heard the joke,) were saying to one another, “What can Mr. Spurgeon mean?” he quietly added, “Any stupid, with half an eye, could see that she would make a man a good wife, so no discrimination was needed in your case, and 1 very heartily congratulate you upon your choice.” The neat turn of the speech not only set the whole company at their ease, but proved a notable addition to the harmless merriment that always prevailed on such occasions until the: time came. for the closing devotional service before the happy couple started for their honeymoon.

At one wedding breakfast, Mr. Spurgeon made an amusing allusion to the fact that the bridegroom, a missionary brother from Japan, had been previously married. Speaking to the bride, he said, “You must not be to proud of your husband,  
Mrs. — for he is only second-hand; yet he is as good as new, for he has been Jappaned!”

Anyone acquainted with Queen Square Baptist Chapel, Brighton, or who looks at the position, of that building as represented in the above view, will realize how appropriate was Mr. Spurgeon’s reference to it after he had conducted at marriage service there. In the course of at charming address at the breakfast which followed the ceremony, he turned to the bridegroom, and said, “I tell my friend.. that, whatever he says about his wedding, he will never be able to say, ‘ This thing was not done in a *corner!’“*

Even when he had not been present at the marriage of his friends, Mr. Spurgeon often managed to make merriment for them out of something which he heard or knew concerning the happy event. A notable instance of this occurred when “one of our own men” and his bride went to Mentone for their honeymoon, and someone sent to the beloved President a newspaper containing a full report of the service:, and the details generally published on such occasions. In the course of conversation after the happy couple arrived, Mr. Spurgeon said to the bride, “Mrs.\_\_\_\_, if I was a young lady, going to be married, I should wear so-and-so and so-and-so.” Turning to her husband, she exclaimed, “Oh,\_\_\_\_! Isn’t it funny? That’s just how I was; dressed.” “Then,” said Mr. Spurgeon, “I should have so many bridesmaids, and they should wear such-and-such dresses and suchand-such hats.’ Oh,\_\_\_\_! Why, that is just how many bridesmaids I had, and they were dressed exactly’ like that.” “Then, for presents,” said the Pastor, *“I*should like so-and-so and so-and-so.” *“Oh,\_\_\_\_\_*! Isn’t it funny? That is just what we had.” It is not certain that the good lady knows even to this day how it came to pass; that the great preacher’s wishes and her own coincided so singularly! Certainly, he extracted a considerable quantity of pure fun out of her amazement as he proceeded with his recital of things to be desired at a wedding.

On one of his visits to Mentone, a friend asked him, “In what colored ink should a promise of marriage be written?” He guessed all the colors he could think of, and then was; informed that the right answer was, “in violet” (inviolate). He was so delighted with the conundrum, — both for its. wit, and for its confirmation of the solemnity of an engagement with a view to marriage, — that he often tried the effect of it upon his friends, and seldom found one who was more successful in seeing through it: than he himself had been, though all thought the answer to it was admirable.

**LEARNED IN THE LAW**

Mr. Spurgeon once spent an evening, with a few of Her Majesty’s judges, at the house of Mr. Justice Lush, who was a very dear personal friend, of his. After dinner, with an air of apparent seriousness, the Pastor said that he had a point of law that he should like to submit to the eminent authorities present. There was a man who had been lying in Camberwell for the last fortnight, and yet: nobody would bury him; his friends would not arrange for his funeral, and neither the police nor the parish officials had been able to get him interred. The learned judges began consulting with one another, and quoting various Acts of Parliament that applied to such a case, and said that, if the relatives persistently refused to bury the man, the requisite power remained with certain local authorities whom they named. They were, however, considerably nonplussed when Mr. Spurgeon very quietly said, “There was one little item in the case that I omitted to mention, *the man is not dead yet!.*...Are you not afraid of the consequences of taking in Her Majesty’s judges like that?” inquired Mr. Justice Lush adding, “You really ought to be committed for contempt of court; but as you seem to be well up in legal matters, tell me, — Ought a man to be allowed to marry his widow’s sister?.. Oh, yes!” exclaimed the Pastor, not suspecting the trap that had been laid for him, and in the excitement of the moment thinking that the question had been, “Ought a man to be allowed to marry his de. ceased wife’s sister?.. Then, said the judge, “we will cry quits, for even your friend in Camberwell could not marry his *widow’s* sister!”

Later in the evening, Mr. Spurgeon told a story that invariably elicited the wrong reply, and that occasion was no exception to the rule. “A lady and gentleman were engaged to be married; they were walking along the seashore, when some dispute arose, and the lady, in a fit of temper, snatched the engagement ring from her finger, and threw it: into the water. After a while, she. found another lover, to whom she was married, and they went down to Scarborough to spend the honeymoon. On. the first morning, they had fish for breakfast; and, as the bridegroom was dividing it:, he felt something hard; what do you suppose the knife had cut against?” Of course, the judges, like everybody else, exclaimed, “The ring.” “No,” said Mr. Spurgeon, “it was only a bone!”  
Pastor Charles Spurgeon mentions a service conducted by his dear father at Pollockshaws. During that visit to Scotland, Mr. Spurgeon was introduced to the Dean of Guild. “The Dean of Guild; oh, you are the gentleman who can go through every tollgate in England without paying!.. I was not aware that any such privilege was attached to my office.:’ “It is quite true, sir,” replied the dear Pastor; *“you*can go through every tollgate: without paying, but the gatekeeper will charge, *for*your horse and carriage!”

**STUDY AND SMILES**

All the students of the Pastors’ College, who have recorded their reminiscences of the time spent in. connection with that Institution, have testified to the bright and joyous atmosphere which pervaded all the classes, and which has made that period in their history ever-memorable to them. From the very beginning of Mr. Spurgeon’s work of training young men for the Christian ministry, hard study and a happy spirit have been delightfully combined. Even before there wits any College, when a solitary student was under the charge of Mr. Rogers, coming events cast their *sunshine*before, as the two following paragraphs, supplied by Mr. Medhurst, clearly prove: —

“Soon after I sent to live with Mr. Rogers, one Saturday morning Mr. Spurgeon called to see what progress we were making, when the following conversation took place: — ’ Well, friend Rogers,’ inquired the dear Governor, ‘ how are you getting on with this zealous young Baptist?’ ‘ Oh!’ replied the tutor’, ‘we get along very nicely; but we don’t say much about baptism. You know, Mr. Spurgeon, that when the Samaritan woman found the Savior, she left her waterpot.’ ‘Yes, friend Rogers,’ was the prompt answer, ‘she left her sprinkling machine, for the Lord Jesus had shown her the:’ much water” that there was in the deep well.’ “On another occasion, there had been a snowstorm during the night; so, in the morning, I joined Mr. Rogers’ sons in a game of snowballing in front of the house. This, dear’ precise Mrs. Rogers considered very unbecoming on the part of a ministerial student! Mr. Spurgeon called shortly afterwards, on the same day, and the good old lady (she was a dear kind soul) asked him what he thought of me for so far forgetting what was due to my position as a candidate for the Christian ministry. Mr. Spurgeon replied, ‘Well, Mrs. Rogers, I greatly admire the preeminent grace of God that did not allow me to come earlier this morning · for had I been here, I fear I should have been tempted to join in the snowballing.’ Then, turning to me, he said, in a tone of assumed solemnity, ‘Young man, you are forgiven this time; but see that you transgress no more, — until the next fall of snow!’“

Mr. Spurgeon evidently had great confidence, both in Mr. Rogers and in those who were trained by him, or he would not have committed to his care the hundreds of students who passed through ‘the College during the long term of his principal-ship. It is to the credit of both tutor and taught that, although some: few of the men have become Paedo-Baptists, no one of them has ever been known to attribute his change, of sentiments to the influence of the Congregational Principal. Yet the subject of believers’ baptism *versus*infant sprinkling was very often under discussion; and probably all the students, at some time or other, sought to lead Mr. Rogers into what they regarded as the light upon this important matter. The President used to say that the brethren treated their tutor as a kind of hone on which they tried to sharpen their Baptistic arguments, and he himself had many all encounter with the sturdy old Independent. A very favorite simile with him was that the Paedo-Baptist tutor of Baptist students resembled a hen sitting on ducks’ eggs, and he humorously described the agitation of the poor bird as she stood trembling on the edge of the pond while the ducklings took to the water according to their nature! This comparison was greatly enjoyed by the merry audience, and they were: not less please, d with Mr. Rogers’ ready reply, “If I am as silly as an old hen, I have always managed up to the present to keep my head above water!”

Pastor Harry Abraham has written, for this volume, the following description of a lively scene which may be regarded as; fairly representative of many similar occurrences in the history of the College: —

**“WHEN ESSEX MEETS ESSEX.”**

“The summer holidays had ended. The opening day of a new session was ever a time. of glad greetings, and of pleasant reparations for the tasks which lay before us. Old friends were speaking mutual welcomes, and new students were regarded with kindly curiosity. The tutors were heartily received, as; being at once our fathers and our brothers; for so was it ever in the days of Messrs. George Rogers, David Gracey, and Archibald Fergusson; while the dear President, C. H. Spurgeon, was still the bestowed, — most paternal and most fraternal of all.

“On the morning to which I now refer, the three tutors were in their places on the platform in the College lecture-hall, and nearly a hundred of us occupied the benches. The venerable and venerated George Rogers was telling, in characteristic fashion, how he had spent the vacation: attending recognition services, delivering charges, preaching sermons, and speaking at various meetings in places where ‘our own men’ were doing the Great Master’s work. The dear old man could never resist an opportunity of making some playful allusion to his own Paedo-Baptist views, in contrast ‘with those which his hearers held, — always to the advantage of his own position, of course. An observation of this kind, which had just fallen from his lips, led Professor Gracey to interject the sentence, ‘ But *you won’t be baptized.’*‘Yes, I will,’ replied the nimble-witted sage, ‘ if you’ll let me *stand up to be done!’*But the Irish wit of the classical tutor was equally quick, and he answered, ‘ We’re quite willing to let: you stand up if *only the water is deep enough!’* — a retort which the students emphasized with a merry peal of laughter and ringing cheers. ‘ Ah!’ said the old man, in the familiar tone which always seemed gravest when his spirit was gayest, ‘you can’t find anything deep *enough for Mr. Gracey!*

“In the very midst of the applause which followed this smart rejoinder, in came the President? Only those: who knew how much he was beloved, and what a gladsome spirit: of freedom was always associated with his coming upon such a scene, could have understood, or perhaps excused, the boisterous burst of welcome — laughter, cheers, and a general din of delight, — which sent the echoes flying about the lecture-room for a while. Ere the noise subsided, Mr. Spurgeon had reached the platform steps, where he paused, — lifted his right hand, — and exclaimed, ‘ Brethren! brethren! I feel like Moses coming down from the mount; true, there isn’t much music, you are not exactly (lancing, but you are making a great row; and, lo! I see that you are *worshipping — an Essex*calf! In an instant, Mr. Rogers had seized the sharp shaft of good-tempered humor, and, with exquisite grace and skill, had sent it flying back, by simply and swiftly *dropping into his chair,*with a profound and courtly bow, *leaving the President standing alone upon the platform, himself the Essex calf to whom the homage was*being *rendered!*A more perfect *tu quoque in*action could not be conceived, and no words can indicate the wonderful way in which it was done’. It was the wittiest thing I ever saw, even from the most witty of octogenarians whom I have ever met. But the merry scene was not quite at an end even then. Well, friend Roger what does all the noise mean?’ asked the genial ‘Governor.’ ‘Oh, sir! Mr Gracey has been trying to put me down.’ Like a flash came the Roland for the Oliver. ‘Why, that’s what I have been trying to do for the last twenty years, you old sinner, and you won’t go *down!’*

“All tint: sparkling fun lingers in the. memory, — pure as the holy joy of angels;-for there strangely mingles with it the recollection of the hallowed moments spent at the throne of grace before the threatenings ended; and between the playfulness and the prayer there seemed to be no abrupt transition, no discord, no incongruity, — but all was perfect harmony and happiness.”

Many other amusing reminiscences of College days have been preserved, but space can be spared for only one more, which relates to a certain period when the library had been closed for a while, mainly because some of the choice volumes, which it ought to have contained, were missing. It seemed a long time to the students before they were able again to avail themselves of the privilege of consulting’ the many valuable books collected in that spacious room at the top of the building. Chic Friday afternoon, when the President took his place on the platform of the deskthen, he looked up at the clock, and seeing that it had stopped, said, “I cannot understand what is wrong with that clock; we have: had it repaired several times, yet it won’t go.” One of the students thought he saw an opportunity of calling attention to another matter in which he and all the brethren were interested, so he said,” It’s like the library, sir, it is shut up.” “Yes,” replied Mr. Spurgeon, “and very probably for the: same reason, because some of the ‘ works’ have been taken away!”

At the close of the annual Conferences, it was the President’s custom to invite from a dozen to a score of the ministers to spend the Friday afternoon and evening at his house; not only for their: own enjoyment, but also in order that they might repeat for Mrs. Spurgeon’s benefit as many as possible of the notable, sayings during the: week, or recall any incident in which she would be specially interested. It was a very delightful windingup of the race. tings; and with prayer, and speech, and song, the. time swiftly passed. On one of those occasions, the whole company started to march round the garden, singing, “Hold the fort.” Mr. Spurgeon was walking in front of his little band of picked soldiers of the cross; but, as soon as the first verse of the hymn was finished, he cried, “Halt! Right about face! Quick march! *Now*you may sing, —

***“‘See the mighty host advancing,*  
Satan leading on,,’“**

One year, Mr. W. Y. Fullerton was, with his beloved Pastor, the guest of Mr. Duncan at “Bellmore.” On the: Sabbath, the evangelist preached at Kilmun; and, the following morning, when driving past the building where the service had been held, Mr. Spurgeon pointed to the house adjoining, where there was a notice, “Mangling done here,” and amused, the other visitors by trying to connect that announcement with the sermon of the preceding day.

Pastor W. Williams, of Upton Chapel, narrated, in his *Personal Reminiscences of Charles Haddon Spurgeon,*an amusing experience which he had when it was his privilege to accompany his President to Mr. Duncan’s. In connection with the illustration on the opposite page, he wrote:

“In the foreground of the picture is a stag, lying majestically, with head erect, in the meadow (as though ‘ Benmore’ belonged to him). There is a little incident connected with this stag which I think is worth relating. It may tell a ‘wee’ bit against the writer, but it illustrates Mr. Spurgeon’s love of fun. Soon alter we were settled clown at ‘ Benmore,’ Mr. Duncan said to me, ‘Can you shoot, Mr. Williams?’ ‘Yes,’ I replied, ‘ I was almost born with a gun in my hand.’ ‘Well, then,’ said he, ‘ I will send to Glasgow for a gun license for you to-morrow.’ I had not specially noticed the stag in the meadow, for there were plenty of deer close, too. The next evening, just as it was getting a little dusk, as Mr. Spurgeon, Mr. Duncan, and I were sitting outside the house, Mr. Spurgeon said, ‘Oh, Mr. Williams, I have asked and obtained permission from Mr. Duncan for you to shoot that fine stag in the meadow; see, he is lying there now. But you are to shoot him as he lies; for, if you get him to mows, you won’t hit him; and Mr. Duncan says, it you kill him, you can have a haunch of the venison to take home with you. Now, there is a chance for you.’ I expostulated, and said it was not fair to shoot at the animal *silting;*if I were allowed first to make him rise, I would fire. ‘No, no,’ said Mr. Spurgeon; ‘ if’ you don’t shoot him sitting, Mr. Duncan is sure you won’t shoot him at all. He is a very unusual sort of stag.’ I yielded, and crept quietly behind the trees in front of him until I got within forty yards of the animal, when, dusk as it was, I began to be suspicious, and soon discovered that *the stag was bronze.*I did not fire, or the reader might be now looking at the singular phenomenon of a livelylooking stag’s body without a head. I turned round to find Mr. Spurgeon laughing with all his might. A tougher piece of venison than I should have liked to bring to London, was that stately monarch of the meadow.” For many years, Mr. Spurgeon’s portrait occupied a prominent, position in most of the cartoons and caricatures in which representative public men were grouped together. In some of them, he. was depicted in company that he never kept, and at scenes he never frequented; but the artists usually intended, even in such case. s, to pay a well-deserved tribute to his popularity. Mr. Spurgeon regarded these productions only as so many more specimens of harmless pleasantry to be added to the large collection of pictures in his portfolios. In a few instances, there was no fun in the pictorial representations of the dear Pastor; but only coarse blasphemy, which made him shudder at the awful condition of heart of the human being who thus not merely ridiculed him, but also poured out his scorn upon all that he held sacred and precious. Still, these were the exceptions, few and tar between, which saved him from the “woe” of having all men speaking well of him.

Among the ecclesiastical cartoons, one that interested and amused Mr. Spurgeon very much is here reproduced. It formed part of a shilling booklet, published by Mr. James Wade, of 18, Tavistock Street, Covent Garden, under the title, “The Dream of Paul, the Parish Clerk.” The Pastor had no cause to find fault with the directions inscribed on the sign-post above which his portrait appeared, and he regarded others in the group as being ingeniously pictured with remarkable accuracy.

When T *he Great Eastern*was launched, many suggestions were made as to the best way of utilizing the huge vessel: the cartoon on page 338 humorously contains several of them, including the proposal that Mr. Spurgeon should preach on board every three hours!

This chapter cannot be better concluded than by inserting a selection of

**A UTOBIOGRAPHICAL ANECDOTES,**  
related in Mr. Spurgeon’s own words.

Soon after I came to London, an eccentric individual called to see me, with the view of setting me right on various points in which he did not agree with the doctrine I preached. When he failed to convince me that my teaching was unscriptural, he rose and said,. “ Then I will shake off the dust of my’ feet against you.” “Please don’t do that,” I answered, “you might make the carpet dirty; you will find a scraper and a mat at the front door, they will answer the purpose quite: as well I”  
A man who had made a special study of “the. number of the. beast” mentioned in the Book of Revelation, wrote to me and said that he could make: the names of Mr. Gladstone and the Emperor Napoleon I II. agree with the mystic number, 666; but he could not make the numerical value of the letters in my name fit in with it, and he wanted me to explain how I accounted for that fact. “Why,:” I replied, “I suppose it must be because I am not the beast, and that, therefore, 666 is not the number of my name!”

Dean Stanley once invited me to dine with him; and when I arrived, I found Mr. Rogers, of Bishopsgate (“ Hang Theology” Rogers), was also a guest. We had a merry time, especially when the question of Disestablishment was under discussion. The Dean jocularly said to me, “When that time comes, would you like to have the: Abbey?.. No, thank you,” I replied, “I have not horses enough to fill it.’ “Well,” said the genial ecclesiastic, “I did not think you would have made that objection, but really the place is more adapted for stables than for preaching the gospel to such crowds as gather around you. But, seriously, Mr. Spurgeon, if the Church is disestablished, what will become of friend Rogers and myself?.. Why, I answered, “you will have to do as I do, live upon what your people give you.” “Oh dear! Oh, dear!” cried both gentlemen at once, “if we only had what our people gave us, it would be a poor living.” I encouraged them to do all they could to educate their congregations in the Scriptural system of giving before the day of their emancipation arrived.

A young man, who had been “in fellowship with the brethren,” wished to join the church at the Tabernacle. I knew that they would not grant him a transfer to us, so I wrote to ask if there was anything in his moral character which should prevent us from receiving him. The reply they sent was laconic, but not particularly lucid:... “The man.. has too much of the flesh.” When he called to hear the result of his application, I sent for a yard or two of string, and asked one of our friends to take my measure, and then to take his As I found that I had much more “flesh” that he had, and as his former associates had nothing else to allege against him, I proposed him far church-membership and he wits in due course accepted.

I went, on several occasions, to The Cottage, Virginia Water, to visit Captain Welch, R.N., the former commander of the Queen’s yacht. He was on board the *Alberta*when the *Mistletoe*was run down, but I believe he was free from all responsibility for the sad disaster’s we were walking towards his house, I noticed that he had a number of dragons all along the eaves. Pointing to one of them, I said, “Ah, captain! that is what you ought to have had when the *Mistletoe*was sunk by the royal yacht.” “What do you mean, Mr. Spurgeon?” he inquired. *“Oh!*” I replied, “only that you ought to have had the drag on!”

Once when I was going through a gentleman’s garden, in company with the owner, we suddenly came to a rosemary bush, and I playfully said to him, — not dreaming that my words could ha. re any personal application, “Oh, rosemary! you know what people say about it, I suppose? ‘ Where the rosemary grows, the missus is the master.’” The next time I went there, I saw that the bush had been cut down! Then I knew who was the master!

A gentleman said to me, one day, “Ah! Mr. Spurgeon, I don’t agree with you about religion; I am an agnostic.’ Yes!” I replied, “that is a Greek word, and the exact equivalent is ignoramus; if you like to claim that title, you are quite welcome to.” I do not think he cared to accept that designation, for he thought himself anything but an ignoramus!

I have greatly admired Mr. George Tinworth’s work, and have been much pleased with many of his original interpretations of Scripture. On one occasion, when I called at Messrs. Doulton’s, he said to me, “I wanted your help, the other day, Mr. Spurgeon. Someone was here, looking at this panel, — ‘ The enemy sowing tares.’ You see that I have depicted ‘ the enemy’ sowing with his left hand; the gentleman said that was not correct, and I did not know what reply to give to him.” “Why, you should have told him that he never saw Satan sowing tares with his right hand!” Mr. Tinworth thought that would have been a most conclusive answer, and was sorry! it had not occurred to him at the time.

(After that particular panel was sold, the artist made another upon the same subject; but in that one he reversed the position of the sower’s hands, so that his critic would be satisfied — at least upon that point, — if he could see the quaint yet suggestive work here represented.)

The compilers of Mr. Spurgeon’s “Life” are regretfully aware that the chapter on “Pare Fun” does not adequately set forth the vivacity of his wit, or the geniality of his humor. They cannot reproduce the soft rich tones o:’ his voice, the merry twinkle in his eye, or the grace of gesture which accompanied all his utterances. His fun was so natural, so spontaneous, and so hearty, that any description of it fain to do justice to the effect it produced at the time. The *esprit*of his jests and repartee cannot b:; written down; ‘it was as fugitive as the colors of those iridescent fish of which we read that, the moment they are drawn up in the nets, the rainbow hues vanish, and their singular beauty has faded away.

Perhaps it is better so. We prefer to recall Mr. Spurgeon’s solidity of thought, steadfastness of purpose, and unfaltering faith in God as the chief characteristics of his life, — the firmament across which the flashes of his wit would sometimes play, like the harmless lightning of a summer’s eve.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY DIARY, LETTERS, AND RECORDS VOLUME 4

***by His Wife and His Private Secretary***

SPURGEON’S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

COMPILED FROM

HIS DIARY, LETTERS, AND RECORDS,

**BY  
HIS WIFE,  
AND HIS PRIVATE SECRETARY.**

“‘The law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips; he walked with Me in peace and equity, and did turn many away from iniquity.”—*Malachi 2:6*.

VOLUME 4  
1878-1892.

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C. H. SPURGEON’S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

CHAPTER 83.

FATHER’S FURLOUGH, AND HOW HE SHARED IT.

BY PASTOR THOMAS SPURGEON.

The text which for years has been our consolation is that which saith, “I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.” Happy enough is the man who is chosen of God; he may not ask a question as to when or where. Yet we could wish it were otherwise in our case, and that zeal and fervor were not restrained and hampered by being yoked to painful infirmities of the flesh. We *could*do more, and we think we may add, without self-confidence, we *would*do more, if we were not laid prostrate at the very moment when our work requires our presence. However, unto the Lord be the arrangement of our health or disease, our life or our death; but while we live, we will leave no stone unturned for the increase of His glorious Kingdom in the earth. Every interval of relief shall be laid out in His service. The time is short, it must therefore be spent all the more economically; the work is great, the Lord must be trusted the more simply.

During the Pastor’s illness, the pulpit at the Tabernacle has been five times occupied by Mr. Thomas Spurgeon, and once by Mr. Charles; and it has been a delight of no ordinary kind for both of the sick parents to hear on all hands the highly-favorable judgments of God’s people as to the present usefulness, and ultimate eminence, of their sorts. Godly parents should be encouraged by our experience to pray for and expect the salvation of their offspring.—C. H. S., *in*“Notes” *in*“The *Sword and the Trowel” before leaving for the furlough described in this chapter.*

Let me describe certain Baptists in this hotel. (I) A father and son;—the father, rather lame; the son, very attentive,, to the father; in fact, a model; father improving as to health, but nothing to boast of. These were, of course, the dear writer himself and “Son Tom.”—S. S.I (2) An old man-servant with a grey beard,—an odd customer, commonly called “Old George.” (3) Mrs. Godwin, daughter of Dr. Acworth, of Rawdon, and wife to the son of Dr. Godwin, of the same place. With her are two daughters, once pupils of Miss Dransfield, excellent ladies. (4) An old round-faced Dutchman, a Mennonite, with his daughter, another Mennonite;— haters of baby-baptism, and very glad to see Mynheer  
Spuurjeoon!—C. H. S., *in letter written home during the furlough.*

M OTHER WORSE RETURN, was the sad, brief message that hurried me home from Australia in 1878. How joyful was the discovery, on arriving at Plymouth, that the crisis of her illness was past! But, alas! alas! dear father soon fell sick; and what with helping to nurse him at home, and attempting to take his place at the Tabernacle, it really looked as if it was on his account, rather than on mother’s, that Providence had led me back. This surmise was further strengthened when, much to my surprise, it was proposed that I should accompany the convalescent to Mentone.

It might be thought that I should have jumped at such a privilege; but, if the truth is told, I must admit that I was by no means keen on going. Perhaps I was a little weary of travelling; may be, I wanted to get at some permanent employment; perchance, I was loth to leave my mother, still so sorely sick. I fancy, too, that I had pardonable fears that I could not provide for my father such companionship as he deserved and desired. I had yet to learn how easy it was to please him. As it happened, I had not been a week with him ere I could write, “What a good father he is, to be sure! I loved him much although away from him, and now my affection will increase by being with him.” So, indeed, it did. Three months at Mentone, under the varying experiences of earnest work and happy recreation, of growing health and sad relapse, of fair and stormy weather, gave me an insight into his character such as I could not have gained in any other way. Many a time, since then, have the memories of that sojourn in the sunny South, with the dear man of God, been an inspiration to me.

I am not sure that, after the lapse of twenty years, I could have ventured to recite the story of that memorable visit, had not the letters that I wrote home been fortunately preserved, Dear mother has treasured them all these years, and they have greatly refreshed my memory. I only wish I had written more than these thirty missives; and that, in them, I had spoken more in detail of the sayings and doings of my beloved parent during those glad and golden days. Perhaps, the better way is to rejoice that I wrote so much. We were supposed to take it in turn to correspond with home. Father called my part of the work my book, and gave me “full permission to write fifty thousand sheets.” How little either of us dreamed what a purpose these notes would eventually serve!

Of our journey to the land of sunshine, little need be said. The dear invalid began to improve directly we started. He seemed better at Folkestone, and better still at Paris. Even the long night-journey to Marseilles did not unduly tire him. Ere we left the gay capital, “we had knelt in prayer, asking for peace and pleasure on our way; and, at the very start, we had an answer in the shape of a pleasing interview with a converted Jew who was acting as Cook’s agent. He spoke very earnestly about the blessed Book, and his dear Savior Jesus Christ. On the journey, father amused us for some time with arithmetical puzzles, in which, of course, he had the best of it.” The night was bitterly cold,—our breath froze on the carriage windows,—yet the sick preacher took no harm. “Our prayers were answered most graciously; we had journeying mercies rich and rare.” I should have said that our party consisted of father and son, Mr. Joseph Passmore,—that kindest and most genial of travelling companions,—and “Old George,” or, as I find I used to style him, “Father Christmas.”

A brief halt at Marseilles was helpful, but the rest of the journey proved slow and wearisome. How shall I speak of the joy with which the Pastor hailed his chosen resting-place? What though the weather was so unfavorable, for a while, that he had constantly to say, “This is not Mentone,” the very sight of the hills, and the olives, and the sea, revived his spirit. He knew that, when the sun did shine on them, they would be surpassingly lovely. The closing days of January were “as fine as fine could be,” so, though the limbs were not yet strong, it was possible to get to Dr. Bennet’s garden, or to watch the fishermen draw in their seine, and even to saunter up one or other of the charming valleys. But progress was all too slow, and an alarming relapse, supervened. It was a black Thursday when I had to send word home, “Dear father’s right foot is wrong, and he is fearful that it will get worse.” On the first of March, the most that could be said was, “Where the path was pretty level, he managed well enough alone, but every now and then he had to lean upon my shoulder.” There was gladder tidings a week later, “All is full of mercy with us. Dear father still continues to improve though his knees are certainly not hurrying to fullness of strength.” However, he gradually rallied. Great was my grief that the closing week was stormy and dismal. I had so hoped that he could be in the healing sunshine “just to receive the finishing touches.” On the fourth of April, I had the joy of recording, “Father pronounces himself better than ever this morning.” That was the last bulletin. I was particularly struck with the welcome accorded by all to the great preacher. It was hardly the sort of welcome usual in such cases. There was no undue familiarity in it, but it was hearty, spontaneous, and, I might even say, affectionate. Everybody was delighted to see him. The foreigners, who called him *“Meester* Sparegen,” vied with Englishmen in assuring him of their joy at his return. He had a genial smile and a cheery word for all. The Hotel de la Paix was still more peaceful when he became its guest. Old acquaintances, and ministers of the gospel, had a specially hearty reception from him. Even the clergyman, who claimed to be “a friend of more than twenty ‘years’ standing, because,” said he, “I have been cribbing from you all that time” was favored with quite a large slice of attention. Most to his mind, however, were the King’s three mighty men, George Muller, John Bost, and Hudson Taylor. In the company of these kindred spirits, he literally revelled. Was I not honored to be an onlooker?

Family worship was a delightful item of each day’s doings. It was, of course, usually conducted by C. H. S. but he sometimes asked others to take part. His unstudied comments, and his marvelous prayers, were an inspiration indeed. I did not wonder that requests were received for a share in this privilege. I find, in my journal, the fol1owing interesting entry for March 3:—“We had two fresh arrivals to morning prayers. Strangers to father, they had requested, through the waiter, admission to our worship, so a stately mother and a tall daughter from Belgrave Square were made right welcome.”

It was often directly after breakfast that the work had to be seen to for it must be known that C. H Spurgeon’s holidays were by no means altogether devoted to so-called pleasure-taking. He found his truest delight in active service. Sometimes, if the truth must be told, it appeared to all of us that he rested insufficiently. There were those ceaseless letters; how they worried me, for he would answer them himself, when I wanted him to be by the sea, or under the olives! How he loved the olive trees, chiefly because they told him of his Lord and of Gethsemane!

I confess that I begrudged him the time he spent in corresponding with all save dear mother and the Tabernacle Church. This is how I wrote at the time concerning this matter —“As to his other letters, I wish folk would not bother him with nonsensical epistles. I must admit that it does not seem any great labor to him to answer them; still, the time would be far better spent in the sunshine; but what can’t be cured must be endured.” I think I understand better, by this time, why he answered almost everyone. He knew so well the power of letter-writing. He knew also how glad the recipients would be, and what life-long friends he would secure. Quite recently, a venerable saint, in his eighty-ninth year, sent me, “just to look at,” a letter he had received from dear father at Mentone. It was in answer to a message of gratitude for a sermon in *The Christian Herald,*and ran like this —

“My Dear Brother,

“I thank you for your word of good cheer. It is a great joy to be the means of comfort to an aged believer. You will very likely get home before I shall, but tell them I am coming as fast as the gout will let me. The Lord will not leave you now that hoary hairs have come, but will now carry you in His bosom. Peace be unto you!

“Yours heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
Who can tell the joy that brief, bright, brotherly note brought the octogenarian, who, after all, was not the first to “get home”?

But there was other work to be done. The weekly sermon had to be revised, and the magazine edited. Here is a striking *holiday*item —“He is; very busy with the magazine, and fears he cannot write to you today.” Moreover, there was generally some book on the stocks, and since he who would write books must read them,—a maxim which obtained even with so original a thinker as he was,—it is written in my diary “We have beguiled many of our hours by reading, and father has been culling flowers of thought to be arranged in fragrant nosegays by-and-by.’ The only mishap on our journey to Mentone was the temporary loss of a bag full of books; but a more serious loss than that seemed scarcely possible to the author and devourer of books. He was as a workman bereft of his tools. He was in terrible distress, and refused to be comforted till the satchel was forthcoming. “Great was the Pastor’s joy on finding his peculiar treasure.”

With very special delight I recall the fact that I, too, was set to work, and that I had the President of the Pastors’ College as my private tutor. Let me give a few quotations which will sufficiently indicate the curriculum of the Mentone branch of that Institution—“I read Chapter I. of a French history from which father questioned me afterwards. I then stuck to Hodge till dinner-time, and by tomorrow I hope to get into real working order. It is very good of dear father to interest himself so in my welfare. I shall do my very best to prevent him ever regretting it.” “Father and son worked at history and Hodge. *The driest matter bursts into a blaze when C. H. S. puts some of his fire to it.”*“Father is now on a sofa, at an open window, inspecting a primer of political economy, prior to my study of it. I wonder if this College course extraordinary will admit me to the Conference; I greatly hope so.” “I have just completed an examination in history, and am, as usual, top of the class. A still more interesting way of studying French history was introduced yesterday. Father borrowed Carlyle’s *French Revolution,*and read it to us!” There follows a hint that Mr. Passmore seemed to appreciate this method of instruction (even) more than Hodge. But, oh, it was glorious to hear C. H. Spurgeon read Carlyle!

Every day when the weather favored, and health permitted, we had an outing of some sort. It often consisted only of a drive up one of the valleys, and a stroll back; but we generally took our lunch, and “Old George” was sorely tried because there was no spot sufficiently level for his cloth, and no center-piece more elegant than an orange; but these were trifles which our sharpened appetites scorned. How the dear Pastor gloried in the freedom of these rambles! The spring flowers and the trap-door spiders, no less than the towering hills and dashing rills, filled his soul with prayer, and praise, and poetry. The prayer and praise constantly found expression, and once at least the poetry overflowed. “We lunched beneath the fir trees. Meanwhile, the birds were singing to us. No wonder, then, that the poetic fire burst forth, and C. H. S. gave vent to his delight in extempore rhyme. It should be perhaps explained that we had been reading Cowper together before the meal.”  
Five times we went up the Gorbio valley, and declared that “fifty times would hardly tire us of the lovely place.” Longer, but scarcely more enjoyable expeditions were made to Bordighera,— “the place where the sun seems always; shining;”—to Nice, and Monaco, and Roquebrune, and Ventimiglia, and Dolce Acqua.

Cap Martin was a favorite spot. As soon as the weather cleared, the cheery voice rang out, “Son Tom, I propose a drive to Cap Martin.” I thereupon heartily seconded the resolution, and the friends (for others had joined us by this time,) carried it unanimously. After a breezy drive, “we clambered over the rocks, and watched the pale green coursers foam toward the shore, and dash themselves in spray about us. We were a jolly party, altogether, and who will say that dear father was not the jolliest of all?”

Sometimes, quite, an excursion party was organized, “personally conducted” by C. H.S. Thus we read, in the chronicles of our visit—“We had a splendid trip, the day before yesterday, to Ventimiglia,—a whole party of us, in two carriages. Father was guide, of course, and interested us greatly with his graphic descriptions of the amphitheatre and the cathedral. You know how much more one can learn when he is at hand to point it out.”

I am tempted to quote largely from the report of a visit to the charming residence of Mr. Thomas Hanbury. As it was fully enjoyed by him whose time of rest I am endeavoring to picture, I cannot pass it by in silence. “March 23, ’79 — The morning was wet and cold; but suddenly, the wind changed, and the sun tried to struggle through the clouds. We were wondering if we might hope for a drive in the afternoon, when Mr. Hanbury’s carriage was announced to be in waiting to convey us; to the Palazzo Orengo. Mr. H. had noticed the change before we did, and was more confident of favorable weather; so he kindly sent for us with a promise to return us when we wished. The prospect of a charming ride, and a lovely stroll in an earthly paradise, (to say nothing of a *recherche* lunch,) was eagerly jumped at.

“From the magnificent gateway on the high road, we walked by an easy decline toward the mansion. At every turn,—nay, at every step,—there was something to admire and marvel at. The walks are spread with tiny blue beach stones, so that, though the plants and shrubs were overflowing with crystal tokens of the recent rain, we went over the garden dryshod. Mr. H. was our guide, and descanted concerning aloes, and agaves, and eucalypti, and the rare and curious plants which he had gathered from every quarter. I saw quite a number of my Australian friends,—she-oak, wattle, gum, etc.” I well remember that dear father was specially delighted with the wonderful show of anemones. Thousands of these bright flowers, of every hue, sprang from the fresh green grass,—a fallen rainbow, surely! An aloe, too, pleased him greatly. Much to its owner’s; regret, it was beginning to flower. It was the finest in the garden, and Mr. H. knew only too well that its effort still further to beautify itself must end in death.

But Dr. Bennet’s garden was our chief resort,—“a veritable paradise on the side of a rocky steep.” How many times it was visited, I cannot tell. It was near at hand, and no special invitation was necessary. Father loved to look on the town from this view-point, and desired me to sketch the scene.F1 It was not the first time my pencil had been at his service; and great was my joy to transfer to my sketch-book the scenes which particularly interested him, such as some queer specimens of architecture in the old town, the tunnel-pierced cliff with the Italian guard-house on its brow, the ruined castle and running fountain at Roquebrune, or a specially gnarled and twisted olive tree. Never had aspiring artist a more indulgent patron.

After dinner, there was generally an adjournment to the smoking-room, where father chatted freely ‘with the other visitors at the hotel, who were by no means loth to exchange sentiments with the distinguished preacher. And he could discourse on almost any theme. How pleased he was to meet an aged Mennonite Baptist there! An Alsatian baron, who had translated some of the sermons, and had come all the way from Cannes to see him, was received, one evening, with due ceremony, in his private sitting-room.

Will anyone be surprised to hear that, on one occasion, Mr. Spurgeon witnessed a conjuring performance? “Vie were entertained at a ‘*brillante seance de magie,*’ given by ‘Le Prof*esseur Prestidigitateur,*B. Marchelli.’ The performance was very good for that of a strolling conjuror. Dear father seemed to enjoy it mightily, especially when the Professor produced a turtle-dove from ‘Old George’s’ pocket in first-rate style.” Almost every evening, we had some reading of a light description,—*The Ingoldsby* Legends being a favorite work. It was my privilege, also, to add to the paternal merriment by reading certain humorous sketches of my Australian experiences, sometimes amid a shower of newspapers and other missiles. We enjoyed our Sundays thoroughly. The Presbyterian Church was not then built, so we worshipped in a room of Mrs. Dudgeon’s villa. Dr. Hanna and others preached, and our Pastor was often an interested listener. He always had unstinted praise for a sermon which exalted Jesus, and proclaimed His dying love. “That was a very sweet sermon,” he used to say when such a discourse had been delivered. How delighted he was to hear George Muller on “Patient waiting upon God.” Especially did he rejoice in the man behind the message. The preacher came to our communion service, and closed it with prayer. I remember that, after asking great things for my beloved parents, he prayed very earnestly for “the dear son in Australia.’ I had great pleasure in informing him that I was the son in Australia; and oh! how warmly did he grasp my hand,—the dear old man! Little did we dream then that, nine years after, he would help to marry me in New Zealand.

Perhaps I may venture to add, concerning our Sundays, that it was my joyful privilege to conduct several services. On one occasion, the Pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle occupied a seat under the verandah. I told him, afterwards, how fortunate it was that did not happen to address “outsiders.” I cannot forget the loving encouragement he gave me. Not less did I prize the lenient criticisms and valuable hints as to style and delivery. I may be pardoned, too, for treasuring the memory of how, during this happy holiday, he conceived the idea of having me ever with him, and of instituting a Sunday afternoon service that I might conduct. But the Master willed it otherwise.

We had a whole day with George Muller in Dr. Bennet’s garden, and I am able to copy from nay letter of the following date this striking testimony as to the advantage of such fellowship “Dear father declares himself far better able to ‘trust and not be afraid’ through intercourse with Mr. Muller.” The stimulus to faith was greatly needed then. How well God times His aid! In the same epistle, after recording our sorrow at mother’s continued illness, these words occur — “Another source of anxiety is the lack of funds for the Colportage Association. This matter also we have believingly commended to the God of all grace, who will surely not let His servants want. Dear father has been in many straits before, and has always been delivered. In this trouble also the Lord will befriend him, — lot what is £700 to Him?”  
For Pastor John Bost, director of the Asylums of La Force, C. H. Spurgeon consented to preside at a public meeting. Besides being deeply interested in his work among the epileptics, father was greatly taken with the mart himself. The Englishman and the Frenchman had something in common, for Pastor Bost was brimful of humor, and withal somewhat stout, He himself said, “Mr. Muller is a great man, John Bost is a big man.” The meeting was a grand success. “Both speakers mingled plenty of fun with their addresses; and I, for one, was laughing and crying alternately all the time. ‘The dear epileptics were most effectively pleaded for.”

This sketch of C. H. Spurgeon at Mentone would hardly be complete if it did not tell how amused he was by the Carnival procession. I call to mind how interested he was in the various devices, and how heartily he laughed at the grotesque ones. He was specially pleased with a company mounted upon donkeys, and representing candlesticks. The men’s bodies were the candles, their heads the flames, and on their spears they held extinguishers. I almost wonder that the group did not figure afterwards in *Sermons in Candles.*

As soon as a measure of health returned, the eager worker looked longingly towards home. His head nurse declared that he was not fit to go back, but the patient was impatient to be in harness again. Here is the official bulletin for March 17:—“He seems, to my mind, hardly strong enough to undertake the thousand duties of his gigantic work; but he will not hear of staying longer, and has already engaged a sleeping-car.’ Urgent representations from the Tabernacle, that he should remain away till thoroughly restored, came to hand; but an extra week was all that the combined efforts could secure. He was as a greyhound in the leash till he was back at his post.

And what a home-coming it was! Nightingale Lane then heard sweeter music than ever Philomel produced,—the music of loving welcome to dear ones mingled with fervent gratitude to God. And when the blessed ministry at the Tabernacle was resumed, there rose to Heaven a doxology, loud as the voice of many waters, from a church and congregation that loved their Pastor almost as well as he loved them.

What a welcome he must have had, thirteen years later, when from the same sunny land he went home to God!

CHAPTER 84.

DOUBLE SILVER WEDDING.

It was right and seemly that, at the close of thin period of twentyfive years, some testimonial should be offered to the Pastor. The like has been worthily done in other instances; 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 appear 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 ns 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 by the gate; and as we behold 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! — *C. H. S., in “The Sword and the Trowel,” January,* 1879

A FTER the furlough described in the previous chapter, the first great historical event was the celebration of Mr. Spurgeon’s pastoral silver wedding, — the commemoration of the completion of the twenty-fifth year of his ministry in London. It was felt, by many of his friends, that so notable a period of Christian service should not be allowed to pass without due recognition, and many of them desired to avail themselves of the opportunity to present to their Pastor a testimonial of their loving esteem. As soon as the matter was mentioned to him, he resolutely refused to receive any personal presentation; but, feeling that the church’s gratitude to God for all the blessing vouchsafed during that memorable quarter of a century ought to find suitable expression, he suggested that efforts should be made to help the one portion of the work which had been a. source of some anxiety to him, and might be more so in the future.

At the annual church-meeting, in January, 1878, the question assumed definite shape, as will be seen from Mr Spurgeon’s own account of the proceedings — “It was proposed, and heartily carried by all, that the deacons should consider how best to celebrate the Pastor’s silver wedding when the twenty-fifth year should dose, it God should spare the senior Pastor to that time. Mr. Spurgeon then reminded the church that its heaviest burden was the Almshouses, which, having been scantily endowed for six aged sisters, now accommodated seventeen, and made a heavy drain on the communion fund. It appeared, from the balance-sheet, that the alms given away to the poor annually exceeded L1,000; and, from the great number of the poor members, it had been needful for the Pastor to find L120, and for other friends to give privately in order to balance the account. This was principally clue to the large item for support of almswomen; and Mr. Spurgeon said that, if friends would make an effort to raise about L5,000, this part of the church work would be put into proper shape, and he should regard it as a fit way of celebrating the anticipated event. He remarked that it was comparatively easy to carry the load now, but that he should not like to leave such a heavy burden for his successor. Should he himself be suddenly called away, the church might find it no great cause for blessing Mr. Spurgeon’s administration if it found that houses had been built for the aged widows to starve in, but that their daily bread had been forgotten. He considered that the good ship was in trim condition from stem to stern with this exception, and he would like to see the matter done, and done well. From the enthusiasm of the meeting, there is little doubt that, by many hands, the needful amount will be brought in on or before January, 1879.”

By that date, far more than the sum mentioned had been received. About half the amount was realized by a bazaar, for the Pastor had not then seen, as he did in later years, the evils necessarily associated with that method of raising money for the Lord’s cause. The presentation had to be postponed, for a time, as Mr. Spurgeon was away at Mentone, seeking rest and restoration; but, at last, May 20, 1919, was fixed for the joyous event. It was preceded by special sermons on the Sabbath, in the course of which the following historical and autobiographical references were made by the preacher —

“Under the present pastorate, we are like mariners in mid-ocean, distant twenty-five leagues, or rather years, from the place of our departure, and making all sail for the further shore. As to any service we may expect personally to render, we are certainly in the midst of the years, if not near to their end. In the course of nature, we could not expect that more than another twenty-five years of service could be compassed by us, nor are we so foolish as to reckon even upon that we have, at any rate, come to middle life in our church-relationship, now that we celebrate our silver wedding. Brethren, there is about ‘the midst of the years’ a certain special danger, and this led the prophet, as it shall lead us at this time, to pray, in the words which I have selected for my text, ‘O Lord, revive Thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known.’ Youth has its perils, but these are past; age has its infirmities, but these we have not yet reached; it is ours then to pray against the dangers which are present with us in the midst of the years. The middle passage of life with us as individuals, and with us as at church, is crowded with peculiar perils.

“There is a certain spur and stimulus of novelty about religious movements which in a few years is worn out. I well recollect when we were called ‘a nine days’ wonder, and our critics prophesied that our work would speedily collapse. Such excitement had been seen before, and had passed away; and this would be one among other bubbles of the hour. The nine days have lasted considerably long; — may nine such days follow them, in God’s infinite mercy! Now, whatever detractors might say, we know that there was then a life, an energy, a freshness about everything which was done by us as a church which we could hardly expect to continue with us for all these years. From an admirable fervor, many cool down to a dangerous chill. This is to be bemoaned where it has occurred, and it is to be feared where as yet it has not happened, for such is the natural tendency of things. Beloved brethren, I have prayed to God that, when what is called the *esprit de corps*is gone from us, the *Esprit de Dieu*may still abide with us; that, when the spirit which grows out of our association with each other declines, we may be sustained by the Spirit which unites us all to the Lord Jesus.

“This very house of prayer has been to some of you a quiet resting-place. You have been more at home here than when you have been at home. I will be bound to say that you recollect more happy times that you have had here than anywhere else, and these have put out of your memory the sad records of your hard battling in the world, even for a livelihood. I know that many of you live by your Sabbaths, You step over the intervening space from Lord’s-day to Lord’s-day, as if the Lord had made a ladder of Sabbaths for you to climb to Heaven by; and you have been fed, as well as rested, in Gods house. I know you have, for he who deals out the meat has had his own portion; and when he is fed, he knows that others have like appetites, and need like food, and know when they get it. You have clapped your hands for very joy when redeeming grace and dying love have been the theme, and infinite, sovereign, changeless mercy has been the subject of discourse.

“Well now, by every happy Sabbath you have had, my brethren; by every holy Monday evening prayer-meeting; by every occasion on which God has met with you in any of the rooms of this building, when a few of you, at early morning, or late in the evening, have gathered together for prayer; by every time in which the realization of Jesus’ love has charmed your soul up to Heaven’s gate, bless and magnify His Name, who has crowned the years with His goodness. There had been no food for us if the Lord had not given us manna from Heaven. There had been no comfortable rest for us if He had not breathed peace upon us. There had been no coming in of new converts, nor going out with rapturous joy of the perfected ones up to the seats above, if the Lord had not been with us and, therefore, to Him be all the praise.

“I do not suppose that any strangers here will understand this matter. It may even be that dray will judge that we are indulging in self-gratulation under a thin disguise; but this evil we must endure for once. You, my brothers and sisters, who have been together these many years, comprehend what is meant; and you know that it is not within the compass of an angel’s tongue to express the gratitude which many of us feel who, for these five-and-twenty years, have been banded together in closest and heartiest Christian brotherhood in the service of our Lord and Master. Strangers cannot guess how happy has been our fellowship, or how true our love. Eternity alone shall reveal the multitude of mercies with which God has visited us by means of our association in this church; it is to some of us friend, nurse, mother, home, all in one. During all these years, the Lord has been pleased, in infinite mercy, to prepare men’s hearts to listen to the Word. It was not possible, they said, that great places could be filled with crowds to hear the old-fashioned gospel. The pulpit had lost its power, — so unbelievers told us; and yet, no sooner did we begin to preach in simple strains the gospel of Christ, than the people flew as a cloud, and as doves to their windows. And what listening there was at New Park Street, where we scarcely had air enough to breathe! And when we got into the larger place, what attention was manifest! What power seemed to go with every word that was spoken; I say it, though I was the preacher; for it was not I, but the grace of God which was with me. There were, stricken down among us, some of the most unlikely ones. There were brought into the church, and added to God’s people, some of those who had wandered far away from the path of truth and righteousness; and these, by their penitent love, quickened our life, and increased our zeal. The Lord gave the people more and more a willingness to hear, and there was no pause either in the flowing stream of hearers, or in the incoming of converts. The Holy Spirit came down like showers which saturate the soil till the clods are ready for the breaking; and then it was not long before, on the right and on the left, we heard the cry, ‘What must we do to be saved?’ We were busy enough, in those days, in seeing converts; and, thank God, we have been so ever since. We had some among us who gave themselves up to watch for the souls of men, and we have a goodly number of such helpers now, perhaps more than ever we had; and, thank God, these found and still find many souls to watch over. Still the arrows fly, and still the smitten cry out for help, and ask that they may be guided to the great healing Lord. Blessed be God’s Name for this! He went with us all those early clays, and gave us sheaves; even at the first sowing, so that we began with mercy; and He has been with us; even until now, till our life has become one long harvest-home.  
“I am bound to acknowledge, with deep thankfulness, that, during these twenty-five years, the Word has been given me to speak when the time has come for preaching. It may look to you a small thing that I should be able to come before you in due time; but it will not seem so to my brethren in the ministry who recollect that, for twenty-five years, my sermons have been printed as they have been delivered. It must be an easy thing to go and buy discourses at sixpence or a shilling each ready lithographed, and read them off, as hirelings do; but to speak your heart out every time, and yet to have something fresh to say for twenty-five years, is no child’s play. Who shall do it unless he cries unto God for help? I read, but the other day, a newspaper criticism upon myself, in which the writer expressed his wonder that a man should keep on year after year with so few themes, and such a narrow groove to travel in; but, my brethren, it is not so, our themes are infinite for number and fullness. Every text of Scripture is boundless in its meaning; we could preach from the Bible throughout eternity, and not exhaust it. The groove narrow? The thoughts of God narrow? The Word of the Lord narrow? They who say so do not know it, for His commandment is exceeding broad. Had we to speak of politics or philosophy, we should have run dry long ago; but when we have to preach the Savior’s everlasting love, the theme is always fresh, always new. The incarnate God, the atoning blood, the risen Lord, the coming glory, these are subjects which defy exhaustion. When I recollect how, as a boy, I stood among you, and feebly began to preach Jesus Christ, and how these twenty-five years, without dissension, ay, without the dream of dissension, in perfect love compacted as one man, you have gone on from one work of God to another, and have never halted, hesitated, or drawn back, I must and will bless and magnify Him who hath crowned these years with His goodness.

“Now I come to my closing point. It is this, — the crowning blessing is confessed to be of God. Some churches have one crown, and some another; our crown, under God, has been this, — the poor have the gospel preached unto them, souls are saved, and Christ is glorified. O my beloved church, hold fast that thou hast, that no man take this crown away from thee! As for me, by God’s help, the first and last thing that I long for is to bring men to Christ. I care nothing about fine language, or about the pretty speculations of prophecy, or a hundred dainty things; but to break the heart and bind it up, to lay hold on a sheep of Christ and bring’ it back into the fold, is the one thing I would live for. You also are of the same mind, are you not? Well, we have had this crowning blessing that, as nearly as I can estimate, since I came amongst you, more than nine thousand persons have joined this church. If they were all alive now, or all with us now, what a company they would be! I find that, during these twenty-five years, there have gone from us, to the upper realms, about eight hundred who had named the Name of Jesus. Professing their faith in Christ, living in His fear, dying in the faith, they grave us no cause to doubt their sincerity; and, therefore, we may not question their eternal safety. Many of them gave us, in life and in death, all the tokens we could ask for of their being in Christ; and, therefore, we sorrow not as those that are without hope. Why, when I think of them, — many of them my sons and daughters in the faith, — now before the throne, they fill me with solemn exultation! Do you not see them in their white robes? Eight hundred souls redeemed by blood! These are only those whom we knew of, and had enrolled on our church-books. How many more there may have been converted, who never joined our earthly fellowship, but, nevertheless, have gone home, I cannot tell. There probably have been more than those whose names we know, if we consider the wide area over which the printed sermons circulate. They are gathering home one by one, but they make a goodly company. Our name is Gad, for ‘a troop cometh.’ Happy shall we be to overtake those who have outmarched us, and entered into the Promised Land before us. Let us remember them, and by faith join our hands with the its. Flash a thought to unite the broken family, for we are not far from them, nor are they tar from us, since we are one in Christ.”

Monday evening, May 19, was mainly devoted to praising the Lord for His goodness to both Pastor and people during the whole period of their union; but, before the meeting closed, Mr. Spurgeon gave an address, as he felt that there would not be time, the following’ evening, for him to say all that he wanted. Among other things;, he said — “I have, as you must imagine, felt the deepest emotion, at the end of these twenty-five years of your affectionate cooperation; and especially an emotion, which I shall not attempt to express, of grateful affection to you all for the noble testimonial which you have raised to commemorate the event. I felt sure that you would take up the plan of providing for our aged sisters as soon as it was proposed to you by the deacons; but I did not think that you could give me such a testimonial as you have prepared. The net sum which is to be handed to me is, I am informed, £6,238, (afterwards increased to £6,476 9s.,) the spontaneous giving — the universal giving — the delighted giving of the entire church and congregration. Everyone has seemed jealous of being excluded; so all, both rich and poor, young and old, have pressed forward with their gifts. I certainly could not have imagined that you would so largely exceed the amount needed for the Almshouses; and yet, when I remember your many other loving and generous acts, I cannot be surprised at anything. It is just like you; your conduct to me is all of a piece, and may God bless you for it! I was ill all the while you were doing this great deed of love, and I could not rise from my bed; but, each day, I had tidings of some sort about you, and your words and acts of love; and I hardly knew how to bear it. It lifted me out of despondency, but it cast me down with exceeding gratitude. I scarcely like to speak upon the subject, because it has been a rule with me not to take a text which I could not hope to grasp. Little boats are safest while they keep in sight of shore. This subject is one of those upon which the more said the better, and yet it remains better than all that can be said. I condense my sermon into a sentence, and that sentence is a prayer, — May the God, whom I serve, bless you all a thousandfold for this token of your love and kindness towards me, which I know you have rendered for Christ’s sake!”

On Tuesday evening, May 20, the Tabernacle was crowded in every part for the meeting at which the testimonial was to be presented. After prayer and praise, Mr. B. W. Cart read a. long but interesting historical paper, entitled, “A Grateful Retrospect,” summarizing the church’s progress during Mr. Spurgeon’s ministry; Dr. Charles Stanford followed with a choice composition upon “The Baptist Churches, twenty-five years ago and now;” a few brief addresses were delivered; and then, as a pleasant interlude before, the presentation was made by Mr. William Olney, the Pastor said — “Before we go to the business of the evening, we will sing our Tabernacle National Anthem, that glorious hymn, —

***“‘Grace, ‘tis charming sound,’ —***

to the tune ‘ Cranbrook’, which a critic has called ‘execrable.’ I am such a heretic as to like ‘Cranbrook’; and if you will only sing it as we generally do, we will make some of these heathen here tonight like it. The way of singing now (continued Mr. Spurgeon, in affected tone to imitate the parties to whom he alluded) is, ‘Let us sing to the praise and glory of God, and rattle through it as fast as possible, with never a fugue or a repeat, and get it over and done, for we are sick to death of it.’ In truth, I think some of the much-admired modern tunes might be very well represented under the following story — ‘I hope you enjoyed our music this morning,’ said a gentleman of the High Church to a Presbyterian friend who was staying with him. ‘Well, I cannot say that I admire your form of service at all; I like things much better as we have them in the old kirk.’ ‘No? But you are, after all, a gentleman of musical taste; did you not very much enjoy that *introit?’*‘I really don’t know which it was.’ ‘But you must have been pleased with that *anthem,’*repeated the High Churchman. ‘I don’t know, I can’t say much in its favor,’ was the reply. ‘Well, there was one very remarkable tune; didn’t you notice it)’ ‘Oh!’ was the response, ‘ I didn’t think much of it.’ ‘Well, now, I am very sorry, because that is a very ancient tune, used by the early Church very often; indeed, I believe it was sung in the catacombs. I have even heard that this wonderful piece of music came from the Jews, and was no doubt chanted in the liturgical service of the Temple for you know the worship of the ancient Temple was liturgical, and not your bare Presbyterian form at all. There appears to be scarcely any doubt that the tune we had this morning was originally sung by David himself when he played on his harp.’ ‘Dear me,’ said the Presbyterian, ‘I never heard that before, but it throws great light upon Scripture. I never could make out why Saul threw a javelin at David; but if that was the tune which he sang when he played his harp before the king, I can understand Saul’s ferocity, and justify it, too.’ ‘Cranbrook’ is not the tune that was sung by David, but it is a good deal better than anything David ever sang; the tune is more musical, and the hymn has more gospel in it than was known under the law.”

***“Grace, ‘tis a charming sound,”***

was then sung, to the tune “Cranbrook”, as only a Tabernacle audience of six thousand people could sing it. Then followed the presentation of the testimonial. The principal portions of Mr. Olney’s address, and of Mr. Spurgeon’s reply, were published in Vol. II., Chapter XLIV., and therefore need not be repeated here; but the record of that memorable meeting may be closed with the Pastor’s allusions to his people’s affection and his own resolve — “I can only use over again the simile I have employed before. If the crystallizing of sugar, to make sugar candy, strings are stretched across the vessel in which the syrup is boiled; upon these strings the sugar crystallizes. You are the sugar; the Divine life supplies the fire which melts your hearts; and I am the thread around which you crystallize. So be it still! But your love is to me an amazement; I am the most astonished person among you; I do not comprehend it; it seems a romance to me. What I have done, I shall do still; namely, love you with all my heart, and love my Lord as His grace enables me. I mean to go on preaching Jesus, and His gospel; and you may be sure that I shall not preach anything else, for with me it is Christ or nothing. I am sold up, and my stock-in-trade is gone if Jesus Christ is gone. He is the sum of my ministry, my All-in-all.”

A pleasing sequel to the presentation was thus noted at the time by Mr. Spurgeon “The testimonial which celebrated our twenty-five years of pastoral work was presented on Tuesday, May 20, and there and then dedicated to the Lord. On the following Thursday evening, we commenced a new period in our church history; and it is a singularly pleasing coincidence that, at the church-meeting held on that evening, no less than thirty-seven candidates came before the church, and confessed their faith in Christ, — the largest number that we have ever received at one churchmeeting. This was the more remarkable as it happened entirely without arrangement on the part of the Pastor or anyone else. We regard it as ‘a token for good,’ and look for greater things than these.’”

Only a brief mention of our personal silver wedding is necessary. There was some intention of holding a special meeting at the Tabernacle, to congratulate the. Pastor and his wife, on Monday, January 10, 1881, — two days after the actual date; but, unhappily, Mr. Spurgeon was laid aside at the time, so that idea had to be abandoned, although we were both very sympathetically remembered in the supplications of those who were assembled, that evening, in the much-loved house of prayer. Ultimately, the commemoration took the form of a private gathering of friends, at “Westwood,” on Wednesday, February 2. It was characteristic of my beloved’s devotion to his Lord’s service, and of the intimate union existing between himself and his church-officers, that such an event in our family history should have been celebrated in connection with a meeting of the deacons at our home. I might not have remembered that circumstance had I not been favored with the loan of one of the invitations issued by the dear Pastor, *a facsimile o*f which is here reproduced. I am not aware that he ever signed another letter with our united initials, and the date on which this one was written gives it now a specially tender interest. I have no very vivid recollections of the evening’s proceedings; but I know that Mr. William Olney and Mr. Carr, as the spokesmen on behalf of their brotherdeacons, made most sympathetic references to both the parents and their twin-sons, and that, after the interchange of many cheering reminiscences, and a time of holy fellowship, the whole household joined us for family worship, which was conducted by Mr. Spurgeon with his usual fervor and impressiveness.

Among my dear husband’s papers, I find a letter, relating to this happy season, from his old Cambridge friend, Mr. J. S. Watts, of whom frequent mention was made in Vol. 1. of the A*utobiography.*This epistle so sweetly links the beginning of our wedded life with the twenty-fifth anniversary of our marriage, that it appears to me to deserve a place in this chapter,

“Regent Street,  
“Cambridge,  
“January 8, 1881.

“My Dear Friend,

“My mind reverts to the month of January, twenty-five years ago, when a certain newly-married juvenile Pastor and his wife came to me for a, few days, and solaced themselves in their mutual love for each other at my house.

“Many things have happened since that time; but their faithfulness and their affection for each other have not been impaired; and now that they are about to celebrate their silver wedding, I ask permission to remind them of those early days, and to add my hearty congratulations at this auspicious period.

“May the 8th of January, 1881, ring in a strain of joyful music over the strings of the past, assuring them that ‘golden days’ are yet to come, even before they ‘walk the golden streets.’ So prays, —

“Their old friend and well-wisher,  
“J. S. WATTS.”  
Another loving letter, written at that period by Dr. W. Morley Punshon, is also worthy of preservation here —

“Tranby,  
“Brixton Rise, S.W.,  
“Jan., 1881.

“My Dear Sir and Brother,  
‘The papers tell us that the 8th inst. will be a memorable day to you; and, amid hosts of greeting friends, my wife and I (than whom you have none truer, though our love can rarely exhibit itself but in wishful thought and prayer,) would fain express our good wishes in a line.

“We trust there is good foundation for the rumor, which has lately reached us, of great and permanent improvement in Mrs. Spurgeon’s health; and we pray that, if it be the Lord’s will, you may be continued to each other in happy fellowship until the ‘silvern’ shall have become ‘golden’ by the lapse of years.

“Like most of God’s anointed, it seems as if you are to be ‘made meet by consecrated pain.’ May the Refiner sit always by the furnace! You know that the fire will never be kindled a whit too fiercely, nor burn a moment too long.

“Them are many, whom you know not, who thank God, in these times of rebuke, for your fidelity to the old gospel, and who watch you with solicitude and prayer.

“Wishing for Mrs. Spurgeon and yourself, happiness, and the blessedness which is better, — the Lord’s unutterable peace, long and useful lives, and the ‘abundant entrance’ at last, I am, in my wife’s name and my own,

“Yours very affectionately,  
“W. MORLEY PUNSHON.”  
“Rev. Chas. H. Spurgeon.”

Three months later, when Dr. Punshon was “called home,” Mr. Spurgeon gratefully referred to this letter, and sought to comfort the bereaved family in their season of sorrow.

CHAPTER 85.

ENQUIRERS AND CONVERTS.

There are gentlemen, in England, who can afford to drive a coach and four from town to town and carry nobody, performing their journeys for their own amusement; but I am not able or willing to do anything of that kind. Unless I can have my coach loaded with passengers to Heaven, I would sooner it was never started, and had rather that my team stopped in the stable. We must carry some souls to Heaven, for our call is from above and our time is too precious to throw away on mere pretense of doing good. We cannot play at preaching; we preach for eternity. We cannot feel satisfied merely to deliver sermons to senseless throngs, or to the most attentive crowds. Whatever smiles may greet us as we start, and whatever salutation may welcome us at our close, we are not content unless Jesus works salvation by us. Our desire is that grace should be magnified, and that sinners should be saved. They used to jeer at the Tabernacle in Moorfields, and the one in Tottenham Court Road, and call them Mr. Whitefield’s soul-traps; — a very excellent name for a place of worship; such may this Tabernacle ever be! — C. H. S., in a sermon preached August 19, 1877,*a night when the Tabernacle was free to all comers, the regular congregation having vacated their seats.*

I am sure that if a minister wants conversions, he must identify himself with his people. There are persons, nowadays, who make a difficulty about Moses praying for Israel, “If Thou wilt forgive their sin; and if not, Not me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book ‘which Thou hast written;” and they raise questions about Paul being willing to be separated from Christ for his brethren, his kinsmen according to the flesh. Oh, but there is no difficulty in the matter if you once get to feel such an intense love for the souls of men that you would, as it were, pawn your own salvation, and count it little if you might but bring the people to the Savior’s feet! A man who has never felt that willingness does not yet know the true throb of a pastor’s heart; he has not been ordained to be a shepherd if he would not lay down his life for the flock, if it were necessary. — C. H. S., *in a sermon preached at the Tabernacle, August*23, 1883.

He who has spoken the Word with power to the heart bears to him who has heard it the relationship of a father to a son. There are many, in this place, to whom I stand in this most hallowed connection. You recognize it, I know, and I desire to express my intense and fervent love to the many of you who have been born unto God by the preaching of the Word here. I do not know of anything that has more greatly comforted me, during the last week or two in the time of sharp contention for the faith, than the reception of so many letters, from persons of whom I have never before heard, saying, “You do not know me, but you are my spiritual father; and now, at such a time of trial as this is to you, I must write and send you a word of good cheer.” It is always a cause of thankfulness to me when my testimony is blessed to the conversion of a seeking soul; but when I think of the hundreds, and the thousands, — ay, I am not exaggerating when I ,say thousands of converts, — whom I have, met with here on earth, and the many more, at present unknown to me, whom I hope to meet with either here or in Heaven, I do rejoice, yea, and I will rejoice; and I cannot help expressing my great low to all those who have been brought to the Savior by the words which I have preached and published. — C. H. S., *in a sermon delivered at the Tabernacle, November*6, 1887.

I N one of the sermons preached in connection with his pastoral silver wedding, Mr. Spurgeon called attention to the fact that, during his twentyfive years’ ministry in London, more than nine thousand persons had joined the church; while, probably, an equal or still larger number had been converted through hearing or reading his sermons, although they had not become members at the Tabernacle. The previous volumes of the *Autobiography*have contained many references to these converts, and records of the means blessed to their salvation; but it appears necessary to devote two chapters in the present volume to the same subject in order adequately to set forth this most important part of the dear Pastor’s service, and to show how abundantly the favor of God rested upon it from its commencement to its close. It is a cause for devout thankfulness that, in a great measure, a similar blessing still accompanies his published words, both in our own tongue, and in many of the languages into which they have been translated. The first part of the following narrative is, given in Mr. Spurgeon’s own words; the latter portion consists of the instances of usefulness which various friends have described; and, to make the chapters as varied and as complete as possible, there are included in them several specimens of the beloved soul-winner’s methods of dealing with anxious enquirers and sinners seeking the Savior. The cases of blessing here recorded are selected from the whole of his London ministry; and are, therefore, all the, more representative of the continued usefulness of his Work for the Lord during the long period from 1853 to 1892.

There are some passages of Scripture which have been more abundantly blessed to the conversion of souls than others have, they may be called salvation texts. We may not be able to discover how it is, or why it is; but, certainly, it is the fact that some chosen verses have been more used of God than any others in His Word to bring men to the cross of Christ. They are not more inspired than other parts of the Bible; but I suppose they are more noticeable, from their position, or from their peculiar phraseology they are more adapted to catch the eye of the reader, and am more suitable to a widely prevailing spiritual condition. All the stars in the heavens shine very brightly, but only a few catch the eye of the mariner, and direct his course; the reason is this, that those few stars, from their peculiar grouping, are more readily distinguished, and the eye easily fixes upon them. So I suppose it is with those passages of God’s Word which especially attract attention, and direct the sinner to the cross of Christ. One of the chief of those texts is Isaiah xliii. 25: “I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.” I have proved it to be a most useful one; for, out of the thousands of persons who have come to me to narrate their conversion and religious experience, I have found a very large proportion who, have traced the Divine change which has been wrought in their hearts to the hearing of this precious declaration of sovereign mercy, and the application of it with power to their souls by the Holy Spirit.

Some who come to see me, with the view of joining the church, cannot say much, and they think that I shall be very dissatisfied with them because they make a great muddle of their narrative; but the people with whom I am least satisfied are those who reel off their yarn by the yard; they have it all ready to repeat, and everything is arranged as prettily as possible. As I listen to it, I know that someone has told them what to say, and they have learned it all tot me to hear. I like far better the testimony that I have to pick out in little bits, but which I know comes fresh from the heart of the trembling convert. Sometimes, it costs the poor soul a tear or a real good cry, and I have to go round about in all manner of ways to get hold of the story at all; but that shows that it is true, and that the man never borrowed it. I like to hear the experience of a believer, when he comes straight out of the world, and out of the ways; of sin, to confess his faith in Christ. He does not know anything about the terms that Christian people use, he has not learned our phrases; and it is a great delight to hear it all fresh and new. Yet it is always the same story in all the essential parts of it. However strangely he may narrate it, it tallies with that of others in the main points. Take the experience of a Christian man who has been brought up in the sanctuary from his childhood, and extract the pith and marrow of it, Now take the experience of a man who has been a horse-racer, a drunkard, a swearer, but who has been truly converted, and extract the essence, of that. Talk to a peer of the realm who has become an heir of the Kingdom of Heaven, and take the substance of his experience. Now speak to a chimney-sweep who has been brought to the Lord, and get the gist of his experience; put them all side by side, and you will not know one from the other. There are always the same essential marks, — death, birth, life, food, — Christ in the death, the birth, the life, the food, — repentance, faith, joy, the work of the Spirit of God. But it is very sweet to hear the story told in the many different ways in which the converts tell it. The true child of grace is ever the same in heart, although the outward appearance may continually vary.

Among the many thousands of souls who have been brought to know the Lord under my instrumentality, I have often noticed that a considerable proportion of these, and of the best members of our church, too, were won to the Savior, not by legal terrors, but by gentler means. Sitting, on one occasion, to see enquirers, I should think that there were as many as twelve out of the twenty-three whose convictions of sin were not distinctly marked with the terrors of the flaw. I asked an excellent young woman, “What was the first thought that set you really seeking the Savior?” “Oh, sir!” she replied, “it was Christ’s lovely character that first made me long to be His disciple. I saw how kind, how good, how disinterested, how selfsacrificing He was, and that made me feel how different I was. I thought, ‘Oh! I am not like Jesus!’ and that sent me to my room, and I began to pray, and so I came to trust in Him.” “The first religious impression I ever had,” said another, “that set me seeking the Savior, was this; a young companion of mine tell into sin, and I knew that I was likely to do the same if I was not kept by someone stronger than myself. I therefore sought the Lord, not so much at first on account of past transgression, but because I was afraid of some great future sin. God visited me, and I then felt conviction, of sin, and was brought to Christ.” Singularly enough, too, I have met with scores of persons who have trusted in Christ, and then have mourned their sins more afterwards than they did before they believed. Their convictions have been more terrible after they have known their interest in Christ than they were at first. They have seen the enormity of the evil after they have escaped from it; they have been plucked out of the miry clay, and their feet set upon the rock; and then, afterwards, they have seen more fully the depth of that horrible pit out of which they have been snatched. It is not true that all who are saved suffer such convictions and terrors as some of us had to endure; there are very many who are drawn with the cords of a man and the hands of love. There are some who, like Lydia, have their hearts opened, not by the crowbar of conviction, but by the picklock of Divine grace. Sweetly drawn, almost silently enchanted by the loveliness of Jesus, they say, “Draw me, we will run after Thee.”

A young woman came to me, one day, after a service, to ask me whether I really meant what I said when I declared that he that believed in Jesus; Christ was saved there and then. “Yes,” I replied; and I gave her the Scriptural warrant for the statement. “Why!” she exclaimed, “my grandfather told me that, when he found religion, it took him six months, and they had nearly to put him into a lunatic asylum, he was in such a dreadful state of mind.” “Well, well,” I answered, “that sometimes happens; but that distress of his did not save him. That was simply his conscience and Satan together keeping him away from Christ. When he wats saved, it was not by his deep feelings; it was by his believing in Jesus Christ.” I then went on to set the Savior before her as our sole ground of hope in opposition to inward feelings. “I see it,” she said; and I rejoiced as I noticed the bright light that passed over her face, a flash of heavenly sunshine which I have often seen on the countenances of those who have believed in Jesus Christ, when peace fills the soul even to the brim, and lights up the countenance with a minor transfiguration. Scores of times, when I have been talking with those who have been utterly bowed down beneath sin’s burden, they have looked as though they were qualifying for an asylum through inward grief; but as soon as they have caught this thought, “Christ stood as the Substitute for me; and if I trust in Him, I have the proof that He did so, and I am clear,” their faces have been lit up as with the very glory of Heaven.

Some persons have come to me for spiritual guidance because they have been misled by others. One lady, who called upon me, said that she had not heard me preach, but she had been reading my sermons, and God had been pleased to bless them to her, not only to her conviction, but to her conversion. She went to the clergyman of the parish, full of joy at having found the Savior, and began to tell him of her gladness, and how she rejoiced that all her sins were blotted out. He stopped her, and said, “My good woman, that is all a delusion; you have no right to believe that your’ sins are pardoned, till you have led several years of piety and devotion.” She went away sad, and she came to ask me if what the clergyman said was true; and when I quoted that verse, —

“The moment a sinner believes,  
And trusts in his crucified God,  
His pardon at once he receives,  
Redemption in full through His blood;” —

“Oh!” she said, “I see it clearly now;” and when I went on to tell her that many, who had believed in Christ, had been black sinners one moment, and white as snow the next, by casting themselves simply on Christ, they had instantly found peace, she could not but take to her heart the precious promises of Christ, and, believing in Jesus, being justified by faith, she had the peace of God that passeth all understanding, and she went away rejoicing in Jesus..

I was going to preach in the country, on one occasion; and before I went, I received a letter from a young man who wrote — “Dear Sir, — When you come to this town, do preach a sermon that will fit me; for I have heard it said that we must all think ourselves to be the wickedest people in the world, or else we cannot be sawed. I try to think so, but I cannot, because I have not been the wickedest. I want to be saved, but I do not know how to repent enough.” Of course, I told him that God does not require every man to think himself the wickedest in the world, because that would sometimes be to think a falsehood, for there are some men who are not so sinful as others are. What God requires, is, that a man should say, “I know more of myself than I do of other people; and from what I see of myself, not merely of my actions, but of my heart, I do think there can be few worse than I am. They may be more wicked openly; but, then, I have had more light, more privileges, more opportunities, more warnings, and therefore I am, in my own opinion at least, more guilty than they are.” Some friends have really made an obstacle out of the very thing for which they ought to have been most grateful. An excellent and amiable young woman, when converted to God, said to me, “You know, sir, I used almost to wish that I was one of those very bad sinners whom you so often invited to come to Jesus, because I thought then I should feel my need more; that was my difficulty, I could not feel my need of Christ.” It is a pity that any should make a hindrance of this matter; yet they do, and others make a difficulty for the opposite reason; they say, “Oh! we could trust Christ if we had been kept from sin.” The fact is, that unbelieving souls will not trust Christ whichever way they have lived; for, from some quarter or other, they will find cause for doubting; but, when the Lord the Spirit gives them faith, big sinners will trust Christ quite as readily as those who have not been great offenders openly; and those who have been preserved from open sin will trust Him as joyfully as the vilest transgressors.

We have had, in the Tabernacle, many very remarkable instances of how God does still bless the outcasts and the very chief of sinners. There was a man, known in the village where he lived by the name of Satan, because of his being so thoroughly depraved. He was a sailor, and as another seaman in that place had been the means of the conversion of all the sailors in a vessel belonging to the port, this man desired to sail with him to try and beat his religion out of him. He did his best, — or rather, his worst, — but he signally failed; and when the ship came to London, the Christian man asked the ungodly one whether he would come to the *Tabernacle.*He did not mind coming to hear me, for, as it happened, I was brought up near the place where he lived. This “Satan” came, on the Lord’s-day morning when the text was upon soul-murder; and, by the Holy Spirit’s gracious application of the Word to his heart, he sat, and sobbed, and cried under the sermon at such a rate that he could only say, “People are noticing me, I had better go out;” but his companion would not let him go out; and, from that day forth, he became a new creature in Christ Jesus, and he is living and walking in the truth, an earnest believer, singularly clear in his doctrinal knowledge, and doing all that he can for the spread of the. Kingdom of Christ.

On another occasion, on a Lord’s-day morning, I preached upon the words of the leper, who said to Jesus. “Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.” On the following Thursday morning, I received this letter — “Dear Sir, — I feel so happy to tell you that the Lord has pardoned a poor outcast of society. I got into your place, in a crowd, hoping nobody would see me. I had been out all night, and was miserable. While you were preaching about the leper, my whole life of sin rose up before me. I saw myself worse than the leper, cast away by everybody; them is not a sin I was not guilty of. As you went on, I looked straight away to Jesus. A gracious answer came, ‘Thy sins, which are many, are forgiven.’ I never heard any more of your sermon, I felt such joy to think that Jesus died even for a poor harlot. Long ere you get this letter, I trust to be on the way to my dear home I ran away from. Do please pray for me that I may be kept by God’s almighty power. I can never thank you enough for bringing me to Jesus.” If it had not been for that sentence about going home, I might have had some doubt concerning her conversion; but when a fallen girl goes home to her father and mother, it is a sure case. This letter gave me great joy; to see souls saved, is Heaven to me.

Not only has there been a great variety in the converts during my ministry, but the means blessed to their conversion have been very varied? One brother, when he came to join the church, told us that, as an ungodly stranger, he was going into Exeter Hall just as I gave out Charles Wesley’s hymn, beginning —

***“Jesus, lover of my soul.”***

He said to himself, “Does Jesus really love me? Then, why should I live in enmity to Him?” There and then, he turned unto the Lord; and, not long after, he came boldly out, and confessed his faith in Christ, and sought to do all he could to lead others to the Savior.

I remember one friend coming to me, and saying, very earnestly, “I should like, sir, to take a scat in the Tabernacle.” I answered, “Well, do so, by all manner of means; I am very glad when people do so.” “But,” said he, “I may not come up to what you expect of me, for I have heard that, if I take a sitting here, you will expect me to be converted, and I cannot guarantee that.” “No,” I replied, “I do not want you to guarantee it; I do not mean the word expect in that sense at all; but I do hope that it will be so.” “Oh!” exclaimed he, “and so do I; I am going to take a sitting with that very view.” And it was so of course, it was so. When the man wished it, God accepted the wish, and heard the prayer, and. he was brought to Christ, and joined the church.  
One brother, when he was giving his testimony before being baptized, said — “The first time I came to hear Mr. Spurgeon in the Tabernacle, if you had asked me about myself, I should have told you that I was as religious a man as ever lived in Newington, and as good a man, certainly, as ever formed part of any congregation; but all this was reversed, when I heard the gospel that day. I came out of the building with every feather plucked out of me. I felt myself the most wretched sinner who could be on the face of the earth, and I said, ‘I will never go to hear that man again, for he has altogether spoiled me.’ But that was the best thing which could have happened to me; I was made to look away from myself, and all that I could do, to God, and to His omnipotent grace, and to understand that I must pass under my Creator’s hand again, or I could never see His face with joy. I learned to loathe my own righteousness as filthy rags, fit only for the fire, and then I sought to be robed in the perfect righteousness of Christ.”

Another man, who came to join with us in church-fellowship, owed his conversion, indirectly, to a Jew. He was on an omnibus going by the Tabernacle, one Sunday, and a crowd was standing outside, as usual, waiting for the doors to be opened. The person sitting next to him was a well-known Jew. “Ah!” said the man, “that humbug always attracts the people.” The Jew turned round to him, and enquired, “Would not you like to see such a crowd as that round your shop? I should welcome them at my place of business. I have ridden past here these twenty-eight years, and have always seen just such a crowd as that waiting to get in. Now, if your shop had been crowded thus for twenty-eight years, and anybody said that you did not sell a good article, what would you reply? You would probably answer that those people were good judges, and that, if you had not supplied goods that were satisfactory, they would not have kept on coming. Now, I am a Jew, yet I am inclined to go in, and listen to what Mr. Spurgeon has to say, because I see these crowds of people going ‘to hear him.” The man who had at first made the offensive remark was greatly impressed by his companion’s observation, and in telling us how it afflicted him, he said, “I discovered that I had been buying the wrong article, and I thought the Jew had spoken very sensibly, so I resolved to go, and see and hear for myself.” He came, examined the article that was offered for sale, and bought it on the gospel terms, “without money and without price.”

One Sabbath evening, while preaching in the Tabernacle, I felt moved to say “Dear mother, if you have never talked with your daughter about her soul, do it this very night. ‘But,’ you reply, ‘when I get home, she will be in bed.’ If so, then wake her up, but do talk and pray with her tonight; and then let her fall asleep again; begin at once this holy service if you have neglected it until now.” One good woman, who was present, went straight home, and did exactly what I had said; she woke her daughter up, and began speaking to her about the Savior. The dear girl said, “Oh, mother! I am glad you have spoken to me about Jesus; for months, I have been wishing you would do so.” It was not long before the mother brought her daughter to see me about joining the church, and then told me how the blessing had come to her.

On various occasions, the Lord has set His seal upon a very simple request that I made to my congregation. I asked those who were present, after they reached their homes, to spend a little time quietly and alone, and then, when they had honestly considered their condition in the sight of God, to take a pencil and paper, and to write, one of two words. If they felt that they were not believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, I asked them to write, the word *Condemned,*but if they were trusting to Him alone for salvation, to put on the paper the word *Forgiven.*Several friends were brought to decision for Christ in that way; amongst them was one young man who, at first, wrote the word *Condemned,*but, as he looked at it, his tears began to flow, and his heart began to break; and, before long, he fled to Christ, put the paper in the fire, took another piece, wrote, on it the word *Forgiven,* and soon came to tell me the good news, and to ask that he might be admitted to church-fellowship. In another case, a man went home, and told his wife that he was going to write the word *Condemned;*she pleaded with him in vain, for he took the pencil, and was just about to make the letter C; but his little daughter, a Christian girl, caught hold of his hand, and said, “No, father, you shall not write it;” and by the united entreaties of his wife and child, the man was brought to the Savior, and afterwards became a member with them at the Tabernacle.

My experience goes to show that there have been persons converted to God by doctrines that some might have thought altogether unlikely to produce that result. I have known the doctrine of the resurrection to bring sinners to Christ; I have heard of scores brought to the Savior by a discourse upon election, — the very sort of people who, as far as I can see, would never have been reached if that truth had not happened to be an angular doctrine that .just struck their heart in the right place, and fitted into the crevices of their nature. I have often preached a terrible sermon upon the law, and afterwards found that sinners had been comforted by it. God frequently blesses the Word in the very opposite manner to that in which I thought it would be blessed, and He brings very, very many, to know their state by nature by doctrines which I should have thought would rather have comforted believers than awakened the unconverted. I am constantly driven back to the great foundation truth of Divine Sovereignty, and am made to realize that, in grace as well as in providence, —

***“God moves in a mysterious way,  
His wonders to perform.”***

I was talking one day, with an aged minister; and I noticed that he put his hand into his waistcoat pocket, and brought out a letter that was well-nigh worn to pieces. As he unfolded it, he exclaimed, “God Almighty bless you, sir! God Almighty bless you, sir!” I said, “Thank you, my dear sir, for that blessing, but what makes you give it to me?” The good man replied, “I had a son, who I thought would be the stay of my old age; but he disgraced himself, and ran away from home, and I could not tell where he had gone, only that he said he was going to America.” When the minister had told me so much of his story, he bade me read the letter, which ran thus — “Dear Father, — I am here in America; I have found a situation, and God has prospered me. I write to ask your forgiveness for the many wrongs that I have done you, and the grief I have caused you; and to tell you that, blessed be God, I have found the Savior. I have joined the church here, and hope to spend my life in the Redeemer’s service. This great change happened thus. I did not sail for America on the day I expected to start; and, having a leisure hour, I went down to the Tabernacle to see what it was like, and there God met with me. In his sermon, Mr. Spurgeon said, ‘Perhaps there is a runaway son here. Fine Lord call him by His grace!’ And He did call me.” “Now,” said the minister, as he folded up the letter, and put it into his pocket again, “this son of mine is dead, and he has gone to Heaven; and I love you, and shall continue to do so as long as I live, because you were the means of bringing him to Christ. It is very difficult to say which of us was the more happy as we rejoiced together over the wanderer who had thus been brought to the Lord.

On another occasion, a lad, who was just going to sea, came to the Tabernacle, and was converted; and, a few hours after, was in Heaven. He wrote to tell his parents that he had found the Savior; and, just as they were reading his letter, they received news that the vessel in which he sailed had been in collision, and that he was drowned.  
Two enquiring ones came to me in my vestry. They had been hearing the gospel from me for only a short season, but they had been deeply impressed by it. They expressed their regret that they were about to remove far away, but they added their gratitude that they had heard me at all. I was cheered by their kind thanks, but felt anxious that a more effectual work should be wrought in them, and therefore I asked them, “Have you in very deed believed in the Lord Jesus Christ? Are you saved?” One of them replied, “I have been trying hard to believe.” I have often heard this statement, but I will never let it go by me unchallenged. “No,” I said, “that will not do. Did you ever tell your father that you tried to believe him?” After I had dwelt awhile upon the matter, they admitted that such language would have been an insult to their father. I then set the gospel very plainly before them in as simple language as I could, and I begged them to believe Jesus, who is more worthy of faith than the best of fathers. One of them replied, “I cannot realize it; I cannot realize that I am saved.” Then I went on to say, “God bears testimony to His Son, that whosoever trusts in the Lord Jesus Christ is saved. Will you make Him a liar now, or will you believe His Word?” While I thus spoke, one of them started as if astonished, and she startled us all as she cried, “Oh, sir, I see it all; I am saved! Do bless Jesus for me; He has shown me the way, and He has saved me. I see it all.” The esteemed sister who had brought these friends to me knelt down with them while, with all our hearts, we blessed and magnified the Lord for a soul brought into the light. The other young woman, however, could not see the gospel as her companion had done, though I feel sure she will do so; but it seemed strange that, both hearing the same words, one should come out into clear light, and the other should remain in the gloom.

CHAPTER 86.

ENQUIRERS AND CONVERTS (*CONTINUED*).

W HEN talking with anxious enquirers, I am often amazed at the *ingenuity* with which they resist the entrance of the truth into their hearts. I do not think I have ever been so much astonished at the invention of locomotive engines, electric telegraphs, or any other feats of human mechanism, as I have been at the marvelous aptitude of simple people in finding out reasons why they should not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. After I have proved to them to a demonstration that it is the most reasonable and fitting thing in the world for them to trust themselves with Christ, they ask, “How is this to be done?” or, “How is that to be accomplished?” and they argue, first one way, and then another, all against their own best interests. Often, I go patiently through the whole process again and again; and even when that has been done, there comes another objection. I have tracked these people to their holes as diligently as if I had been a fox-hunter, and I have tried to unearth them from their hiding-places; but I find that they can often burrow faster than I can follow them. Oh, the “ifs” and “buts” they put; the “perhaps,” and “peradventure,” and “I don’t feel this,” and “I don’t feel that”! Oh, that wicked questioning of Christ! While talking with them, endeavoring to comfort them, and I hope not unsuccessfully, I am often led to realize more deeply than before, in my own mind, what an awful crime it is to doubt God, to doubt Him who speaks from above, to doubt Him who hung bleeding on the tree.

Sitting, one day, to see enquirers, a young Dutchman came into the room. He had crossed from Flushing, and desired to tell me his difficulties of soul. He began, “Sir, I cannot trust in Christ.” My answer was, “Why not? What has He done that you should speak so ill of Him? I have trusted everything in His hands, and I believe Him to be quite trustworthy. What do you know against His character?”

“Indeed, sir, I know nothing against Him, and I am ashamed that I have so spoken, for I believe the Lord Jesus to be worthy of all confidence. That was not what I meant. May I trust Him to save me?”  
“Of course you may, for you are commanded to do so by the gospel, which says, ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.’ You are warned against not believing by the words, ‘He that believeth not shall be damned.’“

“I may, then, trust Christ; but does He promise to save all who trust Him?” “Certainly. I have already quoted to you the promise of the gospel. It is also written, ‘Whosoever shall call upon the Name of the Lord shall be saved.’ It Jesus does not save you upon your trusting Him, you will be the first He ever cast out.”

“Ah, sir, I see it! Why did I not see it before? I trust, and Jesus saves me. I am well repaid for coming from Flushing.”  
I prayed with him, and he went his way trembling for joy.

A lady came to me, after a service in the Tabernacle, and asked me to pray for her. She had been before to speak to me about her soul, so I said to her, on the second occasion, “I told you very plainly the way of salvation, namely, that you are to trust yourself in Christ’s hands, relying on His atoning sacrifice. Have you done that?” She answered, “No,” and then asked me whether I would pray for her. I said, “No, certainly I will not.” She looked at me with astonishment, and again asked, “Will you not pray for me?” “No,” I replied, “I have nothing for which to pray for you. I have set the way of salvation before you so simply that, if you will not walk in it, you will be lost; but if you trust Christ now, you will be saved. I have nothing further to say to you; but, in God’s Name, to set before you life or death.” Still she pleaded, “Do pray for me!” “No,” I answered, “would you have me ask God to shape His gospel so as to let you in as an exception? I do not see why He should. His plan of salvation is the only one that ever has been or ever will be of any avail; and if you will not trust to it, I am not going to ask God anything, for I do not see what else is wanted from Him. I put this question plainly to you, ‘Will you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? I certainly was somewhat surprised when the sister said, very deliberately, “If it be so, then, that salvation will come to me by believing, I do believe what the Scripture says concerning Christ; and, moreover, I feel that I can trust myself with Him, because He is God, and He has offered a sufficient sacrifice for my sins; and I do trust myself to Him just now; and I feel such a strange peace stealing over me at this very moment. I have trusted Him, and I am certain that I am saved;” and, in an instant, she said to me, “Good evening, sir; there are other people waiting to see you,” and away she went, like at common-sense woman as she was; and she has often told me, since, how glad she was that I refused to pray for her, and so brought her to the decision to trust Christ for herself, and thus to receive the assurance of her salvation.

There is a great contrast between the way in which different converts begin their new life. I have sometimes thought that, if a man does not become a high-class Christian during the first three months after his conversion, he probably never will. I have noticed some people who have commenced their Christian career in a very feeble fashion. I hope they so began that they were really saved; but, still, they started doubting and fearing, and they kept on in the same style till they went to Heaven. “Ah, sir!” said one to me once, “either all the world has altered, or else I have, for people I once delighted in I am now afraid of. The things that once made me glad now make me unhappy, and those that I thought melancholy are now the very things in which I find my highest joy.” I am always thankful when our friends get a very decided conversion, because, though I am not going to say a word against those who come to Christ very gradually, yet their experience is rather cloudy. No doubt they are just as safe as others, but they lack a good deal of comfort afterwards; and, sometimes, persons who are very readily converted, and who have no very deep sense of sin, are more apt to play with evil than others are who have had a clearer sight of its enormity. Some begin by serving the Lord stingily, not giving Him their whole hearts; or they commence coldly, and so they never get hot with zeal all their lives. I am glad when a young convert is red-hot, or even whitehot; I like to see him too full of zeal, if that is possible; because, when he cools down, he will come just to the right temperature if he is too hot at first but, if he is cool at the beginning, what will he come to by-and-by? There are no laborers for the Master who are so useful as those who begin to serve Him while they are young. Sometimes, God converts men in middle life, or even in old age, and uses them in His service; but, still, I venture to assert that Church history will show that the most useful servants of Christ were those who were caught early, and who from their youth up bore testimony to the gospel of Jesus. In the case of some old people, who have been professors of religion for years, but who have done next to nothing for Christ, I find it very difficult ever to stir them up at all. When I do get a saddle on them, they are very restive creatures, like a horse that hats never been broken in; but if I break them in while they are colts, they get used to their work, it becomes a delight to them, and. they would not be happy unless they had something to do for the Lord Jesus. I remember having a considerable share of sneers, and rebukes not a few, from some who thought themselves very wise men, because I began preaching at the age of sixteen. I was recommended to tarry at Jericho till my beard had grown, and a great many other pieces of advice were given to me; but I have never regretted that I was a “boy-preacher” of the Word; and if I could have my time over again, I would like to do just the same as I did then.

I have been delighted as I have noticed the earnest efforts of many of my church-members in seeking to bring sinners to the Tabernacle to hear the gospel.

Two of our brethren, both working-men, — one of whom has been afamous runner, and who has won prizes in many running-matches, — are accustomed, as they say, to hunt in couples for souls. Their usual method is for one to go on one side of the street, and his friend on the other, on the Lord’s-day morning, in those parts of London where Sabbath trading is carried on to the greatest extent. One morning; one of them was giving a tract to a person as the other was crossing over to join him, to communicate with him on some subject. As the second friend met the man who had received the tract, he heard him say, with an oath, “What is the use of giving me this tract? I shall be in hell in an hour!” He said to his fellow-laborer, on reaching him, “Did you hear what that man said?” “No,” he answered, “I did not notice; what was it?” “He appeared very wild, and talked of being in hell in an hour; he is either insane, or he is intending to commit suicide.” “Do you think so? Then we will be after him.” They followed him, and the second one, on coming up to the man, said to him, “What did you say when you took that tract?” “That’s no concern of yours,” he answered, “mind your own business.” “Oh!” ‘was the reply, “but it is my business, for, if I heard aright, you said that you would be in hell in an hour.” “Yes, I did say so; this world is worse than hell, and I’ll be out of it in an hour.” “No, you won’t,” said our friend, “for I mean to stick by you; and I won’t leave you for an hour, go where you may.”

The poor creature then succumbed, and the godly men took him into a coffee-shop, and gave him a good breakfast. The man felt less like committing suicide after that meal. Our friends knew that the best gospel sermon would not be likely to benefit a man who was starving; he had tasted nothing for three days, and had walked the streets all the night. Hence, our brethren wisely felt that they must first feed his hungry body; and after that, they brought him to the Tabernacle. When the service was over, their poor patient looked a little more hopeful, and the soul-doctors thought it best to repeat the dose of solid nutriment. They took him to a house where they were accustomed to dine, in a humble way, and he shared their meat. He went to one of the Bible-classes in the afternoon and, in the evening, they brought him again to the Tabernacle, and it pleased God to touch the poor man’s heart, and bring him to a knowledge of himself and his Savior. Then he became communicative, and it appeared that he had left his wife for four or five months, and had been living a life of dissipation, sin, and poverty. He gave the name and address of his wife, in the North of England; she was written to, and his fare was paid home; and, after he had gone back, a letter came from the good woman, saying that she had been a member with the Wesleyan Methodists, and had been long praying for her husband, who had been an awful reprobate, and had at last run away from home. Then she thought it was all over with him; but God had designs of love towards him, and now he had sat down at the Lord’s table with her.

She did not know what to say, her heart was so full of gratitude to God, and to the dear friends who had been the means of bringing her husband to the Savior.

At another time, a man came to join the church; and, according to our usual custom, he was asked how he had become converted, when he told us the following story. He said — “I was employed in driving a horse and van; I never thought of going to any place of worship, and I do not think anybody ever said a word to me about God or Christ until one day when I was crossing ,over London Bridge when, suddenly, a man jumped up, and climbed into the back of my cart. I took my whip to lash him off, but he said, ‘Hold hard mate, I’ve got a message for you.’ This was a very curious thing to me, and I asked, ‘What is it?’ ‘I will tell you, but I may as well sit in front.’ So he sat down beside me. Then I asked him. ‘What is your message?’ ‘It is a message from God to your soul.’ I cursed and swore at him; but that made no difference to him. He said, ‘You are the very man I was after. I knew you were a swearing man, for it was that first attracted my attention to you, and I am sure my message is for you.’ I said to him then, ‘What have you to say? Come cut it short.’ He did cut it short, and he put it pretty straight, too. He told me what would become of my soul if I died a swearer, and he talked to me about the world to come. Then he told me that there was a Savior for sinners, and that, if I trusted Him, I should be saved. Before he left me, he made me promise that I would go to, hear you, sir. So I promised, and as I always boasted that I kept my word, I came to hear you, though I was precious sorry that I had promised to do so. I never got up so early on a Sunday morning before; and when the man saw me at the gate, he took me in, and gave me his seat, and stood himself all the service, which I thought was was very kind on his part. After the sermon, he asked me, ‘Did you like it?’ I replied, ‘No, I did not; that is not the sort of thing that I care about; I don’t believe in religion.’ ‘Ah! but you will,’ the man said; and he and I parted company at the gate, and I hoped I should never meet him again.

“I did not see him for some weeks; but, one day, as I was walking down the Blackfriars Road, I saw him coming along, so I slipped round the first corner, and began to run to avoid him; but, soon, I heard somebody running after me, and he came up to me, and said, ‘Well, mate, how are you?’ ‘All right.’ ‘Are you going on any better?’ he asked. I did not give him any answer, and then he told me that he had made up his mind that I should be a Christian one day, and that he never meant to let me alone till that came to pass. I believe he would have gone into my house with me; but, as my wife, and I were fond of drink, there was only a little furniture in it, and I did not wish him to come in, and see the miserable place, so, to get rid of him, I proposed to go and hear Mr. Spurgeon on the next Sunday. I kept my promise; and, now, I am happy to say that I do not need anybody to induce me to go to the Tabernacle. I have been here six months, I have found the Savior for myself, and I have got four of our men to come down to hear the gospel with me.”

Perhaps, next to the joy of actual conversions, the rescue of those who have long been in dense spiritual darkness has given me the greatest delight. Many of God’s people are perplexed with questions concerning their interest in Christ, or they are afflicted with deep depression of spirit out of which only the Lord Himself can lift them up. I have tried, upon some of the sorely-troubled ones, all the promises of the Bible which I could remember. I have reminded them of the person of Christ, and of His consequent power; of the sufferings of Christ, and of His consequent ability to cleanse from sin; but I have many times had this answer given to me, “When God shutteth up, who can deliver?” and I have been very often made to feel that, as Pastor, I could not quench the fiery darts of the wicked one for other people, and that I could not break in pieces the sword of the enemy, for others, or even for myself. Yet I have been very happy when the Lord has enabled me to be the means of cheering any desponding or even despairing soul. One day, as I came out of the pulpit, there met me a brother-minister, and he said, “Sir, I cannot tell you all the particulars now, but I will write tomorrow; my wife is set at liberty. Afterwards, he wrote to tell me how she had been in despair, and what

sorrow she had suffered, and what a grief it had, been to him; but while I preached upon the words, “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward,” she was brought out of bondage. Oh, how I praised and blessed God, and thought that I would like to preach day and night if I might but be the channel of such blessing again and again.

Another case which I remember was that of a man of excellent character, well beloved by his family, and esteemed by his neighbors, who was for twenty years enveloped in unutterable gloom. He ceased to attend the house of God, because he said it was of no use; and although always ready to help in every good work, yet he had an abiding conviction upon him that, personally, he had no part nor lot in the matter, and never could have. The more anyone talked to him about the things of God, the worse he became; even prayer seemed but to excite him to more fearful despondency. In the providence of God, I was called to preach the Word in his neighborhood; he was induced to attend, and, by the Holy Spirit’s blessing on the sermon, he obtained a joyful liberty. After twenty years of anguish and unrest, he ended his weary roamings at the foot of the cross, to the amazement of his neighbors, the joy of his household and the glory of God. Nor did his peace of mind subside; for, until the Lord gave him a happy admission into eternal rest, he remained a vigorous believer, trusting and not being afraid.

Probably the most notable instance of the uplifting of a soul from the deepest despair was the one which was thus related by Mr. Spurgeon, at a Monday evening prayer-meeting at the Tabernacle, as an illustration of the personal preparation which a soul-winner may have to go through before the Lord use him to certain individuals —

Some years ago. I was the subject of fearful depression of spirit. Various troublous events had happened to me; I was also unwell, and my heart sank within me. Out of the depths I was forced to cry unto the Lord. Just before I went away to Mentone for rest, I suffered greatly in body, but far more in soul, for my spirit was overwhelmed. Under this pressure, I preached a sermon from the words, “My God, My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me?” I was as much qualified to preach from that text as ever I expect to be; indeed, I hope that few of my brethren could have entered so deeply into those heart-breaking words. I felt to the full of my measure the horror of a soul forsaken of God. Now, that was not a desirable experience. I tremble at the bare idea of passing again through that eclipse of soul; I pray that I may never suffer in that fashion again unless the same result should hang upon it.

That night, after the service, there came into my vestry a man who was as nearly insane as he could be to be out of an asylum. His eyes seemed ready to start from his head, and he saw that he should utterly have despaired if he had not heard that discourse, which had made him feel that there was one man alive who understood his feelings, and could describe his experience. I talked with him, and tried to encourage him, and asked him to come again on the Monday night, when I should have at little more time to speak with him. I saw the brother again, and I told him that I thought he was a hopeful patient, and I was glad that the word had been so suited to his case. Apparently, he put aside the comfort which I presented for his acceptance, and yet I had the consciousness upon me that the precious truth which he had heard was at work upon his mind, and that the storm of his soul would soon subside into a deep calm.

Now hear the sequel. Last night, of all the times in the year, when, strange to say, I was preaching from the words, “The Almighty hath vexed my soul,” after the service, in walked this self-same brother who had called on me five years before. This time, he looked as different as noonday from midnight, or as life from death. I said to him, “I am glad to see you, for I have often thought about you, and wondered whether you were brought into perfect peace.” I told you that I went to Mentone and my patient also went into the country, so that we had not met for five years. ‘To my enquiries, this brother replied, “Yes, you said I was a hopeful patient, and I am sure you will be glad to know that I have walked in the sunlight from that day till now. Everything is changed and altered with me.” Dear friends, as soon as I saw my poor despairing patient the first time, I blessed God that my fearful experience had prepared me to sympathize with him and guide him; but last night, when I saw him perfectly restored, my heart overflowed with gratitude to God for my former sorrowful feelings. I would go into the deeps a hundred times to cheer a downcast spirit it is good for me to have been afflicted that I might know how to speak a word in season to one that is weary.

Many remarkable instances of blessing upon Mr. Spurgeon’s sermons were never reported to him while he was here. The following pleasing testimony came to Mrs. Spurgeon on the first anniversary of his home-going —

“More than thirty-nine years ago,” the writer said, “when he was a youth of nineteen, and I a child of ten, I heard him preach a never-to-be-forgotten sermon, which was like an echo upon earth of the ‘new song’ in Heaven. I was in great distress of soul at the time, and had just given myself up as a hopeless backslider, when he came to our little chapel, and preached this lovely sermon the text was, ‘And they sang a new song.’ Vividly, as though it only happened yesterday, do I recall every part of that service, and the heavenly smile lighting up his clear young time, as, looking round into our pew, he seemed to single me out, and said, ‘Have you learned the key-note of that new song? I’ll tell you in a whisper what it is, ‘tis Jesus! only jesus.’ And then he went on ringing ‘those charming bells’ of ‘free grace and dying love’ till my poor heart was lifted up into joy, and peace, and full assurance, which, through all the ups and clowns of thirty-nine years of spiritual life, I have never quite lost from that day, till the hour he left this world for his native Land, it has been my joy to watch, with the profoundest sympathy and love, his wonderful and beautiful life, — to weep over his sorrows, to rejoice in his joys, and to pray for him in all the trials he endured with such Christlike gentleness and patience. None have greater reason than I to say, from the very heart, ‘Bless God for dear Mr. Spurgeon!’ The weekly sermon is, next to the Word of God, my meat and my drink; each one seems more precious than the last. I have given away as many as I could; and one entitled, ‘Christ’s Hospital, (No. 2,260,) is such an exquisite jewel, such a gem of the first water, that I should like to place it in the hands of every human being on the globe.

“I have often wished to tell your dear one all this; but now, in your dark days, I feel I must tell you, May ‘the consolations of God’ indeed abound towards you!”

Pastor’ E, A. Tydeman, one of “our own men,” thus relates how a sermon by Mr. Spurgeon was the means of preserving from suicide one who had. long been in terrible distress of mind — “Some years ago, in a village on the South Coast, I met an elderly man, who gave me the following account of the only time he ever heard our dear President. He said “It was in the year 1861, and I was in great anxiety. My business was failing, we had trouble in the family, and, worse than all, I had allowed my trials to estrange my heart from God. I had from childhood been an attendant upon the means of grace, and for many years I was a member of a Baptist church; but I had gradually become a “backslider in heart,” and now, when these outward troubles came upon me, it appeared to me that the Lord had cast me away from His presence, and taken His Holy Spirit from me, till I said, with Israel’s first king, “God is departed from me, and answereth me no more.” My wife — a godly woman, — did her best to rouse me from my despondency, but to no purpose; and I went from bad to worse, forsaking the house of God, and the companionship of His people, till I seemed to have lost all hope, and almost all desire for the knowledge of the ways of the Lord. Then I seemed to hear the evil one say, “Curse God, and die.” Yes, what better course could I take? If I must be damned, why not meet my fate at once? I went down to the shore, for I lived not far from the sea; but the thought that my body would probably be washed up where I was so well known, deterred me.

“Then came the suggestion, why not go to London, where I should be a stranger, and end my life there? So, going home, — it was a Saturday, and the week’s work was done, — I got ready for the journey, and telling my wife that I should not be home till Monday, I took train and went to town; and all that evening, I wandered from street to street in utter wretchedness, and when it was dark, I went down to the riverside; but, at every available spot, I found someone standing about, who seemed to be watching me, so I gave up the idea for that night. I found a lodging somewhere in the neighborhood of Kennington Lane, intending to carry out my purpose on the Sunday when the wharves and lanes would be more lonely.

It was long before I could sleep, and I was late in rising the next morning. After I had eaten my breakfast, I went out, and asking the way to London Bridge, turned my steps in that direction, the load at my heart heavier than ever, yet with no relenting in my determination to end my wretched life. Wandering disconsolately along, I came to a spot where a crowd was waiting, outside a large building, which I must have passed the night before without noticing it. I found, on enquiry, that the place was none other than “Spurgeon’s Tabernacle,” — as my informant styled it. Scarcely realizing what I did, I joined the people waiting on the steps, and, when the doors were opened, found myself hurried forward by the press, till I had reached the uppermost landing; Once fairly inside, it seemed as though every seat was occupied; but, after a while, I secured a place at the back of a recess in the top gallery.

“There was a hush as the minister came to the front of the platform, and said, “Let us pray,” but the prayer did not touch me, for he was evidently on the mount with God, and I was in the deeps of despair. After the prayer, a hymn was sung; but, though all around me were singing I could not; and I remained in the same state all through the reading, the singing, and the prayer which followed, for my heart was still unmoved, unless it was to a deeper depth of darkness. Then came the text, Psalm 35:3; and if I live to be a hundred years old, I shall never forget the thrill which passed through me as Mr. Spurgeon read those words, “Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation,” and then, coming forward to the front rail, he looked up at me, and said, “Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation,” and if ever God’s voice was heard on earth by human ear, it was heard by me that morning. The first time, for many a weary week a gleam of hope came to my soul, and I sat and drank in the message, as a thirsty pilgrim in a desert land might drink at Elim. As the sermon advanced, and various phases of soul-conflict were depicted, I trembled with emotion, till I could sit no longer; it was fortunate that I was in front of no one, for there I stood during the rest of the service, with eyes intent, and, for aught I know with mouth wide open too and when once, during the sermon, the preacher looked up at me, and spoke of one “standing far away in the gallery,” F3 I thought that I must have shouted. Long before the close of the discourse, my handkerchief was wet with tears, but they were tears of joy; and when the end came, I made straight for the door, saying to those before me, “Let me out, or I shall knock somebody down!” “Are you out of your mind? “ said one. “No, thank God!” I answered, “not out of it, but in it for the first time for many a long day;” and so I passed out into the street, and for hours, oblivious of everyone and everything around me, I wandered up and down with a heart as full of joy and praise as it could hold; and from then till now, I have never lost the assurance that God is my salvation.”

Another of “our own men,” Pastor W. E. Rice, reports the following remarkable case of conversion, which was related to him by a Congregational minister in Australia — “Some years ago, a father, living in a country town, apprenticed his son to a London silversmith. For a time, all seemed, to be going well but, one day, he received a letter to say that the lad had robbed his master. With a sad heart, he hastened to town only to find, alas! that it was but too true. The indentures were cancelled, and the boy left his situation in disgrace. As the father and son were walking through the crowded streets of the City, the lad suddenly darted away, and disappeared. The police searched for him in vain, and the poor man had to return alone to tell the sad news to his broken-hearted wife.

“Years passed, and nothing was heard of the prodigal son. One Sabbath evening, the parents stayed home from the service; and, while sitting quietly reading God’s Word, they were unusually constrained to pray for their lost boy; and they knelt down together, and asked that he might be arrested in his sinful career, and brought back to the old home. Presently, the servant came back from the service she had attended, and her master enquired as to the sermon she had heard. ‘Oh, sir!’ she said, ‘I have not heard a word of the sermon; I could do nothing but pray for Master Harry.’

“That night, some men were passing the Metropolitan Tabernacle, on their way to break into the shop of a certain silversmith in London, when one said to another, ‘Harry, just run up the steps, and see the time.’ He did so, opened the door, and stood in the aisle. Mr. Spurgeon was preaching about the dying thief; and seeming to point direct at Harry, said, in those ringing, well-remembered tones, ‘If there is a thief here tonight, Jesus Christ can save him.’ The arrow hit the mark. Harry went back to his garret to pray; and, in a week’s time, there was a knock at the door of the old home in that country town. The father opened it, stood face to time with his longlost son; and then followed the old story of the prodigal’s return, — tears, confession, forgiveness, welcome, restoration, joy.”

Mr. Cheyne Brady has thus recorded the means used by God for the conviction and conversion of a man who had previously lived a terribly dissolute life — “After some years spent in the service of sin, he set his heart on a change of residence. A house likely to suit him being pointed out, he went to the proprietor, and asked for the key. The landlord offered to accompany him, and show him the house; but he declined, saying he preferred going over it by himself. Having examined the lower part of the dwelling, he proceeded upstairs, and ascended to the attic. As he entered, he saw something scratched on the window-pane, and approached nearer in order to read it. These words, traced with a diamond, met his gaze —

**“PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD.’**

“He staggered, and, for the first time in his life, he trembled before his Maker. The Spirit of God met him there alone. He stood riveted to the spot; and, in the agony of his soul, he cried out, ‘Lord, have mercy upon me! Lord, save me!’ At length, he got out of the house; but the solemn message followed him, ‘Prepare to meet thy God.’ He lost all pleasure in his fox-hunting, and became utterly miserable. He tried to drown serious thought amongst his evil companions, but those warning words haunted him wherever he went.

“Several days passed thus, when his eye caught a notice that, in a certain village, sixteen miles off, Mr. Spurgeon was to preach that evening. He said to himself, “Go and hear that man.’ He ordered his horse, and rode the sixteen miles, that he might listen to something which, perchance, would give his wounded spirit relief. The text was, ‘Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest;’ and, in the course of the sermon, Mr. Spurgeon made an earnest personal appeal, which was blessed by the Holy Spirit to the conscience-stricken sinner, who, there and then, believed in the Lord Jesus, and left the chapel a new man in Christ.”

Rev. D .A. Doudney, Hatford Rectory, Faringdon, has recalled a remarkable incident, which was related to him by Mr. Spurgeon — “He told me that, many years ago, a well-dressed man, with a very proud and conceited manner, came to see him in his vestry with a view to joining the church at the Tabernacle. The man said, ‘I purpose giving seven thousand pounds to any object connected with your congregation, or in which you are interested, but it is on the condition that you accept me as one of your members.’ Mr. Spurgeon told him that he could not receive him into the church unless he felt sure that he was a converted man, and he asked him several searching questions. To all these enquiries, the man gave very unsatisfactory replies; and, consequently Mr. Spurgeon said that, although he was extremely sorry, he could not see his way to accept him whilst he was in his present spiritual state. The man was astounded. ‘What!’ he exclaimed, ‘do you mean to tell me that you will not receive me with seven thousand pounds, — seven thousand pounds?’ ‘No,’ said Mr. Spurgeon, ‘nor if you offered me seventy times seven thousand pounds.’ The man went away in at rage.

“Mr. Spurgeon told me that, just then, money was greatly needed in connection with some of his undertakings, and seven thousand pounds would have been a most welcome gift; but he clearly felt that his visitor was not in a satisfactory spiritual condition, and that, therefore, he could not conscientiously accept him. Shortly afterwards, the man was admitted into another congregation, the minister of which was not so scrupulous; but, some years later, the same individual came again into Mr. Spurgeon’s vestry, and it was at once evident that he was greatly altered. No selfconceit was apparent in him then, but deep humility. He did not allude to a gift of seven thousand pounds, or, indeed, to any gift; but, after asking Mr. Spurgeon whether he remembered him and his rejection, he said that he had reason to thank God, with all his heart, for the treatment he then received, because it was the means of leading him to look within, to consider what his state was before God, to discover his many deficiencies and, eventually, it resulted in his being enabled to rejoice that he had been made a new creature in Christ Jesus. A few questions and answers confirmed his; statement, and then Mr. Spurgeon had the pleasure of willingly accepting him. He was for some years a useful member of the church at the Tabernacle; and, at length, he passed away in the full faith of the gospel.”

CHAPTER 87.

WESTWOOD

We have often been advised to, rise front Nightingale Lane to higher ground, to escape a portion of the fogs and damps which hang almost always over our smoky city. In the good providence of God, we have been led to do so, and we are now upon the Southern heights. We did not seek out the place, but it came into our hands in a very remarkable manner, and we were bound to accept it. We have left the room which has been so long our study, and the delightful garden where we were wont to walk and meditate. Not without many a regret have we transferred our nest from our dear old home to the Hill of Beulah.

What a type of our departure out of this world is a removal from an abode in which we have lived for years! Many thoughts have thronged our mind while ,are have been on the wing from the spot where we have dwell for more than `twenty years.-C. H. S., in "Spurgeon's Illustrated Almanack" for 1881.

C ONCERNING the Removal from "Helensburgh to "Westwood, Mr. Spurgeon often said-"I did not arrange it myself; the Lord just put a spade underneath me, and transplanted me to Norwood." The change came to pass in the following way. In the year 1880 a great trouble arose through what was intended to be only a joy and a help. Mrs. Tyson, who had long been a generous donor to all the Tabernacle Institutions, made a will by which she meant to leave to the College and Orphanage the greater part of her estate, subject to the payment of certain annuities to a number of aged pensioners upon her bounty. The kind testatrix appointed, as her executors, Mr. Spurgeon and a clerical friend, explaining that she did so on purpose to ensure that there should be no question about the carrying out of her intentions; but, unhappily, the bequests included her real as well as personal property, and therefore came within the scope of the Law of Mortmain. The whole affair was complicated in so many ways that the executors were obliged to arrange with the Trustees of the College and Orphanage to institute a friendly suit in the Court of Chancery in order to have an authoritative decision upon the points about which there was uncertainty. This involved a heavy addition to the delft Pastor's work, and necessitated many journeys to "White Lodge," Biggin Hill, Upper Norwood, where Mrs. Tyson had lived.

After the executors had paid one of their periodical visits, Mr. Spurgeon suggested that, before, returning home, they should drive as far as the front of the Crystal Palace.. Proceeding along Beulah Hill, the notice of a house, and estate for sale caught his eye as he passed a gateway which was afterwards to become very familiar to him. He had long felt the need of removing to higher ground, and to a more secluded spot than the once rural Nightingale Lane had become, and he had been making enquiries in various directions; but, so far, he had not heard of any place which was sufficiently near the Tabernacle, and, at the same time, fairly clear of the smoke and fog of London. On reaching the Palace, the return journey was commenced; and, soon, the carriage was back in Beulah Hill, and nearing the gate where the board had been seen. Bidding the coachman stop, the Pastor asked his secretary to find out what the notice said. It appeared that cards to view the property were required; but, on asking at the house, permission was at once given for Mr. Spurgeon to see all he wished, and then, for the first time, he passed down the drive, and beheld his future home.

As soon as he caught sight of "Westwood," he exclaimed, "Oh, that place is far too grand for me?" and, after a very brief inspection, he left without having any anticipation of becoming its owner. So completely did he give up all thought of living there, that he did not even send anyone to the sale; but, a few days afterwards, he received a note telling him that the reserve price had not been reached, and asking if he would make an offer for the estate. Then came what Mr. Spurgeon always regarded as the providential interposition of God in the matter. That very day, the builder, whom he always employed for all work needed at "Helensburgh House," called to enquire if he wanted to sell his home; because, if so, one of his neighbors wished to buy it as a residence for his son-in-law who was returning from abroad. The Pastor then mentioned the house he had seen at Norwood, and added, "If I could get for this place anything like what is needed to purchase the other, I should be glad to make the exchange." A consultation was held as to the price to be asked, a sum was stated, and duly reported to the neighbor, who at once said, "I should not think of offering Mr. Spurgeon any less, for I am sure he would only fix a fair value; I will give you a deposit to seal the bargain." The builder soon returned with the message and cheque; but Mr. Spurgeon said, "I must wait to see if I can buy `Westwood,' or I shall be out of house and home." He drove again to Beulah Hill, found that he could, without difficulty, meet the difference in the price of the two places, and, within a few hours, the old home was sold, and the new one secured, as he always believed, by Divine arrangement.

The incoming residents at "Helensburgh House" desired to have some permanent memorial of their predecessor's occupancy of the house, so Mr. Spurgeon wrote the following inscription, and had it engraved, and fixed underneath the large painted window at the end of the study—

***"Farewell, fair room, I leave thee to a friend:  
Peace dwell with him and all his kin!  
May angels evermore the house defend  
Their Lord hath often been within."***

In August, the removal took place, and in the next number of The Sword and the Trowel, the Editor wrote-"as the matter of change of residence may be, it has sufficed to create all sorts of stories, among which is the statement that `Mr. Spurgeon's people have given him a house.' My evergenerous friends would give me whatever was needful; but, as I had only to sell one house and buy another, there was no necessity for their doing so. Having once accepted a noble presentation from them, and having there and then handed it over to the Almshouses, it would by no means be according to my mind to receive a second public testimonial. One friend who heard of my change of residence right generously sent help towards the expense of removal; but, beyond this, it is entirely my own concern, and a matter about which I should have said nothing if it had not been for this gossip."

Though Mr. Spurgeon had described "Westwood" as being far too grand for him, he was very vexed when an American visitor published a grosslyexaggerated account of "its park, and meadows, and lakes, and streams, and statuary, and stables," which were supposed to rival those of the Queen at Windsor Castle! It would be difficult to find the "park," for the whole estate comprised less than nine acres,-three of which were leasehold;-and the numerous "lakes and streams" which the imaginative D.D. fancied that he saw, were all contained in the modest piece of water across which the prettiest view of the house can be obtained. Mr. Spurgeon hoped that one effect of his removal to "Westwood" would be that he might enjoy better health than he had at Clapham; he even cherished the notion that the change would be so beneficial that he would not need to go to Mentone in the winter. But overwork exacted the same penalties in the new home as in the old one. For a time, the hydropathic appliances at the Beulah Spa seemed to afford relief; but, by-and-by, they also failed, and the Pastor, in his own expressive way, said that he had resolved to go to Heaven as the Israelites crossed the Jordan, dryshod. The friendly connection with the hydropathic establishment was, however, still maintained, for its proprietor was permitted to have a pipe running from his house to the well in Mr. Spurgeon's garden, so that any of the guests who desired to drink the Beulah Spa water might have a supply of it. The prospectus, issuedat the time that "Westwood" was offered for sale, contained a very elaborate description of the virtues of the water, and its medicinal value as compared with that of other springs in England and on the Continent; but Mr. Spurgeon never concerned himself much about it, though he occasionally drank it himself, and gave others the opportunity of following his example.

Apart from its private uses, perhaps "Westwood" was never more thoroughly utilized than on the occasions when tutors and students gathered there, to spend a long and delightful day with their beloved President.F4 The rosary was the usual place of meeting; and here, after partaking of refreshments, a brief devotional service was held, followed by the introduction of the new students. The name of nearly every one of them, or something about his previous calling, or the place from which he. had come, furnished material for that ready wit with which Mr. Spurgeon brightened all parts of his service; and the freshmen were always warned that the festive proceedings of the opening day were not to be regarded as representative of the rest of their College career, which must be one of real hard work, so that they might derive all possible benefit from the season of preparation for the ministry.As the brethren dispersed to their various forms of recreation, a number of them always chose the Puritan game of bowls; and in the summerhouse overlooking the lawn, the President and tutors watched them, and, at the same time, talked over any matters on which they might need to consult. Thus, on one occasion, a brother was called from his play to receive a commission to go to the Falkland Islands; another was summoned to go to the mission-field; while to others was entrustedthe honor of reviving some decaying church in an English village, or starting a new one amidst the dense population of London or some provincial town.

The top of the round tower, visible from the lawn, is the place from which a wide extent of country cart be seen; and many of the students, in days past, sought and secured permission to "view the landscape o'er." The grand stand at Epsom is plainly discernible from the grounds; but, from the greater height, the tower on Leith Hill, and, in a peculiarly favorable state of the atmosphere, Windsor Castle also can be descried.

The steps leading down to the lawn often formed a convenient rallyingpoint for the evening meeting, though sometimes the brethren were grouped around the upper summerhouse. Far away across Thornton Heath rolled the great volume of sound as the male choir of eighty to a hundred voices sang the sweet songs of Zion, of which the College anthem"Hallelujah for the Cross!"-was certain to be one. The words spoken by the President, at those gatherings, are gratefully remembered, by brethren now laboring for the Lord in various parts of the world.

During the day, informal meetings were held under "The Question Oak," which gained that name because, beneath its widely-spreading branches, Mr. Spurgeon allowed the students to put to him any enquiry that they pleased, and he answered them all without a moment's hesitation, and often interspersed his replies with the narration of striking incidents in his own experience, such as those recorded in Vol. 3.

The lake is not likely to be forgotten by some of the Pastors' College brethren who are now in the ministry. On the first visit of the students to "Westwood," the President told them to go wherever they pleased, and to explore the whole place. It was not very long before some of them discovered that there was a boat on the lake, and not many minutes more before the boat and all its crew had gone down into the mud!

Happily, the coachman's cottage was close by, so it became a place ofrefuge for the shipwrecked collegians, who received the sympathetic attentions of their brethren while their garments were being restored to a wearable condition; and they were themselves temporarily clothed from the wardrobe of Mr. Spurgeon and the coachman. As the students were not so stout as the former, nor so tall as the latter, they were not very comfortable in their borrowed raiment; but, later in the day, they appeared in their proper garb, and the President then turned the adventure to practical account by warning them to keep clear of the. muddy waters of doubt, and not to trust themselves off terra firma unless they were sure of the trustworthiness of their boat and the skill of the oarsman.

In addition to the students of the Pastors' College, many other visitors have, from time to time, been welcomed at "Westwood." On one occasion, a party of American friends, who had been worshipping at the Tabernacle on the Sabbath, asked Mr. Thomas Cook, of Leicester, by whom they were being "personally conducted" through London, to seek permission for them to see the preacher at his home. This was readily accorded; and one of their number, Dr. J. G. Walker, wrote, after Mr. Spurgeon's home-going, a long and interesting account of their reception. The following extract will convey a good idea of the impressions made upon the Transatlantic visitors that day, and also on many others who, at different times, saw the dear Pastor in his own house and garden—

"Turning into the open gateway, a short drive along the thickly-shaded carriage-way brings us to the house itself, now and ever to be known by the familiar name of `Westwood.' Mr. Spurgeon is at the carriage before we alight, and gives us such a cordial greeting that we immediately feel at home ourselves. We spend a few moments, in the rosary, in further social intercourse. Then, with cheerful, though somewhat labored steps, our genial host leads us along the grass-bordered walks around the house, down a winding pathway sheltered by overhanging trees, over a little rustic bridge, and along the edge of a miniature lake; then out upon a sloping stretch of open ground, from the summit of which the `Westwood' dwelling sends down its sunny glances, and beyond which the widening ,expanse of a picturesque English landscape suggests to heart and voice alike the familiar melody `Sweet Beulah Land.'

"At every step, we find ourselves drawn closer and closer to the man himself, as, with unaffected simplicity, and with easy, brilliant, entertaining conversation, he makes the moments pass too quickly by. Recalling these glimpses of the social and domestic life of the great preacher, leads me to indicate a few of the impressions that are most tenderly cherished. I was especially struck with his love of nature. He lived in loving acquaintance with his beautiful surroundings. He seemed to be on terms of closest intimacy with every leaf, and plant, and flower; and, without question, this may very largely account for his own marked naturalness in speech and movement, both in the pulpit and out of it. Like the leaves, and plants, and flowers, he loved to be just what God made him.

"'Come into my picture gallery,' said he, ‘and let me show you some pictures painted by God Himself.' Again we found ourselves at the entrance to the rosary, where our attention was directed to certain openings which had been made in the dense foliage. Placing us in the proper positions before these open spaces, he invited us to look through them; and, as we did so, we found ourselves gazing upon natural pictures that were all the more beautiful because they enabled us, as well as the owner of the gallery, to look through nature up to nature's God.' In all these methods of expression, there was not the least show of affectation, or any assumption of sanctimoniousness. The entire conduct and conversation of the man, both in his private walks and public ways, breathed out the fervor and the frankness of a soul `who know, and loves God, and who lives and communes with his Savior.'"

A visitor at "Westwood," who professed to have come from the United States, was received by Mr. Spurgeon with considerable cordiality because he announced himself as "Captain Beecher, the son of Henry Ward Beecher." He was conducted through the grounds, and had the special attractions of the place pointed out to him; and he, on his part, managed very well to sustain the role he had assumed until, just before leaving, he said, "Oh, Mr. Spurgeon! excuse me for making such a request, but could you change a cheque for me? Unfortunately, I waited until after the bank was closed, and I want some money very particularly tonight." The dear Pastor's suspicions were at once aroused, and he said, with pardonable severity, "I do not think you ought to make such a request to me. If you are really Mr. Beecher's son, you must be able, through the American consul, or some friend, to get your cheque cashed, without coming to a complete stranger;" and, foiled, in his attempt, the young man departed. A few days afterwards, a gentleman was murdered in a carriage on the Brighton railway; and when the portrait of the criminal, Lefroy, was published in the papers, Mr. Spurgeon immediately recognized the features of his recent visitor, though he never understood the reason for the man's strange call at "Westwood."

One place to which "Westwood" visitors were sure to be taken was the fernery and among the many treasures to which their attention was directed, the mother-fern was never forgotten, and most of them received from the dear owner, as living mementos of their visit, some of the babyferns growing on the parent-plant. At one of the Tabernacle prayermeetings, Mr. Spurgeon gave an address upon the mother-fern, in which he urged his hearers to seek to be spiritually what it was naturally, and, by the grace of God, to be the means of reproducing themselves in their converts, in whom the same blessed process might be repeated by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit.

At one time, bees were kept at "Westwood," and Mr. Spurgeon was intensely interested in watching them whenever he had a few minutes to spare, or any visitors who could explain their various movements. The scientific lecturer at the Pastors' College, at that period, was Professor Frank Cheshire,-a great authority on bees and bee-culture; and he was delighted to place his wide knowledge of the subject at the dear President's disposal. One day, he brought with him a Ligurian queen, which he had procured on purpose to add to the value of the Pastor's busy bees, and he was delighted to see how quickly her majesty made herself at home among her English subjects.

After a while, Mr. Spurgeon noticed that the little creatures appeared to have to fly so far afield, to "gather honey all the day," that they seemed quite tired out when they reached the hives, or fell exhausted before they could get back to their homes. There was also much difficulty in keeping them alive through the winter; so he, reluctantly parted with them. Before he did so, however, he had one experience, connected with them, which he never forgot. On a calm summer's evening, he was standing to watch them, when, without giving him any warning, hundreds of them settled on his clothes, and began crawling all over him. He rushed upstairs, stripped off all his garments, threw them quickly out of the bedroom window, and marvelous to relate, he escaped without a single sting.

One Monday morning, not long after removing to "Westwood," the whole household was in a state of consternation because there had been a burglary during the night. On the Sabbath evening, a service had been held in the study, and a small window had been opened for ventilation. It was not noticed at the time for locking up, so it remained open, and made it a comparatively easy matter for a thief to enter. He did not get much for his pains, and his principal plunder almost led to his arrest. Mr. John B. Gough had given to Mr. Spurgeon a valuable stick as a token of his affection; this was amongst the burglar's booty, and, after hammering out of shape the gold with which it was adorned, he offered it for sale at a pawnbroker's in the Borough. It was possible still to read the name, C. H. Spurgeon, in the precious metal, so an assistant was despatched for the police; but, before they arrived, the man decamped, and was not seen again.

Annoying as the incident was, the Pastor always said that he was decidedly a gainer by the transaction. With the amount he received for the battered gold, he bought some books which were of more use to him than the handsome stick would ever have been. Then the Trustees of the Orphanage felt that, as he was the Treasurer of the various Institutions, and often had money, and documents of value, belonging to them, in his possession, he ought to have a safe in which to keep them, so they presented one to him. The burglar had thrown down, in the study, a number of lighted matches, and the loose paper, in various parts of the room were set on fire, so that a great conflagration might easily have resulted, if the Lord had not graciously prevented such a calamity. Thankfulness for this providential escape was followed by the recollection that, since the transfer of the property from the former owner, the premises had not been insured, so that the loss, in case of fire, would have been serious. That neglect was speedily remedied; and, by means of electric bells and other arrangements, special protection was provided for the future.

News of the burglary was published, in various papers, with considerable exaggeration; and, perhaps as the result of the publicity thus given, Mr. Spurgeon received a letter, purporting to have been written by the thief; and it bore so many marks of being a genuine epistle that it was really believed that it came from the man himself. Among other things, he said that he didn't know it was "the horflings' Spurgin who lived there, for he would not have robbed him, and he put the very pertinent question, "Why don't you shut your windows and keep a dog?" From that time, dates the entry to "Westwood" of "Punch"-the pug concerning whom his master testified that he knew more than any dog ever ought to know!

One Thursday evening, when preaching at the Tabernacle, Mr. Spurgeon introduced his canine friend into the sermon, and turned to good account his pugnacious propensities-"I think that I have heard preachers who have seemed to me to bring out a doctrine on purpose to fight over it. I have a dog, that has a rug in which he sleeps; and when I go home tonight, he will bring it out, and shake it before me,-not that he particularly cares for his rug, but because he knows that I shall say, `I'll have it,' and then he will bark at me, and in his language say, `No, you won't.' There are some people who fetch out the doctrines of grace just in that way. I can see them trotting along with the doctrine of election just in order that some Arminian brother may dispute with them about it, and that then they may bark at him. Do not act so, beloved."

In many of his letters from Mentone, Mr. Spurgeon mentioned his dog; a few extracts will show how fond he was of the intelligent creature— "I wonder whether Punchie thinks of his master. When we drove from the station here, a certain doggie barked at the horses in true Punchistic style, and reminded me of my old friend Punchie sending me his love pleased me very much… Poor doggie, pat him for me, and give him a tit-bit for my sake… I dreamed of old Punch; I hope the poor dog is better… Kind memories to all, including Punch. How is he getting on? I rejoice that his life is prolonged, and hope he will live till my return. May his afflictions be a blessing to him in the sweetening of his temper!… Tell Punchie, `Master is coming!'""Punchie," on his part, was very much attached to his dear owner, except when Mr. Spurgeon had the gout, and then the old dog would not go near the poor sufferer. The faithful friend in the time of affliction was "Punch's" son, "Gyp." He was not as wise as his father; indeed, he was often called a stupid creature, and his master made a telling illustration out of his folly in barking at thunder. The paragraph may fittingly end the present chapter, for it shows how Mr. Spurgeon employed in his Lord's service even the slightest incidents that occurred in his own home.

On that occasion, he wrote "The first time our young dog heard the thunder, it startled him. He leaped up, gazed around in anger, and then began to bark at the disturber of his peace. When the next crash came, he grew furious, and flew round the room, seeking to tear in pieces the intruder who dared thus to defy him. It was an odd scene. The yelping of a dog pitted against the artillery of heaven! Poor foolish creature, to think that his bark could silence, the thunderclap, or intimidate the tempest! What was he like? His imitators are not far to seek. Among us, at this particular juncture, there are men of an exceedingly doggish breed, who go about howling at their Maker. They endeavor to bark the Almighty out of existence, to silence the voice of His gospel, and to let Him know that their rest is not to be disturbed by His warnings. We need not particularize; the creatures are often heard, and are very fond of public note, even when it takes an unfriendly form. Let them alone. They present a pitiful spectacle. We could smile at them if we did not feel much more compelled to weep. The elements of a tragedy are wrapt up in this comedy. Today, they defy their Maker; but, tomorrow, they may be crashed beneath His righteous indignation. At any rate, the idea of fearing them must never occur to us; their loudest noise is vocalized folly; their malice is impotent, their fury is mere fume. `He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh the Lord shall have them in derision.'"

CHAPTER 88.

A TYPICAL WEEK'S WORK.

Preaching at the Tabernacle, on the text, "Jesus therefore, being wearied with His journey, sat thus on the well," Mir. Spurgeon said— "It seems rather singular, but it is worthy of notice, that our Lord appears to have been more tired than His disciples were, for they had gone away into the city to buy meat; I suppose that He might have gone with them if He had not been more fatigued than they were,. He was quite worn out, and thoroughly spent; and so, while they went into Sychar to purchase provisions, He sat down on the well. I take it that, in all probability, the reason is this,-He had mental weariness associated with His bodily fatigue; and when the two things come together, they make a man wearied indeed. I know that there are some who fancy that, to think and to care for others, to preach and to teach, is not much of work. Well, my dear brother, I can assure you that you may keep on working much longer with your arm than you can with your brain; and I am speaking from experience when I say that careful thought, and great anxiety to do good, bring much wear and tear with them to a man's whole constitution. And if the life is taken out of anyone in two ways at once,-by fatigue of body, and by fatigue of mind, too,then you will see that such a man will necessarily be the first to give way.

"But my Lord, though He is very weary, has at last spied out the person for whom He is waiting and watching. Here she comes; and now His heart seems to beat more quickly, His eye is brighter than usual, He is not half so fatigued as He was. You may have seen the faint and tired hunter suddenly grow strong when, at last, he spies on the crag the chamois he has come to seek; or the fisherman standing wearily in the stream, holding his rod, and ready to go home to his long-needed meal, but, at last, the salmon begins to pull away at his line, now how strong a man he is! He will go on for an hour at that work, and he will not want to eat or drink. The whole of his being is in the fishing. So was it with my blessed Master. That woman was coming, and Christ was `all there,' as u e say. He was ready to speak the right word,-a word in season to one who was weary,-to speak the word of admonition, or of comfort, or of invitation; and He is `all here' at this moment. I thought, when I stood here tonight to speak to you, `I am constantly coming to the Tabernacle to talk to this great throng,' and something seemed to say to me, `You ought to be glad to have such an opportunity.' I thought, `Yes, and I am glad; and I will at my very best preach Christ to them as long as this tongue can move, for it is a delightful privilege to be allowed to tell men about my Master's pardoning love.' But, oh, if He were here in bodily presence, He would do it so much better than any of us can, for His heart is so much more full of love than our poor hearts are!"

M ANY people have wondered how it was possible for Mr. Spurgeon to do all the work that he was able to perform, for so many years, with such happy results. He had efficient helpers in various departments of his service, and he was always ready to render to them their full meed of praise. Yet, with all the assistance upon which he could rely, there still remained for the chief worker a vast amount of toil which he could not delegate to anyone. He was a splendid organizer, and he could find employment suited to the capacity of many individuals with greatly varied qualifications; and while he could keep them all busily occupied, he was himself so quick in all his labor that he would probably do single-handed as much as all of them combined could accomplish.

The following description of a typical week's work will afford at least a glimpse of the way in which the dear Pastor spent a considerable portion of his time, and it will also indicate some of the methods adopted by him in discharging the heavy responsibilities which devolved upon him. In such an active and far-reaching life as his was, no one week in the year could be quite like the rest, nor indeed did the occupations of any two days exactly resemble one another; but the particulars here given will supply all that needs to be known about a fairly representative week's work.

The week must consist of seven days, for the Day of Rest was, in many respects, the beloved preacher's busiest time; and, although he often tried hard to get a Sabbath for himself on the Wednesday, the ever-increasing and not always reasonable requests for services, all over the kingdom, frequently encroached upon the brief period of relaxation to which he was rightfully entitled, and which the claims of health imperatively demanded. He was, perhaps, all the more willing to take a long holiday in the winter because he had toiled so strenuously and almost continuously through all the other months of the year; though it must also be recorded that during his seasons of rest, he probably did as much as most men do when in full work. `The sermon had to be issued every week, and the magazine every month, material for the Almanacks had to be arranged, there were always some new books in course of preparation, many letters followed the absent minister wherever he might go, and the care of his own church and many others, and the many forms of holy service in which he was; interested, left all too little leisure for the weary brain and the oft-suffering body. But if his holiday was a time of toil, what must have been the pressure when, for weeks and months at a stretch, it was almost literally "all work and no play"?

In describing a typical week's work, a beginning can most appropriately be made with an account of the preparation for the hallowed engagements of the Sabbath. Up to six o'clock, every Saturday evening, visitors were welcomed at "Westwood," the dear master doing the honors of the garden in such a way that many, with whom he thus walked and talked, treasure the memory of their visit as a very precious thing. At the tea-table, the conversation was bright, witty, and always interesting; and after the meal was over, an adjournment was made to the study for family worship, and it was at these seasons that my beloved's prayers were remarkable for their tender childlikeness, their spiritual pathos, and their intense devotion. He seemed to come as near to God as a little child to a loving father, and we were often moved to tears as he talked thus face to face with his Lord. At six o'clock, every visitor left, for Mr. Spurgeon would often playfully say, "Now, dear friends, I must bid you `Good-bye,' and turn you out of this study; you know what a number of chickens I have to scratch for, and I want to give them a good meal tomorrow." So, with a hearty "God bless you!" he shook hands with them, and shut himself in to companionship with his God. The inmates of the house went quietly about their several duties, and a holy silence seemed to brood over the place. What familiar intercourse with the Savior he so greatly loved, was then vouchsafed to him, we can never know, for, even while. I write, I hear a whisper, "The place, whereon thou standest is holy ground." No human ear ever heard the mighty pleadings with God, for himself, and his people, which rose from his study on those solemn evenings; no mortal eyes ewer beheld him as he wrestled with the Angel of the covenant until he prevailed, and came back from his brook Jabbok with the message he was to deliver in his Master's Name. His grandest and most fruitful sermons were those which cost him most soul-travail and spiritual anguish;-not in their preparation or arrangement, but in his; own overwhelming sense of accountability to God for the souls to whom he had to preach the gospel of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ. Though he had the gift of utterance above many, preaching was to him no light or trifling task; his whole heart was absorbed in it, all his spiritual force was engaged in it, all the intellectual power, with which God had so richly endowed him, was pressed into this glorious service, and then laid humbly and thankfully at the feet of his Lord and Savior, to be used and blessed by Him according to His gracious will and purpose.

Sometimes, but not often, he would leave the study for a few moments, to seek me, and say, with a troubled tone in his clear voice, "Wiley, what shall I do? God has not given me my text yet." I would comfort him as well as I could; and, after a little talk, he would return to his work, and wait and watch for the Word to be given. It was to me, a cause for peculiar thankfulness when I was able to suggest to him a passage from which he could preach; and, afterwards, in referring to the sermon, he seemed so pleased to say, "You gave me that text."

Many years ago, on a Friday evening in Conference week, a number of the ministers met at "Westwood," as was usual with them, to talk over the doings of the past days, and to enjoy a chat with the President in his own home. During the evening, it was suggested that each one should explain his method of procedure in the most important matter of sermon-making; and the idea found great favor with the little company. Many of the brethren responded, and told, more or less interestingly, their manner of preparation; but it was evident that all awaited with impatience the moment when "the dear Governor" should speak, and reveal to them the secrets of his Saturday nights' work. Very eager were the faces turned to him as he sat, blissfully happy in his easy chair, the strain of the week over, and in full enjoyment of the free and holy fellowship which obtained on such occasions. I cannot recall his very words, but the purport of them was something like this — "Brethren, it is not easy for me to tell you precisely how I make my sermons. All through the week I am on the look-out for material that I can use on the Sabbath; but the actual work of arranging it is necessarily, left until Saturday evening, for every other moment is fully occupied in the Lord's service. I have often said that my greatest difficulty is to fix my mind upon the particular texts which are to be the subjects of discourse, on the following day; F5 or, to speak more correctly, to know what topics the Holy Spirit would have me bring before the congregation. As soon as any passage of Scripture really grips my heart and soul, I concentrate my whole attention upon it, look at the precise meaning of the original, closely examine the context so as to see the special aspect of the text in its surroundings, and roughly jot down all the thoughts that occur to me concerning the subject, leaving to a later period the orderly marshalling of them for presentation to my hearers.

"When I have reached this point, I am often stopped by an obstacle which is only a trouble to those of us whose sermons are regularly printed. I turn to my own Bible, which contains a complete record of all my published discourses; and, looking at these I have preached upon the text, I find, perhaps, that the general run of thought is so similar to that which I have marked out, that I have to abandon the subject, and seek another. Happily, a text of Scripture is like a diamond with many facets, which sparkles and flashes; whichever way it is held, so that, although I may have already printed, several sermons upon a particular passage, there is still a fresh setting; possible for the priceless gem, and I can go forward with my work. I like next to see what others have to say about my text; and, as a rule, my experience is that, if its teaching is perfectly plain, the commentators, to a man, explain it at great length, whereas, with equal unanimity, they studiously avoid or evade the verses which Peter might have described as `things hard to be understood.' I am very much obliged to them for leaving me so many nuts to crack; but I should have been just as grateful if they had made more use of their own theological teeth or nut-crackers. However, among the many who have written upon the Word, I generally find some who can at least help to throw a side light upon it; and when I have arrived at that part of my preparation, I am glad to call my clear wife to my assistance. She reads to me until I get a clear idea of the whole subject; and, gradually, I am guided to the best form of outline, which I copy out, on a half-sheet of notepaper, for use in the pulpit. This relates only to the morning sermon; for the evening, I am usually content if I can decide upon the text, and have a general notion of the lessons to be drawn from it, leaving to the Lord's-day afternoon the final arrangement of divisions, sub-divisions, and illustrations.  
This is as nearly as I can recollect, the dear preacher's own explanation of his mode of preparing his discourses; and when I have called my readers' attention to the accompanying facsimile of the rough notes and jottings made by him on one of those memorable Saturday evenings, I may resume my own portion of the narrative. "Will you come and help me tonight, Wiley?" he would say, as if I were doing him a favor, though the service was one which an angel might have coveted. I always found, when I went into the study, an easy chair drawn up to the table, by his side, and a big heap of books piled one upon the other, and opened at the place where he desired me to read. With those old volumes around him, he was like a honey-bee amid the flowers; he seemed to know how to extract and carry off the sweet spoils from the most unpromising-looking tome among them. His acquaintance with them was so familiar and complete, that he could at once place his hand on any author who had written upon the portion of Scripture which was engaging his attention; and I was, in this pleasant fashion, introduced to many of the Puritan and other divines whom, otherwise, I might not have known. These seasons were of such special delight to me that I gave a brief account of them in my book, Ten Years of My Life; and, as the description then came fresh from my heart, and warm with the joy of sacred fellowship, I prefer to transcribe it here, rather than trust to my memory for details—

"For some time, it has been the dear Pastor's custom, as soon as the text for the Lord's-day morning service has been given him by the Master, to call me into the study, and permit me to read the various Commentaries on the subject-matter in hand. Never was occupation more delightful, instructive, and spiritually helpful; my heart has burned within me, as the meaning of some passage of God's Word has been opened up, and the hidden stores of wisdom and knowledge have been revealed; or when the marrow and fatness of a precious promise or doctrine have been spread like a dainty banquet before my longing eyes. Shall I ever forget those solemn evenings when the sufferings of the Lord Jesus were the theme of tearful meditation; — when, with `love and grief our hearts dividing,' we followed Him throughout the night on which He was betrayed, weeping, like the daughters of Jerusalem, and saying, `There was never sorrow like unto His sorrow;' — or the more rapturous time when the topic for the morrow was to be, `the exceeding riches of His grace,' and `we were fairly bewildered by the inexhaustible treasures of love and mercy to be found in that fair `land of Havilah, where there is gold'? Gracious hours are those thus spent, and unspeakably precious to my soul; for, while the servant of the Lord is reaping the corn of the Kingdom for the longing multitude who expect to be fed by his hand, I can glean between the sheaves, and gather the `handfuls of purpose' which are let fall so lovingly.

"There come delightful pauses in my reading, when the book is laid down, and I listen to the dear voice of my beloved as he explains what I cannot understand, or unfold meanings which I fail to see, often condensing into a few clear, choice sentences whole pages of those discursive old divines in whom he delights, and pressing from the gathered thoughts all the richest nectar of their hidden sweetness. Thus, a poor prisoner has the first sip of the `wines on the lees, well-refined,'-the first morsel from the loaves with which the thousands are to be fed and refreshed on the morrow. How shall I sufficiently thank God for this drink of the brook by the way, this `holy place' within my home where the Lord deigns to meet with me, and draw out my heart in adoration and worship?"

Lord's-day morning. — Mr. Spurgeon always set a good example to his people by being early at the sanctuary. He usually reached the Tabernacle at least half an hour before the time for commencing the service. During that interval, he attended to any matters that were of special urgency, selected the hymns that were to be sung, and arranged with the precentor the tunes best adapted to them; and the remaining minutes were spent in prayer with all the deacons and elders who were not already on duty elsewhere. The dear preacher himself greatly valued that season of devotion, and his sermons contain many references to the petitions presented by the brethren in his vestry before joining in the public worship of the great congregation. During the thirty years that he preached in the beautiful building he had so largely helped to erect, there was practically no difference in the size of his audience, for the Tabernacle was always crowded, though sometimes the number of friends unable to gain admission, when the outer gates were closed, was larger than on other occasions. Punctually at eleven o'clock, Mr. Spurgeon was seen descending the steps leading to the platform, followed by the long train of officebearers, and, after a brief pause for silent supplication, the service began. There is no necessity to describe in detail even one of those memorable assemblies. In the course of his long ministry, many hundreds of thousands of persons, from all parts of the globe, heard him proclaim that gospel which became to multitudes of them the power of God unto salvation; while, happily, by means of the printed sermons, the messages he delivered continue to reach an ever-widening circle of readers, not only in our own land and language, but in other climes and in the many Strange tongues into which the precious discourses have been and still are being translated.

Mr. Spurgeon himself often said that the pulpit was his throne, and that, when preaching, he envied no monarch in all the world, nor felt the slightest desire to exchange places with any man upon the face of the earth. Yet was there, even to him, an inner shrine-the very holy of holies,-which was more sacred still. Many times he has testified that, when leading the great congregation in prayer, he has been so rapt in adoration, and so completely absorbed in the supplication or thanksgiving he has been presenting, that he has quite forgotten all his surroundings, and has felt even a measure of regret, upon closing his petition, and opening his eyes, to find that he was still in the flesh, in the company of men of like passions with himself, instead of being in the immediate presence of the Most High, sharing in the higher worship of the holy angels and the spirits of just men made perfect. Mr. D. L. Moody must have been very deeply in sympathy with Mr. Spurgeon upon this matter, for he declared that, greatly as he had been blessed every time he heard the Pastor preach, he had been even more impressed as he had heard him pray. Other notable servants of Christ have borne a similar testimony.

The service being ended, — if it was the second Sabbath in the month, the Pastor joined the large company of communicants who usually filled the spacious lecture-hall; and there, around, the table of their Lord, another half-hour of hallowed Christian fellowship was enjoyed, completing and consummating the blessing received in the public assembly. To many of the most earnest workers of the Tabernacle Church, the morning was the only time when they could meet with their brethren and sisters in Christ in their own house of prayer for the afternoon and evening were devoted to Sunday-school and mission work, open-air preaching, or the many forms of Christian service in which they were engaged. The Pastor constantly referred to this happy arrangement; and urged others of the members to adopt the same method of both getting good and doing good, as it would help to develop their own gifts and graces, and it would also make the more room for the unconverted who desired to come to hear the Word at night.

Each Sabbath, except the second, the ordinance of the Lord's supper was observed at the close of the evening service,-the first Lord's-day evening in each month being the time for the great communion the Tabernacle, when the area and the larger part of the first gallery were reserved for communicants, and many hundreds of spectators were able to remain in other parts of the building. It was a most impressive scene,-sublime in its simplicity,-and those who have ever taken part in it can never forget it. Mr. Spurgeon had long held and taught that the apostolic precedents all appeared to indicate that the celebration of the sacred supper should take place each Lord's-day, and, therefore, whether at home or abroad, he always attended the communion every Sabbath if it was possible, and he often bore his willing witness that the frequent participation in the holy feast increased rather than diminished its value as a constant reminder of Him who said to His disciples, "This do in remembrance of Me."

On every Sabbath morning in the. month, except the second, there was usually a long procession of friends from the country, or from foreign lands, waiting for just a shake of the hand and a hearty greeting from the Pastor; and it was interesting to notice how quickly he recognized those whom he had seen before, even if years had elapsed since they last met. All through the summer season, some hundreds of visitors from the United States helped, at each service, to swell the contingents from other parts; and most of them afterwards sought to secure a personal interview with the great preacher to whom they had been listening. Among them were usually some of the most noted of the American ministers of various denominations, to whom a hearty invitation was given to take part in the evening service, or the prayer-meeting the next night. Mr. Spurgeon loved to quote what one of these brethren said to him-"Well, Brother Spurgeon, I was here ten years ago, and heard you preach, and I find that you have not altered your doctrine in the least. You stand today exactly where you stood then." "Yes," replied the Pastor, "and if you come again in another ten years, you will, by the grace of God, find me still preaching the very same gospel, unless the Lord hats, in the meantime, called me home." Among the very special friends, from across the Atlantic, were such divines as Dr. John Hall, Dr. W. M. Taylor, Dr. Cuyler, Dr. Armitage, Dr. MacArthur, Dr. Lonmer,and Dr. H. L,. Wayland; and they were sure to be invited to call during the week, at the Pastor's home, and some of them had the still greater delight of spending a quiet day with him in the country, when that rare privilege was possible. Others, at mutually-convenient times, visited the Orphanage, and the rest of the Institutions, under his guidance, and thus they heard from his own lips the charming story of how the Lord had led him and blessed him in connection with all the different branches of his service.

The informal reception being over at last, the Pastor was able to leave,unless, as not seldom happened, some poor trembling soul was waiting in the hope of having a word or two of cheer and direction from him, or one of the earnest workers, always on the watch for anxious enquirers, came forward, with radiant face, bringing one or another who had sought and found the Savior either during or since the service. While Mr. Spurgeon was residing at "Helensburgh House," he was able to return home to dinner on the Lord's-day; but, after removing to "Westwood," he soon found that the distance was too great, so he remained for the afternoon within easy reach of the Tabernacle, with friends who were only too glad to minister in any way to the comfort and refreshing of the one who had been so greatly blessed to them. Sometimes, there was a sick member whom the Pastor felt that he must visit after dinner; otherwise, he had an hour or so of rest and Christian conversation before retiring, at about four o,'clock, for the preparation of his evening discourse. Some, who were very little children then, can probably remember the injunction given to them on such occasions, "You must be very quiet, for Mr. Spurgeon is getting his sermon." Ere he was summoned to tea, as a rule, the brief notes which he was going to use in the pulpit were duly arranged. The evening sermon was usually shorter than the one delivered in the morning, and somewhat more evangelistic, in order to be specially adapted to the larger number of casual worshippers who might then be present. Yet, often, that order was changed; and the morning discourse more nearly resembled an earnest evangelist address, while the sermon in the evening was a closely-reasoned exposition of the doctrines of grace, which again and again led to the conversion of more sinners than did some of the appeals directly addressed to them, and which seemed as if they must reach the hearers' hearts.

For some years, once a quarter, the Tabernacle was thrown open, on the Lord's-day evening, to anybody who liked to come, the members of the church and congregation being asked to stay away for that night. It is not many preachers who could make such an experiment, but it was crowned with abundant success from the first. Mr. Spurgeon said, afterwards, that his regular hearers had so loyally complied with his request that they should worship elsewhere for that one occasion, that, in addition to the seat-stewards and other workers who were present, he could not recognize half-a-dozen persons in the whole assembly of five or six thousand people. The discourses delivered to such a promiscuous audience were, naturally, evangelistic, and many were brought to the Lord through these special services.

Before the evening worship, on ordinary Sabbaths, the Pastor often saw an enquirer, or a candidate for church-fellowship, who found it difficult to get to the Tabernacle during the week; and, after preaching, except on communion nights, however weary he might be, he was never too tired to point a poor sinner to the Savior, and to act the part of the true shepherd of souls to those who were seeking entrance into the fold. By the time he reached his home, he had certainly "earned a night's repose;" yet his day's labor was not always finished even then; for, if he was going to preach a long way in the country, on the morrow, he was obliged to start at once revising the report of the discourse which he had delivered in the morning. That, however, was quite an exceptional arrangement; and, as a general rule, his first work, every Monday, was the revision of the Lord's-day morning's sermon.

This was always a labor of love, yet it was a labor; and it is not surprising that, during a very severe illness, when his friends induced him to see an eminent physician, the doctor urged and almost ordered him to abandon this heavy task so soon after the great strain of the Sabbath services. But the Pastor knew that, to delay the publication even for a week, would materially affect the circulation; and he also said that, if he was to continue his gifts to the Lord's cause on the scale to which he had been accustomed, he must keep all his literary work up to the highest mark, and he could not bear the thought of lessening the help that he saw to be required in so many different directions. He used also playfully to say that the earth itself would cease to revolve if the sermon did not come out every Thursday morning; and, in advising the students occasionally to follow his early example, and to write out their discourses in full,-but not to read or recite them,-he told them that the revision of his sermons for the press gave him all the benefits that other preachers might derive from writing theirs.

As soon as the messenger' brought the reporter's manuscript, Mr. Spurgeon glanced at the number of folios,-to see whether the discourse was longer or shorter than usual, so that he might judge whether he had to lengthen or to reduce it in order that it might, when printed, fill the requisite space,-twelve octavo pages;-and at once began revising it. The fascimile, on the opposite page, will show how carefully and thoroughly this part of his work was done; it will also have, to many readers, a peculiarly pathetic interest from the fact that it formed part of the last sermon he ever corrected, and that, while writing in it about the glories of Heaven, he was describing what he was himself to witness on the very day that the discourse was to be read,-the never-to-be-forgotten January 31, 1892.

After Mr. Spurgeon had made the alterations which he deemed advisable, Mr. Keys, who sat on his left-hand in the study, was entrusted with the duty of verifying quotations, and seeing that the punctuation and other minor matters were all in order. Then, when about a third of the manuscript was ready, the messenger started off with it to the printers, returning for a second supply, and sometimes even for a third if the work of revision was at all delayed.

(As this, chapter mentions the reporting of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons, it may be of interest to insert what Mr. T. A. Reed said of him in his lecture on "Speaking and Speakers from a Shorthand Writer's Point of View"-"When a speaker has a distinct articulation combined with a clear strong voice, the reporter who has to follow him is in Elysium;-that is, if the utterance is not too rapid, or the style of composition too difficult. The ,combination, however, is rare. It has, a very striking example in Mr. Spurgeon, who, without apparent effort, makes himself distinctly heard at the farthest end of the Metropolitan Tabernacle. To a clear, ringing, musical voice, he adds an almost perfect articulation. Canon Liddon is another illustration of the kind of elocution I have been speaking of. Preaching under the dome of St. Paul's, his voice, clear and rich, penetrates the most distant aisles of the great cathedral, where the tones of an, ordinary speaker would die away unheard, save as taint reverberations. Canon Farrar also has an excellent voice, but it is not so melodious as either Mr. Spurgeon's or Canon Liddon's ....

"The average rate of public speaking is about 120 words a minute. Some speakers vary greatly in their speech, not only on different occasions, but in the course of the same speech. I have, for example, a memorandum of a sermon by Mr. Spurgeon, showing that, during the first ten minutes, he spoke at the rate of 123 words; a minute; the second ten minutes, 132; the third ten minutes, 128; the fourth ten minutes, 155; and the remaining nine minutes, 162; giving an average of about 140 words a minute. Another sermon shows an average of 125 words a minute,-namely, the first ten minutes, 119; the second ten minutes, 118; the third ten minutes, 139; and the remaining sixteen minutes, 126. Taking the average of a number of sermons, his rate may be reckoned to be nearly 140 words a minute."

CHAPTER 89.

TYPICAL WEEK’S WORK *(CONTINUED).*

H ERE was a little breathing-space for the busy toiler after the boy was sent away with the first portion of the sermon manuscript but, usually, other work at once claimed the Pastor’s attention. On his right-hand, and represented in the view here given, his private secretary, Mr. J. W. Harrald, had been busy opening the morning’s leters, and arranging those that required immediate answers. If there were any that he knew would be specially cheering, they were always placed where they would at once catch the eye of “the dear Governor.” This was always the case with large and unexpected donations for the Lord’s work under his care, — such as a Cheque for £500, which came as a substantial token of a father’s gratitude for Mr. Spurgeon’s efforts to be the means of blessing to the gentleman’s son at Mentone. Sometimes, there were anonymous letters, — complaining, or abusive, or even blasphemous, — and it was with peculiar satisfaction that they were prevented from ever wounding the beloved servant of the Lord for whom they were intended by those who wrote them. The Pastor occasionally dictated replies to a few of the letters before continuing his sermon-revising; but, more often, with his own hand, he wrote the answers in full, for he never spared himself if he could, give greater pleasure to others. In later years, as the number of donors to the various Institutions; increased so rapidly, he wets obliged to have a set of receipts lithographed in facsimile; but, even when using these, he added a few words which greatly enhanced their value in the opinion of those who received them. He found it necessary also to have a considerable variety of lithographed letters prepared, ready to send to applicants for admission to the College and Orphanage, or persons seeking situations, asking him to read manuscripts, or to write the Prefaces for new books, or to do any of the thousand and one things by which so many people sought to steal away his precious moments, and. at the same time to augment the revenue of the Post Office.

It was usually far into the afternoon before the last folio of the sermon was reached, and the messenger was able to start with it to the printing-office. Then there were more letters to be answered, possibly books to be reviewed, magazine proofs to be read, or other literary work to be advanced to the next stage; and it was with the utmost difficulty that even a few minutes could be secured for a quiet walk in the lovely garden that, all day long, seemed to be inviting the ceaseless worker to come and admire its many charms. He could hear the voice of duty calling him in another direction, and soon it was time to get ready to start for the Tabernacle.

The clock in the illustration opposite shows that, when the photograph was taken, the Pastor had arranged to be at Newington at half-past five, either meeting the elders, and considering with them the very important matters relating to the church’s spiritual state which specially came under their notice, or presiding at the first part of a church-meeting, which often lasted throughout the whole evening, and was mainly occupied with the delightful business of receiving new members. As seven o’clock approached, he left the meeting in the charge of his brother, or one of the deacons or elders, that he might be at liberty to begin the prayer-meeting at the appointed hour. Sometimes, if he had engagements which would prevent him from being at the Tabernacle on Tuesday or Wednesday, he would get his sermon-revision completed before dinner, and, directly afterwards, go up to see enquirers and candidates, — a congenial but exhausting form of service which often continued right up to the hour of prayer.

On certain special Mondays in the year, the annual meetings of some of the smaller Societies were held, and on those occasions Mr. Spurgeon was at the lecture-hall in time to give out the “grace before tea.” His presence was greatly prized by the earnest and energetic sisters who carried on the various works of charity and beneficence; and they were much encouraged by his hearty words of cheer, and by the financial help which always accompanied them. It was really surprising to, notice, year after year, how much he varied his addresses at these gatherings, for the audience mainly consisted of the same persons each time. The three principal Societies were the Poor Ministers’ Clothing Society, the Ladies’ Maternal Society, and the Ladies’ Benevolent Society, — or, as they were sometimes humorously described, the big box Society, the little box Society and the Christmas box Society, only that the bounty of the third was bestowed all the year round, as well as at Christmas time, when there was an extra manifestation of generosity. The dear Pastor found a constant theme for merriment in the Reports presented at these meetings. At one time, the ladies recorded that so many “cases” had been relieved; and when he pointed out objections to that term, they substituted “objects” with no better success; but the climax was reached when it was announced that so many “sheets, blankets, pillowcases, and other garments” had been given away during the year! Such harmless fun brightened up the proceedings that might otherwise have become monotonous, and it was perhaps indulged in on purpose to show the good sisters how to associate as much cheerfulness as possible with work that must often have sorely depressed their spirits as they heard of the poverty among ministers of the gospel and other tried children of God.

A little before seven o’clock, the happy season of talk was brought to a Close, a brief prayer for a blessing on the work and workers followed, and then the whole company ascended to the Tabernacle for the prayermeeting. All who are familiar with. Mr. Spurgeon’s writings, know that he regarded the prayer-meeting as the thermometer of the church; and, judging by that test, the spiritual temperature of the large community under his charge stood very high. Not that he could ever induce all the members to be regularly present on the Monday night; but, for many years, the numbers attending filled a large portion of the area and first gallery, and the world-wide testimony was that the meeting was altogether unique, the only one that at all approached it being Pastor Archibald G. Brown’s Saturday night prayer-meeting at the East London Tabernacle. Nor was it remarkable simply for its size, but the whole spirit of the gathering made it a source of peculiar helpfulness to all who were in constant attendance, while occasional visitors carried away with them even to distant lands influences and impulses which they never wished to lose or to forget. Many years ago, Mr. Spurgeon gave, *in The Sword and the Trowel*, detailed reports of these hallowed evenings, in the hope that the record might be useful in awakening new interest in what he always regarded as the most important meeting of the week. He often said that it was not surprising if churches did not prosper, when they regarded the prayer-meeting as of so little value that one evening in the week was made to suffice for a feeble combination of service and prayer-meeting.

The gatherings at the Tabernacle on Monday nights were constantly varied. Usually, some of “our own men” laboring in the country or abroad were present, and took part, while missionaries going out to China, or North Africa, or other parts of the foreign field, or returning home on furlough, helped to add to the spiritual profit of the proceedings. The Pastor always gave one or more brief addresses, and never allowed the interest to flag; and, all too soon, half-past eight arrived, and the meeting had to be concluded, for many of the workers had other prayer-meetings or services following closely upon that one.

Mr. Spurgeon’s day’s work was not yet complete, for various visitors were waiting for an interview; and, with them, some candidates or enquirers needed and secured a few precious minutes, — the conversation and prayer at such times being something to be remembered with gratitude as long as they lived. On some Monday nights, an extra service was squeezed in; and, leaving the Tabernacle a little before eight o’clock, the Pastor preached at Christ Church, Upton Chapel, Walworth Road Chapel, or some other neighboring place of worship; or spoke at some special local gathering, such as a meeting at the Newington Vestry Hall on behalf of the Hospital Sunday Fund. When, at last, he was really en route for home, his first question was, — “Has the sermon come?” and the second, — “What is the length of it?” If the reply was, “Just right,” it was joyfully received, for the labor of adding or cutting out any made the task of revising the proof still more arduous; and, if a distant preaching engagement had to be fulfilled the next day, the revision was obliged to be completed that night, or very early in the morning. On one occasion, when the London Baptist Association Committee met at “West-wood” for breakfast and business, it transpired that their host had taken time by the forelock, and begun his day’s work at four o’clock.

Ordinarily, the correction of the proof of the sermon was completed by about eleven o’clock on Tuesday morning, leaving a couple of hours for replying to letters, and attending to the most pressing literary work. When there were only four Thursdays in the month, an extra sermon was required to make the usual number for the monthly part, and that entailed heavy labor. The discourse available for this purpose were the shorter ones delivered on the Sabbath and Thursday evenings; and, as a rule, two or three pages had to be added to them. The facsimile on the opposite page is a good example of the method adopted in lengthening the sermon which had been set up from the reporter’s transcript, unrevised, and it is specially suitable to the present volume as it contains a striking passage in the dear preacher’s autobiography.

Tuesday afternoon, with rare exceptions, was devoted to the truly pastoral and important work of seeing candidates and enquirers at the Tabernacle; and in no part of his service was Mr. Spurgeon more happy and more completely at home. On reaching his vestry, at three o’clock, he always found some of his elders already at their post; and usually they had, by that time, Conversed with the first arrivals, and given them the cards which were to introduce them to the Pastor. If he was satisfied with the person’s own testimony, he put the name of the friend upon the list of those to be proposed for church-fellowship, and indicated the elder or deacon to be appointed as visitor, to make the necessary enquiries before the applicant could be admitted to baptism and membership. In the course of three or four hours, twenty, thirty, or even forty individuals were thus seen; and anyone who has had much experience, in such service knows how exhausting it is. Sometimes, the number was smaller, or it was made up with those who came about other matters. These were seen by Mr. Harrald, or the elders; and interviews with the Pastor were arranged if they were deemed advisable. At five o’clock, a brief interval was secured for tea; and, during that half-hour, the Pastor compared notes with his helpers concerning, those with whom he had conversed, and related specially interesting incidents which some of the candidates had described to him. Then he returned to the happy task, and kept on as long as any were waiting; and, often, as the crowning of his day’s labor, he went down to the lecture-hall, to preside at the annual meeting of one or other of the Tabernacle Societies, such as the Sunday-school, the Almshouses Dayschools, the Evangelists’ Association, the Country Mission, the Loan Tract Society, or the Spurgeon’s Sermons’ Tract Society. He frequently said that the number of Institutions, Societies, Missions, and Sunday-schools connected with the Tabernacle was so large that it would have been possible to arrange for an anniversary of one of them every week in the year! The secretaries or leaders of many of these works always secured his presence and help at their meetings, if possible; and he used to describe the lecture-hall as his happy hunting-ground where he found recruits for the College. Among the most successful ministers and missionaries at home and abroad at the present time, are several who tremblingly spoke before him, for the first time, at these week-night gatherings. Some of them might scarcely recognize themselves by the description the beloved President gave of them then, as he pictured the “fledglings, with their callow wings, trying to soar away to the empyrean, but falling down flop into the arena!”

Sometimes, instead of meeting with a few hundreds of friends; in the lecture-hall, the Pastor presided over many thousands in the Tabernacle. One such gathering took place on the night when the Jubilee Singers sang, and, by that one effort, the sum of L220 was added to the funds of the Fisk University; another notable meeting was held when our own black brethren, Johnson and Richardson and their wives, had their farewell before proceeding to Africa, “the land of their fathers;” — and an equally memorable occasion was the evening when Mr. John B. Gough gave one of his marvelous oratorical displays on behalf of the Pastors’ College and, in recognition of his kindness, the Pastor presented to him a complete set of his sermons. At other times, Mr. Spurgeon was not the chairman of the meeting; but he helped to contribute to the success of the proceedings by delivering an earnest address in aid of the Primitive Methodist Missionary Society, the Liberation Society, or some other great public movement for which the Tabernacle had been lent, and for which his personal advocacy was also desired.

Wednesday was the only possible time available as a mid-week Sabbath; and whenever it could be secured for rest, its benefits were immediately manifest. Each year, on his return from Mentone, Mr. Spurgeon told his secretary to keep his diary clear of all engagements on that day; but, alas! soon one, and then another, and yet others, had to be given up in response to the importunate appeals to which the self-sacrificing preacher had not the heart to say, “No,” although he knew that the inevitable result would be a breakdown in health, and the canceling for a time of all arrangements for extra services. Then, when he appeared to have recovered, the same process would be repeated, with an exactly similar sequel; but the requests for sermons, speeches, and lectures poured in upon him even during his worst illnesses, and it always pained him when he felt that he must refuse them.

But there were some red-letter days when, with a congenial companion, he would go off for a long drive into the country, as described in Vol. 3, Chapter 76. Yet, even then, before he started in the morning, or after he returned at night, he often accomplished what most other people would have considered enough for a hard day’s work. When there was only two or three hours available for a drive, a favorite route was over the Shirley Hills, and through Addington Park. The Archbishop of Canterbury kindly sent, each year, a card giving the right of free passage through his spacious grounds, and he, on several occasions, expressed his wish to have the pleasure of entertaining Mr. Spurgeon at Addington. On the acceptance of one invitation to lunch, Dr. Benson greeted his guest very heartily, and, pointing to his butler and footman, said, “There are two members of your congregation, Mr. Spurgeon. When I am in residence at Lambeth, they always go to the Tabernacle. I don’t name them, for I would do the same myself if I had the chance. When your coachman gets round to the tables, he will recognize another Tabernacle attendant; and I can truly say that they are all a credit to the instruction they receive from you.” This testimony was very pleasing to the dear Pastor, and he was further cheered by hearing of others on the estate who were readers of his sermons. The two preachers spent a very enjoyable time together; and, later on, during Mr. Spurgeon’s long illness, one of the letters which gave him great comfort was written by the Primate. In his friendly intercourse with the Tabernacle Pastor, Dr. Benson followed in the footsteps of one of his own predecessors, for, during the time that the bill for the abolition of church rates was before Parliament, Archbishop Tait frequently consulted Mr. Spurgeon upon several of the details of the measure.

Sometimes, instead of going through Addington Park, Mr. Spurgeon paid a visit to the Bishop of Rochester at Selsdon Park. A very intimate friendship existed between Bishop Thorold and the Pastor, and they enjoyed many happy hours together in the Selsdon home and garden. Usually, each year, as the time approached for the preparation of the addresses to be delivered in connection with his episcopal visitation, the Bishop invited Mr. Spurgeon to spend a long quiet day with him in prayer and conversation upon such matters as would help to put him in a right state of heart for the responsible task before him. On several occasions, he also visited his friend at “Westwood;” and the season of spiritual fellowship in the study must have been mutually profitable, for, when it was over, and the visitor was gone, Mr. Spurgeon always remarked, “Oh, we have had such a delightful time of talk and prayer together!” During the Pastor’s great illness, the Bishop called more than once to express his deep personal sympathy with the beloved sufferer, and his wife; and he wrote or sent many times to make tender, loving enquiries concerning the invalid.

One letter of Bishop Thorold’s, relating to Mr. Spurgeon’s visit to him, has a very special interest now that both of them have entered into “the glory.” When the Pastor published *The Clue of the Maze*, he sent a copy to his friend, who at once wrote —

“Selsdon Park,  
“Croydon,  
“Aug. 31, 1885.

“My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,  
“Your remarkable book has reached me, with its affectionate inscription, which I prize even more.

“Perhaps, some day, in the City of our King, we may look back at our stroll under the Selsdon elms, and our prayer in the little chapel, and feel them to have been an earnest of the glory at hand.

“Ever your brother in Jesus Christ,  
“A. W. ROFFEN.”

Thursday morning was principally devoted to letter-writing and literary work in general. Mr. Spurgeon’s position naturally brought him into correspondence with vast numbers of people all over the world; and he willingly wrote those thousands of letters, which are now of almost priceless value to their possessor. Yet he often felt that he could have employed his time to far better purpose. Again and again, he sorrowfully said, “I am only a poor clerk, driving the pen hour after hour; here is another whole morning gone, and nothing done but letters, letters, letters!” When reminded of the joy and comfort he was ministering to so many troubled hearts by that very drudgery, he agreed that it was work for the Lord as truly as the preaching in which he so much more delighted. Still, we often felt that quite an unnecessary addition to his already too-heavy load was made by the thoughtless and often frivolous communication, to which he was expected personally to reply. Perhaps someone says, “Then he should not have replied to them.” Yes, probably anybody but C. H. Spurgeon would have thrown many of them, unanswered, into the wastepaper basket; but his kind heart prompted him ever to minister to the pleasure and profit of other people, whatever the cost to himself might be. Yet even he sometimes mildly protested against the unreasonableness of his correspondents, as the accompanying paragraph testifies —

“No sooner was it known that 1 was going to Scotland for rest, than I received requests for sermons, not only from a large number of Scotch towns, and from places on each of the three lines of railway, but I was entreated just to make a few hours’ stay, and preach in North Wales, as also on the Cumberland coast, which, as everybody knows, are both on the road to Scotland if you choose to make them so! How many pence I have been fined, in the form of postage for replies to these insanely kind demands, I will not calculate; but it is rather too absurd. I am told, over and over again, that I could stop two hours, and go on by the next train; and this being done at a dozen places, when should I reach Scotland? This, too, when a man is out for a holiday!

“Alas! the holiday itself had to be postponed for a while, through continued ill-health. Now, it may seem a very simple thing to write to these good people, and say, ‘No;’ but it is not so. It pains me to refuse anyone; and to decline to preach is so contrary to all my heart’s promptings, that I had rather be flogged than feel compelled to do it.”

If Mr. Spurgeon’s correspondence was not quite as burdensome as usual, or if he had literary work that had to be done, — when the weather permitted, he liked to retire to this favorite retreat, where the hours fled all too swiftly as he wrote his comment on the Psalms, or some of the other books that now remain as permanent memorials of his studious and industrious life.

After dinner, the Pastor’s definite preparation for the evening service began, though the subject had probably been, as he often said, “simmering’“ in his mind all the morning. The Saturday evening process was to a great extent repeated, but one of his secretaries had the privilege of looking up anything that might help him to get the true meaning of his text. His private study, commonly called “the den,” became, on such occasions, his place for secret retirement and prayer; and very joyously he generally came forth, carrying in his hand his brief pulpit-notes; though, at other times, the message he was to deliver only came to him just in time.

For many years, Mr. Spurgeon had, on Thursday evening, in the Tabernacle lecture-hall, from six o’clock till nearly seven, what he termed “The Pastor’s prayer-meeting.” This was an extra gathering, specially convened for the purpose of pleading for a blessing upon the Word he was about to preach; and most refreshing and helpful it always proved both to himself and the people. From the New Park Street days, he had made little or no difference between the services on the Lord’s-day and on weeknights; and, throughout the whole course of his ministry, the Thursday evening worship afforded an opportunity for the attendance of many Christian workers of all denominations, who were not able to be present on the Sabbath; and, among them, were numerous Church of England clergymen and Nonconformist ministers. At the close, several of these hearers desired a few minutes conversation with the preacher, so that it was late before he could get away; and then, though not weary of his work, he was certainly weary in it.

On Friday morning, the usual routine of answering correspondence had, to some extent, to give way to the President’s more urgent work of preparation for his talk to the students of the College. He regarded this part of his service as so important that he devoted all his powers of heart and mind to it, and it was indeed a rich store of mental and spiritual instruction that he carried up, each week, to his “school or the prophets.” Hundreds of “our own men” have testified that, greatly as they profited by the rest of their College curriculum, Mr. Spurgeon’s Friday afternoon class was far beyond everything else in its abiding influence upon their life and ministry. With such a responsive and appreciative audience, he was at his very best; and both student, and ministers have often declared that, not even in his; most brilliant pulpit utterances, hats he ever excelled, or even equaled, what it was their delight to hear from his lip, in those never-to-beforgotten days. From three till about five o’clock, there, was a continuous stream of wit and wisdom, counsel and warning, exhortation and doctrine, all converging to the one end of helping the men before him to become good ministers of Jesus Christ. Then, when the class was dismissed, another hour, or more, was ungrudgingly devoted to interviews with any of the brethren who desired personally to consult the President; and that this privilege was highly prized was very evident from the way in which it was, exercised.

Now and then, the Friday afternoon was made even more memorable by a special sermon to the students, at the close of which the Lord’s supper was observed, the whole service being peculiarly helpful to the spiritual life of the brethren. On other occasions, students from Harley House, or Regent’s Park, or Cheshunt College paid a fraternal visit to Newington; and, in due course, the Pastors’ College men returned the visit. At such times, Presidents, tutors, and students vied with one another in making their guests feel at home, and in conveying to them all possible pleasure and profit.

Perhaps, between six and seven o’clock, Mr. Spurgeon was free to start for home; but, more likely, there was another anniversary meeting — possibly, of the Evening Classes connected with the College, — at which he had promised to preside or there was some mission-hall, at which he had engaged to preach or speak; or there was a sick or dying member of the church to whom he had sent word that he would call on his way back from the College. It was utterly impossible for him to make any systematic pastoral visitation of his great flock; — that work was undertake, n by the elders; — but he found many opportunities of visiting his members; and his sermons contain frequent references to the triumphant deathbed scenes; that he had witnessed. He could not often conduct funeral services, yet there were some cases in which he felt bound to make an exception to his usual rule, as he did also in the matter of weddings. *The Sword and the Trowel*F6 has recorded typical instances of how thoroughly, on such occasion, he sorrowed with those who wept, and rejoiced with those who were full of happiness. Add to all this, the constant interruptions from callers, and the many minor worries to which every public man is subject, and readers may well wonder when Mr. Spurgeon could find time for reading, and study, and all the work he constantly accomplished! If they had known how much he was continually doing, they might have marveled even more, than they did. Surely, there never was a busier life than his; not an atom more of sacred service could have been crowded into it.

Saturday morning was the time for the Pastor and his private secretary to clear off, as far as possible, any arrears of work that had been accumulating during the week. The huge pile of letters was again attacked; various financial matters were settled, and cheques despatched to chapel-building ministers or those engaged in pioneer and mission work, or needing some special assistance in their labor for the Lord. The secretary also then reported the result of interviews with students, and various officials and workers in connection with the different Institutions, and received instructions as to the replies to be given to their requests, or with regard to various matters tending to the general efficiency of the whole work. It was usual, often, on that morning, for the President to see some of the applicants for admission to the College, or to examine the papers of others, and to dictate the letters conveying his decision, or making further enquiries if there was a doubt either with regard to acceptance or rejection. Brethren just leaving for the foreign mission field, or some other distant sphere of service, were glad of the opportunity of a personal farewell, and of the tender, touching prayer, and tokens of practical sympathy, with which they were speeded on their way. Then there were magazine articles to be written or revised, Almanacks to be prepared, books to be read and reviewed, or sent to some of the brethren who helped (and still help) in that department of *The Sword and the Trowel*, and, by the time the gong sounded for dinner, the Pastor was often heard to say, “Well, we have got through a good morning’s work, even if there is not much to, show for it.”

The greater part of the afternoon was spent in the garden, if the weather was favorable; and one of the. few luxuries the dear master of “Westwood” enjoyed was to stroll down to the most secluded portion of the grounds, and to rest awhile in the summerhouse, to which he gave the singularly appropriate title, “Out of the world.” Here, with his wife, or some choice friend, the precious minutes quickly passed; and, by-and-by, other visitors arrived, for a cheery chat, and a peep at the numerous interesting things that were to be seen. It is needless to give the names of the many who shared in the delights of those happy afternoons; most of Mr. Spurgeon’s special ministerial and other friends and acquaintances were included amongst them. One visitor who was always welcome was the good Earl of Shaftesbury. His life also was a very busy one, so he could not often come; but, every now and then, when he was more than usually depressed and troubled by the aspect of affairs, religiously and socially, he found it a relief to have a talk with his Baptist friend, who largely shared his views concerning the state of the Church in general, but who also saw some signs of better and brighter days which the venerable nobleman had not perceived. The peer and the Pastor had such stores of good stories to tell, that the time rapidly and pleasantly passed, and they parted with the hope of meeting again on earth, and with the brighter hope of the reunion in Heaven, where there would be no parting for ever.

On several occasions, after the Earl had paid a visit to “Westwood,” Mr. Spurgeon instructed his secretary to insert in the scrapbook, then being compiled, a photograph, or engraving of his lordship, and he himself briefly recorded the fact that his venerable friend had again been to see him. The following page contains a reproduction of one of the best of these portraits, — taken by Messrs. Russell and Co. when the Earl attained his eightieth year, — with a facsimile of the inscription written on the back of it. On his part, Earl Shaftesbury preserved, in his diary and letters, many records of those enjoyable Saturday afternoons. The following entry in his diary probably refers to the very visit mentioned by Mr. Spurgeon — “July 10, 1881. — Drove to ‘Westwood’ to see my friend Spurgeon. He is well, thank God, and admirably lodged, his place is lovely. His wife’s health, too, is improved by change of residence. It is pleasant and encouraging to visit such men, and find them still full of perseverance, faith, and joy in the service of our blessed Lord.”

CHAPTER 90.

LETTERS ON PRIVATE AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS, 1856-1890.

In reviewing the Letters of William Cowper, Mr. Spurgeon wrote — “We cannot write letters nowadays, but must be content to send mere notes and memoranda. When letters were reasonably few, and cost a shilling each, men had the time to write well, and thought it worth their while to do so. Now that the penny post is a public man’s sorest trial, the shorter we can make our epistles, the better. How we wish some of our correspondents would believe this, especially those young ladies who cross their letters. We never waste a moment in trying to read what people think to be unworthy of a fresh sheet of paper; crossed letters make us cross, and we drop them into the waste-paper basket. By the way, what right has a man to expect an answer to a letter if he does not enclose a stamp? It is a dead robbery to make some of us spend scores of pounds in a year on postage.”

T HE preceding chapter contains so many references to Mr. Spurgeon’s correspondence that it may appropriately be followed by some specimens of the letters which he wrote at various periods during his long ministry. Many have already been published in the previous volumes of this work, where they seemed needful to the consecutiveness of the narrative, and others must be reserved for later portions of this volume. The present selection is intended to give some idea of the extent and variety of the subjects upon which the beloved Pastor’s correspondents wrote to him, and of the replies; which he sent to their communications. Some of the letters have already appeared in print; but most of them have been copied from the originals which have been kindly forwarded by their possessors specially with a view to their inclusion in the Autobiography, while others are reproduced from the copies of replies which Mr. Spurgeon had himself preserved In classifying the correspondence, a beginning is made with —

**LETTERS TO PERSONAL FRIENDS.**

A gentleman in Glasgow greatly values the original of this note, which was written by Mr. Spurgeon the day following that on which he had preached at the Surrey Gardens Music Hall for the first time after the great catastrophe; it was addressed to Revelation John Anderson, of Helensburgh, who had sent a generous contribution to the Tabernacle Building Fund from himself and his friends —

“3 Bengal Place,  
“New Kent Road,  
“Monday, 24th Nov. (1856.)

“My Very Dear Friend,

“I have received your munificent donation, and return you very hearty thanks, and beg you to express my gratitude to all those who have contributed. Yesterday, the Lord was with me mightily; not a dog moved his tongue. But, oh, the griefs I have endured! God has borne me up, or I had been overwhelmed.

“How hell has howled, but how Heaven will triumph! How is the work in Helensburgh? I hope the shout of a King is with you. “Dear wife and I very often talk of our dear Anderson. You are very near to our hearts.  
“Our boys are well, so is ‘beloved Apphia.’ Give our kind regards to all friends, and accept our true love yourself.  
“I am,  
“Yours ever,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

The following note, and reply, will serve as specimens of the correspondence between Mr. Ruskin and Mr. Spurgeon in the days long past —

“Denmark Hill,  
“Camberwell,  
“25th Nov., 1862.  
“My Dear Friend,

“1 want a chat with you. Is it possible to get it, — quietly, — and how, and where, and when? I’ll come to your — or you shall come here, — or whatever you like. I am in England only for ten days, — being too much disgusted with your goings on — yours as much as everybody else’s — to be able to exist among you any longer. But I want to say ‘Good-bye’ before going to my den in the Alps.

“Ever with sincerest remembrances to Mrs. Spurgeon,  
“Affectionately yours,  
“J. RUSKIN.”

“Clapham,  
“Nov. 26, I862.  
“My Dealt Mr. Ruskin,

“I thought you had cast me off; but I perceive that you let me alone when all is right, and only look me up when you are getting disgusted with me. May that disgust increase if it shall bring me oftener into your company!

“I shall be delighted to see you tomorrow, here, at any time from 10 to 12 if this will suit you.

“I wish I had a den in the Alps to go to; but it is of no use for me to grow surly, for I am compelled to live amongst you sinners, and however disgusted I may get with you all, I must put up with you, for neither Nature nor Providence will afford a den for me.

“Yours ever most truly and affectionately,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

Nothing ever gave Mr. Spurgeon greater delight than the glad tidings that his message had been blessed to the salvation of souls, or the strengthening of saints. To a friend in Dublin, who sent him such good news, he replied on February 8, 1868: —  
“It cheers me very greatly to know that my sermons are the food of any of God’s people. For such a joy, I would cheerfully have suffered much; and, lo! it comes without it. I can bear my willing testimony to the faithfulness of the Lord. My sermons are a great drain upon me mentally, but still the springs are not dried. In times of great exhaustion, fresh streams bubble up. In pecuniary matters, we are often tried; but, never come to want, and we never shall while Jehovah lives.”

Just at that time, the Pastor had the further trial of the very serious illness of Mrs. Spurgeon. In answer to a letter informing him that a special prayermeeting had been held at the Baptist Chapel, Thetford, to plead for her recovery, he wrote —

“Clapham,  
“Feb. 29, 1868.  
“My Dear Mr, Welton,  
“Thanks a thousand times! Prayers are enriching things; you make me wealthy. May you and your people long enjoy prosperity! “Yours ever truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

To an afflicted lady in Bristol, Mr. Spurgeon thus revealed an interesting circumstance in connection with the origin of his sermon entitled “Faith’s Ultimatum” —

“Nightingale Lane,  
“Clapham,

“July 23, 1875.  
“My Dear Friend,

“Your kind gift has been unacknowledged because I wanted to write to you myself, and my hand has been bad with rheumatic gout so as to make me quite an invalid these last two weeks, and keeping me from my preaching most of the time. I thank you most heartily, and the more because of your very kind words.  
May you have daily strength for your great affliction, and may your heart exult more and more in the Lord! Pray for my poor wife, who suffers ever.

“I think my sermon upon ‘Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him,’ will be to your mind. It was squeezed out of me by great pain.

“Yours in much sympathy,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

When arrangements were being made for the sale of the old Devonshire Square Chapel, which was so close to Petticoat Lane that “Babel-like sounds, and perfumes not at all ambrosial, mingled with the worship, and even other things appeared on the scene,” Mr. Spurgeon wrote —

“Clapham,  
“Jan. 8.  
“My Dear Sir,

“I congratulate you on the prospect of an emigration from the worse than Egypt of Devonshire Square. Whatever your chapel may have been in ages past, it has become of late atmospherically and entomologically horrible; the din outside, on the Lord’s-day, in which Jews and Gentiles emulate each other in row-making, fits your house to be a den in Babylon rather than a temple upon Zion. That a church and congregation should have gathered so long, in such a spot, is a miracle of grace on God’s part, and of inertness on the part of man. May you get away from the rags and the racket, and may you and your friends enjoy prosperity abundantly!

“Yours very truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

The following note was written to the late Henry Richard, Esq., M.P., secretary of the Peace Society, in reply to an invitation to speak at the annual meeting of that body —  
“Nightingale Lane,  
“Clapham,  
“April 24.

“Dear Sir,  
“I really cannot do more. I am sick and sorry and jaded. Let me alone. ‘A merciful man, etc.’ I would be at peace.  
“Yours truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

In December, 1879, when Mr. Spurgeon was very ill at Mentone, he was greatly cheered by the receipt of a cablegram, from the New York Baptist Ministers’ Conference, containing the following message — “Prayers. Sympathy. 2 Corinthians 1:2,7 Potter, Secretary. The telegram was followed by a long loving letter; but, before it arrived, Mr. Spurgeon had already replied thus —

“To Rev. D. C. Potter,  
“Secretary, New York Baptist Ministers’ Conference,  
“Dear Sir,

“I thank the Conference very heartily and humbly. I am honored by such a kind deed, and I am not the less comforted. What greater joy can I have from my fellow-men than to be remembered by them in the hour of affliction with prayers and sympathies? God bless you, my brethren, and reward you a thousandfold for this loving remembrance of one who has no other right to it but that which arises out of oneness of heart in our one Lord, one faith, and one baptism! By such brotherly kindness, may all American and English baptized churches be welded into a more complete unity, so that fraternal love may abound! May the Lord bless and prosper you among the nation to which you belong, and may the truth more and more abundantly prevail with you and with us! I am recovering slowly from a very severe illness, and your telegram has acted both as a tonic and as a cordial to me. Again I thank you from the bottom of my heart.  
“Yours most gratefully,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”

On April 5, 1881, the annual butchers’ festival was held at the Tabernacle. Mr. Spurgeon was unable to be present, but he wrote the following letter to Mr. Henry Varley, to be read at the meeting —

“Westwood,  
“April 5, 1881.  
“Dear Friend,

“A month ago I was just recovering, and I took five services in the week with great delight. The immediate result was another illness. This time I am weaker, and I have the same work before me. The friends beg me not to attempt so much, and my own judgment tells me that they are right. I must therefore be away from the butchers’ festival, though with great regret. I never promised to be there. Someone did for me, and I don’t believe in those proxy promises. You are a host in yourself. Tell the true blues to be true blue, and follow the best of leaders, — namely, the Lord Jesus. May they all be pure and upright, so as to be Christians indeed. They will do well to be moderate in all things; better if they become total abstainers from strong drink; and best of all if they have new hearts and are believers in Jesus. I am sure we shall always be glad to find house-room for them so long as you and the master-butchers find the solids for filling up the empties. I wish every man would get a day’s march nearer Heaven on this occasion. May God’s blessing be with you and all your hearers this night!

“Yours heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

After Rev. Joseph Cook, of Boston, U.S.A., had been lecturing in the United Kingdom for about six months, questions were raised in various quarters concerning his orthodoxy. The Earl of Shaftesbury was one of those who were in doubt with regard to his theological teaching, but Mr. Spurgeon very earnestly pleaded the cause of the eminent lecturer from across the Atlantic. The following is one of two letters which he wrote to the venerable Earl upon this matter —

“Westwood,  
“Beulah Hill,  
“Upper Norwood,  
“May 11, 1881.

“My Dear Friend,

“I agree with you in heart, and soul, and faith; and so also does Joseph Cook. His expressions may not be clear, but his meaning is identical with our own. There is, however, little hope of my leading you to think so, now that Mr.\_\_\_\_ has cast his lurid light upon the lecturer’s words; and therefore I will not enter into a discussion.

“Your action is wise, namely, to refrain from endorsing that which you do not approve of. But, I pray you, believe that, as I know Mr. Cook, and am as sure of his orthodoxy as I am of my own, I cannot desert him, or retract the commendations which I am sure that he deserves, but I am none the less one with you. If you would only see Mr. Cook, you would form a different estimate of him; but, anyhow, I shall not love or admire you one atom the less whatever you do.

“I am, perhaps, more lenient than you are because I never was able to be quite so guarded a speaker as you are. I think no man speaks so much as you do with so few blunders, but impetuous people get into muddles. I quite agree with Mr. Foster’s estimate of you as certain to have been Premier had you been ambitious in that direction, for you very seldom allow your speech to get cloudy, or to run over to the other side when emphasizing his; — but pray do not expect such accuracy of us all.

“Here is a man who, with tears, denies the slightest complicity with heterodoxy, and says that he lives and feeds on the old-fashioned truth so dear to us; — well, — I believe what he says, and wish that half the ‘orthodox’ were as orthodox as he is.

“The Lord ever bless and sustain you, my dear friend, and spare you to  
us many years to come I wish, when these meetings are over, you would come and see —

“Your Lordship’s most hearty friend,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
To this letter, Lord Shaftesbury replied as follows —  
“24, Grosvenor Square, W.,  
“May 14, 1881.  
“My Dear Friend,

“If Joseph Cook stands high in your esteem, it is, I am confident, because you decidedly, and conscientiously believe that he holds, in all truth and earnestness, the great vital doctrines of the Christian Faith, — those doctrines indispensably necessary to salvation, and which have been the life and rule of your ministerial services. In these have been your joy, and your strength. Signal as are the talents that God has bestowed upon you, they would, without preaching Christ in all His majestic simplicity, have availed you nothing to comfort and instruct the hearts of thousands.

“Such being the case, who would expect you to recede, by one hair’s breadth, unless you carded your convictions with you? Certainly not I.

“I am deeply gratified by your kind letter, and all its candid and friendly expressions. You must not admit any abatement of your regard and love for me. Mine towards you can never be lessened, while you stand up so vigorously, so devotedly, so exclusively for our blessed Lord.

“Ever yours most truly,  
“SHAFTESBURY.”  
“P.S. — I will pay you a visit as soon as possible.”

Mr. Cook was intensely grateful to Mr. Spurgeon for his powerful advocacy, even if it did not convince the venerable Earl. It is somewhat singular that, just as this chapter is being compiled, it is reported that, in answer to a statement that Mr. (now Dr.) Joseph Cook had joined the Spiritualists, he wrote, “Spiritualism is Potiphar’s wife; my name is Joseph.” His reply seems to indicate that efforts had been made to entangle him, but that he had resisted them as successfully as his ancient namesake repelled his tempter.

Mr. Spurgeon was always on very friendly terms with his neighbor, Revelation Burman Cassin, M.A,, rector of St. George-the-Martyr, Southwark. On the twenty-fitch anniversary of Mr. Cassin’s ordination, a testimonial was presented to him; and the Pastor, although away from home, wrote concerning it —

“Mentone,  
“December 17, 1883.  
“Dear Mr. Olney,

“I had no idea that the presentation to the Revelation Burman Cassin was coming off so soon. Had I been at home, I was to have attended the meeting, for he is a brother for whom my heart always has a warm place. I wish him every blessing, and, above all things, abundant grace to win multitudes of souls for Christ out of his immense parish. His true piety, his loving manners, and his catholic spirit, make me esteem him most highly. Had I been able to attend, I should have added £5 to the testimonial, as a very inadequate but very honest token of my affection for him. As I am so far away, please be my substitute, and give the amount on my behalf. You can trust me till I return.

“Yours ever heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.  
The following letter greatly interested Mr. Spurgeon —

“Christ Church Vicarage,  
“Rotherhithe,  
“August 16, 1884.  
“Mr. Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“I have, for many years, been an admiring reader of your sermons, and have often felt that I would write and tell you how useful I have found them personally and ministerially. I am specially urged to write today for the following reason. My mother, a clergyman’s widow, died on May 19, this year, at Boston, Lincolnshire, aged 87. She used to take your sermons weekly, read them carefully, have them bound handsomely at the end of the year, and present the bound volume to me, year by year, on my birthday, August 16.

“The Vol. for 1883 — her last gifts — was ready bound, and have today written my name in it, as she cannot. Praying that the Lord may give you health and strength, continued usefulness, and increasing holiness, and asking your pardon, if intrusive,

“Yours very sincerely,  
“H. C. MITCHINSON,  
“Vicar of Christ Church, Rotherhithe.”  
To this letter, Mr. Spurgeon replied thus —  
“WESTWOOD,  
“August 19, 1884.  
“Dear Friend,

“It is a great pleasure to be enabled to give seed to the sower. The Lord accept my thanks for many such sweet messages as yours to cheer me! The Lord also be with you in all your ministry, and give you an abundant harvest!

“I congratulate you upon having a mother in Heaven. Mine still lingers in much suffering; yours is promoted to felicity. We will follow on. I have paused to pray for you. Please do the like for me, for I need it every day.

“Yours most heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

Several letters of condolence are given in the latter part of the next chapter, so one of congratulation may be inserted here. The following cheery note was sent to Revelation E. W. Matthews, secretary of the British and Foreign Sailors’ Society, in May, 1885, in reply to a communication from him announcing the arrival of a little daughter, and sending contributions for the Orphanage from all his children —

“Dear Friend,

“Matthews are so good that there can hardly be too many of them if they all turn out to be evangelists. God bless the parents more and more, and cause the children to be real blessings to them in later years! That you should bid your children send me a crown each, suggests that I hold a fourfold monarchy in your esteem but, alas! I need a. Priest and a King more than ever. I rejoice that our Lord Jesus is growing more precious to me in that capacity. May these four Matthews all be crowned with lovingkindness and tender mercies!

“Yours very heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.

For marty years, on his summer visits to Scotland, Mr. Spurgeon was the guest of Mr. James Duncan, at “Benmore,” the beautiful mansion depicted in Vol. 3. The following letter was written to Mr. Duncan’s sister, in reply to one from her, mentioning various places and persons known to the Pastor, and saying that, as she had heard that he was overworking himself, she advised him to study what the sixth commandment required, “all lawful endeavors to preserve our own life” —

“Westwood,  
“August 26, 1885.  
“Dear Mrs. Moubray,

“I heartily thank you for the proverbs, some of which I have used. I think I am well acquainted with the book you have culled from; indeed, I would go far to see a proverb-book which I do not know. “Happy woman to be sailing over the fair seas, and gazing upon those glorious hills, I find abundance to do all day, and every day; but, as the Lord blesses the work, I am not able to weary of it.

“I saw Mr. Duncan on Sunday, much to my joy. He is, indeed, a kind and tender friend, and his sister is like unto him. God bless both!

“I trust Mr. McKercher will get better, and be restored to you. Truly good men are scarcer than they used to be. The world has gone after the idols of modern thought, and those of us who do not thus wander are esteemed to be ‘old fogies.’

“A woman rose in the Tabernacle, last Sunday, just as I entered, and began to talk about the sixth commandment! Of course, I pricked up my ears, and wondered whether it was a lady from Strone House! She did not get far before the attendants carried her off. I have not asked her name, but it looks very suspicious. Were you up in London last Sunday?’

“I am studying that commandment, and I begin to think that I must work much harder, for fear somebody should be killed, spiritually, by my failure to preach in season and out of season.

“My very kindest regards; and heartiest thanks to you. “Yours ever gratefully,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

Correspondents often asked Mr. Spurgeon to tell them the meaning of difficult passages of Scripture. In reply to the enquiry of a generous helper, in Scotland, concerning Hebrews 6:4-6, the Pastor wrote —

“Westwood,  
“March 15, 1887.  
“Dear Friend,

“I have always taught that, if the Divine life could entirely die out, there would be no second quickening. We can be born again, but not again and again. If the salt could lose its savor, it would be a hopeless case. From which I argue that, as no believer in Christ is in a hopeless case, no man has utterly lost the life of God after once receiving it.

“The wilful return to sin would be fatal.  
“In each passage quoted, the evil supposed is also denied. (See Hebrews 6:9, and 10:39.)

“One great means of securing final perseverance is the knowledge that we cannot go in and out of Christ at pleasure; if we could utterly quit Him, there could be no possibility of renewal. (Hebrews 6:4.) Therefore we are bound to hold on even to the end.

“My wonder is how, in the teeth of these texts, Arminians believe that men can lose the Divine life and receive it again. No words can be clearer than those which describe this as ‘impossible.’

“I have sent a catalogue with sermons marked which may help you. Write me whenever you like, only excuse me if I am brief. “Yours heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

For several years, Mr. Spurgeon preached the anniversary sermon at Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road, more than once going there for the purpose after conducting his own Monday evening prayer-meeting. In 1888, he was too unwell to go, so he wrote the following letter to Mr. Newman Hall, who read it at the public meeting —

“Westwood,  
“July 4, 1888.  
“My Dear Friend,

“I have only just heard that today is your anniversary. I  
congratulate you, and I pray that you may have a right good day. If I had been ‘well enough, I would have accepted your invitation, you may be quite sure. I thank you and your friends for many kindnesses received by way of help in my hour of sickness. The Lord bless you who preached, and the people who spared you! In these days, we are two of the old school our experience has taught us that, both for conversion and edification, the doctrine of Christ crucified is all — sufficient. A childlike faith in the atoning sacrifice is the foundation for the purest and noblest of characters. As the hammer comes down on the anvil ever with the same ring, so will we preach Christ, Christ, CHRIST, and nothing else but Christ.

“Our friends leave us for the suburbs, but I trust the Lord will raise up around us another generation of faithful men. God bless those attached brethren who stick to us, and bear the brunt of the battle with us! I feel a deep gratitude to all such, both at the Tabernacle and at Christ Church. To you I desire continued health and joyous communion with God.

“Yours very heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

Dr. H. L. Wayland, of Philadelphia, was frequently in correspondence with Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon. On more than one occasion, he sent contributions for the Lord’s work under their care. In reply to one of these communications, the Pastor wrote —

“Westwood,  
“June, 1889.  
“My Dear Friend,

Your letter to Mrs. Spurgeon has greatly cheered her… She is to write to the kind donor of the draft, and I am to thank you. Wisdom ordains division of labor. My dear wife does not improve in health. I don’t think she could improve in any other way.

“I hold on, and stand fast. Despite what your correspondents may tell you, I know of a surety that there is an awful twist in the thoughts of the many, and error bears the bell. Yet I am not doubtful of the ultimate result.

“I see that the Lord loves you and yours greatly, for He tries you. These are His love-tokens. I have many, and I prize them. Your love is sweet to me.

“Yours most heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

In August, 1889, Mr. S. G. Richardson, the Sheffield Master Cutler-elect, sent to Mr. Spurgeon, through a mutual friend, a very cordial invitation to attend his banquet. This elicited the following answer —

“Westwood,  
“August 23, 1889.  
“My Dear Friend,

“You are. most kind, and so is the Master Cutler, but I am so taken up with work that I must not leave home. I rejoice in the kindness and courtesy of Mr. Richardson, and I beg you to thank him heartily. Really, I am not a man for a feast, even if I could come. Our Lord Mayor pressed me to meet the Archbishops and Bishops at a banquet, but I could not bring my soul to it, — I mean, the banquet. I had no objection to the Bishops. Last week, I had tea at the Archbishop’s, and luncheon with the Bishop of Rochester; but the banquet was out of my line. I am best at work, — my own work. Still, God bless you, and the Master Cutler, and all the good folk!

“Yours heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
The invitation to tea at the Archbishop’s was written by Mrs. Benson, and was as follows —

“Addington Park,  
“Croydon,  
“August 10, ‘89.

“My Dear Sir,

“We have just come back to Addington, where we shall be for a few days before going abroad; and I am writing to claim your kind promise to come and see us here. Might we hope that you will come to afternoon tea on. Thursday next at 5 o’clock? It will be a great pleasure to see you. I fear Mrs. Spurgeon is not strong enough for so long a drive; otherwise, it would have given us great pleasure if she would accompany you.

“Believe me,  
“My dear sir,  
“Yours very truly,

“MARY BENSON.”  
“The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.”

The day mentioned not being convenient to Mr. Spurgeon, because of the Tabernacle service, another afternoon was fixed, and that happened to be in the same week in which he had promised to take luncheon with the Bishop of Rochester, who wrote, a few days afterwards —

“Selsdon Park,  
“Croydon,  
“August 23, 1889.

“My Dear Friend,

“I thank you exceedingly for your valued gift. The *Salt-cellars* shall have an opportunity of sparkling in my sermons, and I shall begin to read *The Cheque Rook of the Bank of Faith today*.

“You may like to see a very friendly though not a gushing criticism on your sermons in The Guardian of last Wednesday, — the leading High Church journal.

“We all have a most charming impression of your visit. Next time you come, I shall try to pick your brains about preaching. “Most truly yours,  
“A. W. ROFFEN.”

The following bitter — the last one written by Mr. Spurgeon to his old friend, Mr. J. S. Watts, of Cambridge, has a specially pathetic interest now —  
“Westwood,  
“May 29, 1890.

“Dear Friend,

“How are you? I am myself below par in health; but exceeding full of the Lord’s goodness. I have seen sixty-nine candidates for church-fellowship this month. Long hours it has cost me to converse with the many, and select these; but it is glorious harvest work. Everything prospers more and more. But I get faint at times in body. I must rest more. On June 19, I shall be fifty-six, and my years have been such as produce great wear and tear. Yet I shall soon pick up again.

“I shall send you my College Reports for the last two years, that you may see how, in temporal supplies, we know no lack. My liberation from questionable associations has brought around me a host of the Lord’s own who have a like love to His inspired Word and immutable truth. Divinely has He sustained me, and He will. Peace be unto you!

“Yours ever lovingly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

One of the many loving notes preserved by a former member of the Tabernacle Church is interesting because of the Biblical names borne by himself and several of his relatives who are mentioned in it —

“Westwood,  
“Aug. 30, 1890.  
“Dear Mr. Keevil,

“What a patriarchal family you are! Here is Joshua sending me a letter from Noah, containing news about Enoch, and Job and his girls! It makes me feel proud to be in such ancient company. God bless you all!

“I will send Noah a receipt. Like his namesake, he seems to have had enough fair. Well, we shall get home. You are a good soul. May the Lord give you the double portion, as he did Job! “Yours heartily ever,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”

While Mr. Spurgeon was ill at Mentone, in December, 1890, he received a letter from his old and faithful friend, Dr. D. A. Doudney, Editor of The Gospel Magazine, who said — “I had such a spirit of holy wrestling at the footstool of mercy, on your behalf., in the wakefulness of the past night, that I could but cherish the hope that the Lord was giving you relief.” In reply, Mr. Spurgeon wrote —

“Mentone,  
“December 5, ‘90.  
“Venerated Friend,

“It made my heart leap for joy when I read in your note that you had liberty in prayer for me. I am recovering. I can hold the pen, as you see. My hand was puffed up, and, in consequence, like all puffed up things, useless; but it is coming to its true form, and I am rallying from the weakness which follows great pain.

“Of a surety, it is well. I praise God with all my heart for the furnace, the hammer, and the file. May He bless to you the infirmities of years, and carry you ever in His bosom!

“Your loving, grateful friend,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

CHAPTER 91.

LETTERS ON PRIVATE AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

LETTERS CONCERNING LEGACIES.

T HE following letter, relating to an estate of the value of L5,000, may be inserted as a specimen of many which Mr. Spurgeon had to write, on other occasions, with reference to financial matters about which he ought never to have been troubled. In several instances, when money was bequeathed to him which he thought should have gone to the relatives of the testator or testatrix, he paid it over to them without the least hesitation, and it often grieved him that he could not do the same with’ legacies, left to his Institutions, which ought to have been given to needy relations. In the case here referred to, he had simply to refuse what he regarded as an unjust and unreasonable demand —

“Clapham,  
“June 13, 1868.  
“Dear Sir,

“Although Mr.\_\_\_’s will certainly makes me his residuary legatee absolutely, he gave the solicitor to understand that he left the money to me because he was sure I should not appropriate it to myself, but would use it for religious and charitable purposes. This request he also wrote me, and it was sent by his solicitor. The Law of Mortmain prevented him from leaving his money as he desired, therefore he put it in my hands, very much to my discomfort. I shall, not, on any account, accept a farthing for myself from this estate, but carry out the testator’s known wish.

“I do not consider this to be any barrier to my making awards to claimants who may have moral claims of a sound character against the estate, for it is not to my mind to give to religion or charity till justice has been done. Hence I have, to the best of my judgment, with the kind advice of the executors, met each claim, not only of a legal, but of a moral kind, and there is now no balance remaining to be disposed of; or so small as to be not worth mentioning. There will be no more funds available during the existence of two lives; and, consequently, the claims of Mr.\_\_\_ and others must wait, even if they can be attended to at any time.

“The executors do not believe in the claims of Mr.\_\_\_ ; but they, as gentlemen, would advise, me with impartiality, and if you convince them, you convince me; only I cannot be expected to disburse money which I have not received, from an estate with which personally I have no profitable connection, left by an utter stranger.

“I see no grounds for your severe language towards me; and as for your threat to publish the matter abroad, so far as I am concerned, I neither court nor fear publicity in any of my actions; and, in this case, if the simple truth be published, it will little concern me what the public think of ray proceeding. I am the gainer of much trouble and annoyance by’ this unhappy legacy, and nothing more.

“Yours truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

“P.S. — Please send future letters on this business to the executors.”

One of many letters, which had to be written at a later period with reference to great fortunes said to have been left to Mr. Spurgeon, may also be given —

“Westwood,  
“March 26, 1884.  
“Dear Sir,

“In speaking or a supposed large fortune left to me, you very wisely say, ‘If it is so!’ Several times, such rumors have gone abroad; — much smoke; from a very small fire. In the present case, there may be something; ‘but how little none can tell.’ This rumor brings to me begging letters and requests of the most amazing kind; and, in a measure, stops supplies for my many enterprises, and so causes me much trouble. Please, therefore, say in your paper that the large fortune is a myth. With many thanks for your kind remarks,

“I am,  
“Yours in much weakness,  
“C.H. SPURGEON.  
**CORREPONDENCE *RE* LECTURES  
AND SERMONS IN THE UNITED STATES.**

In the year 1873, Mr. Spurgeon, in addressing his church and congregation, made the following reference to a proposal which he had received —

“I had a letter from a gentleman well known in America, giving me the offer of 25,000 dollars for twenty-five lectures. On these terms, the twenty-five nights would give me £5,000, and in a hundred nights I should have £20,000. Besides this, I should be allowed to lecture for as many more nights as I chose, so that I might, in the course of a year, be worth £40, 000, and no doubt the persons who undertook the arrangement would earn ten times that amount. What do you suppose was my answer to this offer? I wrote, ‘If you were to multiply it a hundred times, and again a hundred times, I should feel it as easy to decline as I do now, when I say that I cannot cross the ocean to lecture upon any subject whatever. I am a minister of the gospel, and never lectured for money, and do not intend to do so now.’”

Although the refusal was so emphatic, other offers continued to come. In 1876, a paragraph appeared in some American papers stating that “The Revelation Mr. Spurgeon writes that he will visit the United States in the autumn.” This elicited the following letter —

“Boston, Mass., U.S.A.,  
“June 23, 1876.  
“Rev. C H. Spurgeon,

“Dear Sir,

“Is the above paragraph true? We have tried so long, and so hard, for so many years, to secure you, that we thought it impossible, and long since gave up all hope. We are agents (exclusive agents) for all the leading lecturers in the country, and do nine-tenths of the lecture business of America, and we are responsible for what we offer. We will give you a thousand dollars in gold for every lecture you will deliver in America, and pay all your expenses to and from your home, and place you under the most popular auspices in this country. Will you come?

“Yours truly,  
“THE REDPATH LYCEUM BUREAU.”  
To this communication, Mr. Spurgeon replied —

“Clapham,  
“London,  
“July 6, 1876.

“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 anys 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.

“Yours truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

In 1878, two other invitations came, the first of which Mr. Spurgeon answered thus — “I have not the slightest idea of visiting America. If ever I should do so, I could not preach or lecture for money. Excellent as your services doubtless are to those who need them, they could not possibly be needed by me. I should regard it as an utter prostitution of any gifts I possess if I were, as a servant of God, to use them to make money for myself in the way in which lecturers very properly do.”

The reply to the second request was — I am not open to any engagement either to lecture or to preach in America. I could not consider your offer for a single moment. I have on several occasions given a positive refusal, and can only repeat it in the plainest terms. I am not to be hired for any money.”

Another effort was made in 1879, when Major Pond was in England with Dr. Talmage, and the former wrote to Mr. Spurgeon, asking for an interview, and saying, among other things — “I want to see the man to whom I would pay the compliment to offer fifty thousand dollars for speaking fifty nights in my country, and to my countrymen.” To this note, Mr. Spurgeon replied —

“Nightingale Lane,  
“Balham,  
“Surrey,  
“June 6, 1879.

“Dear Sir,

“I am not at all afraid of anything you could say by way of tempting me to preach or lecture for money, for the whole of the United States in bullion would not lead me to deliver one such lecture. It would only waste your time and mine for you to see me, though I feel sure that you are one of the pleasantest men upon the earth. Your good-natured, pertinacity so admirable that I trust you will not waste it upon an impossible object; but be content to have my acknowledgment that, if success could have been achieved, you would have achieved it.

“Yours truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

In 1883, a syndicate in the United States, Without even asking for Mr. Spurgeon’s opinion or consent, arranged for the transmission, by telegraph, of his Lord’s-day morning sermons, and their publication on the following day, in a number of papers in Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Philadelphia, and St. Louis, having an aggregate circulation of a million copies. The experiment was doomed to be a failure, for the instructions to the English agents were, “Cable Spurgeons Sunday morning sermons, omitting the little words.” The attempt to insert those words in the report received on the other side of the Atlantic produced such a strange result that Mr. Spurgeon wrote on the first copy he received — “Sermon a hash, but pretty well considering the hurry and double transmission to New York, and then to Cincinnati.” In reply to a complaint that the arrangement involved a great increase in Sabbath labor, the Pastor wrote —

“Westwood,  
“June 8, 1883.  
“Dear Sir,

“It is true that my Sunday morning sermons are taken by the United States Press Association, and are cabled so as to appear in the papers on Monday morning. So far as this occasions Sunday work, I regret it; but I have no more to do with it than you have. I have never been in any way consulted in the matter, and so I have not entered into any enquiry as to the labor involved.

“Yours truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

Only a few weeks elapsed before the Pastor was able to write *in The Sword and the Trowel* — “The sermons were not long telegraphed to America, so that our friends who feared that the Sabbath would be desecrated may feel their minds relieved. We are not sorry; for the sermons which we saw in the American papers may have been ours, but they were so battered and disfigured that we would not have owned them. In the process of transmission, the eggs were broken, and the very life of them was crushed. We much prefer to revise and publish for ourselves; and as these, forms of publication are permanent, their usefulness becomes in the long run greater than would come of a wide scattering of faulty reports.”

Four’ years later, another attempt was made to arrange for the early publication, on an extensive scale, of summaries of Mr. Spurgeon’s sermons; but this also failed. He was unable even to entertain the proposal made to him in the following letter, for he never knew “ten days in advance” what the subject of his discourse would be; otherwise, in this case, there might not have been the same objection as on the former occasion as the effort need not have involved any increase of Sunday labor —

“New York Syndicate Bureau,  
“No. 1, William Street,  
“New York,  
“Sept. 20, 1887.  
“Rev. C. H. Spurgeon,

“Dear Sir,

“We have arrangements about perfected by which we are to publish, every Monday morning, in all the large cities of this country, a synopsis of the sermons of six of the leading clergymen here. The idea is, to get advance notes of the sermons (about ten days in advance), and send them out to our syndicate of newspapers. It is necessary to get the matter so far in advance as we have to reach San Francisco. Those we intend publishing are, Rev. Phillips Brooks, of Boston; Dr. John Hall, New York; Dr. Talmage, Brooklyn; Cardinal Gibbons, Baltimore; Rev. John. P. Newman, Washington; and the Most Revelation Archbishop Ryan, Philadelphia.

“While negotiations have been going on, we have received numerous requests from our subscribing Editors for a weekly synopsis of your sermon, and thinking that there might be an inducement in having your congregation increased into the millions, with the corresponding increase in the beneficial influence of your sermons, we have thought it wise to approach you on the subject.

“Could you not cable, at our expense, about ten days in advance, the ideas of your sermon each week? The exact phraseology is not necessary, as the ideas are all that are wanted. Cable, say 250 to 300 words. For this courtesy, we would be pleased to forward, each week, our cheque at the rate of — a year. If you think favorably of the matter, kindly cable the one word ‘Yes’ to our registered address, ‘Exactness, blew York,’ and we will write you in regard to any detail that may be necessary. Hoping that you will render a favorable decision,

“We are,  
“Yours very truly,  
“CHAS. R. BROWN, Editor.”

Any friends from the United States, who had ever worshipped at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, and who saw, in *The New York Herald*, January 9, 1888, the report of the service in that building the day before, must have been somewhat surprised at what they read. In the course of a long cablegram purporting to have been received from the *Heralds* London bureau, the correspondent said — “There were fully five thousand in the audience to greet the Tabernacle orator on his return from Mentone. He looked remarkably better than when I interviewed him two months ago for the *Herald* on his departure. *After a grand voluntary from the organ*, during which the congregation silently studied the countenance of the great Baptist preacher, he and the audience standing, they sang Psalm 103, best known in music as ‘Benedice anima mea.’ Then an *assistant* read the second chapter of the first Epistle of John, first giving the revisers’ headnotes summarizing the contents of the chapter. *After the choir, which is of high repute, had sung a hymn in which there was a charming contralto solo*, Mr. Spurgeon preached from the text

‘If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.’ — John 15:7.”

The words printed in italics indicate some of the inaccuracies in these few sentences. As there was no “organ” or “choir” at the Tabernacle, so there was neither “voluntary” nor “contralto solo.” Mr. Spurgeon himself read and expounded John 15:1-8, and also 1 John 2, so his “assistant” had no opportunity of “giving the revisers’ head-notes.” The text was stated correctly, so the references to it, and to one of the chapters which were read, must have been telegraphed, with the number of the Psalm sung; but the descriptive matter in the “cablegram” must have been inserted by someone who knew nothing about the mode of worship adopted, at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, however familiar he might be with the practices prevailing on the other side of the Atlantic.

**CONSOLATORY LETTERS.**

Mr. Spurgeon was a true comforter of the suffering and sorrowing; his frequent personal afflictions, added to his own sympathetic disposition, made him “a succorer of many.” This cheering and helpful note was written to a lady who had told him of her many trials —

“Westwood,  
“March 9, ‘81.  
“Dear Friend,

“You seem to me to be in the night school, — by no means pleasant lessons, few holidays, and no cakes and sugar-sticks; — but a wise preacher, and a guarantee of becoming a well-trained disciple in due time. This is much better than to be pampered with joyous excitements, and to be thereby really weakened in faith. How could you honor Christ, by trusting Him as He is revealed in Scripture, if you were always having new revelations over and above His Word? Too much sight renders faith impossible. A certain measure of darkness is needful for the full exercise of faith. Be of good comfort; for He who has redeemed you will not lose that which has cost Him so much. I hope you will yet recover strength. Why, you are only a young girl yet at thirty-seven! But I know how the spirits sink, and one feels as old as Methuselah. The Lord be ever your Comforter!

“Yours, with much to do,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

One of Mr. Spurgeon’s dearest and most intimate friends was Mr. William Higgs, the builder of the Tabernacle, and a deacon of the church worshipping there. The following extracts from letters to Mrs. Higgs, when her dear husband was “called home,” will show how fully the Pastor sympathized with her and the whole of the bereaved family —

“Westwood,  
“January 3, 1883.  
“Dear Friend,

“How I wish that I could come and join you in your grief, even if I could not give you comfort! But I am too lame to move. Ah, me! what a blow! We were all afraid of it, but did not think it would come just now. Doubtless it is best as it is but it is a sharp gash in the heart. He was a dear soul to us all, but specially to you. I beg the Lord to bear you up under this the heaviest of all trials. All is well with him. ‘There is our comfort. His pains and wearinesses are over, and he rests. I will come as; soon as I can travel, but this swollen right foot holds me like a fetter of iron.

“Loving sympathy to every one of you. God bless you! “Yours ever heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
“Westwood,  
“January 6, 1883

“Dear Mrs. Higgs,  
“L\_\_\_ and G\_\_\_ have now told me all about our dear one’s death.

The Lord has dealt well with him. I wonder how he lived so long to cheer us all and I feel relieved that he lived no longer, for it would have been great anguish to him. He has gone at the right time. The Lord will be your comfort and help. I meant to go to you this morning, but I found my foot would not let me go up and down steps. It is a double pain to be kept from you and your sorrowing family. We shall all meet again. Let us bless God. Can we?

“Your loving friend,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
When Pastor T. W. Medhurst lost a daughter, Mr. Spurgeon wrote to him —  
“Westwood,  
“May 24, 1884.  
“Dear Friend,

“May you be sustained under your heavy trial! Now that you and your dear companion are most fully realizing the void which is made in your household,, may you find living consolations flowing into your hearts! ‘It is well,’ and faith knows it is so; and worships the Lord from under the cloud. How time has flown! It seems but the other day that you were married; and now you are an old father, bereaved of a daughter. Dear Caleb Higgs, too, is gone home long ago.

“We shall meet above before long. Till then, in our Lord’s business we will find solace, and in Himself delight.  
“Yours ever heartily’,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”

The following letter was written to an Oxfordshire clergyman, with whom Mr. Spurgeon had long been in close personal friendship;he was always deeply interested in the open-air services under the oaks on Mr. Abraham’s farm (see Vol. 3), and induced all whom he could influence to be present —

“Westwood,  
“June I2, 1884.  
“Dear Friend,

“I casually heard from Mr. Abraham that you were ill, but I had no idea that it was a serious matter; but Mr. Rochfort has kindly given me further news. I feel very sad about it, but I am sure you do not. The loss will be ours, and Heaven and you will gain.

“Dear loving brother, you have nothing now to do but to go home; and what a home! You will be quite at home where all is love, for you have lived in that blessed element, and are filled with it. I shall soon come hobbling after you, and shall find you out. We are bound to gravitate to each other whether here or in glory. We love the same Lord, and the same blessed truth..

“May the everlasting arms be underneath you! I breathe for you a loving, tender prayer, — ‘Lord, comfort Thy dear servant, and when he departs, may it be across a dried-up river into the land of living fountains!’  
“I am fifty next Thursday, and you are near your Jubilee. In this we are alike; but Jesus is the highest joy. Into the Father’s hands I commit you, ‘until the’ day break, and the shadows flee away.’

“Your loving brother,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

The good man did not linger long, and in the August number of *The Sword and the Trowel* Mr. Spurgeon inserted the following note — “Our dear brother, Revelation Thomas Curme, vicar of Sandford, Oxon, has passed to his reward. He was a sweet Christian, of calm and serene spirit, full of love and humility, yet firm as a rock in the doctrine of grace. When the denouncer of Baptismal Regeneration was shunned by many of the clergy, one of his brethren asked Mr. Curme, ‘How can you spend so much time in company with Spurgeon?’ His gentle answer was, ‘ It is more wonderful that he should associate with me than that I should meet with him.’ His love to us was wonderful, and constituted one of the joys of our life. He was beloved of all ‘who knew him, and we were one with him in the’ faith which is in Christ Jesus. He passed away full of years, ripe for his rest.”

When the mother of one of “our own men” was “called home” just after her son’s recognition service at Luton, Mr. Spurgeon wrote to him from Mentone —

“Dear Mr. Feltham,

“It is a great sorrow to lose such a mother, but also a great joy to know it is well with her. She could not have passed away under happier circumstances. She must have been glad to see her son so happily settled, and then gladder still to be with her Lord for ever. No lingering sickness, no fierce pain; but gentle dismission, and instant admission into the glory. I envy her as much as I dare. The Lord be with you and your beloved, and comfort you to, the full!

“Your sympathizing friend,  
The “grandmother” so tenderly mentioned in the following letter was, of course, the Mrs. Bartlett who so long conducted the large Bible-class at the Tabernacle —

“Mentone,  
“December 14, ‘87.  
“Dear Mr. Bartlett,

“I sorrow with you over the departure of your little Lillie; but you will feel that there is honey with the gall. She was a dear child, ready to take her place with the shining ones. Grandmother will receive her as a messenger from you.

“May peace and consolation flow into the heart of yourself and wife! I send you a little cheque to ease the expense. I cannot ease your pain; but there is ‘another Comforter’ who can and will do so. Receive my hearty sympathy. We are all going the same way. The little one has outrun us; we shall catch her up soon.

“Yours very heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
When the wife of Dr. S. O. Habershon was “called home,” Mr. Spurgeon wrote to Miss Ada R. Habershon —  
“Westwood,  
“April 30, 1889.  
“Dear Friend,

“I I heard with deep regret of your dear father’s loss, — which is your mother’s gain. I do not wonder that the beloved man is not well. it is a crushing stroke, and he has a, tender heart. The Lord Himself sustain him! The Holy Ghost Himself has undertaken the office of Comforter because there is such need of comfort in the tried family, and because it is such work as only’ God can do effectually. I commend you to the’ other Comforter.’ I could not expect to see you at the College supper, but it is very kind of you to write me. You cheer me much by the reminder of the use of The Cheque Book to the dying one. God be praised!  
“I may send you my Christian love in this hour of sorrow, for I feel great sympathy with you and your father, and a hallowed oneness of heart with you in the faith of our Lord, and in service for His Name. May a sweet hush fall on your hearts!

“Yours very truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

Miss Habershon thus explains the allusion to Mr. Spurgeon’s volume, The Cheque Book of the Bank of Faith — “My dear mother read it daily; and, during her last illness, it was read to her as long as she could bear it. The last portion my dear father read to her was on April 8, — she fell asleep on the 13th, — and the words were singularly appropriate — ‘if there is no more work for you to do for your Master, it cannot distress you that He is about to take you home.’”

A few months later, Dr. Habershon also received the summons, “Come up higher.” During this last illness, his daughter wrote to inform Mr. Spurgeon, and he replied as follows —

“Westwood,  
“August 3, 1889.  
“Dear Friend,

“You are now tried indeed, but all-sufficient grace will bear you through. I desire my tenderest love to your suffering father. If he is now going home, I congratulate him upon the vision which will soon burst upon him. If he tarries with us a little longer, it will be profitable for you. We have not the pain of choice. It is a great mercy that we are not placed in the perplexing dilemma of choosing either for ourselves or others, whether we live or die. I pray for you both. May you maintain the peace which now rules you, and find it even brightening into joy in the Lord’s will! Jesus said to the women at the sepulcher, ‘All hail.’ All is well.

“Yours most heartily,  
Mr. Spurgeon’s presence and address at the funeral greatly comforted the mourners; and in thanking him, Miss Habershon consulted him with regard to the future, and. received the following reply —

“Westwood,  
“September 6, 1889.  
“Dear Friend,

“It would seem to be wise advice which would lead your brother to take your father’s house. In the profession, a measure of prestige is valuable, and this hangs even about the abode of a distinguished man when the name is the same. You and your sister will be rightly led, for you look up; and there is a finger which never misleads.

“It was a great solace to be able to do anything to comfort your heart. Your thanks are far more than I deserve; but I did honestly endeavor to bear a testimony which I pray our Lord to impress on some for whom we felt anxious.

“In these crises of life, the power to sit still is greater than that of activity — which frets into restlessness. I commend you to the Good Shepherd. HE will direct your path.

“Yours very heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

This chapter may be appropriately closed with a brief mention of the manner in which Mr. Spurgeon voluntarily increased his correspondence to a very considerable extent, and thereby became the means of untold blessing to many of those to whom he wrote. At one of the meetings during the College Conference of 1890, a very touching prayer was presented by Dr. Usher, who pleaded with great earnestness for the salvation of the children of the brethren. The beloved President was much moved by the petition, and the hearty response which it evoked; and he at once offered to write to all the ministers’ sons and daughters whose fathers intimated their wish for him to do so by sending to him their children’s names and ages. Two letters were written and lithographed, — one for the older boys and girls, the other for the little ones, — the name and date being, in every instance, filled in by Mr. Spurgeon himself. In this way, many hundreds of young folk, at home and abroad, received a direct communication from the dear Pastor, and he had the joy of reading a large number of replies testifying to the fact that the Holy Spirit had richly blessed the effort to the salvation of the youthful recipients.

Thoughtful and kind as the whole arrangement was, there remained a finishing touch which no one could give so lovingly as our Mr. Great-heart. The lithographed letter to the elder children contained references to “father and mother” which made it scarcely suitable for the “mitherless bairns” whose fathers desired them to have a share in the favor of a letter from Mr. Spurgeon. The facsimile, on pages 118 and 119, will show how lovingly he read it through, and made the necessary alterations to adapt it to the dear girl who received it; and he did this on June 19, his own birthday, when he was overwhelmed with contributions for the Orphanage, which all had to be acknowledged before he went up to the Festival at Stockwell, at which he was expected to make several speeches. Surely, even he could hardly have given a more convincing proof of his delight in imparting pleasure to others whatever might be the cost to himself.

CHAPTER 92.

MR. SPURGEON’S OPINIONS ON SUBJECTS OF GENERAL INTEREST.

W HILE the many hundreds of letters and notes written by Mr. Spurgeon were being examined with a view to the selection of those inserted in the preceding chapters, it was found that, in several of them, he had given expression to his opinions upon subjects — of permanent public interest. It was decided, therefore, that a number of his epistles concerning religious, political, and social matters should be collected in a separate chapter, in order that those who desire to know what he said upon these topics may be able to refer to them. The letters are, as far as possible, arranged in chronological order, with sub-titles to increase the facility of reference to them.

**INFANT SALVATION.**

Among the many falsehoods which, at different times, were told concerning Mr. Spurgeon, one which he naturally repelled with the utmost indignation was the statement that he once declared that “there are in hell infants a span long.” In reply to a correspondent who asked if he had ever said this, he wrote —

“Newington, S.E.,  
“June 12, 1869.  
“Dear Sir,

“I have never, at any time in my life said, believed, or imagined that any infant, under any circumstances, would be cast into hell. I have always believed in the salvation of all infants, and I intensely detest the opinion, which your opponent dared to attribute to me. I do not believe that, on this earth, there is a single professing Christian holding the damnation of infants; or, if there be, he must be insane, or utterly ignorant of Christianity. I am obliged by this opportunity of denying the calumny, although the author of it will probably find no difficulty in inventing some other fiction to be affirmed as unblushingly as the present one. He who doubts God’s Word is naturally much at home in slandering the Lord’s servants.

“Yours truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

The question of the salvation of infants is also referred to in the following note, which was written to a minister, whose infant child had died, and to whose wife a Christadelphian had expressed the idea that children dying at that age have no existence after death —

“Clapham,  
“June 8, 1872.  
“Dear Friend,

“I am just leaving home, and can only write and say, — May the Comforter fulfill His Divine office in your hearts! The child is with Jesus. David did not think his babe annihilated when he said, ‘I shall go to him.’ Away with these foolish dreaams! The Lord be with you!

“Yours in sympathy,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
**ROMANISM IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.**

When Mr. Mackey, the Protestant lecturer, was put in prison, Mr. C. N. Newdegate, M.P., called upon Mr. Spurgeon, to discuss the various aspects of the question, and the anti-Romish agitation in general. After he reached his home, he wrote to the Pastor as follows —

“3, Arlington Street,  
“Piccadilly,  
“Sept. 24, 1871.

“My Dear Sir,  
“I shall consider our conversation as confidential, as I am sure you will, since I mentioned individuals and their conversations, which I have no right to publish. You will, I am sure, understand this.

“Yours very sincerely,  
“C. S. NEWDEGATE.”  
To, this note, Mr. Spurgeon replied thus —  
“Clapham,  
“Sept. 26.  
“My Dear Sir,

“Rely upon me. As far as I am concerned, I do not object to your repeating any remarks of mine but I quite see the propriety of your request, and will readily comply with it. The imprisonment of Mr. Mackey appears to be a breach of all equity. If law permits it, law itself is bad. To check the power of the Papacy, and put down its errors, is a work worthy of the efforts of the best of men. May you have success in your labors! So long, however, as the Episcopal denomination remains Popish and patronized, your efforts will be stultified.

“Some years ago (such things are rare with us), I lost a member of my church, who is now a Romanist. How was he seduced? Not by Dr. Manning or St. George’s Cathedral, but by Mr. Mackonochie and St. Alban’s. I have more to fear from your Church than from the Pope’s hirelings, for it uses its Evangelical clergy as the first lure to godly people, then its semi-Ritualists, then its full-blown Papists, and so on, till men are conducted down to the pit of Popery.

“Besides, your Church claims a pre-eminence I cannot concede to it, curses me roundly in its canons, denies my call to the ministry, shuts the worthlest of my brethren out of its pulpits, and to crown all, compels me to pay tithe, and support an establishment which I abhor. Yet I love the true Protestants in your Church most heartily, though smarting daily under grievous wrongs, in the infliction of which they are participes criminis.  
“Christian charity finds it hard to live where it is demanded on the one side, but cannot be returned on the other. While the existence of Protestant Dissenters is ignored by the Church, as such, and is treated as a crime in her canons, it is only a miracle of grace which enables a Nonconformist to have fellowship with any member of the dominant sect. I pray God to remove this monstrous barrier in the way of union, and to unite all our hearts in His fear.

“I am glad to have seen you, and am,  
“Yours very heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
**BELL-RINGING AT NEWINGTON.**

At various times, Mr. Spurgeon was obliged to write to the Newington clergy concerning the bell-ringing during services at the Tabernacle. The following was one of these communications —

“Nightingale Lane,  
“Clapham,  
“July 4.

“Dear Sir,

“I beg to call your attention to the great disturbance caused by the ringing of a bell, at St. Gabriel’s Church, while the congregation at the Tabernacle is engaged in prayer. I reminded your predecessor that no right of bell-ringing belongs to any but a parish church, and informed him that I really must appeal to the law to stop the needless nuisance. He very kindly reduced the evil to the minimum, and I no longer objected. I am sure it is far from me to wish to interfere with the peculiar habits of my neighbors; but when many hundreds of persons, met to worship God, are disturbed by the clanging of a loud bell, it compels me to complain. The hours when we are at worship are at 11 and 6.30 on Sunday, and from 7 to 8.30 p.m. on Monday and Thursday.  
“Wishing to be upon good terms with all in the parish, I trust that you will not allow the bell-ringer to disturb us further, but will substitute a few strokes for the many which are now given.

“I am,  
“Yours truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

Canon Palmer, to whom the above letter was addressed, was one of the speakers at the memorial service for Christian workers held in connection with Mr. Spurgeon’s funeral, and, after reading the note, he said —

“I have no copy of my answer, but I think I can remember its effect tolerably well. It was that I did not know what the law might order, but I was quite sure what the gospel required. *It* required that my neighbors should not be unnecessarily troubled, and I would give orders, at once, that the bell-ringing should be confined to a few strokes, and I had no doubt that the bell-ringer would be very much obliged to Mr. Spurgeon for mitigating his labors in that extremely hot weather. He wrote me again, immediately —

“Dear Sir,

“I am exceedingly obliged by your prompt and Christian reply. I felt it needful to make my protest against the bell-ringing somewhat strong, that I might not appear to be asking a favor merely, but claiming a right not to be disturbed. Otherwise, the lapse of years gives right to a custom against which no protest is entered. This, and no unfriendliness to you, prompted what you considered to be a threat. I can only hope that future correspondence may be, on my part, on a more pleasant subject, and, on your part, may be in the same generous tone.

“Yours very heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

ANNIHILATIONISM. During the whole of Mr. Spurgeon’s ministry, comparatively few of the members of his church embraced erroneous opinions; but when they did, they usually resigned their membership, and united with those who held similar views to those which they had adopted. There was at least one individual who did not conform to this rule; and, concerning him, the Pastor wrote as follows to Revelation Samuel Minton —

“Clapham,  
“July 20.  
“Sir,

“I am sorry that Mr. — stultifies his own convictions, and distresses others, by remaining with a church whose testimony is diametrically opposed to his opinions. It seems to me that a Christian man is bound to unite with a church where he may consistently hold! and promulgate his views; but he has no excuse if he remains with a people to whom his views are obnoxious, and where his agitation of his opinions tends to create strife and division. We, as a church at the Tabernacle, cultivate fellowship with all the churches of our Lord, although differing in many respects from some of them; but, within our own membership, we have a basis of agreement in doctrine and practice, and where a member differs from it, it is his duty to remove to some other community where his views are held, or else he must expect us to withdraw from him. I have taken no further action in the case of Mr.\_\_\_ than to request him to find a more congenial fellowship; but if he does not do so, our discipline must take its usual course. No honest man can be a member of the church meeting at the Tabernacle, and hold annihilationist views, for now and in all time past we have borne testimony to the generally-received doctrine.

“Yours truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
**VOTING “AS UNTO THE LORD.”**

During the General Election of 1880, a gentleman having written to express his deep regret that Mr. Spurgeon “should have descended from his high and lofty position as a servant of God, and preacher of the everlasting gospel into the defiled arena of party politics,” the Pastor replied to him —

“Nightingale Lane,  
“Balham, Surrey,  
“March 22, 1880.

“Dear Sir,

“Your letter amuses me, ‘because you are so evidently a rank Tory, and so hearty in ‘your political convictions that, in spite of your religious scruples, you must needs interfere in politics, and write to me. If there is anything defiling in it, you are certainly over head and ears.

“However, dear sir, I thank you for your kindness in wishing to put me right, and I can assure you that I vote as devoutly as I pray, and feel it to be a part of my love to God and to my neighbor to try to turn out the Government whom your letter would lead me to let alone.

“You are as wrong as wrong can be in your notion; but, as it keeps you from voting, I shall not try to convert you, for I am morally certain you would vote for the Tory candidate.

“In things Divine, we are probably at one; and you shall abstain from voting as unto the Lord, and I will vote as unto the Lord, and we ‘will both give Him thanks.

“Yours truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

Yet, staunch Liberal and ardent admirer of Mr. Gladstone as he was, Mr. Spurgeon was by no means a blind follower of any earthly leader. He protested very’ emphatically against the appointment of the Marquis of Ripon as Viceroy of India, and he wrote thus, concerning that and other political questions, in reply to a letter from his old Cambridge friend, Mr. J. S. Watts —  
“Nightingale Lane,  
“June 19, ‘80.

“My Dear Friend,

“Like yourself, I go in for religious equality, but I like things done legally, and not in Mr. Gladstone’s occasionally despotic way, — by Royal Warrant, or by his own will. Alter the Act of Settlement if the nation chooses, but do not contravene it. Moreover, I should not allow a Mormonite to be Judge in the Divorce Court, nor a Quaker to be Commissioner of Oaths, nor an atheist to be Chaplain to the House of Commons; and, for the same reason, I would not have a Roman Catholic, sworn to allegiance to the Pope, to be Viceroy of India. Mr. Gladstone said this himself when writing about the Vatican; but the way in which he eats his words, and puts on a new form so soon as he is in power, does not increase my esteem for him.

“I belong to the party which knows no party. To cheapen beer, to confirm the opium curse, to keep in office the shedders of blood, and to put Papists to the front, are things I never expected from Mr. Gladstone; but ‘cursed be the man that trusteth in man.’ Yet I am a Gladstonite despite all this.

“To turn to a better subject, — the Girls’ Orphanage is outdoing all that went before. Love-letters pour in today. Am I not happy? I believe I have £7,000 out of £11,000. It comes leaping over mountains and hills. The Lord is a glorious Helper. Oh, for more faith in Him!

“Yours ever most heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
In order to keep together the letters relating to Mr. Gladstone, another of later date is inserted here —  
**HOME RULE.**

It is well known that Mr. Spurgeon did not agree with Mr. Gladstone’s Home Rule proposals, and that many of his own most ardent admirers differed from him upon that matter. Among others, Pastor T. W. Medhurst supported the Liberal leader, and, in consequence, some of the Portsmouth papers represented him as having spoken unkindly of his beloved President. He therefore wrote to Mr. Spurgeon. who sent the following reply —

“Dear Friend,

‘I did not think your language, as reported, to be disrespectful, nor even dreamed that you would be unkind. Speak as strongly as ever you like, and I shall not be aggrieved. You are as free as I am; and I am free, and mean to be. If others think the bill wise and good, I hope they will do their best to carry it. I believe it to be a fatal stab at our common country, and I am bound to oppose it. I am as good a Liberal as any man living, and my loving admiration of Mr. Gladstone is the same as ever, hearty and deep, but this bill I conceive to be a very serious error. I claim to be under no man’s dictation, and to dictate to no man. Do not fear to speak through any shrinking on my account. Both sides ought to be heard. I shall love you none the less, but all the more, for being plain-spoken,

“Yours very heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
**REGISTRARS AT NONCONFORMIST WEDDINGS.** The following letter is of special interest now that the proposal referred to in it has been embodied in an Act of Parliament —  
“Westwood,  
“April 9, 1881.  
“Dear Friend,

“I regard marriage as a civil contract, which ought to be made before a magistrate or a registrar. I should be glad to be rid of marrying and burying altogether as religious matters, save only where there is a sincere desire for the Divine blessing or consolation. In these cases, let the minister hold a service at the house or the meeting-house; but do not make him a State official to register marriages, and to be held responsible for all the intricacies of marriage law.

“I hope Mr. Briggs’ proposal will never pass, or anything like it. If it did, I could only refuse to marry anybody, for I will not become a registrar. I altogether agree with the reported action of the Liberation Society, and wish for the time when all marriages shall ‘be at the registrar’s office, and then the godly can have such religious service afterwards as; they wish.

“Yours ever heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
VIVESECTION.

At a meeting, held at West Norwood, under the auspices of the London Anti-vivisection Society, the. following letter from Mr. Spurgeon was read —

“Westwood,  
“July 25, 1881.  
“Dear Sir,

“I am unable to attend your garden meeting. I wish evermore the utmost success, to all protests against the inhuman practice of vivisection. It does not bear to be thought of. How it must excite the righteous indignation of the all-merciful Creator! It is singularly sad that there should need to be an agitation on such a question; for one would think that the least-enlightened conscience would perceive the evil of such cruelty, and that the most-hardened heart would retain sufficient humanity to revolt against it.

“Yours truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
**PERSECUTION OF JEWS IN RUSSIA.**

Mr. Spurgeon was unable to be present at the meeting held at the Mansion House, on February 1, 1882, to protest against the persecution of the Jews in Russia, but the following letter from him was read by the Lord Mayor —

“I am sorry that I am quite precluded by prior engagements from being at the Mansion House to speak against the outrages committed upon the Jews. I am, however, relieved by the belief that the heart of England is one in a strong feeling of indignation at the inhuman conduct of certain savages in Russia. Every man and woman among us feels eloquently on behalf of our fellow-men who are subjected to plunder and death, and still more for our sisters, to whom even worse treatment has been meted out. Thence you have the less need of speeches and orations. As a Christian, I feel that the name of our Redeemer is dishonored by such conduct on the part of His professed followers. As a Nonconformist and a Liberal, believing in the equal rights of all men to live in freedom and safety, I must protest against a state of things in which the Jew is made art outlaw. Lastly, as a man, I would mourn in my inmost soul that any beings in human form should be capable of such crimes as those which have made Russia red with Israelitish blood. But what need even of these, few sentences? The oppressed are sure of advocates wherever Englishmen assemble.”

**GOSPEL TEMPERANCE.**  
On March 15, 1882, Mr. Spurgeon wrote the letter on the following page, to be read at the meeting to which it refers —  
“Dear Friends,

“I am exceedingly sorry to be absent from this first meeting to form the Tabernacle Total Abstinence Society. The worst of it is, that my head is so out of order that I cannot even dictate a proper letter. I can only say, ‘Try and do all the better because I am away.’ If the leader is shot down, and his legs are broken, the soldiers must give an extra hurrah, and rush on the enemy. I sincerely believe that, next to the preaching of the gospel, the most necessary thing to be done in England is to induce our people to become total abstainers. I hope this Society will do something when it is started. I don’t want you to wear a lot of peacocks’ feathers and patty medals, nor to be always trying to convert the moderate drinkers, but to go in for winning the real drunkards, and bringing the poor enslaved creatures to the feet of Jesus, who can give them liberty. I wish I could say ever so many good things, but I cannot, and so will remain,

“Yours teetotally,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
When the second anniversary of the Society was celebrated, Mr. Spurgeon was again ill, for he wrote this letter to be read at the meeting — “Westwood,  
“March 19, 1884.  
“Dear Friends,

“I have just been saying that I should like to be as strong as a lion; but it has been suggested to me that, then, I might not be so strong as I am now. I am sorry that I happen to be weak when the battle is against strong drink. May the speakers tonight make up for my enforced absence by speaking twice as well as possible! The theme should fire them. I hope they will be full of spirit against evil spirits, stout against stout, and hale against ale. Let the desolate homes, the swollen rates, the crowded goals, the untimely graves, and the terrible destruction of souls, all wrought by drunkenness, inspire you with fervor for the cause of temperance. Thank God for what has been accomplished; your year’s labor has not been in vain in the Lord; but let this nerve you for larger endeavors. The drink must be dried up, — fountain, stream, and pool; this river of death must cease to flow through our land. God’s grace will help us. His pity for sinners will move Him to aid every loving effort for the salvation of the fallen.

“I pray for a sevenfold blessing upon the year to come. If I cannot speak to men, I can speak with God for them, and I will do so. May our Lord Jesus Christ inspire us with a deeper love to perishing sinners! With my hearty love,

“I am, Brother Blues,  
“Yours truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
**PIGEON-SHOOTING.**

In a letter to Mr. J. T. Markley, of Eastbourne, dated April, 1882, with reference to his suggestions in the public prints in favor of the substitution of artificial for live birds at shooting contests, Mr. Spurgeon wrote — “My judgment is heartily with you as to the brutality of pigeon-shooting matches. I cannot make out how people, who are in other matter, kind and gentle, can frequent these butcheries. I am still very unwell, and hardly like to think of the woes of this creation. I cannot just now do or say anything worth doing or saying, so I must leave the cause of the dumb in the hands of such good pleaders as yourself.”

**DISESTABLISHMENT.**

Mr. Spurgeon promised to be present, if possible, at the Liberation Society’s meeting at the Tabernacle, on May 3, 1882; but, in consequence of ill-health, he was not able to be there, so he sent the following letter to Mr. J. Carvell Williams, who read it at the meeting —

“Westwood,  
“May 3, 1882.  
“Dear Sir,

“I had always intended to speak tonight if strength were given to me, and I am greatly disappointed that I am obliged to be absent. I feel that this question of liberating the bride of Christ from her dishonorable association with the State grows upon me in importance the more; I love the Lord Jesus. I see the political evil of the situation, but the religious criminality is that which most oppresses me.

“Here is a Church of Christ which surrenders itself to the State. Its Bishops are appointed by the rules of a worldly kingdom; and as for itself, it cannot wear a ribbon, or leave it off, without Caesar’s permission. It is a mercy that some few of her sons find this fetter too galling. The mystery is that they should continue to wear it when the door to Christian liberty is open. I long to see the piety of Episcopalians so elevated that they will hate the present infamous alliance, with all its hard bondage. Failing this, may the eyes of statesmen be opened that they may cease to intermeddle in a sphere in which they have no vocation! For members of our legislature, as for us all, it is a task difficult enough to enter the strait gate each one for himself; and it is a superfluity of naughtiness for these gentlemen to attempt to legislate for the Kingdom of Christ, who asks for no help, from them. More strength to the arm of those true friend; of the Church of England who would establish her by Disestablishment, and enrich her by Disendowment!

“Yours truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
**CLOSE-COMMUNION.**

In the Richmond (U.S.A.), *Christian Advocate*, May 17, 1883, there appeared what the Editor called “a clever, chatty letter” by Mr. Richard Ferguson, who represented Mr. Spurgeon as saying that “he would rather be a cannibal than a close-communion Baptist.” This statement was reported to Mr. Spurgeon, and he thereupon wrote —

“London,  
“June 20, 1883.  
“Dear Sir,

“I am not in the habit of speaking disrespectfully of strictcommunion Baptists, for I have a full conviction of their conscientiousness. As to saying that I would sooner be a cannibal than a close-communion Baptist, I never thought so, and certainly never said so. I have not the slightest wish to be one or the other; but I rejoice in being a loving brother to the latter.

“Yours heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

At various times, Mr. Spurgeon was asked about the genuineness of expressions with reference to close-communion which were attributed to him; another of his replies may suffice, to show the general tenor of his letters upon this question. An American Presbyterian paper stated, “on the authority of a sainted gentleman,” that Mr. Spurgeon had said, “I hate a close-communion Baptist as I hate the devil.” When this paragraph was brought under Mr. Spurgeon’s notice, he wrote —

“London,  
“March 26, 1884.  
“Dear Sir,

“I do not know who ‘the sainted gentleman’ may be, but he did not speak the truth if he reported me as saying that I hated a closecommunion Baptist as 1 hate the devil. I never even thought of such a thing, and assuredly it is not and never was true of me. The ‘saint’ have have dreamed it, or have mistaken the person.

“The most unaccountable statements are made by men of known integrity, and they can only be accounted for by misunderstanding or forgetfulness. I know my own mind and views, and I can say, without reserve, that the expression could not have been used by me. As compared with the bulk of English Baptists, I am a strictcommunionist myself, as my church-fellowship is strictly of the baptized.

“Yours heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
“Rev. A. S. Patton.”

**FRANCHISE REFORM.**

In reply to an invitation to speak at the Reform Demonstration, in Hyde Park, on July 21, 1884, Mr. Spurgeon wrote — “I heartily approve of the measure for giving the franchise to our country brethren, and I much regret that the Lords should stand in the way of it. It must come as surely as time revolves, and no hurt can come of it unless it be from the friction occasioned by the opposition to it. I am not able to attend meetings to urge on political reforms; but whenever topics which touch upon the rights of men, righteousness, peace, and so on, come in my way, I endeavor to speak as emphatically as I can on the right side. It is part of my religion to desire justice and freedom for all.”

**ANGLO-ISRAELISM.**

Mr. Spurgeon’s opinions on this subject were expressed in the following note to at gentleman who was devoting his attention to the work of answering the arguments brought forward in support of the idea —

“Westwood,.  
“September 27, 1884.  
“Dear Sir,

“I wish you every success in your warfare against this silly craze. I was at one’ time rather amused with the delusion, as a freak of human folly; but it evidently has its moral and spiritual bearings, and must therefore be met and exposed. I have not time for this contest, and therefore I am the more pleased to see others in the field.

“Yours truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
**OPEN-AIR BAPTISMS.**

A newspaper correspondence having arisen concerning the proceedings in connection with open-air baptism at Sheepwash, in Devonshire, Pastor W. T. Soper, one of “our own men,” wrote to Mr. Spurgeon concerning the matter, and his letter elicited the following reply —

“Westwood,  
“May 13, 1885.  
“Dear Mr. Soper,

“I was not present at Sheepwash; and, consequently, can form no opinion as to the behavior of the villagers after the baptism was over; but I remember that the same things were said, more ‘than thirty years ago, of our public baptisms in Cambridgeshire, and I daresay there is as much truth in the representations now made as; in those of the older time.

“Those who did not wish to see so much of baptism imagined evils which existed mainly in their fears.

“Baptism in the open river is so Scriptural, and, withal, such a public testimony, that I hope our friends will never abandon it. The reproach is to be bravely borne; for, if you hide away in the meeting-house, it will follow you there. We are most numerous where the ordinance is most known Next to the Word of God, a baptizing service is the best argument for baptism.

“Whenever numbers of people come together, whether for trade, politics, or religion, there will always be loose persons to dishonor the occasion; but we are not therefore to abstain from such gatherings. Such an inference would be absurd.

“God bless and prosper you!  
“Yours heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

**EVOLUTION.**

In reply to an enquiry with regard to the evolution theory, Mr. Spurgeon wrote —  
“Westwood,  
“February 8, 1887.

“Dear Sir,

“Thanks for your most excellent and courteous letter. I have read a good deal on the subject, and have never yet seen a fact, or the tail of a fact, which indicated the rise of one species of animal into another. The theory has been laid down, and facts fished up to support it. I believe it to be a monstrous error in philosophy, which will be a theme for ridicule before another twenty years.

“In theology, its influence would be deadly; and this is all I care about. On the scientific matter, you do well to use your own judgment.

“The Lord bless you, and lead you into His truth more and more! “Yours heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

At one of the memorable gatherings under “The Question Oak,” a student asked Mr. Spurgeon, “Are we justified in receiving Mr. Darwin’s or any other theory of evolution?” The President’s answer was — ” My reply to that enquiry can best take the form of another question? — Does Revelation teach us evolution? It never has struck me, and it does not strike now, that the theory of evolution can, by any process, of argument, be reconciled with the inspired record of the Creation. You remember how it is distinctly stated, again and again, that the Lord made each creature ‘after his kind.’ So we read, ‘And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind and God saw that it was good.’ And again, ‘And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind and it was so. And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind and God saw that it was good.’ Besides, brethren, I would remind you that, after all these years in which so many people have been hunting up and down the world for ‘the missing link’ between animals and men, among all the monkeys that the wise men have examined, they have never discovered one who has rubbed his tail off, and ascended in the scale of creation so far as to take his place as the equal of our brothers and sisters of the great family of mankind. Mr. Darwin has never been able to find the germs of an Archbishop of Canterbury in the body of a tomcat or a billy goat, and I venture to prophesy that he will never accomplish such a feat as that. There are abundant evidences that one creature inclines towards another in certain respects, for all are bound together in a wondrous way which indicates that they are all the product of God’s creative will; but what the advocates of evolution appear to forget is, that there is nowhere to be discovered an actual chain of growth from one creature to another, — there are breaks here and there, and so many missing links that the chain cannot be made complete. There are, naturally enough, many resemblances between them, because they have all been wrought by the one great master-mind of God, yet each one has its own peculiarities. The Books of Scripture are many, yet the Book, the Bible, is one; the waves of the sea are many, yet the sea is one; and the creatures that the Lord has made are many, yet the Creation is one. Look at the union between the animal and the bird in the bat or in the flying squirrel; think of the resemblance between a bird and a fish in the flying fish; yet, nobody, surely, would venture to tell you that a fish ever grew into a bird, or that a bat ever became a butterfly or an eagle. No; they do not get out of their own spheres. All the evolutionists in the world cannot ‘improve’ a mouse so that it will develop into a cat, or evolve a golden eagle out of a barn-door fowl. Even where one species very closely resembles another, there is a speciality about each which distinguishes it from all others.

“I do not know, and I do not say, that a person cannot believe in Revelation and in evolution, too, for a man may believe that which is infinitely wise and also that which is only asinine. In this evil age, there is apparently nothing that a man cannot believe he can believe, ex animo, the whole Prayer-book of the Church of England! It is pretty much the same with other matters; and, after all, the greatest discoveries made by man must be quite babyish to the infinite, mind of God. He has told us all that we need to know in order that we may become like Himself, but He never meant us to know all that He knows.”

**ARBITRATION.**

When the proposed Treaty of Arbitration between Great Britain and the United States was under consideration in the year 1887, Mr. Spurgeon wrote, in reply to a request for his opinion with regard to it — “Concerning the substitution of arbitration for war, there can surely be no question among Christian men. I rejoice that the two great Protestant nations should seek to lead the way in making permanent arrangements for the future settlement of differences in a reasonable manner. May they succeed so admirably as to induce others to follow their excellent example! It is surely time that we reasoned like men instead of killing like tigers.”

**UNFERMENTED COMMUNION WINE.**

A question having been raised, in The Christian Commonwealth, as to the wine used at the communion services at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Mr. Spurgeon wrote to the Editor as follows —

“Westwood,  
“June 20, 1887.  
“Dear Sir,

“We use Frank Wright’s unfermented wine at the Tabernacle, and have never used any other unfermented wine. I am given to understand that some of the so-called unferrnented wine has in it a considerable amount of alcohol; but Mr. Wright’s is the pure juice of the grape. One person advertised his wine as used at the Tabernacle though we had never used it even on one occasion. So far as we are concerned, we use no wine but that produced by Messrs. Frank Wright, Mundy, and Co.

“Yours truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
**GROCERS’ LICENSES.**

In June, 1887, Mr. Spurgeon gave an address in connection with the Tabernacle Total Abstinence Society, in the course of which he said — “I could tell some dreadful stories of respectable Christian men, whom I know, who come home from business with heavy hearts because they do not know whether or not their wives will be drunk. They have prayed with them, they have wept with them, they have forgiven them many times, and vet the grocer’s shop has been too much for them. Do not talk about the public-house. That thing is straight and above-board, — that much I will say for it, — but the grocer’s shop is the place that ruins an immense number of women. They can get the drink there, and put it down under the name of something else; and I believe there never was a worse move for the temperance of this nation than that which made it easy to buy drink at grocers’ shops. I have not known a grocer who has not been deteriorated by the sale of it. I do not say they have become bad men, but they have not become better men.”

The solicitor to the Off-licenses Association wrote to Mr. Spurgeon, challenging some of his statements, and referring to the Report of the Committee of the House of Lords upon the matter; the following reply was sent to him —

“Westwood,  
“June 30, 1887.  
“Dear Sir,

“I thank you for your letter. I am always ready to hear the other side, and especially when the pleading is so temperate in spirit. I do not intend to enter into controversy, but my opinion has not been arrived at without observation. I believe myself to be much better able to form an opinion than those who are engaged in the trade. Facts well known to us as ministers cannot be divulged. The ease with which drink can be obtained at respectable shops, I believe to be a peculiarly evil form of temptation; but to publish the facts which prove it would be as painful as it would be easy.

“A Committee of the House of Lords can prove nothing; the witnesses are silenced by a delicacy which their position demands. “Yours truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
**THE THEATRE.**

An actress in America, replying to some ministerial criticisms upon the influence of the stage upon religion and morals, made the following statement to an interviewer — “Among the best friends I have ewer had, have been such eminent divines as Henry Ward Beecher, Dr. Chapin, Dr. Talrnage, Dr. Swing, Mr. Spurgeon, and others; and I am sure that none of these thought that my profession, rightly followed, carries with it any danger to good morals or religion.”

The minister who had been in controversy with the lady wrote to Mr. Spurgeon, enquiring as to the truth of this statement, and he replied thus —

“London,  
“January 24, 1888.  
“Dear Sir,

“So far as I can charge my memory, I have never before heard of Miss — am decidedly of the opinion that the stage is the enemy of ‘good morals and religion.’ It has not improved this lady’s truthfulness if she mentioned me as enrolled among her friends. She may be a very excellent person, but I know nothing of her.

“Yours truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

Mr. Spurgeon’s opinions concerning professing Christians going to the theater are well known. Perhaps his most notable utterance upon that subject was evoked by the attendance of a large number of clergymen and minister’s at a special performance in the Shaftesbury Theatre. Shortly afterwards, in a sermon at the Tabernacle, he said — “The Christian Church of the present day has played the harlot beyond any church in any other day. There are no amusements too vile for her. Her’ pastors have filled a theater of late; and, by their applause, have set their mark of approval upon the labors of play-actors. To this point have we come at last, a degradation which was never reached even in Rome’s darkest hour; — and if you do not love Christ enough to be indignant about it, the Lord have mercy upon you!”

**BRETHREN AND BRETHRENISM.**

In May, 1890, a correspondent wrote to ask Mr. Spurgeon some questions concerning Brethren and Brethrenism, and at the same time mentioned the following incident in connection with one of the Pastor’s sermons —

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“This may interest you. My father-in-law, twenty-five years ago, lived in London, and on one occasion went to hear you preach. Your text was Nathan’s words to David, ‘Thou art the man!’ He had been exercised as to doing some little preaching; and as you proceeded with your sermon, he thought, ‘Well, there is nothing for me here.’ You went on, however, to picture the Plague of London, and asked, ‘What would you think of a man who, during the time of the Plague, had a specfic for it, but kept it in his pocket?’ Then, after a pause, and with outstretched finger, you called out, ‘Thou art the man!’ This went right home to my father-in-law’s heart, and he thought, ‘That’s for me! I’ve heard enough!’ From that time he began to preach, and has continued to do so ever since, the result being blessing to many souls, and much glory to the Name of Jesus. His thought was that he had the specific for the plague of sin in his pocket, but that he was failing to administer it’, one of his favorite illustrations of the simplicity of the gospel message is the story of your own conversion, under the local preacher’s sermon upon the text. ‘Look unto Me. and be ye saved,’ which story I once came across in my reading, and showed to him.”

In reply to the foregoing letter, Mr. Spurgeon wrote — “Westwood,  
“May 9, 1890.  
“Dear Sir,

“I cannot say that I have changed my opinion as to Brethrenism, but with many Brethren I have always been on most brotherly terms. I don’t think I am bound to answer your questions about individuals. I believe that I was loved by C. S., and that Mr. Kelly regards me in the kindest manner; and I return the like to the memory of the first, and to the other wire survives. I am, perhaps, better able to sympathize with their separateness now than aforetime; but their ideas of the ministry I do not accept.

“The sermon you mention was not printed. I rejoice that your father-in-law was; set working through hearing it; and I pray that we may each one in his appointed way, hold and spread the truth of the gospel of our Lord who cometh quickly.

“Yours very truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
**FUNERAL REFORM.**  
Mr. Spurgeon wrote the following letter to the honorary secretary of the Church of England Burial, Funeral, and Mourning Reform Association — “Westwood,  
“September 11, 1890.  
“Dear Sir,

“I hardly think it can be necessary to say that the expending of money on mere show at funerals is absurd, unthrifty, and even cruel. I hope the common sense of the people will soon destroy customs which oppress the widow and fatherless by demanding of them an expenditure which they cannot afford. To bedeck a corpse with vain trappings, is a grim unsuitability. Something has been done in the right direction, but I fear your Society has yet to battle with prejudices which are hard to overcome; and when these are conquered, there, will speedily spring up another host of extravagances. I wish you good success in a reform so evidently demanded.

“Yours truly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

CHAPTER 93.

APPRECIATIVE CORRESPONDENTS, 1833-1890.

A LTHOUGH Mr. Spurgeon often found certain portions of his character, and it was; frequently the medium by which he was greatly cheered and encouraged. For many years, not a week passed, and scarcely a day, without tidings reaching him that his sermons or other printed works had been blessed to the salvation of sinners and the edification and strengthening of believers; and he was also constantly reminded, from all quarters of the globe, that prayer for yet larger blessing was continually being presented on his behalf. This assurance was most gratefully received by him, and on many occasions he was quite bowed down under the weight of loving sympathy thus sent to him from far and near. A selection of these letters was given in Vol. 3., in the chapter entitled “Blessing on the Printed Sermons;” so communications of that special character are not inserted in the following pages.

Among the thousands of letters which have had to be read in order to decide which should be used, there are very many that, for various reasons, cannot be included in this work. Some are private documents, never intended to be published; and, of these, a considerable number came from the Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of England, and most of them were written concerning individuals who had formerly been Baptists, and who were seeking admission into the Establishment, or they related to exclergymen who were wishing to enter the Baptist ministry. While some of each class appeared to be acting conscientiously in the steps they were taking, the history of others proved that they were mere adventurers, equally worthless to either Church or Dissent.

Some of Mr. Spurgeon’s correspondents completely changed the tone of their letters in consequence of his earnest contention for the faith; but, instead of giving specimens of the two kinds of epistles, they are omitted altogether. Controversial matters have been, to a large extent, excluded; otherwise, a chapter or two might have been devoted to the  
correspondence which, at various times, caused considerable excitement, if nothing more. The details of Mr. Spurgeon’s career were so constantly proclaimed, with more or less accuracy, to the whole world, that there is the less need, in this work, to refer to certain topics which are already matters of public knowledge.

The letters to and from Mr. Spurgeon would have been sufficient to fill several volumes the size of the present one, and readers will hardly need the assurance that it has been no light task to select those which would be fairly representative of the Pastor’s busy life. Among the numerous interesting communications which he preserved, but which are not included in this work, are very hearty invitations to visit Victoria, and Canada, and South Africa, — at least partly for rest; and earnest requests to him to take part in various Conferences of Baptists or other bodies of believers in Sweden, Norway, Holland, Switzerland, and India; all of which had to be declined with regret. Space could not be spared for two lengthy letters from Dr. R. W. Dale, of Birmingham, and Dr. Leonard Bacon, of New Haven, Connecticut, making preliminary enquiries as to the possibility of Mr. Spurgeon delivering the Lyman Beecher lectures at Yale College; nor was there room for the long explanatory epistle in which Dr. J. H. Vincent, of Plainfield, New Jersey, very earnestly entreated the Pastor to accept the office of “Dean of the Department of Biblical Theology to the Chautauqua School.” In these cases also, only a negative reply could be returned.

Applications for articles in American and other religious and secular papers and magazines; were constantly being received; they often contained the offer of an honorarium, or a draft for the amount which the Editors judged to be adequate; but, almost invariably, they had to be refused, because Mr. Spurgeon’s literary labors demanded every spare moment which he could devote to them. Most of the requests for interviews met with a similar fate, though exceptions were occasionally made, and the publication of the conversations which then took place usually involved further heavy additions to the Pastor’s correspondence.

For the purpose of making some sort of classification, “Letters from Ministerial Brethren” are inserted first. These will show how widespread and intense was the esteem in which Mr. Spurgeon was held by ministers of the gospel, both in the Church of England and among the various Nonconformist denominations. They will also help to cast side lights; upon the Pastor’s character and work, and so further reveal their far-reaching influence and usefulness. “Letters from American and Canadian Friends” seemed to be sufficiently numerous and important to be placed in a section by themselves. “Miscellaneous Letters” could scarcely be classified, so they are simply arranged in chronological order. The illustrations, on pages 185 and 189, are specimens of the many instances in which Mr. Spurgeon’s portrait appeared with those of the principal representative men of the day.

**LETTERS FROM MINISTERIAL BRETHREN**

cannot be better commenced than by the insertion of a loving epistle, written by Dr. Alexander Fletcher, before Mr. Spurgeon’s marriage. He added this postscript, and sent it on to the lady mentioned in it, who has carefully treasured it until the present time — “Sweet love, will this please you? Yes, it will. Every blessing on you! — C. H. S.”

“Cromer,  
“Norfolk,  
“November 16, 1855.

“Dear Young Brother,

“What a delightful, exciting, encouraging meeting we had last Thursday week in your hallowed sanctuary! The smile of God abundantly rested upon us. It was a little Heaven below. Truly, it was good to be there!

“I am looking forward, with great interest, to the evening when we hope you will preach in Finsbury Chapel. When we traveled together from Writtle, I mentioned the evening of the first day of the New Year, namely, Tuesday, January 1st. If nothing comes in the way, I anticipate an august assembly, God’s gracious presence, and much good. Due notice will be given, and we hope to witness a gathering and showers of blessing never to be forgotten. Favor me with a few lines. I return home tomorrow.

“I need not say how much I was pleased with a certain lady, to whom you kindly introduced me. I hope, like yourself, she will acknowledge me as her father She is everything I could wish. May your fellowship on earth be of long duration, and be the sweet prelude of your eternal fellowship beyond the skies! Amen!

“Always yours affectionately,  
“Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.”  
“ALEXR. FLETCHER.”

In those early days, Mr. Spurgeon did not preserve so many of the letters he received as he did in later years, so there is a long interval between the one printed above and the following. It appears that the Pastor, and his friend, Revelation Samuel Martin, of Westminster Chapel, had both been blessed to a certain individual concerning whom a correspondent wrote to Mr. Spurgeon. He passed on the good news to Mr. Martin, who wrote in reply —

“19, Belgrave Road,  
“Belgravia, S.W.,  
“December 17, 1870.

“My Dear Friend,

“Your welcome letter, and the letter of your friend, are in my hand. I thank you for your own loving epistle, and I thank you also for permitting me to read the other letter, and for thus making me a sharer of your joy. What is our hope, and joy, and crown of rejoicing, if not found in such facts as that which ‘W. J. S.’ narrates? Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost!

“Whenever you feel moved to cast your net in our waters, know and remember that our ship, or shore, or whatever may be needful to carry out the figure perfectly, is at your service. A prayerful and praiseful welcome will always be given you.

“I have requested one of my deacons to leave at your door a volume which I beg you to accept.

“As you read this, ask our Heavenly Father to give me back my power of voice, if it be His will, that I may continue to preach His Son, Christ Jesus, with whom I feel more closely united by means of every affliction which I suffer.

“What a large letter I have inflicted upon you! Forgive the infliction. The Lord keep you!

“Always yours,  
“Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.”  
“SAMUEL MARTIN.”

Mr. Spurgeon was very grieved whenever illness prevented him from fulfilling his engagements to preach at the Tabernacle or elsewhere. On one such occasion, he received from Mr. Chown the following loving brotherly letter —

“24, Marlborough Hill,  
“St. John’s Wood, N.W.,  
“May 10, 1876.

“My Very Dear Friend,

“I received your secretary’s letter, last night, announcing your inability to be with us on the 23rd inst. It will be a great  
disappointment to our friends, but we will turn our anticipations into sympathy and prayer. May He, whose love and wisdom have permitted the stroke, give the blessing proportioned to the blow! As the chastening hand is laid upon you, may the supporting arm be underneath and round about you! Many have never felt the Lord so near and precious as in the furnace; may this be your happy lot, and the flames be powerless except to keep off the enemy, and burn off all bonds! There are times when our very tears become wellsprings of peace and comfort; may it be thus, beloved friend, with yours! We are all with you in spirit. May God bless you!

“Forgive this line or two before leaving for Montacute, where two services await me today. Again, and evermore, the Lord bless you! “Yours very heartily,  
“Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.”  
“J. P. CHOWN.”

When the Princess Alice steamer sank in the Thames, on September 3, 1878, and hundreds of lives were lost, Mr. Spurgeon preached two sermons upon the calamity. The following letter refers to the one entitled “Divine Interpositions” —

“Camden House, Dulwich, S.E.,  
“September 26, 1878.

“Reverend and Dear Sir,  
“This is not the first time that we have exchanged friendly greetings. I am now moved to write to you to ask if your sermon on the Thames collision, as reported in The Daily News of the 9th inst., is published in extenso; if so, where can I get it? I am quoting, of course with approval, a passage from it in my next Sunday’s sermon, and would like to have your exact words, if possible.

“One sentence, however, of your discourse leads me to offer for your kind acceptance my last new volume on The Mystery of Pain, Death, and Sin. You are reported to have said — ‘I do not attempt to justify the ways of God to men, but I believe they are all for the best.’ Well, I, too, devoutly believe they are all for the best, but I have attempted to justify them.

“If you read my book, you must not mind a page here and there, sadly jarring on your own feelings; but bravely read straight on, and it is possible you may find much to cheer and strengthen your belief in God’s great and unfaltering goodness.

“I sympathized with you very much in your late illness, and am very glad you are at work again, and hope many years of noble activity are still before you.

“Believe me,  
“Most sincerely yours;,  
“CHARLES VOYSEY.”

In Vol. 2, Chapter 1, mention was made of one of Mr. Spurgeon’s sermons which Dr. Livingstone had carried with him through a great part of the African Continent. The following letter, from Dr. W. Garden Blaikie, tells how the discourse ultimately came into the Pastor’s possession —

“9, Palmerston Road,  
“Edinburgh,  
“April 22, 1879.

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“ I hope the publishers of The Catholic Presbyterian send it to you, as I requested them to do. I am Editor, and wish to be even more Catholic than Presbyterian. I have a proposal to make, and hope you will excuse me. Without introduction, it is this. The first vol. of the Life of Dr. Duff will be out next month. I am going to ask you to write for the said Catholic Presbyterian a notice thereof; particulars not needed, — but just your view of such a man as Duff, and of foreign mission work. I would get you an early copy, you would run over it at a sitting, you would write your first thoughts as they came, you would, in our Journal, secure thousands of readers not without influence, you would exemplify and promote union, and I think, with God’s blessing, you would give a real impulse to foreign missions. In the first number of the Journal, I had a noble paper, by David Livingstone, on Missionary Sacrifices. I wish now to follow it up with a word from you. Do not deny this, if you can grant my request. I am trying, with all my might, to combine and impel Christian effort in the wisest ways of working for our Lord.

“Apropos of Livingstone, I may tell you that I am doing something about a ‘Life’ intended to bring out the more spiritual, missionary, and domestic qualities of the man, 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 written, ‘Very good. — D. L.’ Would you like it?

“If you do not take to the idea of Duff (although it is the best I can think of), tell me, please, if any other presents itself. Your views of our Church organization generally would be very valuable. With great respect,

“Yours very truly,  
“W. G. BLAIKIE.”

At Mr. Spurgeon’s pastoral silver wedding, the celebration of which was delayed through his long and serious illness, he was very strongly urged to abstain, as far as possible, at least for a year, from all services away from the Tabernacle. One of the ministerial brethren, who took an active part in the proceedings on that memorable occasion, was Dr. Charles Stanford, and it happened that the Pastor was under promise to preach for him at Denmark Place Chapel, Camberwell, a few days later. Mr. Spurgeon thought it was extremely kind on his friend’s part voluntarily to release him from the engagement; and the way in which he did so added to the value of the action, which was probably unique in Mr. Spurgeon’s history; for people were always so anxious to obtain his help, whatever the cost to him might be, that we are not aware that anyone else ever wrote to him another such letter as this —

“8, North Terrace,  
“Camberwell,  
“May 22, 1879.

“My Dear Friend,

“Delighted and most grateful as I should have been to have your service in average circumstances, my judgment has always been against allowing you to come On the 28th. I only stated the case, and accepted your generous offer because my folk were so anxious that I should do so.

“Although the bills are out, I have ordered slips, with ‘Postponed,’ printed in red letters, to be pasted over them. It is entire by my act and deed, not yours; and if any remarks are made, they will be made about me. It is not likely that I should be a party to risk doing you harm! Now this will be a conspicuous fact, which can easily be quoted, and which will, I hope, make you able to decline all applications from outside the Tabernacle for the next twelve months.

“May God bless and prosper you richly, still more and more, in all manner of ways!  
“Affectionately yours,  
“CHARLES STANFORD.”

In a later letter, Dr. Stanford wrote — “Purely out of love to you, and at a great loss and self-denial to myself, have I resigned the privilege of your sermon for us tomorrow night. I hardly recollect anything that has cost me so much, or that I have been so very, very sorry to give up. When I saw how far from perfect recovery you are, and how miraculous your home work is, I felt shocked with a fear that I had selfishly taken advantage of your generosity in allowing you to preach for me, especially at the beginning of your new campaign, so setting an example, and more especially as, in the circumstances, it looked as if I had some idea of a quid pro quo! I have, however, taken care to make public the fact that it is all my own doing, and that you were ready to come to us.

“An engagement in a little place takes up as much time as in a greater building, and if you had preached for us, no doubt you would have been pestered by many similar applications, which, if you had even partially accepted, might have worn away your working power, all of which is wanted for your own enormous apparatus of service.”

Mr. Spurgeon, on his part, did all he could to compensate for the disappointment by sending a contribution for the fund in aid of which he was to have preached, and also by presenting some of his books to Dr. Stanford, who wrote, in acknowledgment —

“My Dear Friend,

“You stun me. I can only say, in a short sum tota, — thank you! Our school people are also much surprised and obliged by the ten pounds… Your sermons always quicken me, because they are so full of God’s truth, put in your own way, and are so all-alive. Nothing ought to have the very soul and essence of a man in it so much as a volume of his sermons; that is another reason why I am glad to have some of yours. I have had many sheaves of them, but they are all about in the world now, and many have been preached from church pulpits by old friends. I have looked into The Treasury, just to see its plan, and form some idea of its materials, and I am sure it is a mine. As to the sermons, I pray that they may help me to a knowledge of the secret I so long to find out. I want to win souls, and if it please God, to win them now. I think your list of subjects would alone help me. You remind me in your titles of old Thomas Adams. I have nearly 4,000 books; but, till yours came, I think not twenty-five volumes of modern sermons were in my library.

“Affectionately yours,  
“CHARLES STANFORD.”

The following letter from Dr. W. Morley Punshon is interesting as showing how such an eloquent preacher and lecturer shrank from occupying the pulpit at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, although deeply attached to the Pastor. He did, however, preach there during the time when the Wesleyans were making a special effort to clear off the debts from their chapels, and the building was lent to them.

“Tranby,  
“Brixton Rise, S.W.,  
“October 3, 1879.

“My Dear Sir,

“My only reason for declining the great honor conveyed to me by Mr. Higgs is really my physical inefficiency. I eschew all large places, even in my own denomination, of set purpose. I cannot bear the excitement; and the three months’ anticipation of a service in the Tabernacle would make me thoroughly ill.

“I would do much, both to further your holiday, which I trust may tend to lengthen a life so precious to all of us who love the Lord, — and to manifest the Catholicity, nay, the oneness of our spirit in Christ; but pray excuse me in this.

“With much esteem,  
“Believe me,  
“Yours very sincerely,

“W. MORLEY PUNSHON.”  
The following letter, from Dr. Culross, needs no explanation —

“22, Lynedoch Street,  
“Glasgow,  
“18 June, 1880.

“My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“Either you have received, or you will immediately receive, a letter from D. Anderson, Esq., of Kingillie, near Nairn, and another from Mr. Lee, Free Church minister there, aiming to secure a conditional promise from you to preach in Nairn, next year, in connection with their new place of worship. I have great pleasure in seconding their application. They would endeavor to make your visit as agreeable as possible; and, if you could spare the time, a week or ten days spent there might invigorate you greatly in health. Knowing Mr. Anderson, I am confident he would lay himself out for this purpose. Your sermons are circulated in great numbers throughout the surrounding district, and a visit from you would be welcomed by thousands. I do not think you have ever preached within many miles of the place.

“If it were not that I think a visit to Nairn might refresh and strengthen you, I would not write as I do; but it would be a very different thing from coming to Glasgow. We remember your visit here with gratitude. A young man, who unexpectedly was idle on the afternoon you preached, and who ‘accidentally’ was offered a ticket by a Mend who was prevented from attending, went out of curiosity to hear you, and was led to the Savior. I have since baptized him, and received him into church-fellowship. Doubtless there are many similar cases of which we do not know. I trust you are again restored after your recent attack.

“With much esteem,  
“Faithfully yours,  
“JAMES CULROSS.”  
Dr. Henry Allon wrote this hearty and cheering letter to Mr. Spurgeon in reply to an invitation to speak at the Orphanage Festival —

“10, St. Mary’s Road,  
“Canonbury, N.,  
“May 31, 1881.

“My Dear John Ploughman,

“You do not say at what hour your meeting is, — whether at the first watch, or the second watch, or at cockcrowing, — not the last, I hope. I have promised the Lord Mayor and my wife, — who is only a woman, though a good one, — to dine at the Mansion House at half-past six, on June 22. Now, if your meeting is in the afternoon, — as I think it sometimes is, — I shall deem it a privilege to be at it, and with you.

“I can scarcely admit to myself that your kind and valuable service to us, at the opening of our new building, enhances the feeling of obligation to serve you, or do anything you may think proper to ask. Your great service to the Master, — your simple and unimpaired fidelity to Him, to His truth; and to your brethren, — lay us all under obligations to help you in every way that is possible.

“One could not say this to a young man; but the years have gone by when it can do any injury to say it, or anything but good, to you. For my part, I am very covetous of the real love and esteem of my brethren. I think it makes me tender and humble more than anything, save the ‘Well Done’ of the Master. Sometimes we see men injured by a great success, such as your ministry has been; but God has mercifully kept you from this, and I think all your brethren feel that every year has wrought an added sanctity and grace, so that their love abounds yet more and more to you. There is no service, in my power, that you can ask, that I shall not feel it a great gratification to give. I want to take your Sunday service some day when you are unable to preach.

“Cordially yours,  
“HENRY ALLON.”

Dr. Allon’s wish to take a service at the Tabernacle was duly realized, and when he had been once, he had to go again, and Mr. Spurgeon on more than one occasion preached for him at Islington.

Another of the speakers, invited by Mr. Spurgeon to the Orphanage Festival of 1881, wrote to him thus heartily accepting the invitation —

“11, Clarendon Villas,  
“Barry Road,  
“Peckham Rye, S.E.,  
“June 6, 1881.

“My Dear Sir,  
“I am greatly astonished that you should be aware of my existence; and as to the idea of your catching any flame from me, — I am irresistibly reminded of the words. ‘I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?’ Would to God that I could catch something of that flame which has kindled so many hearts!

“I have an engagement on the 22nd inst., but I must manage to make some arrangement by which I can have the happiness of accepting your kind invitation to Stockwell.

“As; you are good enough to send me some advertisements of your invaluable publications, the principle of Reciprocity (now’ so strangely popular) requires that I should send you the only advertisements I have in hand just now. Of course, I do not expect that one, so overwhelmed as you are with gigantic labors, can pay us a visit. F7

“With most earnest prayers that God may grant you health and vigor, and may make you, for many years to come, a yet more abundant blessing to the Universal Church,

“I am, dear sir,  
“Yours most sincerely,  
“HUGH PRICE HUGHES.”  
Mr. Spurgeon was very gratified by the receipt of the following letter from one of the fathers of the Free Church of Scotland —

“St. Bernard’s Crescent,  
“Edinburgh,  
“June 20, 1881.

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“I am a ‘retired’ minister. In June, 1821 (60 years ago), I began my ministerial work. In August, 1876, I ceased to be in charge of a congregation. I then became colleague and minister emeritus of the Free North Church, Stirling. I am the oldest minister, in point of ordination, in the Free Church of Scotland. I am the oldest surviving ex-Moderator of the General Assembly of the Free Church.

“As to my relation to yourself, I have read, I think, everything you have published, down to your latest sermon and the latest number of *The Sword and the Trowel*. I love your writings for their true Puritan ring, for their soundness, their liveliness, and thoroughly Evangelical character. I do what I can to commend you and your great work, believing that, in doing so, I am serving our Lord. I am not a Baptist (I have written a little on the other side in my day), but I am a lover of all who love the Lord. On this ground, I claim you as a brother; and I will ever pray that the Master may more and more honor you by making you an instrument of good.

“With Christian affection, and sincere goodwill, I remain, “Very faithfully yours,  
“ALEX BEITH, aged 83.”

For several years, when arrangements for the autumnal session ,of the Baptist Union were being made, Mr. Spurgeon was asked, both by the local friends, and by the secretary of the Union, to preach in connection with the week’s proceedings. He fully appreciate, d the honor thus conferred upon him; he also felt the responsibility of addressing the assembled representatives of the denomination, and the hundreds or thousands of other persons who constituted his congregation on those occasions; and the messages he then delivered in various parts of the kingdom were among the most powerful utterances that ever fell from his lips. Yet, long before he was compelled to withdraw from the Union for reasons; stated in a later chapter, he strongly urged the responsible officials to ask someone else to take the position which had so often been occupied by him. It was in reply to one of his letters, to this effect, that the loving epistle, printed on the following page, was penned by Revelation W. Sampson, who was then secretary of the Union.  
“Baptist Union,  
“19, Castle Street,  
“Holborn, E.C.,  
“May 24, 1881.

“My Dear Friend,

“To say all that I should like to say, and, indeed, what merely ought to be said, would sound, so much like flattery, — which you would be as sorry to read as I should be to write,. — that I scarcely know how to reply to yours of the 20th inst. The fact is, your position is unique. We all acknowledge and rejoice in it, and are thankful to our Father in Heaven that He has raised up such an one as you are amongst us. That is simply a fact to be recognized.

“How you have stood the work, and borne what everyone must feel to be far more difficult than the work, the temptation that a position like yours involves, has always been to me a wonder. God’s grace has indeed been magnified in you. To Him be all the praise.

“You say, ‘Do you, yourself, think it right that one man should so perpetually have the honor of preaching to the Union?’ My only reply is, — Were you other than you are, you would not have been so asked; being what you are, we all feel grateful to God when He helps you to speak to us. Depend upon it, as long as God gives you strength, the people will feel these great gatherings incomplete without you. But the tax on your strength I feel to be so great that, after what you have said, I dare not say another word. I wish I could have held out some ray of hope to the friends at Portsmouth. Any inconvenience that I might be put to in the event of your being unable to attend, when the time came, is not to be thought of. When we feared, last autumn, that you might not be able to be with us, I wrote to Stowell Brown, asking him if he would come prepared to speak, — and willing to speak or be silent, as you were able or not. By return of post, came back the kindest letter consenting most gladly. Any of your brethren would do the same for you, such is the position you have secured in their esteem and love.

“May the Lord’s richest blessing be with you and yours! “Believe me,  
“Yours most sincerely,

“W. M. SAMPSON.”

1881 was the year in which the Baptist Union autumnal session was held at Portsmouth and Southampton, and the local committees in both places so energetically supported Mr. Sampson’s plea that, ultimately, Mr. Spurgeon promised to preach in each of the towns. On October 26 and 27, he was graciously helped to fulfill the engagements, and none who were present are likely to forget the discourses he then delivered. At Southampton, Mr. Spurgeon was the guest of Canon Wilberforce, and he and many other Church of England dignitaries were present at the service, and they also privately enjoyed much true Christian communion with the Pastor’, though part of the time they devoted to a very vigorous controversy upon Baptismal Regeneration, in which Lord Radstock proved himself to be a most doughty champion on the Evangelical side. Early in 1882, Canon Wilberforce asked for tickets of admission to the Tabernacle, and, shortly afterwards, wrote to Mr. Spurgeon as follows —

“The Deanery,  
“Southampton,  
“February 24, 1882.

“My Dear Friend,  
“Don’t get canonical; I would not have you anything but what you are!

“We were prevented, at the last moment, from enjoying the privilege of the Tabernacle service; but sent some friends, who very greatly appreciated it.

“Will you come and see us one day again? Would it be possible for you to run down on Monday, March 6, and read the Bible to us at our quiet home Bible-reading? How delighted we should be, and we would take such care of you for the night; or, if absolutely necessary, you could return to London the same evening, though this would be most disappointing to us. Do come; it will be no exertion to you, as there will not be above twenty persons, and you can help us, and speak to us of Him who has so blessedly used you. My wife sends her most kind regards, and begs you to come.

“Ever most sincerely yours,  
“BASIL WILBERFORCE.”

When arrangements were being made for the Baptist Union autumnal session to be held in Liverpool, in 1882, Revelation Hugh Stowell Brown wrote —

“29, Falkner Square,  
“Liverpool,  
“June 12, ‘82.

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“In the name of our churches here, I write to entreat the favor of your being with us to preach at the autumnal meetings of the Baptist Union to be held in Liverpool in the first week of October. Hoping you are well, I am, with best wishes, and with the very earnest desire that you will comply with our request,

“Yours faithfully,  
“H. STOWELL BROWN.”

Mr. Spurgeon once more stated the various reasons why he should not always be the preacher on these special occasions, and, in reply, Mr. Brown wrote —

“My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“We are all as desirous as ever that you should preach at the autumnal meeting. I fully appreciate your hesitancy to take so prominent a place, and to do so arduous a work, year after year; but no one else can do it, and upon your advent very much depends. I hope that, should you come, we can make a handsome collection for your Orphanage. I say this, not as a bribe, — for your resources; for the needs of your Orphanage are in far better hands than ours, and the Lord will not suffer them to fail; but I say it as expressive of the love in which we hold you, and of our wish to do what we think would be gratifying to you.

“I must now leave the decision to your own judgment, earnestly hoping that you will come, yet very unwilling to impose upon you a work which, for various reasons, must be a heavy addition to your many other burdens.

“Yours faithfully,  
“H. STOWELL BROWN.”

Again, and for the last time, Mr. Spurgeon yielded to the entreaties of his brethren; the service was another truly memorable one, and the net proceeds for the Orphanage amounted to £131 5s. 6d.

Revelation Robert Taylor, the Presbyterian minister of Upper Norwood, was one of Mr. Spurgeon’s very special personal friends. He lived so close to “Westwood” that he did not often write to the Pastor, but one of his letters to Mrs. Spurgeon has been preserved; it was written shortly after he had taken part in the Annual Festival at the Stockwell Orphanage, June 21, 1882: —

“Birchwood,  
“Beulah Hill,  
“Thursday morning.

“Dear Mrs.. Spurgeon,

“I take the liberty of sending, with this, The Outlook, of this week, which has a little article which I wrote on the Orphanage Fete. I don’t send it because it deserves your attention, or is worthy of the subject; but just as the heart tribute of a neighbor who greatly admires and loves your distinguished husband, and who highly prizes the privilege which you and he, in your great kindness, allow him of sometimes visiting ‘Westwood.’

“With affectionate greeting to Mr. Spurgeon, I remain,  
“Dear Mrs. Spurgeon,  
“Very faithfully yours,

“ROBERT TAYLOR.”

In the autumn of 1882, when arranging the supplies for the Tabernacle pulpit during his absence at Mentone, Mr. Spurgeon sought to secure the services of Rev. Charles Garrett, of Liverpool. Though this proved to be impossible, the Pastor was; greatly cheered by the receipt of the following reply from his eminent Wesleyan friend —

“Leeds,  
“October 10, 1882.  
“My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“Many thanks for your welcome letter, and its kind enclosure. I shall treasure both while I live. The fact is, I have long been about the most devoted admirer that you have. I have thanked God for giving you to the Church, over and over again; and I always say that the whole Church ought to pray that God may preserve and help you. Hence you may imagine how I prize your kind gift.

“As to occupying the pulpit for you, I would do anything in my power to relieve you from either work or anxiety; but this year I am very heavily taxed. Everybody wants me, and all seem to think that, as I am President, they have a claim to me. I am here at our Foreign Missionary meetings, and then I go for a series of meetings in Scotland.

“Have you ever preached on the Witness of the Spirit? If not, I wish you would. It is a subject on which many are greatly perplexed. Send it to me when it is published. God bless and keep you!

“Yours truly,  
“CHARLES GARRETT.”

The following letter is a specimen of the correspondence between Mr. Spurgeon and Canon Harford, when the latter was one of the Canons Residentiary at Westminster Abbey; he had met the Pastor some time before, and had promised him a medallion executed by himself — “Dean’s Yard,  
“Westminster,  
“March 6, 1883.

“My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“But for an inhuman amount of work which has kept me chained to this Abbey Rock of Westminster, I should be prevented by shame from writing this letter, for the little medallion of the Good Shepherd has been waiting more than a year in the hope of being sent to you! My young page-boy, who will take it to ‘Westwood’ this morning, knows how earnestly I have been hoping to find a free day, in which I could carry it to you myself, and how, day after day, I have been hampered with things immediately around me. An hour ago, all was arranged for our joint pilgrimage today, but the receipt of the enclosed note from an excellent Christian woman (who, for some months past, has been anxious about the health of her old mother to whom she has for years devoted — I ought to say, sacrificed herself,) tells me that, whilst inclination would carry me off to your beautiful Beulah, duty directs me to go at once to Bond Street.

“You must, assuredly, have written some little book, or pamphlet, confirming the hope; and comforting the heart of a believer at such a moment; and if you would kindly give me the name of it, or the numbers or texts of any of your beautiful sermons wherein you have dwelt upon the life of the world to come, I shall feel greatly obliged, and will get them from Paternoster Row this afternoon. Your sojourn on the Mediterranean shore, has, I trust, inspired you with new poetry as well as a fresh stock of health.

“Praying that you may long be preserved to benefit and delight the world, I remain, always,  
“Revered and loved Pastor,  
“Your sincere admirer and fellow-laborer,  
“FREDERICK K. HARTFORD.”

Mr. Spurgeon sent two sermons which he hoped might prove suitable; one of them was the discourse delivered shortly after his return from Mentone, and entitled, “Supposing Him to be the Gardener.” It is one of the choicest of his sermons, and has been greatly blessed to mourners and others who have read it. Canon Harford’s second letter shows how highly he prized it —

“Dean’s Yard,  
“Westminster,  
“March 7, 1883.

“My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“But little did I guess, on entering my house last night at 10.30, that such a rare and precious feast was prepared for me. Both of those sermons are valuable treasures, but the inspired dream at Mentone is one that exceeds in usefulness as well as in superb cleverness all the memorable sermons I have read from English or from American sources during the last twenty-five years. I have ordered fifty copies today, purposing to send the first to the poor mourner whom your message, is certain to comfort, and another to your genuine admirer, Louisa, Lady Ashburton. Some shall go to France, where I hope a translation will be made into the language of the country; and some will go to certain weak brethren whom I have been lately called to ‘work at’ and endeavor to draw away from Agnosticism and so-called Spiritualism.

“I rejoice to think that you like the general tone of the Good Shepherd medallion. There is a proper angle of light for it, which, as you have discovered, ought to come rather from above than from below, and as you so temptingly mention Saturday, and 3 p.m., as your general free day and free hour, I will arrange (D.V.) to run down. to ‘Westwood,’ on Saturday next, by a train which will arrive soon after 3, in order to enjoy a half-hour refreshing converse with the master-poet and philosopher whose genius has been such a joy and benefit to England.

“I must not forget to tell you how one of the most excellent women I ever knew — and whose loss I shall ever mourn, — always read your sermons from the year 1856, When I was ordained at Croydon, until the year 1868, when she was taken away. Meanwhile, before setting out for a round of work chiefly connected with some thirty letters received this morning from India, I send off this scribble as a token of affectionate homage from —

“Yours ever most joyfully and loyally,  
“FREDERICK K. HARFORD.”  
About a Fortnight later, Canon Wilberforce wrote to Mr. Spurgeon —

“The Deanery,  
“Southampton,  
“March 20, 1883.

“My Dear Friend,

“You M UST — imagine my saying must to an Archbishop like you! but you must come, if only for ten minutes, to the anti-opium meeting in Exeter Hall on May 2. I know you have a horrid ‘Liberation’ meeting at the Tabernacle that night. Come and say a word about liberation from the dominion of a drug; or expect me at the Tabernacle with an amendment tied up in blue ribbon!

“Seriously, in order that this meeting shall be a success, your presence is essential, and mine comparatively immaterial. With most kind remembrances,

“I am, affectionately yours,  
“BASIL WILBERFORCE.”

The following letter shows that a Nonconformist friend wrote to Mr. Spurgeon, in quite a different strain, concerning the same Liberation meeting —  
“8, Russell Road,  
“Kensington,. W.,  
“April 25, 1883.

“My Dear Friend,

“I heard today, with deep regret, from Newman Hall, that you are again in great suffering. I was intending to write and ask if you meant to dine at Mr. Allcroft’s, on Wednesday next, after the Bible Society meeting, at which you and I both have to speak. I was going to say that, although I wanted to attend the Liberation Society meeting in the evening, yet, if you had decided to dine with the Primate of all England, I would go, too, just to guard your Nonconformity from the perversive suasions of an Archbishop and a Bishop. Imagine their success, bringing you over to Mother Church, — surpliced choirs, processions, and incense in the Tabernacle, and yourself invested with cope and chasuble! To avert such a catastrophe, I thought that I had better go with you!

“But I am afraid, from what I hear, that you will not be strong enough even to speak at Exeter Hall, to say nothing of the dinner afterwards, so I shall go to the Liberation Society meeting.

“But, dear friend, I am half afraid that this nonsense is like vinegar upon nitre to you if you are suffering so much. You have one cause for great thankfulness, viz., that you, in your gout, do more good than we ordinary creatures can do in our very best health. May you find the old promise to Israel fulfilled in your experience, ‘I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her.’ “Ever your faithful friend,

“COLMER B. SYMES.”

In another letter to Mr. Spurgeon, Mr. Colmer Symes wrote — “I am personally greatly indebted to you, and I specially want to thank you for all the comfort and help which you have given to my late beloved mother during the last fifteen years of her suffering, helpless life at Torquay. Although she never saw or heard you, she always used to call you her minister. May God still continue to you the grace of a simple, consecrated purpose, and the gifts of such a manifold ministry!”  
The following letter from Dr. J. Guinness Rogers shows what he felt concerning the enormous strain involved in Mr. Spurgeon’s preaching at the Tabernacle for so many years —

“1, Princes Gardens,  
“Clapham Common, S.W.,  
“July 14, 1883.

“My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“I have been longing to get across to see you today, but am baffled in my endeavors, and so write a line to say how pleased I am to see that you have so far recovered from the attack of last Sunday.

“It was a pleasure to be able to help you, and so I faced any dissatisfaction with my absence from my own pulpit, which Mr. Charlesworth occupied very efficiently. However, all Christian people have such sympathy with you that I have no doubt I shall be forgiven even by those most disposed to complain if they do not see their own pastor. Your great congregation is an inspiration, but it is also an overwhelming responsibility. I do not wonder that continuous labor in the Tabernacle tells on you, and in ways you may not suspect. I do not envy the man who can preach (here without having his whole nature strained to the utmost; and that means nervous exhaustion, of all others the most difficult to contend against.

“May the Lord spare you many years to do a work to which not one in ten thousand would be equal!  
“Yours very faithfully,  
“J. GUINNESS ROGERS.”

In the “Westwood” chapter, mention is; made of the Saturday afternoon visitors to the Pastor at his home. One friend who was always welcome was Mr. John M. Cook, a near neighbor of Mr. Spurgeon’s, who constantly urged the Pastor to allow him the pleasure of “personally conducting” him and Mrs. Spurgeon (or his secretary) up the Nile, free of expense, just as his father, Mr. Thomas Cook, had desired the privilege of being Mr. Spurgeon’s guide through the Holy Land. It never seemed possible to arrange for either trip, so both father and son had to be content with an occasional call at “Westwood,” sometimes accompanied by special friends whose acquaintance the Pastor might wish to make. The following letter explains the circumstances under which a meeting was arranged between Mr. Spurgeon and Dr. Welldon, the present Bishop of Calcutta —

“Ludgate Circus,  
“October 30, 1883.  
“My Dear Sir,

“Last night, I was dining at Dulwich, with Mr. Wellden, the newlyappointed head-master of Dulwich College. I met, at his table, my old friend, ex-Judge Saunders, from India, who, in conversation, told me that he had the pleasure of introducing to you at the Tabernacle an Indian Nawab, who was traveling under our arrangements, and that the Nawab stayed through one of your services. Mr. Welldon spoke out very strongly in praise of your work, stated that he had been at the Tabernacle several times to hear you, and longed very much for an introduction to you. I took upon myself to say that there was nothing easier, and that I was quite, sure you would be glad to see him. Judge Saunders then suggested that I should arrange to have the pleasure of introducing Mr. Welldon to you. I explained that Saturday was your general day for receiving friends, and that next Saturday would be the only one on which I shall be at home until near Christmas. I shall be obliged by a line from you saying whether it will be quite convenient for you to see these gentlemen any time after 3 o’clock next Saturday afternoon. With kind regards,

“Yours sincerely,  
“JOHN M. COOK.”

The appointment was confirmed, and duly kept, and so began a peculiarly intimate friendship. Mr. Welldon, in the course of the interview, told Mr. Spurgeon how greatly his grandmother prized the sermons, so the Pastor wrote a note to her, and sent it to her grandson, who then gave the following additional particulars concerning her —  
“Dulwich College, S.E.,  
“November 5, 1883.

“My Dear Sir,

“I am deeply grateful for your kind thought of my grandmother. Nothing, I think, could cheer her so much in her last days as this word from you. It will perhaps be a little interesting to you to know that, some years ago, when I was about to live in Germany, she put into my hands several volumes of your sermons, and made me promise to read one every Sunday morning until I came home, as she thought, poor dear! that Senior Classics were sure to be skeptical, and ever since then I have been a student of your writings, so that I suppose there are few members of the English Church who know them better, or owe more to them than I do.

“I shall be at home on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday in the present week, and shall be delighted if you can come then, or at any other time, and see the College.

“Believe me,  
“Ever faithfully yours,  
“J. E. C. WELLDON.”

Mr. Spurgeon early foretold the elevation of his friend to the episcopate, and playfully expressed the hope that, when Mr. Welldon became a Bishop, he would not forsake his Baptist brother. But when the expected promotion came, he had himself been “promoted to glory.”

Singularly enough, the very day that Mr. John M. Cook’s letter reached Mr. Spurgeon, he received this note from another neighbor, Dr. William Wright, Editorial Superintendent of the ‘British and Foreign Bible Society —

“The Avenue,  
“Beulah Hill,  
“Upper Norwood, “October 30, 1883.

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon, “Sir William Muir and his daughters expressed a strong wish, last night, to see you. They are residing for a few weeks on Beulah Hill. I am exceedingly unwilling to bore you, but I promised, if an opportunity offered, to introduce them to you. Sir William’s wish to see you is no vain curiosity, and I think you receive visitors or, Saturdays. As you know everything, you know the excellent work Sir William did in India in putting down infanticide, and especially as a Christian student of Islamic literature.

“If you could see us next Saturday, or the following, I should take it as a great favor. With kindest regards to Mrs. Spurgeon, “Yours very truly,  
“WM. WRIGHT.”

Possibly, because arrangements had been made for the other visitors to call that week Dr. Wright’s party was asked to come on the following Saturday, and he therefore wrote, on November 9: — “I hope to call tomorrow, about three o’clock, with Sir William Muir, Lady Muir, and perhaps their daughters and my wife. I hope you will not consider our visit a visitation.”

Having once found his way to “Westwood,” Dr. Wright often came; and, as the result, he was able to write the remarkable testimony to Mr. Spurgeon’s literary ability which is given in a later chapter. He was “called home” while the present volume was being compiled; and only a few days before he received the Master’s message, “Come up higher,” he was noticed to be standing at the gate of “Westwood,” and gazing with peculiar wistfulness down the drive which he had so many times traversed on those memorable Saturday afternoons that he had spent with his friend in the garden, or among the books which they both so greatly loved.

This chatty note from a very venerable clergyman is interesting because of his reminiscences of the young Pastor at New Park Street Chapel, and some of his clerical critics —

“62 Torrington Square, W.C.,  
“February 22, 1884.

“My Dear Brother,  
“Blessed as you are in common with all believers, with Divine teaching, and with good temper (which all saints are not), I hope you will pardon me, who preached the gospel before you were born, if I ask you, in one of your valuable sermons, to say something about Shakespeare, — perhaps the greatest genius in his way, who ever lived, — but certainly, a deadly enemy to gospel truth. His plays are getting more and more popular’. It is sad to see that even good men are praising him in the pulpit. You have talent and taste enough to appreciate his wonderful power, and have some gifts in common with him; but, of course, you know that reading his plays,, and, much more, attending public performances of them, can but pollute the minds of such as do so.

“In a pastorate of half a century, I have thought it wise to consider suggestions made to me (even anonymously), though I do not always agree with them.

“I often hear you, always with pleasure, I hope, too, with profit. I have for years given away your sound and Scriptural sermons every week; and I tell you, what I have told scores and scores of folk, that you are doing more good than any man in England except Lord Shaftesbury.

“I said to two clerical brethren (both since Bishops), in 1855 (I think), ‘I am going to hear young Spurgeon tonight.’ One of them said, ‘What! that mountebank?’ I heard you in Finsbury Chapel. Before you had got half through your prayer, I said to myself, ‘This lad is no mountebank.’ I heard your sermon, not agreeing with all of it, but I said, next day, when I saw my brethren at a large clerical meeting, “Spurgeon is no mountebank; I wish I could preach half as well, and I wish as much for most of my brethren.’ They were both very popular men; one is sleeping in Jesus, the other is one of our few Evangelical Bishops, and a dear friend,

“I never pass a week without hearing of the good your sermons are doing. A dear old friend, of mine told me, the other day, that his pious aunt (aged 90) said she ‘lived upon those blessed sermons.’ One of my working people said to me, yesterday, ‘I like that Spurgeon, I can understand him.’ This is one of your best features; you are always intelligible; — let me add, always good-tempered; and, best of all, always Scriptural.  
“Yours affectionately,

“R. W. DIBDIN.”

This note came to Mr. Spurgeon, in March, 1884, from Mrs. Weltbrecht — “My son-in-law, Professor Christlieb, of Bonn, is coming to England to hear and see Mr. Moody. He is trying to form an evangelistic center at Bonn, to prepare evangelists to go through Germany, to proclaim Christ and His salvation.

“Professor Chriistlieb enquires of me if he can also see his brother Spurgeon, and I have ventured to tell him that I will write and ask you, and have added that I hoped, if your state of health permitted, you would spare him art hour of your time. Christlieb (‘Christ’s love,’) is full of fire, zeal, and Christian love. He has often been fed by you, dear sir, and has fed others, through your sermons, though he is no common preacher himself. I am sure you will give him a shake of the hand, if possible. His time is very short. He brings his eldest son with him; he, like your sons, but younger, is a preacher of the gospel.”

When the appointment was made, Dr. Christlieb wrote — “It is so kind of you to give me a few minutes next Wednesday at 11 o’clock. Having to write a history of preaching in all ages and Churches, I want to put some questions to you on books written on eminent Baptist preachers.”

Dr. Angus sent to Mr. Spurgeon the accompanying view of the library of Regent’s Park College, with the following note —  
“C. R. P.,  
“December 3, 1884.  
“My Dear Friend,

“I hope you are not ashamed of your company; as I am sure they are not of you. Marshman, Carey, Ward, Fuller, and Booth are over you; Kinghorn is opposite, — a blessed fellowship.

“Ask Mrs. Spurgeon if she can find you’ with all sympathy and regard,  
“Yours very truly,  
“JOSEPH ANGUS.”

For a time, Mr. Spurgeon, and Mr. Lewis, of Westbourne Grove Chapel, were joint-editors of *The Baptist Magazine*, and they were always very intimate and devoted personal friends. This appears to have been the last letter received by the Pastor from Mr. Lewis —

“Victoria Street,  
“St. Albans,  
“November 3, 1884.

“My Very Dear Friend,

“I cannot sufficiently thank you for the loving words you sent me on Saturday; and, best of all, for the assurance of your prayers. I am in a sorry plight, so far as the poor frame is concerned; but blessed with much peace.

“I need hardly tell you that I have no complacency in anything I have done. The faculty of introspection is wonderfully quickened in such circumstances as mine; but ‘grace reigns.’ I only deplore that every pulse of mine has not beaten in accord with the Savior’s will, and every breath exhaled for His glory. May He continue to honor and bless and comfort you!

“With pleasant memories of past associations, — au revoir! Pray for me still!  
“Yours lovingly,  
“W. G. LEWIS.”

When Mr. Spurgeon was arranging for the supplies at the Tabernacle, during his holiday in the early part of 1885, he wrote to ask Rev. Mark Guy Pearse to be one of the preachers. In reply, he received the following loving letter —

“Grosvenor Villa,  
“Southfield Road,  
“Cotham,  
“Bristol,  
“December 26, 1884.  
“My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“I shall count it an honor and a great pleasure to serve you. On February 15, I have promised to preach the Sunday-school sermons for our people here, and cannot put them off; but I can give you February 1. This is the only day I can conveniently find in February; but I can offer you either March 8, 15, or 22.

“I should much like to comply with your request without any of these ungracious buts and ifs. You have made me your debtor long since. There is no man living to whom I am more indebted. God bless you, dear Mr. Spurgeon, and yours, yet more and more!

“Believe me,  
“Always heartily yours,  
“M. GUY PEARSE.”

After the Pastor’s home-going, Mr. Pearse related this touching incident concerning Mr. Spurgeon and himself, and. thus explained the indebtedness mentioned in his letter —

“Some years ago, I sat with him on the platform at the Tabernacle; and, in an interval during the meeting, I whispered to him, ‘When I was a young fellow in London, I used to sit right over there, and hear you preach, and you will never know how much good you did me.’ I cannot forget the bright light that came into his face as he turned to me, and said, ‘You did?’ ‘Yes,’ I replied, ‘and I am so glad to have this chance of telling you of it. You used to wind me up like an eight-day clock; I was bound to go right for a week after hearing you.’ He put out his hand, and took mine in it, and the tears brimmed to his eyes as he said, ‘God bless you! I never knew that.’”

Mr. Spurgeon’s letter in chapter 92, concerning Disestablishment, will give some idea of the nature of his reply to the following communication from Principal Rainy —

“Edinburgh,  
“May 18, 1885.

“My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,  
“We are going to have a public Conference on Disestablishment on the evening of Thursday next. It is the opening day of our Assembly; but this Conference is not exclusively Free Church. It is called by a District Association which looks at the question fully as much on the religious as on the political side.

“Could you send a letter, however brief, to be read at the meeting? It would help us much, — especially with those good people who are afraid of moving anything that exists.

“I was glad to get hold of a good report of your recent speech on the subject. If we should feel drawn to make attract of it, would you license the theft?

“One does not want to spend too much time on these movements, yet they are apt to usurp a great deal. But we have other work in hand as well. There has been a good deal of promising religious impression over the country, and especially in our University. Even this however, seems; to share a little in the strange tendency of our day to cut loose from definite Theology.

“‘Yours ever truly,  
“ROBERT RAINY.”

Even such a simple matter as an application for tickets for a Tabernacle service gave Revelation Henry Simon, of Westminster Chapel, the opportunity of writing the brotherly epistle printed on the next page.

“Mervan House,  
“Brixton, S.W.,  
“May 28, 1885.

“My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“I have at missionary friend, from Peking, who is very anxious to sit at the royal repast which will be spread at the Tabernacle next Sunday night. Being rather overgrown, as heights go, he does not care for the abundant entrance at the front doors, but would, for once, like to enter with the elect saints to whom a less abundant entrance is granted. He looked in such a way that I said I would try to get him a ticket, but where to apply I do not know except it be at headquarters.

“I should have been glad of this, or any other excuse, for calling on you, having a very pleasant and vivid recollection of a walk and talk with you in your garden some years ago; but I have conscience enough left to be satisfied to look at you in the far distance, and to thank God that you are strong enough again to speak to the great congregation. With Christian love;

“I am, dear Mr. Spurgeon,  
“Yours in the best of bonds,  
“HENRY SIMON.”

While staying at Mr. Duncan’s at “Benmore,” in the summer of 1885, Mr. Spurgeon received the following intimation concerning a notable sermon which he had delivered not long before; he gladly gave the desired permission —

“19, Ardbeg Road,  
“Rothesay,  
“30th July, 1885.

“My Dear Rev. Sir,

“For many years, I have perused your weekly sermons with great benefit to body and soul. I new trouble you to say that I purpose delivering your admirable discourse on ‘Coming Judgment of the Secrets of Men,’ with your permission, in the oldest Episcopal Church in Scotland. If you veto this, I will hold fire. I mean to give it verbatim; the only lack will be the voice of the living author.

“Were it in my power, you should have the first vacant mitre in honor and appreciation of your singular gifts. Pardon this obtrusion on the rest which you so much need for your unwearied tax of strength, and believe me to be,

“Yours most truly in Christ,  
“J. F. S. GORDON, D.D.,  
“St. Andrew’s Episcopal Church, Glasgow.”

In 1885, Mr. Spurgeon preached, in Great Queen Street Chapel, the annual sermon for the Wesleyan Missionary Society. It was one of the most remarkable discourses that he ever delivered, and it has been rendered specially memorable because of the large number of missionaries who have gone out to the foreign field in response to the powerful pleas he then urged upon all professing Christians. The text was Matthew 28:18-20, and the title — “Our Omnipotent Leader.” This letter, from a Wesleyan minister in Paris, expresses what many felt concerning it —

“11, Avenue Flachat,  
“Asnieres,  
“Seine,  
“France,  
“June 17, 1886.

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“I purpose taking you for the subject of my monthly lecture at the ‘Salle des Conferences,’ Boulevard des Capucines. I feel that I cannot take this liberty with your name, person, and ministry, without at least informing you of what I purpose doing. You will understand at once that my object is to speak of Christ to a Parisian audience that will be attracted by the subject of the lecture.

“Wesley says, in his ‘Notes to a Helper,’ that a Methodist preacher must have all his wits about him. Methodist preachers have not the monopoly of shrewdness; but I venture to think that, if I am equal to the occasion, I shall have followed out Mr. Wesley’s injunction.

“I thanked you, from a very full heart, in the vestry of Great Queen Street Chapel, for your sermon on behalf of our Missionary Society; I thanked you for it in Exeter Hall, and it would have done your heart good to have heard the response of our people to what I said; and now I seize this opportunity of thanking you again. I shall never have done thanking you for words of cheer that have helped me in the fight. I feel more than thankful; I am grateful. Precious spices become incense when set on fire; so thanks, kindled by love, become gratitude.  
“May I ask you to present my most respectful salutations to dear Mrs. Spurgeon?

“Thankfully and sincerely yours,  
“D. A. DE MOUILPIED.”  
Such letters as the following’ always gave Mr. Spurgeon real pleasure —

“Chaplain’s House,  
“Tower of London,  
“20th January, 1888.

“Dear Sir,

“May I ask you to, be so kind as to let me have two seats in the Metropolitan Tabernacle on Sunday evening next, for myself and sister? It is a good many years since I was there, — at one time regularly, with my mother, whom you well. knew. Although now a clergyman of the Church of England, and therefore quite out of sympathy with your views of that body, I must express, what I have allways felt, the deepest respect for your transparent sincerity, and a hearty admiration of your splendid God-given powers of clear convicting and also comforting gospel preaching. I am what would be termed a High Churchman; but, believe me. I am not alone in, above all, loving and uttering God’s simple gospel, only believing in ceremony and externals as relative goods, means to an end.

“I have often, as a boy, shaken you by the hand, and should feel honored by a chance of meeting you again. May God preserve you many years, though you rhetorically tear my Church to ribbons!

“Ever yours faithfully,  
“E. C. AYLWIN FOSTER”

On March 6, 1888, Mr. Spurgeon preached at Wimbledon; and, the following morning, he received this loving letter from Rev. E. W. Moore, M.A., the vicar of Emmanuel Church —

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,  
“At the risk of being troublesome, I must write just a few lines to thank you for the faithful testimony to a faithful Christ you gave us this afternoon. I hastened back to the vestry (after seeing a friend — Mrs. Seton-Karr, sister to your friend the late Mrs. Dudgeon, of Mentone, out of the crowd,) to have the pleasure of a shake of the hand, but you had gone. I should have liked to tell you, though you need no telling from me, how great and general is the sympathy felt for you here as everywhere by all who cleave to Christ the Head, for your brave and fearless stand for our Lord and Master. Thank you for preaching today a risen, glorious, triumphant, unchangeable Savior. He is the same as ever. He still baptizes with the Holy Ghost and with fire; and if He be for us, who can be against us?

“Thank you for all the help you have often given me by the printed page. If it can be said of any man that he does not know what a great work he is doing, it may be said in a special sense of yourself. You will never know here how many souls you have gathered, and how many preachers you have strengthened. God bless and preserve you to us all for many years!

“Affectionately yours,  
“E. W. MOORE.”  
The following note, from a clergyman of quite another school, was received in August, 1888: —

“Queen’s House,  
“Cheyne Walk,  
“Chelsea.

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“I and two of my children hope for the privilege of hearing you next Sunday night, if there, is any chance of getting seats. It is very seldom, in London, I am out of my own pulpit; and when I am, I do not like to miss the opportunity of hearing the greatest living preacher.

“Yours faithfully,  
“H. R. HAWEIS.”

This letter was written by one of the Evangelical clergymen who resented Mr. Spurgeon’s “Baptismal Regeneration” sermon, but who afterwards became one of the Pastor’s heartiest admirers; the receipt of the letter gave great joy to Mr. Spurgeon —

“Christ Church Vicarage,  
“Worthing,  
“27th February, 1890.

“My Dear Brother,

“I don’t know how it is, but I feel prompted to ask your acceptance of the enclosed New Year address, which, I rather think, will find an echo in your own heart.

“I remember once, when I was in Southwark, feeling constrained to differ from you as to the interpretation of our Baptismal Services. Since that time, the progress of error in the Church visible has been so alarming and continuous, that all who really love the. Truth seem to be under’ a very special obligation to manifest substantial and brotherly unity; and I cannot deny myself the pleasure of saying how much I thank God for the firmness and consistency with which you have maintained and propagated the precious doctrines of the grace of God in a Rationalistic and Ritualistic age.

“Believe me,  
“Yours very faithfully,  
“FRANCIS CRUSE.”

When Mr. Spurgeon learned that the Jews of the present day substitute a dry shank-bone for the Paschal lamb, he was; so struck with the spiritual significance of the fact, that he delivered a discourse upon the subject, and entitled it, “The Shank-bone Sermon; or, True Believers and. their Helpers.” On the following page is one of the many letters he received concerning it.  
“164, Richmond Road,  
“Dalston, N.E.,  
“5/4/90.

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“I enclose a cutting from today’s *Star*, which corroborates in a remarkable manner the ‘shank-bone’ illustration you so happily used at Victoria Park the other day. It is indeed a pity that Jews and half-Christians are content with a bone when they are offered the Lamb.

“You are making a noble stand for the truth, and there are thousands of ministers and others who heartily and daily say, ‘God bless Mr. Spurgeon!’

“Personally, I may say that I owe you more than I can ever tell. If you only knew half, you would never sit ‘under the juniper tree,’ for your life and words are an inspiration to the faithful in every land.

“Wishing you continued Divine favors, I remain,  
“Yours very heartily,  
“W. JUSTIN EVANS.”  
These appreciative letters from ministerial brethren may be fitly closed with the following fraternal epistle from Prebendary Stephenson —

“Lympsham Manor,  
“Weston-super-Mare,  
“July 8, 1890.

“My Dear Brother Spurgeon,

“I quite agree with you that occasional pain and sickness are good for us preachers of Christ’s gospel I thought sympathetically of you, yesterday, when I ached all over, after four services on the Lord’s-day before.

“My heart has been drawn towards you in admiring love for many years, and never more so than when I heard you on the Bible Society platform last May, when you gave abundant evidence that the bough, pruned by the hand of ‘the Husbandman,’ had not been ‘purged in vain.’

“We may not belong to the same regiment of the great army, but our Captain is the same! Go on, my beloved brother, as you have done for so many years past, to proclaim the magnificent glory of grace, and thus to gather trophies for the cross. ‘Tabernacles’ shift and vanish, but ‘Temples not made with hands’ are ‘eternal in the Heavens’!

“God bless you, mine honored friend! This is Cardiphonia, from — “Your loving brother and servant in Christ,  
“J. H. STEPHENSON,  
“Treasurer of Wells Cathedral.’

CHAPTER 94.

APPRECIATIVE CORRESPONDENTS

I N accordance with the intimation in the introduction to the previous chapter, the second sub-division of communications from Mr. Spurgeon’s correspondents is to consist of —

**LETTERS; FROM AMERICAN AND CANADIAN FRIENDS.**

Of these, the first in order of time are those written by Mr. D. L. Moody, and they may fitly begin the series because of the mutual esteem and love which he and Mr. Spurgeon cherished for each other. In reply to a letter from the Pastor, inviting him to preach at the Tabernacle, Mr. Moody wrote —

“12, Lynedoch Place,  
“Glasgow,  
“March 17, ‘74.

“Dear Spurgeon,

“Many thanks for your kind note. I am in hopes that you will be led by the Spirit to preach to young men on Sunday next. Enclosed I send you a circular that a minister here is sending out in the hope that it will stir up some interest in Britain.

“In regard to my corning to your Tabernacle, I consider it a great honor to be invited; and, in fact, I should consider it an honor to black your boots; but to preach to your people would be out of the question. If they will not turn to God under your preaching, ‘neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.’

‘Yours, with much love,  
“D. L. MOODY.”

The following year, Mr. Spurgeon helped Mr. Moody in his London mission; this grateful epistle shows how highly his services were appreciated —

“17, Highbury Crescent,  
“Islington,  
“May 8, ‘75.

“Dear Spurgeon,

“Ten thousand thanks for your help last night. You gave us a great lift. I wish you would give us every night you can for the next sixty days. There are so few men who can draw on a weeknight, and I want to keep up the meetings in the East End and West at the same time; it is hard on me to have to speak twice the same evening, and yet I shall have to do it next week, for I cannot get anyone for the West End. Do all you can for the work, and we shall see blessed results.

“Yours in haste,  
“D. L. MOODY.”

Another letter, written some years later, shows that, while Mr. Moody still held Mr. Spurgeon in just as high esteem as before, he consented to preach at the Tabernacle one Sabbath during the Pastor’s absence at Mentone —

“Newcastle,  
“October 11, ‘81.  
“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“Yours of the 9th is to hand, and in reply let me say that I am thankful for your very kind note. It quite touched my heart. I have for years thought more of you than of any other man preaching the gospel on this earth; and, to tell you the truth, I shrink from standing in your place. I do not know of a church in all the land that I shrink from as I do from yours; — not but what your people are in sympathy with the gospel that I try to preach, but you can do it so much better than I can.  
“I thank you for inviting me, and (D.V.) I will be with your good people November 20. Will you want Mr. Sankey, or will your own precentor have charge? Either will suit me.

“Remember me to your good wife, and accept of my thanks for your letter of cheer.  
“Yours truly,  
“D. L. MOODY.”  
One of the many letters which Mr. Spurgeon received from Mr. Moody’s singing companion will show in what loving esteem he held the Pastor —

“Gwydyr House,  
“Brixton Rise, S.W.,  
“November 8, ‘86.

“Dearly Beloved,’  
“Many thanks for the precious Word you gave us yesterday.F8 It was indeed most refreshing to my soul.

“Is it not a beautiful thought that our Lord’s disciples always called Him, or spoke of Him, as the Son of God, while He was down here on earth, and that He always spoke of Himself as the Son of man; but that, when He went up to Heaven, John saw Him there, and then spoke of Him, or called Him, the Son of Man; John, no doubt, wanted to hold on to Him, even as a brother.

“I will try to see you again at the Tabernacle before I sail on the 18th; I love you very much. God bless you and yours!  
“IRA D. SANKEY.”

Another very dear friend from the United States was Mr. John B. Gough, who lectured at the Tabernacle several times during his stay in England in 1879. By his own request, his last lecture on that tour was given in aid of the Pastors’ College. In writing to Mr. Spurgeon concerning the subject of his discourse, and the arrangements in connection with it, Mr. Gough also made this special reference to the visit he had recently paid to the Pastor at Nightingale Lane —  
“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“My hands are very tender, through rheumatism, so that I write with

difficulty, but I very much wish to send a line or two to you. I am very glad that my last lecture in London is to be under your direction…

“I have purposed writing to your to express our delight at meeting you and Mrs. Spurgeon at your own home, but have been prevented hitherto. We shall not forget that visit; it did us both good like a medicine. It is very refreshing to meet a man who knows what he believes, and speaks it, and lives it. And we have often spoken of you, and dear Mrs. Spurgeon, from whom we learned lessons of patience, trust, and faith, that we hope we shall never unlearn; but if I should tell you how fully you captured our hearts, and how sincerely we love you both, it might appear unseemly. Yet it would be the expression of thousands of hearts that beat with gratitude and affection for you and yours. I would like to speak to you of your sermon on ‘Forgiveness,’ but your time is precious. May God bless; you more and more abundantly! Give our kindest regards to Mrs. Spurgeon and your sons.

“Trusting to meet you, and to hear you, on my next Sabbath in London, September 28th,  
“I am,  
“Most truly yours,  
“JOHN B. GOUGH.”

Dr. H. L. Wayland, of Philadelphia, was; another of the Pastor’s very intimate friends. During his visit to England, in 1881, they spent much time together; and, on his return home, he wrote a long letter, a portion of which is printed on the next page.

“1420, Chestnut Street,  
“Philadelphia,  
“July 19, 1881.  
“My Dear Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon,  
“(or will you not allow me to say,)

“My Very Dear Friends,

“You hardly need to be reminded of the vivid manner in which you, and the Tabernacle, and your charming home, live in my memory. I have taken the liberty to send to you some numbers of our paper in ‘which I have endeavored, for the pleasure of our readers as well as for my own relief, to express some of the impressions made on me while on the other side; but it is slow work, it takes two or three weeks to record what I saw in a few days;.

“My visit to England has made everything in English history, both past and recent, unspeakably more real to me. When now I read of the Parliament and Mr. Gladstone, or of the Tabernacle and its Pastor, or when I read one of the Tabernacle sermons, all is living’ before me. I wonder what is that peculiar quality of some voices that makes them apparently audible to us long after we have heard them with the outer ear.

“I do not forget how busy you both are; but I venture on the remark that a line, however brief, would confer sincere pleasure on your American cousin and brother. I trust that it will please the clear Lord to spare you both until we meet again; and. that you may continue to live in your two noble sons; and not less that the Pastor and President may live long in successive generations of pupils; and that the angel of the Book Fund may be permitted for many years to diffuse light and happiness, not only in her own home, but in many homes where there is little light save that which she sheds. I can only hope that you, my dear friends, remember your visitor with a tithe of the interest and pleasure with which he recalls both of you.

“Most truly and affectionately your friend and brother, “H. L. WAYLAND.”

Dr. T. L. Cuyler, of Brooklyn, always tried to spend an afternoon at ‘Westwood’ whenever he was; in London. One of his many loving letters will prove how he prized the privilege —

“337, Strand,  
“London,  
“July 25, 1881.

“My Dear Brother,

“I cannot refrain from telling you that, among all the enjoyments of my five months’ tour, nothing has given me such solid satisfaction as my visit to your beautiful home on Saturday last. The sweet savor of that visit will abide with me for many days.

“It was a renewed joy to me to grasp again the hand of the minister of Christ who has, been permitted, by tongue and pen, to proclaim the Word of life to more souls than any man since the days of the apostles.

“Please to present my cordial regards to, your beloved ‘Help’ (who ‘answereth to you again,’ — but only in lows).  
“I write this at the National Temperance League office, whither all my letters are sent.

“With grateful affection,  
“Yours to the core,  
“THEODORE L. CUYLER.”

The writer of the following grateful letter was a very special Canadian friend, who was baptized at the Tabernacle —  
“Montreal,  
“14th October 1881.  
“Beloved Mr. Spurgeon,

“A feeling of incredulity took possession of me when I opened and read your note. I thought it simply impossible that it could be from your very own pen. What a man you are! I thought George. Muller wonderful When I came in contact with him; but, really, the riches of God’s grace, and the boundless capacity of these poor human souls and hearts when filled with His grace, are, if possible, still more magnified in you than in him. It was a little thing to do, — writing me that note, — but it has indeed interested and made glad a number of people who daily bear you up before the Lord, and whose hearts go out to you in love exceedingly.

“On Saturday, at gentleman from Edinburgh, who had been travelling in our ‘great lone land,’ as it is called, Manitoba, and who had to spend the Sabbath with us in Montreal, came to see the Y.M.C.A. ‘Where can I get some reading matter for tomorrow?’ he asked of me; and I enquired of him, ‘What kind would you like?’ ‘If there is any place where Spurgeon’s sermons are sold, I prefer them to anything else,’ was his reply; so he was informed where he could get them, and then I added, ‘ I have had a letter from Mr. Spurgeon himself this week.’ ‘You mean from his secretary.’ ‘No, I mean from himself.’ ‘Do let me see it ;’ so he read it, and then he said, as he returned the letter, ‘That man is a marvel. I have got a wrinkle from that little note; do you notice that he says, “I pray for you at this moment”? That is something worth remembering, — “at this moment of writing, while you are before my mind, I pause and pray for you.” That is capital; I won’t forget it.’ I could give you other incidents to prove that your tiny note was like a beam of sunlight shot athwart tried and weary hearts, because of the love they bear you for the Master’s sake.

“Oh, Mr. Spurgeon, that little word of yours, ‘I am feeling rather low,’ struck a chord which still vibrates in my spirit. It was to me like reading the 42nd Psalm. I imagine that there is nothing connected with your ministry to the saint that comes home more tenderly to tried and stricken souls than just what you there express, ‘I am feeling low.’ The great preacher, the author of The Treasury of David, the — but I need not go on, — this man sometimes, ay, often, ‘feels low,’ just as they do. ‘In all their affliction He was afflicted;’ this is what draws hearts to Jesus; and the principle, I take it, is just the same when the friends and intimates of Jesus ‘feel low.’ The fellow-feeling, thus begotten, makes many wondrous kind.  
“I recently published some ‘incidents’ connected with visitation at the hospital. A gentleman came in, and asked me how much it cost me to do so. “$10,’ I said. ‘Well, here is a $10 bill; print some more, I like “facts,” theories don’t go down with me.’ So I have printed another leaflet, which I enclose herewith.

“Now unto Him who can do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think, be glory; and may we share in the glory even though it brings us low! I salute you and Mrs. Spurgeon in the Lord (Romans 16:12), and remain, through the blood which cleanseth,

“Your friend in Jesus,  
“JOHN LOUSON.’

The leaflet enclosed by Mr. Louson contained, among other interesting matter, “A Touching Story,” in which there was the following reference to Mr. Spurgeon and his sermons —

“Some months ago, a young Scotchman was admitted to the hospital. He was suffering from an internal disease which baffled the skill of the doctors; it was akin to consumption, but without its distressing symptoms, yet under it the physical frame wasted away. It was difficult for the patient to realize that he was slowly but surely dying; indeed, he utterly refused to believe it, even when doctors and nurses had given up all hope. It was a delight and privilege to visit and converse with him, for he was Christ’s, and Christ was his; and, though reticent and reserved to an almost painful degree, yet salvation through faith in the Crucified was the theme he most of all loved to talk about; and, next to that, the scenery, mountains, rocks, sunset, and storms of the beloved Isle of Skye, where he was born and brought up. The one and only matter of reading, next to the Bible, was Charles H. Spurgeon’s sermons; of these he never tired. Biographies of eminent Scotchmen, like Norman Macleod, or William Arnot, were taken to him but, as he put them aside, he would say, ‘Spurgeon is always the same, but always satisfying, for he makes you forget himself as he holds up Him who is “fairer than the children of men”’ (Psalm 45:2).”

The following letter is interesting from the information it conveys concerning the first publication of Mr. Spurgeon’s sermon volumes and other works in the United States —  
“8, Murray Street,  
“New York,  
“December 19, 1882.

“My Dear Bro. Spurgeon,

“The present seems a fitting time for me to drop you a line, after a long and successful career as the publisher of your books in America, and I may add, as the introducer of your sermons in book form to American readers.

“At first, it required very special attention on our part to bring them successfully before American readers but, after a while, the tide turned in favor of your books. We made them well known in every State in our Union. We had several valuable friends; the late President Wayland, of Brown University, gave us important aid by letters that we published; so did the late Dr. Alexander, who had been to London, and seen you, and heard you preach often with great satisfaction. He called at our office, and made himself known in person. I had long known him, by reputation, as a very able and distinguished divine of the Presbyterian Church. He had noticed that some of our large daily newspapers were attacking you very fiercely, so he came in to urge us to persevere with the sermons. He said, ‘Do not be discouraged by the unfavorable criticisms of the press. I have seen and heard Mr. Spurgeon; he is a real diamond that will shine brighter and brighter as the years go by. You can use my name in any way that will help you in the battle.’ We thought it was very kind of him to say and do what he did, for he was a good man, with very great influence, and he proved a real help to us.

“On the other hand, we had some discouraging words. Revelation Dr. Kendrick, the Greek Professor in the Rochester University, with which I was connected as one of the Board of Trustees, wrote me — ‘Well, Sheldon, I am surprised that you should lower the standard of your publishing house by issuing the sermons of that green London preacher.’ I can well afford to quote his early remarks, for he lived to write and frequently to tell me, in a very flattering way, how much wiser I was in discerning the signs of promise than he had been; and he has often spoken of you in the most complimentary manner.  
“I only allude to these incidents of the past as pleasant events attending a great and prosperous enterprise.”

(The writer of the letter explained that “the Spurgeon books” had been passed over’ to Messrs. Carter Brothers, that he had sent to the Pastor a complete set of the American. edition of his publications, and he concluded his letter as follows — )

“And now, my respected brother, in taking leave of you as your publisher, permit me to congratulate you upon the really great success that has attended the enterprise. Very few English authors have had such prosperity; I do not think that any preacher and author of religious books has even begun to come up to you. I hear, with great pleasure, of the blessing resting upon your home work, so large and so grande in all its proportions. We feel all of a publisher’s pride in our popular and good author, and shall follow you with our loving thought to the end of your good work.

“Yours most truly,  
“SMITH SHELDON.”  
The writer of the following, note was the well-known and-slavery lecturer, Frederick Douglass —

“The Cross,  
“St. Neots,  
“Hunts,

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon, “July 6, 1887.

“While crossing the Atlantic, last September, and looking out upon its proud dashing billows and their varied forms, and thinking of the diversity in the human family, I remarked that ‘we are many as the waves, but we are one as the sea.’ I had never heard this; simile before, and thought it wats original with me; but, while reading your sermon, published on the 30th June, I noticed that you said, speaking of the one hundred and nineteenth Psalm,’ Its expressions are many as the waves, but its testimony is one as the sea.’ I am led to ask, — Is this a coincidence; or have I, unconsciously, borrowed from you, or have you borrowed this formula from me?  
“Through the kindness of a friend, I had the privilege of listening to you a few Sundays ago. It was the realization of an ardent desire born of reading some of your sermons in America, and of what was said to me of you by my friend, Dr. H. L. Wayland, a gentleman to whom I have been much indebted for friendly sympathy and advice while battling with slavery and prejudice in America.

“Very truly yours,  
“FREDERICK DOUGLASS.”

In May, 1888, at the funeral of his mother, Mr. Spurgeon took a chill, which resulted in his being, laid aside for three weeks. On Lord’s-day morning, June 17, when many of the delegates to the Exeter Hall Conference on Foreign Missions were present at the Tabernacle, the Pastor was; again able to preach, although he was obliged, through great weakness, to sit during a considerable portion of the sermon. Dr. A. J. Gordon, of Boston, took part in the service; and he had also consented to preach if Mr. Spurgeon continued too ill to do so. This arrangement explains the allusion, in the following letter, to the “great deliverance” experienced by Dr. Gordon himself —

“Charing Cross Hotel,  
“London,  
“June 19, 1888.

“My Dear Brother,

“I sincerely trust that you were in no wise injured by your effort on Lord’s-day morning. It seems to me that the Lord’s help given to you then was the most powerful commentary on your text, ‘Let Him deliver him now.’ Be assured that I also experienced a great deliverance, for there were hundreds of visitors, — our whole Missionary Conference, indeed, — who had come to hear you, and I can conceive of no embarrassment greater than that of having to preach to such a disappointed congregation as it must have been in your absence.

“I pray that God will graciously restore you to full health, and cause your bow to abide in strength even when you are ‘sorely grieved and shot at by the archers.’ I greatly desire with Mrs. Gordon, to call on you for a few moments at our home. I should be thankful to know when we can see you. If you are too ill to desire callers, please do not for at moment think of my request, and I shall entirely understand the reason.

“Sincerely yours,  
“A. J. GORDON.”  
The following letter appears to be the earliest from Dr. A. T. Pierson which Mr. Spurgeon preserved —

“2320, Spruce Street,  
“Philadelphia,  
“November 25, 1888.

“My Best-beloved,

“If there is any man on the earth I love better than you, I wish you could point him out. And, as a little thank-offering to God for a personal acquaintance, I send you by my publishers — all bills paid, inclusive of expressage, — fifty copies of Evangelistic Work for your Pastors’ College, with my loving greetings. I am very sorry that your gout is more troublesome. How I wish and pray that the Lord may keep you yet a score of years busy with *Sword and Trowel*, piercing to the backbone the foes of our Lord and His Crown and Covenant, and building up the walls of Jerusalem! Be thou very strong and courageous, my brother; there shall no man be able to stand before thee. There is a fearful apostasy from the truth, — second probation, — partial inspiration, — Ritualism, — the ‘Nehushtan and Ephodism’ of old times are back among us. How little Evangelical preaching! Conversion a lost art; — worldliness so pervading the church that the membership is now divisible into worldly holy and wholly worldly, — and ministers; into  
attitudinarians, latitudinarians, and platitudinarians.

“Give my love to dear Mrs. S. With many prayers for you all. I hope to see you again, in the flesh; but, whether or not, I expect to spend eternity with you in His presence.  
“As always yours,

“ARTHUR T. PIERSON.”  
**MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS.**

Among the communications from non-ministerial friends, specially treasured by Mr. Spurgeon, was the following letter from Miss Florence Nightingale —

“35, South Street,  
“Park Lane, W.,  
“June 30, 1876.

“Dear Sir,

“Nurse Masters, of our training school at St. Thomas’s Hospital, and who is one of a reinforcement of nurses whom we are sending out to join our nursing staff at the Montreal Hospital, was recently admitted by you to baptism and communion. She spoke of it to me with deep earnestness.

“It occurred to me that you might, among the young women of your flock, know some, sound in body and mind, who would like to be trained for a hospital nursing life, which has now sufficient reward, both in the good to be done and in the maintenance to be earned, to be attractive to suitable candidates. The harvest is ready, but the laborers still are few.

“I write under the severe pressure of business, and ever-increasing illness, which has kept me a prisoner to my room for years, so you will excuse a brief letter. I have heard that you are yourself frequently afflicted. May I express my deep regret at your suffering, and my earnest hope that your life may long be spared?

“May God be with us all!  
“FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.”

Earl Shaftesbury’s correspondence with Mr. Spurgeon was so constant, and so voluminous, that a whole chapter might have been filled with it if space could have been spared. This brief note will indicate the usual character of the Earl’s letters, and it will also show the esteem in which he held the Pastor, not only at the time it was written, but right to the end of his life —

“St. Gile’s House,  
“Cranborne,  
“Salisbury,  
“October 20, 1876.

“My Dear Friend,

“The books have arrived in safety; and to the inscription which you, yourself, have written, — I value it highly, — I shall add my own, — a prayer that my descendants will cherish the volumes as the gift of a man whom their ancestor honored and loved as a private friend, but far more as a powerful, bold, true, single-hearted servant of our most blessed Lord and Savior.

“God be with you and yours for ever and ever!  
“SHAFTESBURY.”

From the same address, on November 30, 1883, the Earl sent to Mr. Spurgeon a copy of The Psalms, with Scripture Illustrations, accompanied by’ the following letter —

“My Dear Friend,  
“God be with you to Mentone, at Mentone, and back again, and may He give you all the health you seek for His service!

“Well may you be ‘weary, and worn, and sad.’ The open, avowed, boasted, modern infidelity is terrible, but the almost universality of the Laodicean spirit is still worse. You will come back and find that socialism, contemptuous unbelief, and an utter disregard of anything but that which tends to make this world the ‘be-all’ and the ‘end-all’ of our existence, have attained vastly increased proportions during your absence.  
“There is nothing for it but to preach ‘Jesus Christ and Him crucified,’ with perpetual exhortation to His people to pray for His speedy return. Such a preaching of Christ has been your main strength. May God keep, you in that frame of mind!

“Put, I request you, the little book I now send you, in your pocket. “Yours very truly,  
“SHAFTESBURY.”

“P.S. — I shall distribute largely your volume, Flowers from a Puritan’s Garden.”  
Admiral Sir W. King Hall was one of Mr. Spurgeons most ardent admirers.

Many of his letters were preserved, and all of them bore testimony to the blessing he had received through reading the Pastor’s writings. One of the earliest in the series was the following, written on Mr. Spurgeon’s fortyfourth birthday —

“Admiralty House,  
“Sheerness,  
“June 19, ‘78.

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“May God spare you to work in His vineyard with health and energy many more years! Each day I find, from your Morning and Evening Readings, encouragement, comfort, hope, and proofs of our Savior’s love. I ask your acceptance of my photograph and beg yours in return. Be assured that, though my profession is one of arms, for the defense of our glorious land of liberty, my principles are as peaceful as those held by any member of the Society of Friends.

“With kindest regards, and best wishes for your family,  
“I remain,  
“Your sincere friend,

“W. K ING HALL.”  
“If you want a breath of sea air at any time, come and stay with me. A day or two’s notice will suffice.”

Another sailor friend, John Macgregor, Esq., who was captain and crew of the canoe Rob Roy, and also honorary secretary of the Open Air Mission, wrote as follows in one of his many letters to the Pastor —

“7, Vanbrugh Park East,  
“Blackheath,  
“August 24, ‘78.

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“I promised to tell you that a word of yours would be golden on Oct. 28, when our open-air preachers assemble. You will see that some of us propose to meet-on Monday. That, however, is for garden and green fields; the other meeting must be under a roof.

“As find myself, I am in the furnace of domestic affliction; but the Refiner is looking on.

“The stucco pilasters on the edifice of one’s life are cracked and shaken off but the rock dray rested on is found sure, even in an earthquake.

“Who would like to choose his trial? Even David, when forced to do so, chose to fall into the hands of the Lord, and are we not there already?

“I needed much affliction, as I had none at all of it; and that is not healthy. But God makes me wonder why the blow is sent to my dear wife, unless it is that I feel it the more, and she suffers the less, than if it had been personally mine.

“Yours ever,  
“J. MACG REGOR.”

At the Stockwell Orphanage Festival, in June, 1879, Sir Charles Reed presided. In reply to Mr. Spurgeon’s letter inviting him to occupy that position, he wrote — I am very full of work; but, in common with all London, I feel so grateful for your personal piety, and your personal efforts, that I cannot say ‘Nay.’ How honored I fee1 to be stitched up in a brown cover with such a ‘man of mark’ as C. H. S.!” The allusion was to the current issue of Men of Mark, in which Mr. Spurgeon and Sir Charles were included.

Later in the year, when the Pastor was ill at Mentone, he received this sorrowful letter from his friend —

“Hotel Fleuri,  
“Cannes,  
“December 18, 1879.

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“I have been trying to make my way over to see you; but my doctor has laid such restrictions upon me, that my only available, time (10 to 4) does not permit of so great a journey. I want, however, to have an assurance, that you are better; for in a French paper, I saw a poor account of your health.

“A winter away from home is a new experience to me, and an idle winter is by no means easy to endure. However, I am trying to obey the voice which says, ‘Be still;’ and if the Lord wills, I hope for another decade of work in the field in which He has permitted me, thus far, to labor.

“I suppose you do not preach at all at Mentone; that is, from the pulpit. You do, I know, by your pen; and if, at this Christmas time, you feel prompted to comfort a stricken heart, let me be the object of your philanthropy. On the 19th of June, I was with you; on the 8th of July, we lost our dear son, and we have never yet recovered his body. This stroke broke down our health, and drove us from home.

“Yours truly,  
“CHARLES REED.”

Sir Charles Reed’s hope that he might be spared to labor for another ten years was not realized, for he was called to higher service in less than sixteen months from that time. The brief note from him, printed on the next page, bears in one corner this inscription — “Delivered to me after the decease of the writer, April 8, 1881, — C. H. Spurgeon.”

“House of Commons  
“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

Could you receive a father and son, on Bible Society business, if they called on you on Tuesday next at about noon? My son, who is the secretary of the Society, thinks that, as a vice-president, I could aid him in an application he is commissioned to make.

“Yours truly,  
“CHARLES REED.”

The following letters came from the widow of General Havelock; the son referred to in them was himself a personal friend of Mr. Spurgeon’s, and was the chairman, at the first public meeting held in the Tabernacle —

“14, Kensington Park Gardens, W.,  
“October 7, 1881.  
“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“You may not have heard how very ill my beloved son, Sir Henry, has been. He is suffering from congestion of the brain, brought on by over-work, exposure, and fatigue. We are most thankful to say that the doctors report that the worst seems past, though it will probably be a long time before he can be well again. “His sister and I will feel very thankful if you will remember him in your public and private prayers. His life has ever been devoted to doing acts of kindness for others; and you know how precious he is to us all we should like him to be prayed for, every Sunday, for sometime to come. We know that his father’s God is very near him now in this deep trouble.

“With kind regards to Mrs. Spurgeon, I am,  
“Very sincerely yours,

“H. S. H AVELOCK.”  
Sir Henry’s recovery was much more rapid than his mother had anticipated; and on October 22, Lady Havelock was able to write —

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“I shall feel glad if you will tell your dear people that God has been pleased to hear our prayers, and has once more restored my dear son, Sir Henry, I will not say quite to his usual strength, but so far towards it as to give us great hopes that, with care and rest for some weeks he may be better than ever before. Will you give thanks for us, as a family, at your public service tomorrow, and pray that a larger blessing than ever may rest upon us, and bring us all nearer to Him to whom we owe so much?

“With our kind regards to Mrs. Spurgeon, I am,  
“Sincerely yours,  
“HANNAH S. HAVELOCK.”

Many letters passed between Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Spurgeon, — “the two prime ministers,” as they were often called. Again and again, the Premier invited his Nonconformist friend to meet a congenial company at breakfast or dinner in Downing Street; but there was always some obstacle in the way, and pressure of work or illness prevented Mr. Spurgeon from accepting a very cordial invitation to stay at Hawarden Castle. Whenever the newspapers contained an intimation that the Pastor was laid aside, a special messenger from the First Lord of the Treasury was sent with a letter of sympathy or kind enquiries for the sufferer.

Mr. Gladstone had long wished to attend a service at the Tabernacle, and the following letters show how the wish at last assumed a definite shape, and was carried into effect —

“10, Downing Street,  
“Whitehall,  
“24 August, 1881.

“My Dear Sir,  
“I thank you very much for your kind note and your good words.

My years make it a great object of desire to be relieved from my present work; but I must be patient yet a little while, and must hope that I may not be utterly spoiled by the undeserved kindness heaped on me from so many quarters, and by commendations entirely beyond my deserts.

“I hope the autumn will afford me an opportunity of profiting by your kind offer to meet my wishes respecting the service at the Tabernacle.

“I remain,  
“My dear sir,  
“Faithfully yours,  
“Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.”

“W. E. GLADSTONE.”

“Hawarden Castle,  
“Chester,  
“January 3, ‘82.

“My Dear Sir,

“Some time ago, you were good enough to promise me a safe seat at one of your services and if it consist with your convenience to do me this favor on Sunday evening next, when I expect to be in London, I shall hope to present myself at the exact time and place which you may kindly name. Should you desire to postpone your compliance with my request, I shall hope for another opportunity of preferring it three or four Sundays hence. I remain,

“My dear sir,  
“Faithfully yours,  
“Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.”

“W. E. GLADSTONE.”

On the evening of January 8, the Premier and his eldest sort attended the Tabernacle, and Mr. Spurgeon preached from Mark 5:30,31. The Editors and correspondents of various newspapers; referred at length to the incident, and some of the comments were anything but kind or even courteous. A few days later, Mr. Spurgeon, in sending the volume of views of “Westwood” to Mr. Gladstone, expressed his regret at the tone of some of the articles; and, in reply, he received photographs of Hawarden Castle and the Premier in his study, with this letter —

“Hawarden Castle,  
“Chester,  
“January 16, ‘82.

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“I was not at all surprised at what happened, and had not the smallest disposition or cause to suspect you. My life is passed in a glass bee-hive with this particularity, that I fear many see in it what is not there, by which I am unjustly a gainer.

“I thank you very much for the interesting book of photographs which you have been so good as to send, with an inscription I am very far from deserving. I wish I had a better return to make than the enclosed; but these are the best I can lay my hands on.

“When you were so good as to see me before and after your service, I felt ashamed of speaking to you lest I should increase your fatigue, but before very long I hope to find a better  
opportunity. In the meantime, I remain,

“With sincere respect,  
“Faithfully yours,  
“W. E. GLADSTONE.”  
Mr. Spurgeon was, as the writer of this letter anticipated, much gratified at the information it contained —

“13, St. George’s Terrace,  
“Gloucester Road, S.W.,  
“March 23, 1882.

“Dear Sir,  
“I think, it will be gratifying to you to know that, at St. Stephen’s

Church, G1oucester Road (which is generally supposed to be what is termed ‘very high’), each Thursday afternoon during Lent there have been devotional readings, consisting of extracts from the works of various living divines.

“The reading, this afternoon, was from a sermon preached by you, fourteen or fifteen years; ago, from the text, ‘What if thy father answer thee roughly?’ The greater part of the discourse was read from the pulpit by the junior curate.

“It was very pleasing to me to observe such an exercise of liberty, in the Church of England, as to place your views before the congregation for their acceptance and meditation, and I feel that you will be pleased by my making you acquainted with the fact. Trusting your health is now much improved,

“I remains,  
“Yours obediently,  
“ALFRED WILLIAMS.”

Out of a very large number of letters to Mr. Spurgeon from Lord Radstock, the following has been selected because of the special object with which it was written —

“St. Petersburg,  
“11/4/’82.  
“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“The Baptists in South Russia, who are, I believe, nearly all closecommunionists, are to have a great Conference in May as to whether they should not open their doors to the Lord’s children in general. It is deeply important that they should decide aright. There are marty thousands of Christians in South Russia among the Molokans and Stundists, and it is most desirable, on all accounts, that they should be as united as possible. Will you write a letter to them, addressed to Pastor Liebig, Odessa, encouraging them to take the true ground of union in the Lord’s Name, at any rate as regards receiving Christians at the Lord’s table?  
“Here, we are going on quietly, in spite of difficulties. You would be rejoiced at the faith and love shown by some in the highest class here. Continue in prayer for this land, with thanksgiving. The fields are white unto the harvest, but the laborers are so few and shackled; — yet ‘He must reign.’

“Ever yours in the Lord,  
“RADSTOCK.”

Mr. Spurgeon was often asked to address special classes of hearers. The following letter relates to the invitation given to him to speak to the London medical students —

“45, Inverness Terrace,  
“Hyde Park, W.,  
“September 24, ‘83.

“My Dear Sir,

“Although I am not known to you, you may probably remember my name in connection with Leamington, where my father, Mr. Thorne, at the Bank, once had the pleasure of receiving you as his guest.

“My object in now writing is to express the great gratification which I feel, as President of the Medical Prayer Union for 1883-4, that you have expressed your willingness to say a few words to the students at the annual meeting on Friday, 26th of October. I do sincerely pray that your health may enable you to come; and, in the meantime, I may assure you that the occasion will be worthy of your presence, for it is one when many a young man may decide whether he will commence his career as a disciple of Christ or not. An appeal from you will, under God’s guidance, materially influence some in their decision.

“Again hoping that we may see you on the occasion in question, “I am,  
“Sincerely yours,

“R. THORNE THORNE.”

The meeting was held, in due course, at the Lower Exeter Hall, and proved to be a most profitable one. A somewhat similar gathering was the one held at the Egyptian Hall of the Mansion House, under the presidency of the Lord Mayor, on September 28, 1885, when Mr. Spurgeon addressed the members of the London Banks’ Prayer Union, taking for his subject the words, “Seek ye first the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” The address was worthy of the notable audience assembled to listen to it, and it was afterwards published under the title, “First Things First.”

Mr. T. A. Denny did not often write to Mr. Spurgeon, but saw him at the Tabernacle or at “Westwood” as frequently as he could. This characteristic note will show the esteem in which he held the Pastor —

“7, Connaught Place, W.,  
“February 14, 1884.  
“My Dear Friend,

“How exceedingly kind of you to send me that beautiful book *, The Metropolitan Tabernacle and its Institutions*,’ but greatly more I value the inscription, of which I feel myself all unworthy, but not the less proud.

“How I should like, by-and-by, to walk up and down the streets of the New Jerusalem arm-in-arm between you and dear Moody!

“With affectionate regards,  
“I am,  
“Yours ever sincerely,

“T. A. DENNY.”

Mr. Thomas Blake, M.P., was another intimate friend of Mr. Spurgeon’s, who attended the Tabernacle services whenever it was possible. On Lord’s-day morning, June 12, 1887, he was present, and listened to the Pastor’s sermon from Deuteronomy 30:11-14, which was afterwards published under the title, “Plain Gospel for Plain People.” The same night, he wrote the following letter —  
“Reforn Club,  
“Pall Mall, S.W.,  
June 12, ’87 9.30 p.m.

“My Dear Brother,

“Let me thank you for your golden pot of manna this morning, sweeter than honey and the honeycomb. I feast upon it weekly, all the year round; but it is, if possible, more delicious when it enters the mind and heart by way of ‘Ear-gate’ than by way of ‘Eye — gate.’

“I asked a number of members of Parliament, present yesterday at Portsmouth, to come to the Tabernacle this morning. One I brought, He was much impressed, and I pray that our God may make your sermon to be the message of life to him and to many others ....

“In a few weeks, I intend to resign my seat in Parliament, — one. procured without paid agency of any kind, and which I might hold as long as life and health permitted. It deprives me of higher service, and work I love more. This is my only reason for giving it up. With the night and day work in the House of Commons, all my ‘Lord’s-days’ are required for rest. This must not longer be.

“With much love, believe me,  
“Always truly yours,  
“THOS. BLAKE.”

The members of Parliament, mentioned in Mr. Blake’s letter, had gone to Portsmouth to witness the naval demonstration in connection with the Queen’s Jubilee. About that period, The Whitehall Review published the “Jubilee Reverie” reproduced on the opposite page. Mr. Spurgeon’s portrait — not a very good one, — is at the top, on the right hand, facing Archbishop Benson’s.

The latter part of this letter from Mr. (now, Sir) George Williams refers to Mr.. Spurgeon’s engagement to speak, in Exeter Hall, at the forty-fifth annual meeting of the Central Y.M.C.A., on Friday evening, May 24, 1889: —  
“71, St. Paul’s Church Yard,  
“London,  
“May 23rd, 1889.

“My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“Thank you very much for so kindly sending for my acceptance the *Outlines of the Lord’s Work in connection with the Pastors’ College*. It is not necessary for me to repeat my assurances of prayerful sympathy and interest, for you know you have these; — but if my hopes for your usefulness, and the spiritual success of your manifold labors, are fulfilled, your joy will indeed be full.

“We are anticipating, with supreme pleasure, seeing you tomorrow evening, and are praying that the Master Himself may give you some special word, that may be productive of abundant spiritual fruitfulness.

“Believe me,  
“Yours ever truly,  
“GEORGE WILLIAMS.”

That prayer was abundantly answered, and the Lord’s help to His servant was so graciously manifested that the address proved to be one of Mr. Spurgeon’s most memorable utterances.

This note, from another of the Pastor’s special friends, gives just an indication of its power and usefulness —  
“Beckenham,  
“May 25th, 1889.  
“My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“Thanks be unto God on your behalf! You were wondrously helped last night. The Lord stood by you, and strengthened you. Your words were wise and right words; and they will live, and be wafted to the ends of the earth.

“The kind and loving sympathy, with which you were received, was very cheering and helpful. God bless you tomorrow, and all days! “Yours very truly,  
“SAMUEL THOMPSON.”

Probably Mr. Spurgeon never addressed any great public gathering under such painful conditions as when he spoke, in the Albert Hall, on June 11, 1890, at the annual meeting of Dr. Barnardo’s Homes. He was very ill at the time; in fact, he ought to have been in bed rather than on the platform and the sight of the cripples and other waifs and strays so affected his sympathetic heart that he was utterly broken down, and felt more inclined to weep than to speak; yet he did plead powerfully for the poor children, and perhaps his words had all the greater weight because many in the audience could tell at least something of the suffering he was himself enduring. On his return home, he was completely exhausted. Dr. Barnardo’s letter shows how grateful he was for the Pastor’s aid under such trying circumstances, and it also indicates his natural anxiety as to the consequences of the service thus rendered to him —

“Stepney Causeway,  
“London, E.,  
“12th June, 1890.

“Dear Mrs. Spurgeon,

“I write to you, rather than to your dear husband, for I cannot but fear that his presence and the exertion made at our meeting, last night, may have resulted unfavorably to him; and I would not add another single straw to the burden of pain and weariness; which, it may be, he is suffering from today.

“Nevertheless, I dare not leave this letter unwritten, and so consider it wisest and best to write to you, to tell you how deeply, how unutterably grateful I am to dear Mr. Spurgeon for his presence, for his weighty, loving, gracious, wise words, and for the tender sympathy he showed to and for my bairns, never can forget the debt he has placed me under. All I can now say is this, that I do, from the depths of my heart, thank him. While he spoke, I could but afresh thank God and take courage. No words, uttered last night, fell on my own spirit so like water upon the thirsty ground as did those of dear Mr. Spurgeon. I was cheered, helped, encouraged, lifted up, soothed, and comforted. I could but say, from my heart of hearts, a hundred times, ‘God bless him!’ and now I say it to your ears, which I am sure will not be unwilling to hear that prayer, even from one so unworthy as I am, for him you love so well. The sight of the dear servant of the Lord there, last night, in all his obvious, manifest weakness, was in itself a sermon, even if no words had been uttered by him.

“But I must not go on; this much only I will say. First, he must never again talk of being in my debt. Dear Mr. Spurgeon has paid that debt, if it ever existed, over and over again. Second, I must be careful never again, under any circumstances, to ask at his hands so great a service as he rendered us last night, — unless in the years bright and happy, which I hope are still in store for him, God, in His goodness, may give him back so large a share of health and strength that he may be rather pleased to come to us than otherwise. If such an hour arrives, then indeed I may break the pledge I now give; but, otherwise, I will not dare again to overtax, as we did last night, the loving, tender heart and weary, weakened body of your dear husband.

“And lastly, let me add this, that anything I can do now, or at any time, anything that lies in my poor power, that my children, my assistants, or any of us can do for Mr. Spurgeon, or his work, or for anyone dear to him, I will count it a privilege and an honor to do; and I can but hope that the time, may soon come when Mr. Spurgeon will feel the necessity for putting this sincerely offered pledge to the test.

“I do earnestly hope you are yourself sustained in fair health, and in great peace and comfort of mind. As we could not hope to see you at our meeting, last night, I may venture, to enclose you, as a souvenir of the occasion, two of the programmes then in use. They may help, perhaps, to bring before you a little of what those who were there saw; and I know it is possible they may excite in you some prayerful thought for the thousands of young folk under my care.

“Believe me to be,  
“Dear Mrs. Spurgeon,  
“Gratefully and faithfully yours,

“THOS. J. BARNARDO.”

One of the letters written to cheer Mr. Spurgeon in that season of suffering carne from Bishop Richardson, of the Reformed Episcopal Church, and was as follows —

“27, Belgrave Road,  
“St. John’s Wood,  
“14 June, 1890.

“My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

‘“ I see that, at Dr. Barnardo’s meeting, you said you were ‘as ill as possible.’ God bless you! You have probably done more good than any man of your generation, and it has pleased the Master to keep you humble. You will be well, some day. We love the same dear Master, and will say ‘Welcome’ to one another where no one feels ‘as ill as he can be’

“Your faithful friend,  
“ALFRED S. RICHARDSON, Bishop.”

Only a few days after that great meeting at the Albert Hall, Mr. Spurgeon was at the Mildmay Conference Hall, and there delivered another of his most memorable addresses. The subject of it was, “Christ our Leader in Darkness;” and it has been exceedingly helpful to the children of God who, for various reasons, have been caused to walk in the dark. He was still so far from well that them was great uncertainty as to whether he would be able to be present; and in reply to a note from him, to that effect, Colonel Morton wrote —

“Conference Hall,  
“Midmay Park,  
“London N.,  
“17 June, 1890.

“Dear and Honored Mr. Spurgeon,  
“I may safely say that all Mildmay deeply regrets, with me, your present indisposition; and we, in the office here, commenced this day’s work by praying for you, and by asking God to glorify Himself at the coming Conference, either by your presence or your absence; — in either case, giving you a rich blessing’.

“Should we not be permitted to have you with us, Dr. Andrew Bonar would be the first speaker, and your place would be taken by Mr. Frank White. He has consented to be your ‘reserve’ in case of need, and I have today forwarded your letter to him for perusal. So please do not feel under the slightest restraint, or be careful or anxious at the possibility of disappointing us at the Conference. If we cannot get plums, we must be thankful and grateful for good sound bread!

“Allow me, very late in the day, to thank you for the numberless times you have refreshed, and strengthened, and comforted us soldiers, who, often in India and other Countries, on the line of march, hundreds, of miles from any place of worship, or means of grace (in the ordinary sense of the word), have met under trees, some little distance from camp, and have, after prayer and hymns, introduced you as our preacher. We had a large Bible-class in my regiment, in those days, and many a blessing has been entreated upon you by those dear fellows.

“Your sermon, ‘In the Garden with Him,’ was my companion, quite lately, when going up Monte Pelegrino, near Palermo, en route from Malta to England. In what stray corners of the wide world, where soldiers and sailors are, do you not come, and bring messages of God’s love and truth?

“I have long wished to thank you, as hundreds of others would wish to do; and here is my opportunity. May God increasingly bless you!

“Very sincerely yours,  
“R. MORTON, Colonel.”

Mr. Spurgeon received many letters in German; they were all passed on to a lady who was a member of the Tabernacle Church, and who translated a great number of the Pastor’s sermons and other works into that language. One of them contained some information which greatly interested him. The translator wrote — “This letter is from a German Baptist colporteur in Wurtemberg. He says that he has sold many of your books, which have been a blessing to him and to many other readers of them. The Empress of Germany has bought from him your Dew Drops and Gold Beams (Morning by Morning and Evening by Evening in the German translation), and John Ploughman’s Talk. I wonder how she likes John Ploughman. I believe, very well, because of the contrast it affords from the language of her courtiers.”

Not only did Mr. Spurgeon have a large number of communications written in other foreign languages, but, at various time, he received numerous letters which he regarded as literary curiosities. Many, which were supposed to be in English, were veritable hieroglyphs, most difficult to decipher, though the meaning of them was generally made out somehow or other, and answers despatched to those from whom they came.

The three following epistles were carefully preserved by Mr. Spurgeon, in the envelope in which one of them came, which was addressed thus. (intended for Nightingale Lane, Clapham) —

Rev C Sh Spurgeon  
Eglelane claping  
road  
London.

They are here reproduced, *verbatim et literatim*, with the exception of the names and addresses of the writers, or anything which might give at clue to their identification —

“Sir

“Wiw You Obige me by Forewarding 6 pennyworth of your poterites as I am a yong Man a lite Complection Brown hare neither tall nor peturcular short Will you please to send me some of the Likensse of the yong woman as I have got to Marry and When I have got to see and Marry her Foreward as quick as Posable I have got Dark Blue eyes age. is about 29 to thirty on the first day of december Bornd about one oclock in the Morning,.  
“Rite as soon as you Can.”

“\_\_\_\_\_\_”

“Mas Spurgeon  
“My age is 20 yers old.

“Dea sir as a young Man trusting in a risinang Severe converter by his Quiking power and being Baptized by The Reb , Chapel. and as i have ben working for the Lord and Master Jesus Christ for tow yers and is for yers since i was converted and as i Am a homless child and a orpent as it is; 11 yers since my Father and Mother died and 3 broters and a sister therefor i was left frindless and homeless therefore i had to botle on my selfe but it has put me throu dep exprence but God has blist me abundantly fore it makes me wep when i think of his godness to me therefore i would welsh to be a servent for the Lord if it is the mana of him and if i am wone of his eleked chilain to serve him at horn or abrod

“Plese Sir retern a nancer as i would like to get mor lering your plesur i wil aad no more  
“but ramain your  
“abudent Servent  
“\_\_\_\_\_\_”  
The words italicized in the following letter were underlined by Mr. Spurgeon in the original —

“Mr. Spurgeon,  
“Dear Sir,

“I take the liberty in writeing to you knowing you are one in proclaiming God work in Jesus I have sent you a book I have rote out my silf It is fully my own thoughts. Took from the bible *I am happy to say I had a Born again about three years ago. It was very deep in deed.* I have allways been one to believe in God But about 3 or 4 years ago I had thoughts that there must be some thing in that being born again. *So I prayed very heartly to God for a born again But it did not come by the first prayer or the next and I allmost thought it was no use praying But I prayed on and it came at last* and I saw afterwards It was the best time it could of come as my thoughts at that time was more free to receive it at that time I new not any thing in the true light of the work of Jesus

“God has blessed me very much in giving me enlightment on his great work as Jesus It has been my very life sinch that Born again in procliming the work of Jesus I could bring forword hundreds to show how I love to show God’s love and mercy to man. And I am happy to say I have seen the true born again Though a few words I have spoken I have a very good character as a hard working man my wage is two and twenty shillings a week. But I should very much like to have, my full time In procliming the work of Jesus as Scripture reader. Or some thing like. My age 33. I am married and have three children.

“Dear Sir I thought as you was so will known, you would be the best one to write to. I have sent you the character I had for the situation I am still in Dear Sir I should be very please if you would have the words in the book printed *But if you would kindly send the Book back and the character*

“Yours truly  
“\_\_\_\_\_\_”

CHAPTER 95.

IN THE SUNNY SOUTH.

I do not think any human being upon earth ever felt so much repose of soul and body as I do. Many years of toil are all rewarded by this blessed rest, which only seems too good to be true. I have no task work, and do more voluntarily, as a recreation, than I have often done of obligation. No idle tongues disturb me, or cares molest me. The burden is taken from the shoulder, and the bit from between the jaws. If anything can make me young and strong again, this will. It is rest of a sort which I never knew before in all its forms; for, at other times, pain, or dulness, or too much company, has made it less enjoyable. I rest on the wing, as the swallow is said to do. — C. H. S., in letter from Mentone, written in 1882.

Up in Dr. Bennet’s garden, when Harrald read me the following lines, I adopted them as my own; —

***“O days of heaven and nights of equal praise,  
Serene and peaceful as those heavenly days,  
When souls drawn upward in communion sweet Enjoy the stillness of some close retreat,  
Discourse as if released, and safe at home,  
Of dangers past, and wonders yet to come,  
And spread the sacred treasure of the breast  
Upon the lap of covenanted rest.”***

I T would have been easy to fill a volume with the account of Mr. Spurgeon’s experience,in the sunny South, but the many other interesting portions of his wondrously full life make it needful to condense into two chapters the record of about twenty annual visits to the Riviera. He was fairly familiar with most of the favorite resorts on that part of the Mediterranean shore, and he occasionally made a short stay at one or other of them; but Mentone was the place he loved beyond all the rest. Sometimes, after going elsewhere for a change of scene, a few days sufficed for the enjoyment of the beauties and charms of the new region, and then he would say, “I think we will hasten on to Mentone.” On settling down in his old quarters, he generally exclaimed, with a sigh of relief, “Ah! now I feel at home.”

Mr. Spurgeon’s first visit to the Riviera was made before the railway had been completed along the coast; and he used often to describe to his travelling companions, in later days, the delights of driving from Marseilles to Genoa, and so being able to see, under the most favorable conditions, some of the loveliest views on the face of the earth. On that journey, one incident occurred which was quite unique in the, Pastor’s experience. While staying for a few days at Nice, he received a letter from the captain of the Alabama, an American man-of-war lying in the harbour of Villefranche, inviting him to pay a visit to that vessel. On accepting the invitation, a very pleasant time was spent on board, and then the captain asked Mr. Spurgeon to come another day, and preach to his officers and men, and to those of a second man-of-war which was stationed not far off. Though the preacher was out for a holiday, he gladly availed himself of the opportunity of conducting the service desired; and after it was over, he chatted for some time with a number of his sailor hearers. Amongst them, he found one who, when a boy, had been in Newington Sunday-school, and whose uncle was a member at the Tabernacle, and another who, as a lad, ran away from his home at Dulwich. Several different nationalities were represented and a good many Roman Catholics were there; but all seemed exceedingly pleased to listen to the gospel message, and Mr. Spurgeon said that he did not know that he had ever enjoyed preaching more than he did on that occasion, and that he should, ever afterwards, reckon himself an honorary chaplain of the United States Navy.

Tidings of the service at Villefranche probably reached other American vessels, for, several years later, when the U. S. S. Trenton, the flagship of the European squadron, was at Gravesend, the chaplain wrote to Mr. Spurgeon — “Could it be possible for you, amid your abundant labors, to come down some day, and address our officers and men, it would be esteemed a great favor, and I know it would be the means of doing incalculable good. All through the cruise, it has been my desire that the ship might go to some port in your vicinity, hoping thereby that you might oblige us with a visit.” The Pastor was unable to accede to the request so kindly conveyed, but he fully appreciated the honor, and perhaps all the more because he was never invited to preach on board a British man-ofwar.  
One of the travelling companions on the first visit to the Riviera was the

Pastor’s friend, deacon, and publisher, Mr. Joseph Passmore; and he was usually a member of the little company who gathered at Mentone year by year; though, latterly, his partner, Mr. James Alabaster, had the joy of taking his turn at holiday-making with the author whose works he had so long published.

In 1879, Mr. Harrald went for the first time; and, from that year, until the never-to-be-forgotten last visit of 1891-2, he was only absent twice, when his services seemed more urgently required at home. The accompanying reproduction of a photograph taken at Mentone, in 1880, contains the portraits of Mr. Spurgeon. Mr. Passmore, Mr. Harrald, “Old George,” and “Father Abraham,” whom the Pastor always called his Oxfordshire deacon. Beside Mr. Passmore, the Tabernacle deacons who stayed at Mentone with Mr. Spurgeon were Mr. W. Higgs, sent Mr. T. Greenwood, Mr. C.F. Allison, Mr. W. Higgs, and Mr. F. Thompson.

Mr. Spurgeon often quoted one of “Father Abraham’s” sayings, “I don’t believe any other three men in Mentone have done as much work as we three have done to-ay.” The speaker’s share of the work consisted in sitting quite still, and. reading the newspaper or one of the many interesting books which always formed part of the Pastor’s travelling equipment.

It has been already intimated that the season of rest was by no means a time of idleness; some friends even hinted that there was too much labor,

and too little relaxation. The quotations at the beginning of the present chapter give the chief worker’s own view of the matter in i882; and a few more extracts from his letters of the same period will furnish details of the manner in which some of his days of holiday were pleasantly and profitably spent —

“I went up to Dr. Bennet’s garden at 11 o’clock, and remained there alone with Harrald till 3.30. He read to me, and then I dictated to him, changing to a talk, a walk, a pun, some fun, and the. n reading and speechifying again, the electric shorthand bottling all up for future use. I did enjoy it, though the mistral blew savagely. We were in a corner of the kiosque, out of all the wind, and yet in the open air, with mountains, and sea, and garden all around. No one disturbed us; it was the beau ideal of an artistic author’s studio.”  
“Harrald read to me, yesterday, The Life of Cromwell, — grand, soulinspiring. How the man trusted in the Lord! How sweet is the life of faith, and how splendid are its triumphs! I would live equally above joys and sorrows, and find my all in the Lord Himself.”

“It came on to blow, so Harrald. and I resorted to Dr. Bennet’s garden from to to 3, having a grand read all alone till about 2 o’clock, and then admitting the other friends to be silent disciples among us. I gathered sheaves of texts for sermons, and a few subjects for articles, and had a very happy clay. The wind blew in hurricanes, but we sat with a wall at our backs, and the sun shining upon our faces. Trees were bending; in the gale, and the swift ships were flying across the main; but we had a hiding-place from the wind, and sat therein with comfort.”

Mr. Spurgeon never saw cyclamen growing anywhere without recalling an amusing incident which happened in Dr. Bennet’s garden at the time when visitors were freely welcomed there in the morning. The Pastor and his secretary had fond a sheltered spot where they were completely hidden from view, and during one of the pauses in the reading or dictating, they were greatly interested in hearing a young lady, quite near them, exclaim, in unmistakable Transatlantic tones, “O mother, do come here! There are some lovely sickly men (cyclamen), just here. I du love sickly men!” Perhaps the speaker would not have been quite so enthusiastic if she had been aware of the proximity of the English listeners who mischievously gave to her words a meaning she never intended them to convey.

When Dr. Bennet restored the Saracenic tower here represented, he placed it at the disposal of Mr. Spurgeon, who at once availed himself of such a delightful retreat. Perched up so high above the sea, the view all around was indescribably lovely, while, by turning the key in the lock, absolute immunity from intruders was secured; and, as the result, some of the brightest of the articles in *The Sword and the Trowel* were here written or dictated, and some of the choicest sermons in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* were here composed, at least in outline. Only a short distance away from this tower, and perched on the very edge of the cliff overhanging the sea, stands the Italian guard-house which Mr. Spurgeon had to pass every time he went to see his friend, Mr. Thomas Hanbury, at the Palazzo Orengo, La Mortola. The Pastor often told the story of an incident that happened within this building. In the days when the phylloxera was committing such deadly havoc among the vines of France and Italy, the two countries tried to prevent its further spread by forbidding the transport of fruit, flowers, shrubs, etc., from one land to the other, it was a foolish and useless regulation, for the phylloxera was already in possession of both sides of the frontier; and it led to many amusing scenes. One day, Mr. Spurgeon was going, with a party of friends, for a picnic; and, amongst the articles under his charge, were,, a couple of oranges. He understood sufficient Italian to comprehend that the fruit could not be allowed to pass; but his ready wit suggested the best way out of the difficulty, so he walked into the soldiers’ room, peeled the oranges, carefully putting all the peel into the fire, and ate them, to the great amusement of the defenders of the crown rights ,of the King of Italy! As the story has been published in various papers and books, Mr. Spurgeon is represented as having “stepped back, five or six paces, into France,” in order to defy the Italian guards; whereas, at the time, he was probably one or two hundred yards beyond the boundaries of the Republic.

Dr. Bennet’s garden was not the only open-air study that Mr. Spurgeon had at Mentone. In the accompanying illustration, it is easy to pick out the line of cypresses running through the dense masses of olive trees at the back of the Chalet des Rosiers, the Swiss villa where. Queen Victoria stayed when at Mentone. That cypress walk led up to one of the numerous quiet nooks where the Pastor and his secretary spent many a delightful day. They started from the hotel soon after the little company of friends, who had gathered for morning prayer, had dispersed, and if the weather was favorable for a long stay out of doors, they carried the materials for a light lunch with them, a waterproof rug to spread on the ground to ward off rheumatism, — and some books, of course, generally including a volume of Brooks, or Manton, or some other Puritan divine, with a biography or something that would make a variety in ‘the reading. The reader had to pause, every now and then, to jot down texts that struck the attentive listener as being suggestive, or to preserve, by means of phonography, any happy and helpful thoughts that might be of service in after days. Sometimes, the dictation would only’ be sufficient for a paragraph or two, and then the reading would be resumed; on other occasions, a whole article for the magazine would be ready for transcription before the return journey to the hotel. A large part of The Clue of the Maze, and several of the Illustrations and Meditations, or, Flowers from a Puritan’s Garden, were thus written at another re. tired spot nOt far from the cypress walk. A good idea of the kind of place that was usually selected for this purpose can be conveyed by the view that one of the Pastor’s friends took for him, and most appropriately entitled “A Pretty Peep.”

Occasionally, the time devoted to reading in the open air was spent in one of the many lovely valleys by which Mentone is surrounded. Mr. Spurgeon never forgot one experience which he had in the portion of the Gorbio valley represented in the illustration on the opposite page, and concerning which he wrote —

“In this valley I have spent many a happy day, just climbing to, any terrace I preferred, and sitting down to read. I once left Manton on Psalm 119. by the roadside, and before the next morning it was returned to me. Here, too, on Christmas-day, 1879, I learned what it is to ‘Walk in the Light.’ I had been ill with gout; and, on recovering, arranged to drive up this valley as far as the road would serve, and then send away the carriage, walk further on, have our lunch, and, in the afternoon, walk gently back to the spot where we left the conveyance, the man having orders to be there again by three. Alas! I had forgotten that, as far as the upper portion of the valley is concerned, the sun was gone soon after twelve!

I found myself in the shade before lunch was over, and shade meant sharp frost; for, wherever the sun had not shone, the earth was frozen hard as a rock. To be caught in this cold, would mean a long illness for me; so, leaning on the shoulder of my faithful secretary, I set forth to hobble down the valley. The sun shone on me, and I could just move fast enough to keep his bright disc above the top of the hill. He seemed to be rolling downward along the gradually descending ridge, like a great wheel of fire; and I, painfully and laboriously stumbling along, still remained in his light. Of course, it was not the time for our jehu to be at the appointed spot; so, with many a groan, I had to stagger on until a stray conveyance, came in our direction. Out of the sunshine, all is winter in the sunlight alone is summer. Oh, that spiritually I could always wall< in the light of God’s countenance as that day I managed to keep in the sun’s rays!

***“‘ Like Enoch, let me walk with God,  
And thus walk out my day;  
Attended still with heave ely light,  
Upon the King’s highway.’”***

The Gorbio valley was one of the special haunts of the trap-door spiders until visitors so ruthlessly destroyedtheir wonderful underground home,,. Concerning these and other curious creatures, the. Pastor wrote to Mrs. Spurgeon — ” How I wish you could be here to see the spiders’ trapdoors! There are thousands of them here, and the harvesting ants also, though the wise men declared that Solomon was mistaken when he said, ‘They prepare their meat in the summer.’ I shall send. you a book about them all.” When the volume arrived, it proved to be Harvesting’ Ants and Trap-door Spiders, by J. Traherne Moggridge, F.L.S., and it contained such a choice inscription that it is here reproduced in facsimile—

One of the charms of Mentone to Mr. Spurgeon was the fact that he could constantly see there illustrations of Biblical scenes and manners and customs. He frequently said he had no desire to visit Palestine in its present forlorn condition, for he had before his eyes, in the Riviera, an almost exact representation of the Holy Land as it was in the days of our Lord. He was greatly interested in an article, written by Dr. Hugh Macmillan, upon this subject, in which that devoted student of nature traced many minute resemblances between the climate, the conformation of the country, the fauna and flora, and the habits of the people in the South of France of today, and those of the East in the time when Jesus of Nazareth trod “those holy fields.” In several of his; Sabbath afternoon communion addresses, the Pastor’ alluded to the many things that continually reminded him of “Immanuel’s land,” while the olive trees were a never-failing source, of interest and illustration. One of the works, with which, he had made very considerable progress, was intended to be, if possible, an explanation of all the Scriptural references to the olive,

Mr. Spurgeon often remarked that there were many Biblical allusions which could not be understood apart from their Oriental associations; and, as an instance, he said that some people had failed altogether to catch the meaning of Isaiah 57:20, “The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.” Those who have affirmed that the sea never can rest have not seen the Mediterranean in its most placid mood, when for days or even weeks at a time there is scarcely a ripple upon its surface. During that calm period, all sorts of refuse accumulate along the shore; and then, when the time of tempest comes, anyone who walks by the side of the agitated waters can see that they do “cast up mire and dirt.” Usually, during the Pastor’s stay at Mentone, there was at least one great storm, either far out at sea, or near at hand. In 1882, in one of his letters home, he wrote the following graphic description of the scene he had just witnessed “This afternoon, I have been out to watch the sea. There was a storm last night, and the sea cannot forgive the rude winds, so it is avenging its wrongs upon the shore. The sun shone at 3 o’clock, and there was no wind here; but away over the waters hung an awful cloud, and to our left a rainbow adorned another frowning mass of blackness. Though much mud was under foot, all the world turned out to watch the hungry billows rush upon the beach. In one place, they rolled against the esplanade, and then rose, like the waterworks at Versailles, high into the air, over the walk, and across the road, making people run and dodge, and leaving thousands of pebbles on the pavement. In another place, the sea removed all the foreshore, undermined the walls, carried them away, and then assailed the broad path, which it destroyed in mouthfuls, much as a rustic eats bread-and-butter! Here and’ there, it took away ‘the curb; I saw some twelve feet of it go, and then it attacked the road. It was amusing to see the people move as a specially big wave dashed up. The lamp-posts were going when I came in, and an erection of solid stone, used as the site of a pump, was on the move. Numbers of people were around this as I came in at sundown; it was undermined, and a chasm was opening between it and the road. Men were getting up the gas pipes, or digging into the road to cut the gas off. I should not wonder if the road is partly gone by the morning. Though splashed with mud, I could not resist the delight of seeing the huge waves, and the. sea birds flashing among them like soft lightnings.’ The deep sigh, the stern howl, the solemn hush, the booming roar, and the hollow mutter of the ocean were terrible and grand to me. Then the rosy haze of the far-ascending spray, and the imperial purple and azure of the more-distant part of the waters, together with the snow-white manes of certain breakers on a line of rock, made up a spectacle never to be forgotten. Far away, in the East, I saw just a few yards of rainbow standing on the sea. It seemed like a Pharos glimmering there, or a ship in gala array, dressed out with the flags of all nations. O my God, how glorious art Thou! I love Thee the better for’ being so great, so terrible, so good, so true. ‘ This God is our’ God, for ever and ever.’“

Another phenomenon was thus described in. a letter of the same period — ”About six in the evening, we were all called out into the road to see a superb Aurora Borealis, — a sight that is very rarely seen here. Natives say that it is twelve years since the last appearance, and that it means a cold winter which will drive people to Mentone. Our mountains are to the North, and yet, above their tops, we saw the red glare of this wonderful visitant. ‘ Castellar is’ on fire,’ said an old lady, as if the conflagration of a million such hamlets could cause the faintest approximation to the Aurora, which looked like the first sight of a world on fire, or the blaze of the day of doom.”

Mr. Spurgeon had been at Mentone so many years that he had watched its growth from little more than a village to a town of considerable size. He had so thoroughly explored it that he knew every nook and cranny, and there was not a walk or drive in the neighborhood with which he was not perfectly familiar. His articles, in The Sword and the Trowel, on the journey from “Westwood” to Mentone, and the drives around his winter resort, have been most useful to later travelers, and far more interesting than ordinary guide-books. Many of the villas and hotels were associated with visits to invalids or other friends, and some were the scenes of notable incidents which could not easily be forgotten.

At the Hotel d’Italie, the Pastor called to see John Bright, who was just then in anything bat a bright frame of mind. He was in a very uncomfortable room, and was full of complaints of the variations in temperature in the sunshine and in the shade. His visitor tried to give him a description of Mentone as he had known it for many ),ears, but the great tribune of the people seemed only anxious to get away to more congenia1 quarters. The Earl of Shaftesbury was another of the notable Mentone visitors whom the Pastor tried to cheer when he was depressed about the state of religious and social affairs in England and on the Continent.

One morning, among the little company gathered for family prayer, Mr. T. A. Denny unexpectedly put in an appearance. I n explanation of his sudden arrival, he said, “I felt down in the dumps, so I thought I would just run over to my friend Spurgeon for a few clays, for it always does me good to see and hear him.” His presence was equally’ ‘welcome to the Pastor, and they drove together to some of the most charming’ places in the district.

The genial Sir Wilfrid Lawson scarcely needed anyone to raise his spirits, for he was in one of his; merriest moods when he met Mr. Spurgeon at the hotel door, and the half hour they spent together was indeed a lively time. The Right Hon. G. J. Shaw-Lefevre was another politician whom the Pastor met at Mentone. The subject of Home Rule was just then coming to the front, and the Liberal statesman heard that day what Mr. Spurgeon thought of Mr. Gladstone’s plans; the time came when the opinions then expressed privately were published broadcast throughout the United Kingdom, and materially contributed to the great leader’s defeat. In the earlier years of visiting Mentone, the Pastor stayed at the H6tel des Anglais; and he used often to say that he never passed that spot without looking at a certain room, and thanking God for the merciful deliverance which he there experienced. One day, he was; lying in that room, very ill; but he had insisted upon the friends who were with him going out for a little exercise. Scarcely had they left, whets a madman, who had eluded the vigilance of his keepers, rushed in, and said, “ I want you to save my soul.” With great presence of mind, the dear sufferer bade the poor fellow kneel down by the side of the bed, and prayed for him as best he could under the circumstances. Mr. Spurgeon then told him to go away, and return in half an hour. Providentially, he obeyed; and, as soon as he was gone, the doctor and .servants were summoned, but they were not able to overtake the madman before he had stabbed someone in the street; and, only a very few days later, he met with a terribly tragic end.

In the garden of the same hotel, the Pastor once had an unusual and amusing experience.. A poor organ-grinder was working away at his instrument; but, evidently, was evoking more sound than sympathy. Mr. Spurgeon, moved with pity at his want of success, took his place, and ground out the tunes while the man busily occupied himself in picking up the coins thrown by the numerous company that soon gathered at the windows and on the balconies to see and hear Mr. Spurgeon play the organ! When he left off, other guests also had a turn at the machine; and, although they were not so successful as the first amateur player had been, when the organ-man departed, he carried away a heavier purse and a happier heart than he usually took home.

It was while staying at the Hotel des Anglais that the Pastor’ adopted a very original method of vindicating one of the two Christian ordinances which were always very clear to him. At a social gathering, at which Mr. Spurgeon and a large number of friends were present, Mr. Edward Jenkins, M.P., the author of Ginx’s Baby, persistently’ ridiculed believers’ baptism. It was a matter of surprise to many that he did not at once get the answer that he might have been sure he would receive sooner or later. The party broke up, however, without anything having been said by the Pastor upon he question, but it was arranged that, the next day, all of them should visit Ventimiglia. On reaching the cathedral, Mr. Spurgeon led the way to the baptistery in the crypt; and when all the company had gathered round the old man who was explaining the objects of interest, the Pastor said to his and-immersionist friend, “Mr. Jenkins, you understand Italian better than we do, will you kindly interpret for us what the guide is saying?” Thus fairly trapped, the assailant of the previous evening began, “This is an ancient baptistery. He says that, in the early Christian Church, baptism was always administered by immersion.” The crypt at once rang with laughter, in which the interpreter joined as heartily as anyone, admitting that he had been as neatly “sold” as a man well could be. He was not the only one who learnt that the combatant who crossed swords with our Mr. Great-heart might not find the conflict to his permanent advantage.

Mr. Spurgeon was never able to accept the invitation of Mr. Hanbury, who wished him to stay at the Palazzo Orengo; but, on two occasions, he was the guest, for a week or two, of Mrs. Dudgeon at the Villa 1es Grottes. He had frequently spent a clay there, or gone to a drawing-room meeting in aid of one or other of the many religious; and benevolent works in which that good lady was interested, or, in the evening, had met, at her house, a number of friends, belonging to so many different denominations, that it seemed like a gathering under the auspices of the Evangelical Alliance. On one of these occasions, there were so many Church of England canons in the company, that Mr. Spurgeon humorously said that they’ might form a park of artillery. After a season of general conversation, the whole company usually settled down to listen to the story of the Stockwell Orphanage, or remarkable instances of answers to prayer, or a few words; of loving gospel talk, closing with earnest supplication for a blessing to rest upon all present.

When the weather permitted, Mrs. Dudgeon liked to arrange for a picnic, at which other friends could have the opportunity of meeting her honored guest; she related to him, ‘with great glee, the remark of a Mentonese woman concerning one of those outings — ” I can’t make out you English people at all; you have nice hotels and houses where you can have your meals in comfort, and yet you go and eat your dinner in a ditch!” The “ditch” was, of course, a dry one; and, usually, an olive garden was the scene of the alfresco repast.

A favorite resort for these picnic parties was Beaulieu, rightly named “beautiful place.” The route to it led directly through Monte Carlo, and the Pastor was always glad when that part of the road was passed; he said that the whole region seemed to smell of brimstone! On one of his early visits to the Riviera, he had gone in to see the gamblers in the Casino; but, in all later years, he avoided even the gardens surrounding the building where so many had been ruined both for time and eternity, and he did not like any of those who were staying with him to go merely to look at the players. He used to tell them what was said once to a friend of his, who was walking in the gardens, and who, when he met the manager, began to apologize for his presence there as he never went to the tables.

“My dear sit’,” replied Monsieur ............. , “you are heartily welcome to come at any time, even though you do no’ play; you are one of our best friends, for you and others like you help to make our place respectable.” As the one to whom these words were addressed had an utter horror of supporting gambling in any way, he took care. never again to be seen anywhere near the gardens.

Almost every year, while Mr. Spurgeon was at Mentone, he heard of many cases of suicide as the result of the gambling at Monte Carlo, and in various ways he discovered that the ruin wrought by the Casino was far greater than was known to the public in England. On various occasions, he published some of this information, in the hope of aiding the movement for the abolition of the evil. One of those papers, entitled “The Serpent in Paradise,” was reprinted, and had a large circulation but,, alas! the gaming still continues, and the annual roll of victims appears to be as long and. as terrible as ever.

One delightful excursion was arranged to Laguet, or Laghetto, the charming valley which has been, at times, the resort of almost numberless pilgrims, who have gone there to obtain the supposed mediation of the large wax doll which probably is still preserved in the chapel attached to the monastery. A drive out to that lovely spot, with a mid — day rest for the. horses, and an open-air meal for the travelers, was always regarded by Mr. Spurgeon as one of the greatest enjoyments of his sojourn in the sunny South. But it was only possible in the finest weather, and when the days were long enough to permit the return journey to be completed before sunset; otherwise, a chill and a painful illness would most likely follow, as there was so great a fall in the temperature the instant the sun disappeared for the night.

CHAPTER 96.

IN THE SUNNY SOUTH (CONTINUED).

O N one of the visits to Mrs. Dudgeon at the Villa les Grottes, the Pastor and his secretary were photographed in her garden by her nephew, Mr. H. W. Seton-Karr. The above reproduction gives a slight idea of the view to be seen from one of the upper terraces; the high hills in the distance are beyond the Italian frontier.

For several years, Mr. Spurgeon stayed at the Hotel Beau Rivage. As he generally had several companions, or friends who wished to be near him, his party usually occupied a considerable portion of the small building, and the general arrangements were as homelike as possible, even to the ringing of a bell when it was time for family prayer. Not only were there guests in the house who desired to be present, but many came from other hotels and villas in the neighborhood, and felt well rewarded by the brief exposition of the Scriptures and the prayer which followed it. Those of the company who were members of any Christian church asked permission to attend the Lord’s-day afternoon communion service, and it frequently happened that the large sitting-room was quite full, and the folding doors had to be thrown back, so that some communicants might be in the room adjoining. On the Sabbath morning, the Pastor usually worshipped with the Presbyterian friends at the Villa les Grottes; occasionally giving an address before the observance of the Lord’s supper, and sometimes taking the whole service. Although away for rest, an opportunity was generally made for him to preach, at least once during the season, at the French Protestant Church, when a very substantial sum was collected for the poor of Mentone. He also took part in the united prayer-meetings in the first week of the year, and sometimes spoke upon the topic selected for the occasion.

It is; scarcely possible to tell how many people were blessed under the semi-private ministry which Mr. Spurgeon was able to exercise during his holiday. He used, at times, to feel that the burden became almost too great to be borne, for it seemed as if all who were suffering from depression of spirit, whether living in Mentone, Nice, Cannes, Bordighera, or San Remo, found him out, and sought the relief which his sympathetic heart was ever ready to bestow. In one case, a poor soul, greatly in need of comfort, was marvelously helped by a brief conversation with him. Wine Pastor himself thus related the story, when preaching in the Tabernacle, in June, 1883: —

“Some years ago, I was away in the South of France; I had been very ill there, and was sitting in my room alone, for my friends had all gone down to the mid-day meal. All at once it struck me that I had something to doout of doors; I did not know what it was, but I walked out, and sat down on a seat. There came and sat next to me on the seat a poor, pale, emaciated woman in the last stage of consumption; and looking at me, she. said, ‘ O Mr. Spurgeon, I have read your sermons for years, and I have learned to trust the Savior! I know I cannot live long, but I am very sad as I think of it, for I am so afraid to die.’ Then I knew why I had gone out there, and I began to try to cheer her. I found that it was very hard work. After a little conversation, I said to her, ‘ Then you would like to go to Heaven, but not to die?’ ‘ Yes, just so,’ she answered. ‘ Well, how’ do you wish to go there? Would you like to ascend in a chariot of fire?’ That method had not occurred to her, but she answered, ‘Yes, oh, yes!’ ‘Well,’ I said, ‘suppose there should be, just round this, corner, horses all on fire, and a blazing Chariot waiting there to take you up to Heaven; do you feel ready to step into such a chariot?’ She looked up at me, and she said, ‘ No, I should be afraid to do that.’ ‘ Ah!’ I said, ‘and so should I; I should tremble a great deal more at getting into a chariot of fire than I should at dying. I am not fond of being behind fiery horses, I would rather be excused from taking such a ride as that.’ Then I said to her, ‘ Let me tell you what will probably happen to you; you will most likely go to bed some night, and you will wake up in Heaven.’ That is just what did occur not long after; her husband wrote to tell me that, after our conversation, she had never had any more trouble about dying; she felt that it was; the easiest way into Heaven, after all, and far better than going there in a whirlwind with horses of fire and chariots of fire, and she gave herself up tot her Heavenly Father to, take her home in His own way; and so she passed away, as I expected, in her sleep.”

The testimony of one American minister is probably typical of that of many others who came under Mr. Spurgeon’s influence at Mentone. In on, of his letters to The Chicago Standard, Revelation W. H. Geistweit wrote — ” It has been said that, to know a man, you must live with him. For two months, every morning, I found myself in Mr. Spurgeon’s sitting-room, facing the sea, with the friends who had gathered there for the reading of the Word and prayer. To me, it is far sweeter to recall those little meetings than to think of him merely as the great preacher of the Tabernacle. Multitudes heard him there while but few had the peculiar privilege accorded to me. His solicitude for others constantly shone out. An incident in illustration of this fact will1 never be forgotten by me. He had been very ill for’ a week, during which time, although I went daily to his hotel, he did not leave his bed, and could not be seen. His suffering was excruciating. A little later, I was walking in the street, one morning, when he spied me from his carriage. He hailed me, and when I approached him, he held out his left hand, and said cheerily, ‘Oh, you are worth five shillings a pound more than when I saw you last!’ And letting his voice fall to a tone of deep earnestness, he added, ‘*Spend it all for the Lord*”

A gentleman, who was staying in the hotel at Mentone, where the Pastor spent the winter of 1883, wrote — ” As an instance of the rapidity of Mr. Spurgeon’s preparation, the following incident may be given. There came to him, from London, a large parcel of Christmas and New Year’s cards. These were shown to some of the residents at the hotel, and a lady of our party was requested to choose one from them. The card she selected was a Scriptural one; it was headed,’ The New Year’s Guest,’ and in harmony with the idea of hospitality, two texts were linked together ‘ I was a stranger, and ye took Me in ;’ and ‘ As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become, the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name.’ The card was taken away by the lady; but, on the following Lord’s-day, after lunch, Mr. Spurgeon requested that it might be lent to him for a short time. The same afternoon, a service was held in his private room, and he then gave a most beautiful and impressive address upon the texts on the card. The sermonette was printed in The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit Shortly after that date, and has always seemed to me a wonderful illustration of Mr. Spurgeon’s great power. Later in the day, he showed me the notes he had made in the half-hour which elapsed between the time the card came into his possession and the service at which the address was delivered; and these, written on a half-sheet of notepaper, consisted of the two main divisions, each one with several sub-divisions, exactly as they appear in the. printed address.”

(Just as this chapter was being compiled, one of “our own men,” Pastor W. J. Tomkins, thus reported a far more remarkable instance of the rapidity of Mr. Spurgeon’s preparation — ” One Thursday evening, during the time I was a student in the College, the dear President had been preaching in the West of England, — at Bristol, I think, — and by some cause was delayed on his way back to London. At the commencement of the service, Mr. James Spurgeon announced that he had received a telegram from his brother, mentioning the delay, and stating that he would arrive in time to preach. During the reading of the lesson, which was the 1st chapter .of the Second Epistle to, Timothy, the great preacher entered, to the intense delight of the large congregation present. Mr. James Spurgeon was giving an exposition of the chapter when his brother, who had quietly taken a seat behind him, intimated his presence by gently pulling his coat-tail. The reading was soon finished, prayer was offered, and a hymn sung, and the text was announced ‘Wherefore put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.’ After an interesting and instructive introduction, the Pastor proceeded to deliver a most orderly and helpful discourse, which seemed to bear the marks of careful preparation, and it was with astonishment we heard him say, in the College the next day, that the whole sermon of the previous evening flashed across his mind while sitting upon the platform during the reading of the chapter by his brother.”)

Occasionally, Mr. Spurgeon sent home the outline which he had used at the Sabbath afternoon communion, with some account of the service. The facsimile on the opposite page relates to the address upon the words, “Thou hast visited me in the night,” which was published in The Sword and the Trowel for December, 1886, under the title, “Mysterious Visits.” It contained quite a number of autobiographical allusions, such as the fol1owing — ” I hope that you and I have had many visits from our Lord. Some of us have. had them, especially in the night, when we have been compelled to count the sleepless hours. ‘ Heaven’s gate opens when this world’s is shut.’ The night is still; everybody is away; work is done; care is forgotten; and then the Lord Himself draws near. Possibly there may be pain to be endured, the head may be aching, and the heart may be throbbing; but if Jesus comes to visit us, our bed of languishing becomes a throne of glory. Though it is true that’ He giveth His beloved sleep,’ yet, at such times, He gives them something better than sleep, namely, His own presence, and the fullness of joy which comes with it. By night, upon our bed, we have seen the unseen. I have tried sometimes not to sleep under an excess of joy, when the company of Christ has been sweetly mine..” The closing paragraph is a good illustration of the way in which Mr. Spurgeon made use of the scenes around him to impress his message upon his hearers —

“Go forth, beloved, and talk with Jesus on the beach, for He oft resorted to the sea-shore. Commune with Him amid the olive groves so dear to Him in many a night of wrestling prayer. If ever there was a country in which men should see traces of Jesus, next to the Holy Land, this Riviera is the favored spot. It is a land of ‘vines, and figs, and olives, and palms; I have called it ‘Thy land, O Immanuel.’ While in this Mentone, I often fancy that I am looking out upon the Lake of Gennesaret, or walking at the foot of the Mount of Olives, or peering into the mysterious gloom of the Garden of Gethsemane. The narrow streets of the old town are such as Jesus traversed, these villages are such as He inhabited. Have your hearts right with Him, and He will visit you often, until every day you shall walk with God, as Enoch did, and so turn week-days into Sabbaths, meals into sacraments, homes into temples, and earth into I-leaven. So be it with us! Amen.”

The atmosphere at Mentone was so favorable for photographers’ work that many portraits of the. Pastor were taken during his sojourns in the sunny South. One of the very best is here reproduced.

At the same time and place, the portrait of his private secretary, was; also taken.

Some good people were evidently under the impression that Mr. Spurgeon’s stay in the Riviera afforded him the opportunity of doing literary work for which he had not the leisure while at home. On October 3, 1887, he gave an address, at the Tabernacle, to the members and friends of the Open Air Mission, upon “Winning Souls for Christ.” Shortly afterwards, he received a letter from the secretary, Mr. Gawin Kirkham, thanking him for the address, and adding -” Naturally, we are asked, on every hand, ‘Will it be published?’ We say, ‘Yes, please God. in due time.’ So, when you have time to revise it in the sunny South, we shall rejoice to receive it.”

The address was duly revised, and published, and its influence for good continues even to this day. The Pastor’s experience on that occasion was not at all unusual; for, very often, after he had preached or spoken on behalf of one or other of the Societies for which his help was constantly being asked, the sermon or address was sent to him, with a request for its revision. In such a busy life as his, ‘it was not easy to crowd in both the public testimony and the private toil which so frequently followed; yet, when it was possible, he gladly rendered the desired service in both its forms.

The sunshine and clear air at Mentone helped to increase the natural buoyancy of Mr. Spurgeon’s spirits, and so provided a large supply of pure fun for all who were there with him. Walking by the sea-shore, at a time when the Mediterranean was raging furiously, he asked, “What are the wild waves saying?” and then gave his own witty answer to the question, “Let us (s)pray!”

On the sad occasion when he fell down a marble staircase, he did not at first realize how seriously he had been hurt; and having turned a double somersault, in the course of which some money fell from his pocket into his Wellington boots, and having also lost a tooth, or teeth, in his descent, he ‘humorously described the whole transaction as “painless dentistry, with money to boot!”

One of the most amusing incidents at Mentone was associated with the lions represented in the illustration on page 221. When Dr. William Hanna was driving past these gates, Mr. Spurgeon most seriously assured him that, neither our own Zoologica1 Gardens, nor the Jardin d’Acclimatation at Paris, possessed a specimen of the species of lion to which these belonged, and the worthy doctor accepted the information with the utmost gravity; and it was not until he awoke, in the middle of the night, that he saw the meaning of his genial companion’s playful remark. The next day, when they met, the conversation naturally turned upon the necessity of a surgical operation in order to get an Englishman’s joke into a Scotchman’s head.

One evening, before table d’hote, it was noticed that Mr. Spurgeon was very busily writing something in which he appeared to be deeply interested. After dinner, he went upstairs before the rest of the company; and when they arrived, he said he wanted to read to them a poem he had written, which was as follows —

**“Joseph Harrald.”**

***~~“Poor old Spurgeon we must urge on,  
Not so Joseph Harrald;  
Before: the sun he’s up, like fun,  
Ere the lark has carolled.~~***

***~~‘When worthy Stead has fired his lead,  
Not so Joseph Harrald;  
Sparkling wit is in his head,  
His puns are double-barreled.~~***

***~~“Each other wight is wearied quite,  
Not so Joseph Harrald;  
On he works from morn to night;  
Beats poor Douglas Jerrold.~~***

***~~“We appear in seedy gear.  
Not so Joseph Harrald;  
In his glory he’ll appear,  
As Templars are appareled.~~***

***~~“Wine’s; good drink, as others think,  
Not so Joseph Harrald;  
Truest blue, he’ll never shrink:  
Let his brow be laureled.~~***

***~~“When late he reads, sleep he needs,  
Even Joseph Harrald;  
Gapes with mouth, with which he feeds,  
With which he never quarreled.~~***

***~~“Too familiar we, forget that he,  
Is the Reverend Joseph Harrald;  
From Geneva he; his theology  
Is Calvinized and Farelled.”~~***

“Worthy Stead” was not Mr. W. T. Stead, but one of “our own men” who was then at Mentone. The Times of one day arrived the following evening; and it was not simply weariness, but dislike of the politics of the leading journal, especially in its attacks on Mr. Gladstone, that made the “late” reader feel the need of sleep. And, finally, “Joseph Harrald” had just as hearty a hatred of the title “Reverend” as ever was felt by his beloved Pastor and President, who, in this amusing fashion, exercised no little ingenuity in seeking to give pleasure to his private secretary and those dear to him.  
On another occasion, Mr. Spurgeon wrote at Mentone what he called “A War-Song.” He included it in the programme of the following College Conference; and few who were then present are likely to forget the impression produced when, first, the hundreds of ministers and students, and, afterwards, the thousands gathered at the great public meeting in the Tabernacle, sang this soul-stirring hymn —

***~~“Forth to the battle rides our King,  
He climbs His conquering car;  
He fits His arrows to the string,~~***

***~~And hurls His bolts afar.~~***

***~~“Convictions pierce the stoutest hearts,  
They smart, they bleed, they die;  
Slain by Immanuel’s well-aimed darts,  
In helpless heaps they lie.~~***

***~~“Behold, He bares his two-edged sword,  
And deals almighty blows;  
His all-revealing, killing Word  
‘Twixt joints and marrow goes.~~***

***~~“Who can resist Him in the fight?  
He cuts through coats of mall;  
Before the terror of His might~~***

***~~The hearts of rebels fain.~~***

***~~“Anon arrayed in robes of grace,  
He rides the trampled plain,  
With pity beaming in His face,  
And mercy in His train~~***

***~~“Mighty to save He now appears,  
‘Mighty to raise the dead,  
Mighty to stanch the bleeding wound,  
And lift the fallen head.~~***

***~~“Victor alike in love and rams,  
Myriads around Him bend;  
Each captive owns His matchless charms,  
Each foe becomes His friend.  
“They crown Him on the battle-field, They press to kiss His feet; Their hands, their hearts, their all they yield: His conquest is complete.~~***

***~~“None love Him more than those He slew; His love their hate has slain; Henceforth their souls are all on fire To spread His gentle reign.”~~***

CHAPTER 97.

UNABATED AFFECTION BETWEEN PASTOR AND PEOPLE.

M ANY of Mr. Spurgeon’s letters, published in previous chapters, answer to his own description of the brief “notes” which had to be hurriedly penned amid the heavy pressure of almost incessant toil. Yet he wrote other letters and, amongst the choicest of them, were those addressed to the officers and members of the church at the Tabernacle. Many of these have never been published, although carefully preserved; but it is impossible to convey a true idea of the Pastor’s correspondence without including at least a few specimens of his later epistles to the beloved brethren and sisters committed to his charge. In writing to them, he often seemed to pour out his very soul in his pleading with them to be consistent, prayerful, Christian men and women, earnestly laboring for the good of the people amongst whom their lot was cast.

The following selection comprises the letters written during one sojourn in the sunny South, although, in order to make the set complete, it is necessary to insert the last communication from the Pastor’s sick-room before he was able to start for his needed and deserved holiday —

“Dearly-beloved Friends,

“I am right glad that those who filled my place, last Sabbath, were so graciously enabled to feed your souls. It matters little who distributes the bread so long as it comes fresh from Jesu’s hand. I join you in earnest prayer that the brethren, who have so kindly come to my relief today, may have equally adequate assistance from our Lord and His Spirit. I thank them, but I also envy them; and would gladly pay a king’s ransom, if I had it, for the privilege of preaching this Sabbath. My envy condenses into a prayer that all my Lord’s ambassadors may have good speed this day, that so His Kingdom of peace may mightily grow in the land.  
“After enduring much intense pain, I am now recovering, and, like a little child, am learning to stand, and to totter from chair to chair. The trial is hot, but it does not last long; and there is herein much cause for gratitude. My last two attacks have been of this character. It may be the will of God that I should have many more of these singular seizures and, if so, I hope you will have patience with me. I have done all as to die to abstinence from stimulants, and so on, which could be done and, as the complaint still continues, the cause must be elsewhere. We call the evil ‘gout’ for want of a better’ word, but it differs widely from the disorder which usually goes under that name.

“On the last two occasions when I broke down, I had an unusual pressure of work upon me. My service, among you is so arduous that I can just keep on, at a medium pace, if I have nothing extra to do; but any additional labor overthrows me. If I were an iron man, you should have my whole strength till the last particle had been ‘worn away; but as 1 am only flesh and blood, you must take from me what I can give, and look for no more. May that service which I can render be. accepted of the Lord!

“I now commend you, dear friends, to the Lord’s keeping. Nothing will cheer me so much as to hear that God is among you; and I shall judge of this by importunate prayer-meetings, the good works of the church systematically and liberally sustained, and converts coming forward to confess their faith in Christ. This last token of blessing I look for and long for every week. ‘ Who is on the Lord’s side?’ Wounded on the battle-field, I raise myself on my arm, and cry to those around me, and urge them to espouse my Master’s cause, for if we were wounded or dead for His sake, all would be gain. By the splendor of redeeming love, I charge each believer to confess his Lord, and live wholly to Him.

“Yours for Christ’s sake,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

Not very long after this letter was written, the Pastor was able to start for the South of France. On the way to Mentone, he made a short stay at Cannes, and from there wrote, on January 31 —  
“To my Beloved Church and Congregation,

“Dear. Friends,

“The journey here is long for one who is in weak health, and I have had but a few days of rest, but already I feel myself improving. The Master’s service among you has been very delightful to me; but it has grown to such proportions that I have felt the burden of it weighing very heavily upon my heart, and I have suffered more depression of spirit, and weariness of mind, than I could well express. Rest I could not find at home, where every hour has its cares; but here, I cease altogether from these things, and the mind becomes like an unstrung bow, and so regains its elasticity.

“I wish I could work on among you continually, and never even pause; but many infirmities show that this; cannot be. Pray, therefore, that this. needful break in my work may strengthen me for a long spring and summer campaign.

“Nothing can so cheer me as to know that all of you are living for Jesus, and living like Him. Our church has produced great workers in the past, and I hope the sacred enthusiasm which they manifested will never burn low among us. Jesus is worth being served with our best; yea, with our all, and that in an intense and all-consuming manner. May our young men and women love the Lord much, and win others to Him by their zeal for God; and may our elder brethren, and the matrons among us, prove ever the pillars of the church in their holy conversation and devout godliness!

“Maintain the prayer-meetings at blood-heat. See well to the Sunday-schools, and all the Bible-classes, and other labors for Christ. Let nothing flag of prayer, service, or offering. We have a great trust; may the Lord make us faithful to it! My’ love is with you all, and my prayers for your welfare.

“Oh, that you who are still unsaved may be led to Jesus through those who supply my lack of service! Peace be with the Co-pastor, deacons, and elders, and

with you all!  
“From your loving but unworthy Pastor,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

In his humility, he called himself unworthy, but no one else would have used such an epithet concerning him. Never, surely, was there a more worthy as well as loving under-shepherd of the flock.

The next epistle shows that he had reached his destination — “Mentone,  
“Wednesday evening.  
“To my Dear Friends at the Tabernacle,

“It is only a few days since I wrote to you, and therefore I have nothing fresh to report, except that, each clay, I feel the need and the value of the rest which I am beginning to enjoy. I have only arrived here this afternoon; but the warm sunshine and the clear atmosphere make me feel as if I had reached another world, and tend greatly to revive my weary mind.

“It would be well it I could write without mentioning myself, and for your edification only. Forgive the need which there is of alluding to my health; it would best please me if I could work right on, and never have the wretched item of self to mention. My mind runs much upon the work at home, — the services, the College, the Orphanage, the Colportage, the Sabbath-school, the coming special meetings, and so on. I picture all things in my mind’s eye, and wonder how all are going on; then I pray, and leave the whole with ‘ that great Shepherd of the sheep.’

“My brother and all the officers will watch for the good of the church; and the more spiritual and full-grown among you will also care for the state of the work; and so the’ Lord will use your instrumentality for His glory. We are set for a sign and token of the power of the old-fashioned gospel, and we are bound to prove to all around, not only that the truth can gather, but that it can hold. It will not only forcibly draw men together, but it will bind them together; and that, too, not through some favored preacher, but by its own intrinsic force. This assertion needs proof, and you will prove it.  
“May God, the Eternal Spirit, abide over you all, beloved, and cause you to be strong by the anointing of the Holy One! May the poor be comforted, the sick supported, the warriors be strengthened, and the laborers be sustained! My hearty love is ever with you.

“There my best friends, my kindred, dwell,  
There God my Savior reigns.’  
“Yours in Christ Jesus,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
“KEEP UP THE PRAYER-MEETINGS.”  
The following week, this letter was written —  
“Mentone,  
“February 7.  
“My Beloved Friends,

“After enjoying a few restful nights and quiet days, I feel myself coming round again, and my heart is full of praise and thanksgiving to our gracious God. Your prayers have been incessant, and have prevailed; and I am very grateful to you all. As long as I am able, it will be my joy to be of service, to you; and my only grief has been that sickness has weakened my powers, and rendered me less able to discharge my happy duties among you. The post I occupy needs a man at his best, and I have of late been very much the reverse. However, we know who it is that giveth power to the faint, and so we trust that feeble, efforts have not been ineffectual.

“I shall be doubly indebted to the goodness of our Lord if the remainder of my rest shall confirm the beneficial work which has commenced.. The further repose will, I hope, make me stronger for the future.

“I have not yet heard tidings of the special services, but I hope that every member is at work to make them a success. Pray about them, speak about them, attend them, assist in them, bring others to them. Our two evangelists are the right instruments, but the hand of the Lord is needed to work by them. Call upon Him whose hand it is, and He will work according to His own good pleasure. The times are such that churches holding the old truths must be active and energetic, that the power of the gospel may be manifest to all. We need to uplift a banner because of the truth. So numerous a church as ours may accomplish great things, by the power of the Holy Ghost, if only we are once in downright earnest. Playing at religion is wretched; it must be everything to us, or it will be nothing.

“Peace be with you all, and abounding love!  
“Your hearty friend,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

There is a gap in the correspondence here; for, even on the sunny shore of the Mediterranean, the Pastor’s constitutional enemy found him out, and inflicted fresh suffering upon him. After an interval of three weeks, he was able to write as follows —

“Mentone,  
“February 28.  
“Beloved Friends,

“I rejoice that the time of my return to you is now a matter of a few days, and that I have every prospect, if the Lord will, of returning with health established and mind rested. Perhaps never before have I been brought so low in spirit, and assured, never more graciously restored. May the Lord sanctify both the trial and the recovery, so that I may be a fitter instrument in His hand to promote His glory and your highest good!

“The last fortnight of additional rest was wisely ordained by a higher hand than that of the good deacons, who suggested it to me; for, without it, I should not have had space to pass through an attack of pain which has .just swept over me, and left me improved by its violence. The last few days will, I feel, be the best of the whole, when I shall not have to be thoughtful of recovery, but altogether restful.  
“Good news from the Tabernacle continues to be as cold waters to a thirsty soul. You have had great times of refreshing; may their influence abide with you! We must not go to sleep on my return, nor at any other time; but steadily labor on, and ‘watch for souls. Spurts are very helpful; but to keep up the pace at a high regular figure, is the most important thing. Even an invalid can make a great exertion when some remarkable occasion excites him to do so; but constant, unwearied effort belongs only to those who have stamina and inward force. May our whole church prove itself to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of His might, by unceasingly carrying on its work of faith and labor of love! “In these days, we are regarded as Puritanical and old-fashioned; and this

description, I trust, we shall never be ashamed of, but wear it as an ornament. The old orthodox faith is to us no outworn creed of past ages, but a thing of power, a joy for ever. In the Name of the Lord, who by that faith is honored, we press forward to proclaim again and again the doctrines of the grace of God, the efficacy of the blood of the Divine Substitute, and the power of the Eternal Spirit; and we feel assured that, whoever may oppose, the omnipotent gospel will prevail.

“The multitudes, are hungering for that old-fashioned bread whereon their fathers fed, and too many preachers now give them newly-carved stones, and bid them admire the skill of the,. modern sculptors. We mean to keep to the distribution of bread, and the stone-cutters will meet with no competition from us in their favorite amusement. But, brethren, only a living church — holy, prayerful, active, — can make the old truth victorious. Linked with a mass of mere profession, it will perform no exploits. To you and to me there is a growing call for greater spirituality, and more Divine power, for the work before us increases in difficulty.

“The Lord be with you all, and with your Pastor, deacons, and elders! So prays —  
“Yours lovingly,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

The officers and members of the church took many opportunities of assuring the Pastor of their unwavering attachment and unabated affection. His seasons of sickness afforded occasions for the expression of special sympathy and love. The following letter, written by Mr. B. Wildon Cart, and adopted at a full meeting of the church at the close of the service on a Lord’s-day evening, is a sample of the communications that helped to cheer Mr. Spurgeon when laid aside from active labor for the Lord —

“Very dear and highly-esteemed Pastor,

“Meeting around the communion table of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we are all of us, this night, sad and sorrowful because of your illness; and one impulse fills every heart, we are unanimous in the desire to offer you some expression of our heartfelt sympathy.

“We had hoped that, after a few days’ rest, you would have been relieved of the bodily pain, the physical weakness, and the mental depression with which it has pleased our Heavenly Father to visit you. The Lord has done it. We accept the affliction, as you do, from the hand of God. But we cannot help comparing you to a warrior wounded in action, or to a physician prostrated with exertions to prescribe for patients that importune him on every side. For the work of Christ, you have been nigh unto death, not regarding your life, to supply a lack of service, toward us.

“We cannot forget that this visitation came upon you immediately after a season of heavy labor, remarkable energy, and (as we cannot doubt) of heavenly joy in the service of Christ, of this church, and of other churches. It seems to us meet, therefore, that we should attribute the cause of it to a natural infirmity of the flesh, and not in any wise to the severity of the Lord’s chastening.

“Beloved Pastor, we remember, with tender gratitude, how generously you have always associated us with you in all the success and prosperity that, through the power of the Holy Spirit, have attended your ministry. We never could doubt your sincerity, in offering the praise to God, when we witnessed your humility in imparting so much of the credit (entirely due to yourself to the unworthy brethren and sisters who watch and pray with you, while we account it a high privilege to follow our Lord and Master, as you lead our forces.

“With the affection we bear you, we can truly say that we should account it a happiness to bear your sufferings amongst us; some of us would gladly take them all, if we could thereby relieve you of the heavy cross that bows you down. As we sit before the Lord, we think of you, as the people said to David, ‘Thou art worth ten thousand of us.’ Kindly accept, then, our united expression of love in Christ Jesus, tendered to you in a solemn hour. It may be superfluous to you, but it is refreshing to us to get an opportunity of communicating with you in your sick chamber.

“May the Lord look tenderly upon you in your affliction! May He graciously remember your work and labor o1: love, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister! May He be very attentive to our prayers and intercessions on your behalf, that you may be restored to us, not in weakness and decrepitude, but in the fullness of vigor, with your youth renewed like the eagle’s, — .and that right early!”

(Signed, on behalf of the church, by fifteen deacons and elders.)  
It is significant that only two of the church-officers whose signatures were appended to the letter — one deacon and one elder — still survive.

The following extracts from a letter, written by Mr. Carr to his absent Pastor at Mentone, will still further indicate the loving relationship which existed between Mr. Spurgeon and those who labored with him in the gospel —

“My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“I cannot doubt that you receive, through one and another, full accounts of all matters that relate to the Tabernacle, and the Institutions connected with it, in which many brethren feel the high honor of being associated with you. We are continually hearing of letters you have sent in reply to those that have been written to, you.  
“I often think that, if you could hear in what manner you are spoken of, and in what love and tender regard you are held by your church — officers, you would blush a little. And, then, if you heard the members of the church ask after your health, and say how sorry they were theft you purposed coming home so soon, and how sincerely they wished you would stay till these biting winds had ceased to blow, you would ‘be jealous of yourself with a jealousy that might be very justifiable. If you were to hear what the outside public are constantly saying of you. you might be astonished, but you would be gratified, for, very obviously, there are thousands, who love not the Lord Jesus Christ, who look upon you as one of the best men that ever lived, and one who is doing great good to his fellows.

“Your long affliction, and your tedious banishment, have already borne some peaceable fruits. The stable character of your work has been proved. Had the church been built on the basis of your popularity as a preacher, the congregations would not have been so well kept up in your’ absence; but, so far from that being the case, the prayer-meetings and the weekly communion services are well attended, even when the severe weather, had you been here, would have bee. n sufficient to account for some deficiencies. This has been no ordinary winter. ‘four brother was saying, the other day, that, although we have not yet completed the first quarter of the year, the deaths have already exceeded the average for the halfyear. That may not be so gloomy as it sounds. The depression in the temperature has possibly hastened the exit of some whose constitutions would not have held out for the,, year, and so the average, of which he speaks, may tell no more than its usual tale when the next annual meeting comes round. It, then, the number of your twinges and groans has been reduced by the retreat to a more sheltered locality, let us be thankful, and hope for you a full community on your return.

“What a nice deacons’ meeting we had on Friday! There was; a fill muster of brethren; not one was absent, but the one to whom we all look as Pastor, President, father, and friend. And yet, to the imagination of each one, he was present. No matter was broached without a distinct intimation, on the part of every one,, to consult his wishes. This was the rallying-point of harmonious thought and feeling that became almost pathetic as the meeting proceeded. The secretary will have his work cut out if he tries to make the minutes reflect the business of the evening. I will not attempt it. From resolutions we abstained; and the recommendations were left to our chairman, the Co-pastor, to formulate, and forward for your approval.”

On May 10, 1881, Mr. William Olney wrote to his suffering Pastor a letter of loving sympathy, in which he gave a cheering account of the progress of various portions of the work at the. Tabernacle, and then added — ”You will, I am sure, excuse me for writing rather a long letter to you to-day, as it is my sixtieth birthday. I want to tell you how thankful I am that my lot has been cast, in the good providence of God, under your ministry, and how grateful I am to you for the many years of blessing and instruction I have spent sitting at your feet. I have had great pleasure, for many years, in daily commending you to God, and in doing what I can to assist you in your earnest efforts for God’s glory and the good of souls; but I fear I have done but little. Oh, that it were more! Words cannot express the debt of love I owe to you; and you must kindly excuse my infirmity in not being able to show it ‘better’ in deeds than I have done.”

To the end of his life, Mr. William Olrey’s loving esteem for his Pastor remained unchanged; and when he was “called home,” he was sorely missed.

The year which was to witness the joyful celebration of Mr. Spurgeon’s Jubilee opened for him under trying circumstances. He was away at Mentone, very ill; yet the following letter seems to have caught some of the brightness; of the sunny land where it ‘was penned —

“Mentone,  
“January 10, 1884.  
“Dear Friends,

“I am altogether stranded. I am not able to leave my bed, or to find much rest upon it. The pains of rheumatism, lumbago, and sciatic, mingled together, are. exceedingly sharp. If I happen to turn a little to the right hand or to the left, I am soon aware that I am dwelling in a body capable of the most acute suffering.  
“However, I am as happy and cheerful as a man can be. I feel it such a great relief that I am not yet robbing the Lord of my work, for my holiday has not quite run out. A man has a right to have the. rheumatism if he lilies when his time is his own. The worst of it is, that I am afraid I shall have to intrude into my Master’s domains, and draw again upon ,,,our patience. Unless I get better very soon, I cannot get home in due time’ and I am very much afraid that, if I did return at the date arranged, I should be of no use to you, for I should be sure to be laid aside.

“The deacons have written me a letter, in which they unanimously recommend me to take two more Sundays, so that I may get well, and not return to you an invalid. I wrote to them saying that I thought I must take a week; but as I do not get a bit better, but am rather worse, I am afraid I shall have to make it a fortnight, as they proposed. Most men find that they go right when they obey their wives; and as my’ wife and my deacons are agreed on this matter, I am afraid I should go doubly wrong if I ran contrary to them. I hope you will all believe that, if the soldier could stand, he would march; and if your servant were able, he would work; but when a man is broke, n in two by the hammer of pain, he must ‘wait till he gets spliced again.

“May the best of blessings continue to rest upon you! May those who supply my place be very graciously helped by the Spirit of God!

“Yours, with all my heart;  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

The Pastor often referred, as he did in this letter, to his “right” to be ill during his holiday; but the next communication from his church-officers shows that their regrets on account of his sufferings, at such times, were intensified by the knowledge that, instead of joyously resting and being refreshed, he was enduring painful afflictions..

In January, 1885, instead of being in the sunny South, as he had hoped to be, Mr. Spurgeon was still at home, too ill to travel. At a special churchmeeting, held at the Tabernacle, on January 12, it was unanimously and heartily resolved that the’. following letter should be forwarded to “Westwood” —

“Dear Pastor,

“We have heard, with profound grief, that you have been unable to go out on your proposed visit to Mentone in consequence of severe and painful illness during the past week. Our sincere sympathy’ is rather increased than lessened by the reflection that this season of affliction has not been borrowed from your time of service for the church, but from the period of recreation to which you have a perfect right as well as a hearty welcome.

“While devoutly recognizing the hand of the Lord in this and in all other dispensations of His providence, we feel that it cannot be irreverent to seek some clear interpretation of the will of our Heavenly Father. Can we be mistaken in supposing that the. lesson to us and to yourself is transparent? Your arduous labors, and your incessant anxieties, so far exceed the average strength of your constitution that there is an imperative demand for you to take longer and more frequent occasions of retirement, and to take them, not when you have used up ‘ the last ounce of your strength,’ but when you are in unimpaired vigor.

“Under present circumstances, we earnestly entreat you to consecrate at least three months to entire relaxation from the duties of your sacred office; and if it seem good to you, let the appointment of supplies for ),our pulpit be left to the Co-pastor and the deacons, subject always to their accepting any suggestion of yours, and ‘their communicating to you every arrangement of theirs, as is their habitual wont.

“And accept, herewith, our assurance, as a church, that we will all unite in a strong’ determination to support the good work of the Tabernacle by constant attendance, both on Sundays and weekevenings, and by offering our full contributions to the support of the various institutions of the church.

“With sincere affection, and unceasing prayers for your recovery, “We are, dear Pastor,  
“Yours ever lovingly,”  
(Signed by the church-officers.)

On his recovery, the Pastor left for Mentone, and he was therefore absent at the time of the annual church-meeting; but he wrote the following letter to be read to the members —

“Mentone,  
“February 9, 1885.  
“To the Church in the Tabernacle,

“Beloved in the Lord,

“I salute you all right heartily. I regret that an annual churchmeeting should be held without me; but I know that all things will be done rightly, for the Spirit of God is among you.

“I write only to send my love, and to assure you that I am greatly profiting by the rest which has been given me. I am weak indeed, but I feel much more myself again. I have learned, by experience, that I must go away in November each year, or else I shall be at home ill. If the Lord will help me through the other months of the year, I might rest in November and December with a clear economy of time. I want to do the most possible; and, on looking over the past, this appears to be the wisest way.

“The other matter is, — the elders propose special services, and my whole heart say’s ‘Yes.’ If the church takes it up, the result will be, with the Divine blessing, a great ingathering. Members canvassing from door to door, and leaving a sermon, might do much good. I will subscribe £5 towards a fund for sermons, suitably selected, to be given away. The chief point is, to get the people in, not by bribing them with tea, etc., but by fair persuasion. Oh, for a great blessing!

“I feel grieved to be out of the running, but I cannot help it. I can pray, and I do. Rally round your leaders. Pray with double earnestness. Be instant in season and out of season. Attempt great things;, and expect great things. “May the Lord bless, guide, comfort, strengthen and uphold the Co-pastor, deacons, elders, and every one of you, for Jesus’ sake!  
“Yours in hearty affection,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
“I hope you will re-elect the treasurer and all the elders; they cannot be improved upon.”  
On the proposition of Mr. William Olney, the following congratulatory resolution was sent to the Pastor —

“Resolved that, in review of the past year, we congratulate our dear Pastor on the good hand of the Lord which has been with him, and with us. Three circumstances, each of double significance, haw distinguished this year from other years in our history.

“The first is, that, while an unusually bright summer diminished the attendance of our church-members, an extraordinary influx of rural visitors to the ‘ Healtheries Exhibition’ secured the crowding of the Metropolitan Tabernacle to its utmost capacity.

“The second is, that, although Mr. Spurgeon’s severe indisposition, in the autumn, deprived us of his services on many successive Lord’s-days, his son Thomas, home from New Zealand, most acceptably supplied the pulpit in his absence.

“The third is, that, notwithstanding a long death-roll, our band of deacons remains unbroken; and only one of our beloved elders, a brother ripe in years as well as in grace, has been taken from among us.

“To these reasons for heartfelt gratitude, we must add a fourth, which we record with unmingled satisfaction. It is that another volume of our dear Pastor’s sermons has been placed on our bookshelves, fully equal in freshness; and force, in unction and usefulness, to any of the twenty-nine volumes that preceded it.”

The following chapter will prove that the church-officers and members showed their sympathy with Mr. Spurgeon not only by loving letters and cordial resolutions, but also by practical and substantial tokens of their affection and esteem.

CHAPTER 98.

JUBILEE JOYS.

The river of our peace at certain seasons overflows its banks; and, at times, the believer’s joy is exceeding great. Even princes, who fare sumptuously every day, have their special banquets; and this Jubilee of my life is a true Jubilee of joy, not only to myself, but to every member of my family. — C. H. S.,*in sermon preached at the Tabernacle in celebration of the completion of his fiftieth year*.

J UNE 19, 1884, was one of the red-letter days in Mr. Spurgeon’s history, for he then completed the fiftieth year of his life. At the annual churchmeeting, held in the Tabernacle, on February 13, the following resolution was unanimously and enthusiastically passed — “That the church gratefully recognizes the goodness of Almighty God in sparing to it, and to the Christian Church at large.’, the invaluable life of our beloved Pastor, C. H. Spurgeon; and that, in order worthily to celebrate his Jubilee, a suitable memorial be raised, and presented to him; and that it be an instruction to the deacons to take this matter vigorously in hand, and to carry it forward as they may deem best.”

The deacons, having received that instruction from their fellow-members, lost no time in considering the best method of carrying it into effect; indeed, they were the first to suggest that such a notable period in the Pastor’s life must not be allowed to pass without due recognition; and, with their usual generosity, they headed “the list of love” which was immediately commenced. They had, at first, just the sanre difficulty as when they were arranging for the pastoral silver wedding testimonial, for Mr. Spurgeon again insisted that, whatever amount was raised should be devoted to the Lord’s work, and not be tot his own personal benefit. No doubt this restriction somewhat reduced the total sum ultimately reached, for many generous helpers said that, as the Pastor gave away the whole of the £6,500 presented to him in 1879, and as they were constantly contributing to the various Institutions under his charge, they wished, on this occasion, to give him substantial tokens of their ever-growing love and esteem for himself. It will be seen, from his address acknowledging the testimonial, that he consented, under the urgent entreaties of the donors, to take some portion of the amount for himself; but, even then, he simply took it that he might give it away again; and the only way in which a few very special friends could make sure of his reception of their gifts was to send something direct to him for ornament or use in his home.

On May 6, a few friends met the deacons, to hear how the matter was progressing,, to make further contributions to the fund, and to consult as to the final arrangements with regard to its; presentation. Up to that night, about £1,000 had been received or promised, — just the amount which it was estimated would be required to pay for the Jubilee House, at the back of the Tabernacle, which was then being erected as a permanent memorial of the Pastor’s fiftieth year. On the side of that building is a marble slab, which is here reproduced.

**JUNE 19TH, 1884.**  
WITH GRATITUDE AND GLADNESS  
THIS HOUSE WAS ERECTED TO COMMEMORATE  
**THE FIFTIETH BIRTHDAY OF  
C. H. SPURGEON,**  
PASTOR OF THE CHURCH AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE. *TO the Lord be glory for all the work  
which he has wrought among his people*.

“T HOU HAST THRUSTSORE AT ME THAT I MIGHT FALL BUT THE LORD HELPED ME.  
THE LORD IS MY STRENGTH AND SONG, AND IS BECOME MY SALVATION.  
THE VOICE OF REJOICING AND SALVATION IS IN THE TABERNACLES OF THE RIGHTEOUS.  
THE RIGHT HAND OF THE LORD DOETH VALIANTLY THE RIGHT HAND OF THE LORD  
IS EXALTED  
THE RIGHT HAND OF THE LORD DOETH VALIANTLY. I SHALL NOT DIE, BUT LIVE,  
AND DECLARE THE WORKS OF THE LORD. THE LORD HATH CHASTENED ME SORE,  
BUT HE HATH NOT GIVEN ME OVER UNTO DEATH.”

(*Copy of marble slab and inscription on Jubilee House*.)

Concerning this inscription, Mr. Spurgeon wrote — ”The somewhat lengthy quotation from the Psalm is an accurate photograph of the Pastor’s personal experience, and of the triumphs of the Lord in the adjoining Tabernacle. Power has been seen in weakness, healing by sickness, and joy through sorrow.” Mr. Spurgeon preached upon the various verses here engraved, and he intended to make a book of these sermons;, and of personal memories of the Lord’s goodness; but the work of revising the discourses was, through illness and the pressure of other service, so long delayed, that the publication of the proposed volume had to be abandoned. The manuscripts were, however, carefully preserved for future use in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*. A very pathetic interest now attaches to the sermon issued for reading on January 3, 1892, for it was the first that Mr. Spurgeon had been able to prepare for the press after his long illness, and the last but one that he ever revised. The other three sermons, preached from the texts on the Jubilee House, were published, in clue course, in October, 1897, and the four together form a choice memorial of a notable period in ‘the great preacher’s life.

As the date of the celebration of the Jubilee approached, many references to it appeared in the religious and secular newspapers, the most noteworthy being the articles in the Pall Mall Gazelle of June 18 and 19, 1884. They were the result of Mr. Spurgeon’s compliance with the request contained in the following letter from the Editor, Mr. W. T. Stead —

“Dear Sir,

“You are, I am aware, one of the busiest men in London. But I venture to ask you to spare me a morsel of your leisure to have a talk over things in view of your approaching Jubilee, — your long and successful labors in London, and the general result at which you have arrived after going through it all. That, of course, for the paper and the public. Besides this, I should be very glad to have an opportunity personally of placing myself in immediate  
communication, with one who has been such a power for good in London and throughout the world. I also am very busy, but any day after 12 I am at your service it you can spare me time for an interview. I have the honor to be,

“Your obedient servant,  
“W. T. STEAD.”

The report of the interview contained allusions to many subjects either of passing or permanent interest. The whole conversation was more or less, of an autobiographical character, the opening paragraphs dealing with the subject of religious endowments. Mr. Stead wrote —

“Mr. Spurgeon is one of the most genial of hosts, and in the course of a couple of hours spent in strolling about his well-wooded grounds, or in gossiping in his library, his visitor was able to gather his views concerning a great number of the questions of the day. He found Mr. Spurgeon, as is not to be wondered at, a strong believer in the one-man power. ‘Wherever anything is to be done,’ said he, ‘either in the Church or the world, you may depend upon it, it is done by one man. The whole history of the Church, from the earliest ages, teaches the same lesson. A Moses, a Gideon, an Isaiah, and a Paul are from time to time raised up to do an appointed work; and when they pass away, their’ work appears to cease. Nor is it given to everyone, as it was to Moses, to see the Joshua who is destined to carry on his work to completion. God can raise up a successor to each man, but the man himself is not to worry about that matter, or he may do harm. Hence I am against all endowments for religion; it is better to spend the money for immediate needs. I am not even in favor of endowing my own College. Someone made me an offer, the other day, to found a scholarship in connection with it, but I declined it. Why should I gather money, which would remain after I am gone, to uphold teaching of which I might entirely disapprove? No! let each generation provide for its own wants. Let my successor, if I have one in the College, do as I have done, and secure the funds which he needs for his own teaching. I wish there were no religious endowments of any shape or kind among Dissenters or Churchmen, for I never yet knew a chapel, possessing an endowment, which did not find that, instead of its being a blessing, it was a curse. One great object of every religious teacher should be to prevent the creation of external appliances to make his teaching appear to live when it is dead. If there were no endowments, an error would soon burst up, whereas an artificial vitality is imparted to it by bolstering it up with endowments.’

“‘Then you have faith for yourself Mr. Spurgeon, but none for your successor?’ queried the visitor.

“‘A mart does very well,’ was the reply, ‘ who has faith for himself; but how can he undertake to have faith for another? I am no believer in sponsorship. Who knows where my successor may be? He may be in America, or in Australia, or I know not where. As for the Tabernacle, the man who occupies my place, when I pass away, will have to depend upon his own resources, upon the support of his people, and the grace of God, as I have done; and if he cannot do that, let him come to the ground, for he will not be the fitting man for the post.’“

One other paragraph may be quoted, partly because of the reference made to it by Dr. Peter Bayne —

“‘In theology,’ said Mr Spurgeon, ‘I stand where I did when I began preaching, and I stand almost alone. If I ever did such a thing, I could preach my earliest sermons now without change so far as the essential doctrines are concerned. I stand almost exactly where Calvin stood in his maturer years ; — not where, he stood in his Institutes, which he wrote when quite a young man, but in his; later works; that position is taken by few. Even those who occupy Baptist pulpits do not preach exactly the same truths that I preach. They see things differently; and, of course, they preach in their own way. Although few will deny the wonderful power of the truth as it has been preached at the Tabernacle, it is not according to their method; yet it is the Calvinistic way of looking at things which causes my sermons to have such acceptance in Scotland, in Holland, and even in the Transvaal, where a recent traveler expressed his astonishment at finding translations of them lying beside the family Bible in a great many of the farmsteads of the country. I am aware that my preaching repels many’, that I cannot help. If, for instance, a man does not believe in the inspiration of the Bible, he may come and hear me once; and if he comes no more, that is his responsibility, and not mine. My doctrine has no attraction for that man; but I cannot change my doctrine to suit him.’“

Shortly after the publication of the second article in the Pall Mall Gazelle, the following letter reached the Pastor —

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,  
“It is within the range of possibility that, in your collection of old lumber, you have some scrap of mine which had its place among those ‘paper bullets of the brain’ whose impact did you, it seems, no harm. My present notions about you are contained in the enclosed article, which you may have seen in Thursday’s Christian World. The writing of it gave me unfeigned pleasure.

“I have, for many months, been working strenuously at the original sources for a Life of Luther; and being thus led to visit one of the grand fountains of Evangelical inspiration, I have felt my own early Evangelicalism plunged, as it were, in a bath of life. But I do not think that I have ever wavered in my conviction that, for man and for nations of men, the hope of salvation is renewal in the life of Christ. Yours has been a glorious privilege, — to preach Christ, with Divine recognition so decisive, for nearly forty years.

“What you said about Calvin to the Pall Mall interviewer interests me much. Since making a careful examination of his theology and life, I have transcendently honored that man. But I measure him chiefly by the Institutes; and am very curious to know how you would define his later and ‘maturer’ position. Do not put pen to paper on the subject; but if you have published your view in sermon or book, I should be much obliged by being told how I can obtain it. Perhaps one of your secretaries would send me the necessary word.

“I know you are too magnanimous to retain the least little particle of grudge against me, and you and Mrs. Spurgeon have no more sincere admirer or affectionate well-wisher than I.

“Faithfully yours,  
“PETER BAYNE.”

The actual celebration of the Jubilee commenced on Wednesday, June 18, 1884, when the Pastor sat in his vestry, from twelve to five o’clock, to receive the congratulations of friends, and contributions to be passed on to the treasurers of the testimonial fund. Then, several hundreds of the church-members were entertained at tea in the rooms under the Tabernacle, and afterwards the great sanctuary was crowded with an enthusiastic audience. Such vast numbers of people were anxious to be present, that two evenings had to be set apart for the meetings; and, even then, hundreds of applicants for tickets had to be refused, for so many applied that, if the building had been twice as large, there would have been no difficulty in filling it on both nights.

Little did the cheering thousands know of the intense anxiety that was felt by a few of the Tabernacle officials, and other friends who Shared with them a terrible secret. Just at that time, in various quarters of London, there had been threats of desperate deeds by Fenians, or those in sympathy with them; and an intimation, which the police authorities dared not disregard, had been given that the Tabernacle was to be blown up on the nigh of Mr. Spurgeon’s Jubilee. It seemed scarcely possible that such a diabolical scheme of wholesale destruction of human life could have been devised; but every precaution was taken to prevent it becoming an awful reality. There probably had never been so many detectives and policemen in the building before; and when the proceedings on the second night were over, and the delighted audience had dispersed, there were private but grateful thanksgivings that all had gone off without even a note of alarm; yet, for a considerable period afterwards, it was deemed advisable to have a special watch kept in case arty attempt of the kind indicated might be made. With thoughtful and tender solicitude, all knowledge of the threatened explosion was kept from the Pastor; and it was only when he was in the carriage, on his way home, that Mrs. Spurgeon told him the alarming news which had occupied her thoughts; during the evening, and together they gave thanks that the evil had been averted.

The Wednesday evening meeting was specially intended for the members of the church, and congregation, and representatives of the many missions, schools, and agencies connected with the Tabernacle. The number of these various forms of work for the Lord may’ be judged from the fact that the list of them occupied more than half a page in The’ Sword and The Trowel, while., nearly as large a space was required for the names of the various religious societies, at home and abroad, from which addresses of congratulation had been received.

The Pastor presided, and it was to him a source of intense thankfulness that Mrs. Spurgeon was able to be present on both the evenings, to share with him the joys of the Jubilee, after so many years’ enforced absence from the Tabernacle through severe illness. The keynote of the whole of the gatherings was struck, at the commencement of the meeting, by the Pastor’s opening sentences — ” I do not think anybody imagines that I ought to speak at any great length to-night, but I should like to say very much in very little. I feel overwhelmed ‘with gratitude to you, dear friends, and because of you, to God. Alter the kind words which many of you have spoken to me, I have much to do not to cry; indeed, I have had a little distillation of the eyes quietly, and I feel very much like weeping now, at the remembrance, of all the good and gracious things that have been said to me this day. But let me say this for my speech’ the blessing which I have had here, for many years, must be entirely attributed to the grace of God, and to the working of God’s Holy Spirit among us. Let that stand as a matter, not only taken for granted, but as, a fact distinctly recognized among us. I hope, brethren, that none of you will say that I have kept back the glorious work of the Holy Spirit. I have tried to remind you of it, whenever I have read a chapter, by praying’ that God the Holy Spirit would open that chapter to our minds. I hope I have never preached without an entire dependence on the Holy Ghost. Our reliance upon prayer has been very conspicuous; at least, I think so. We have not begun, we have not continued, we have not ended anything’ without prayer. We have been plunged into it up to the hilt. We have not prayed as we should; but, still, we have so prayed as to prevail; and we wish it to be on record that we owe our success, as a, church, to the work of the Holy Spirit, principally through its leading us to pray. Neither, as a church, have we been without a full conviction that, if we are honest in our asking, we must be earnest in acting. It is no use asking God to give us a blessing if we do not mean it; and if we mean it, we shall use all the means appointed for’ the gaining of that boon; and that we have done. One of my first duties, tonight, will be to remind this audience that it very largely consists of representatives from the various Institutions. A partial list will be read to you; but, incomplete as it is, it is a long one; and though one or two of the Institutions represented may be small ones, yet many of them are so large that they might have constituted public societies having annual meetings at Exeter Hall; and these things have sprung out of this church through that same Holy Spirit who set us praying and set us working’.

“Next to that, it behooves me to say that I owe the prosperity I have had in preaching the gospel to the gospel which I have preached. I wish everybody thought as much, but there are some who will have it that there is something very particular and special about the preacher. Well, I believe that there may be something peculiar about the man, something odd, perhaps. He cannot help that, but he begs to say there is nothing about him that can possibly account for the great and long-continued success attending his labors. Our American friends are generally very ‘cute judges, and I have a good many times read their opinion of me, and they say over and. over again, ‘Well, he is no orator. We have scores of better preachers in America than Mr. Spurgeon, but it is evident that he preaches the gospel as certain of our celebrated men do not preach it.’ I so preach the gospel that people coming to hear it are impressed by it, and rejoice to rally to the standard. I have tried, and I think successfully, to saturate our dear friends with the doctrines of grace. I defy the devil himself ever to get that truth out of you if God the Holy Spirit once puts it into you. That grand doctrine of substitution, which is at the root of every other, — you have heard it over and over and over and over again, and you have taken a sure grip of it. Never let it go. And I say to all preachers who fail in this matter, that I wish they would preach more of Christ, and try to preach more plainly. Death to fine preaching’ There is no good in it. All the glory of words and the wisdom of men will certainly come to naught; but the simple testimony of the goodwill of God to men, and of His sovereign choice of His own people, will stand the test, not only of the few years during which I have preached it, but of all the ages of this world till Christ shall come. I thank you, dear friends, for all your love and your kindness to me, but I do attribute even that, in great measure, to the fact that you have been fed with the pure gospel of the grace of God. I do not believe that the dry, dead doctrine of some men could ever have evoked such sympathy in people’s hearts as my gospel has aroused in yours. I cannot see any reason in myself why you should love me. I confess that I would not go across the street to hear myself preach; but I dare not say more upon that matter, because my wife is here. It is the only point upon which we decidedly differ; I differ in toto from her estimate of me, and from your estimate of me, too; but yet I do not wish you to alter it.”

Mr. B. W. Carr read the congratulatory address which was published at the time in The 5word and the Trowel, but for which space cannot be spared here; the Pastor’s father, brother, and son Charles briefly spoke; Pastor Archibald G. Brown and Mr. H. H. Driver represented the past and present students of the College; Mr. S. R.. Pearce was the speaker on behalf of the Sunday-school; Mr. W. J. Orsman and Mr. W. Olney were the representatives of the missions which had grown out of the church’s work; and Pastor W. L. Lang, F.R.G.S., presented an address from the Baptist ministers of France; but, remembering the worldwide influence, of the American evangelist, Mr. D. L. Moody, probably the most important utterance, that night, was the testimony he gave to the blessing he had derived from the Pastor’s printed and spoken messages —

“Mr. Spurgeon has said, tonight, that .he has felt like weeping. I have tried to keep back the tears, but I have not succeeded very well. I remember, seventeen years ago, coming into this building a perfect stranger. Twentyfive years ago, after I was converted, I began to read of a young man preaching in London with great power, and a desire seized me to hear him, never expecting that, some day, I should myself be a preacher. Everything I could get hold of in print that he ever said, I read. I knew very little about religious things when I was converted. I did not have what he has had, — a praying father. My father died before I was four years old. I was thinking of that, tonight, as I saw Mr. Spurgeon’s venerable, father here by his side. He has the advantage of me in that respect, and he perhaps got an earlier start than he would have got if he had not had that braving, father’. His mother I have not met-but most good men have praying mothers, — God bless them! In 1867, I made my way across the sea; and if ever there was a sea-sick man for fourteen days, I was that one. The first place to which I came was this building. I was told that I could not get in without a ticket, but I made. up my mind to get in somehow, and I succeeded. I well remember seating myself in this gallery. I recollect the very seat, and I should like to take it back to America with me. As your dear Pastor walked down to the platform, my eyes just feasted upon him, and my heart’s desire for years was at last accomplished It happened to be the year he preached in the Agricultural Hall. I followed him up there, and he sent me back to America a better man. Then I began to try and preach myself, though at the time I little thought I should ewer be able to do so. While I was here, I followed Mr. Spurgeon everywhere; and when, at home, people asked if I had gone to this and that cathedral, I had to say ‘No,’ and confess I was ignorant of them; but I could tell them something about the meetings addressed by Mr. Spurgeon. In 1872, I thought I would come over again to learn a little more, and I found my way back to this gallery. I have been here a great many times since, and I never come into the building without getting a blessing to my soul. I think I have had as great a one here to-night as at any other time I have been in this Tabernacle. When I look down on these orphan boys, when I think of the 600 servants of God who haw gone out from the College to preach the gospel, of the 1,500 or 2,0o0 sermons from this pulpit that are in print, and of the multitude of books that have come from the Pastor’s pen, (Scripture says, ‘Of making many books there is no end,’ and in his case it is indeed true,) I would fain enlarge upon all these good works, but the clock shows me that, if I do, 1 shall not get to my other meeting in. time. But let me .just say this, if God can use Mr. Spurgeon, why should He not use the rest of us, land why should we not all just lay ourselves at the Master’s feet, and say to. Him, ‘ Send me, use me’? It is not Mr. Spurgeon who does the work, after ;all; it is God. He is as weak as any other man apart from his Lord. Moses was nothing, but Moses’ God was almighty. Samson was nothing when he lost his strength; but when it came back’ to him, then he was a mighty man; and so, dear friends, bear in mind that, if we can just link our weakness to God’s strength, we ,an go forth, and be a blessing in the world. Now, there are others to speak, and I have also to hasten away to another meeting, but I want ‘to say to you, Mr. Spurgeon, ‘God bless you! I know that you love me, but I assure you that I love you a thousand times more than you can ever love me, because you have been such a ‘blessing to me, while I have been a very little blessing to you. I have read your sermons for twenty-five years. You are never going to die. John Wesley lives more to-day than when he was in the flesh; Whitefield lives more to-.day than when he was on this earth; John Knox lives more today’ than at any other period of his life; and Martin Luther, who has been gone over three hundred years, still lives.’ Bear in mind, friends, that our dear brother is to live for ever. We may never meet together again in the flesh; but, by the blessing of God,. I will meet you up yonder.’

On Thursday evening, June 19, the Tabernacle was packed to its utmost capacity, while crowds in vain sought admission. The Earl of Shaftesbury, K.G., presided, and delivered a notable testimony to the Pastor’s faithfulness from the first days of his ministry until that hour; addresses were also given by the Revs. Canon Wilberforce, J.P. Chown, O. P. Gifford (Boston, U.S.A.), Newman Hall, LL.B., W. Williams ,’,Upton Chapel), and Joseph Parker, D.D., and Sir William McArthur, M.P.; the Jubilee address was, again read by Mr. Carr, and the treasurers of the testimonial fund presented to Mr. Spurgeon a cheque for L4,500, “free from any condition, and to remain absolutely at his disposal.” In reply, the Pastor said —  
“The affectionate words to which I have listened have sunk into my heart. I can take a very great deal of encouragement without being lifted up even to the ordinary level, and all I have received will operate upon me more afterwards than just now. But I am sure that the kindly pressure of the hand, and the way in which friends, one after another, have told me that I led them to the Savior, or that I comforted them in the time of trouble, have been a very great joy to me. To God be all the praise; to me it is an overwhelming honor to be His servant. Had there been no money whatever accompanying this celebration, I should have been as well pleased as I am now; for I never proposed a gift, and I never’ thought of it. I did suggest that there should be some money gathered on account of the building of the house at the back, which is for the use of this church; I thought that a very right and proper object.

“You will remember that, some years ago, you were so good as to give me nearly L6,500 as a testimonial; and 1 went away, that night, with a very light heart, because I had handed the whole amount over to you for the Almshouses and some other works. That is exactly ‘what I proposed to do to-night ; — just the same thing over again, only that I am not permitted to do it. A very large number of the donors said that they ‘would not give anything if ray Jubilee day was made a pretext for assisting the societies. They put it as strongly as that; they had contributed the time before with the view of giving something to me, and they would not give a second time unless it was for my personal benefit. At the start, in addition to paying’ for the Jubilee House, I proposed four objects to be helped, and I asked the donors to allot their money to one or other of those four as they pleased. In pursuance of that request, there has been an allotment made. Judge how very little that idea seemed to take with our friends! Having it before them, and having it pressed upon. them by myself; they have allotted £81 9s. 5d. to the Almshouses. £31 to the Colportage, £74 to the Orphanage, and £43 to my son’s Tabernacle at Auckland; and there is a pound or two — perhaps three — allotted to societies, that is all; and all the rest is evidently left, by the will of the friends, totally free. Well, it must be so, and I accept the. money for myself so far as that is the expressed desire; only I do not know how I can better have it than by being allowed to give it away. What I have is best enjoyed by myself personally when I san use it in some way or other for the advantage .of the work of God. I cannot be debarred from this gratification. I will go the length of saying that I will take some portion of this for myself. But, first of all, there will be £1,000 needed to pay for the house, and furniture, and all sorts of things. Then I want to give something to St. Thomas’s Hospital, which helps many of our poor friends. Some years ago, my dear brother, Mr. Higgs, at my request, paid the usual amount, and became one of the governors of the hospital. He is gone, and I want to be a governor in succession to him, — not that I have any interest to serve there except that of the sick poor. Than I want to give to the church £200, to make up what is given to the Almhouses to £200, and also to give to the deacons £100, which they may keep to lend to persons who can use a loan well. We have no money to lend, and I am the party who has to lend to everybody. I do not go in tot large loans; but I speculate in sewing machines, and mangles, and some other things of that sort. I should have a considerable number if I ever had them back again, but that does not generally happen; so I want other persons to look after the things that are lent, and get the money back again, and I think that would toe very useful. I want, also, to give to the Baptist Fund for the relief of poor ministers, £50, on the behalf of my son Charles, to make him a member of it. I should like to give L1oo to the fund for augmenting the salaries of our poor brethren. I should like to make up the amount for Colportage work to £200. I should like to give £250 to the Tabernacle at Auckland. I should like to give at least £100 ‘to my wife’s Book Fund for poor ministers.

“I have a little list here; but if I were to read any more, friends might object that I was doing contrary to their wish. I must try and avoid all opposition to the donors, and yet help my work and other work. I am called upon so much to help the building of chapels and such like things, that I am kept perpetually very poor; not that I want anything. I have all things. I do not need this money; but, still, there has been a time when we expended all that we had, and we had nothing laid by whatsoever. But if anybody supposes that I have a very large sum of money laid by, I shall be very glad to let him make a bid for it. I think it is highly probable that I should be a great gainer by the offer, even if it were a reasonable one. I had a huge fortune left me, as you know, some time ago, — in the moon. It was in the papers everywhere; that is where it was. When the papers hand it over, I shall be glad. It has; ever been the case with me that, whenever I have had help given me, there have been calls at once more than equal to it. On the last occasion when I received a testimonial from you, I was greatly amused at the shoal of applicants who wrote to me for the money. Though the papers stated that I gave it all back again, these people applied for it all the same. One person wrote wanting help for her husband, that he might pay his; debts on his farm, amounting to some £500, because it was clear to her mind that I had such a lot of money that I did not want any more, or else I should not have given back the testimonial. I could not see how, after I had handed over the money, I could still give it to somebody else. I beg to give notice that it will be useless to write to me for this money, because I shall be able to appropriate it without the assistance of friends. There are so many Institutions here, and so much work to be done, that, whatever comes to me, the first thing; I begin to think of is, not ‘What shall I do with it?’ but ‘ In which direction do I need it most?’ Our friend spoke the honest truth when he said, ‘Money is just what the Pastor does want.’ I am the pipe through which the money runs. It runs in at one end, and it runs out at the other with extreme rapidity; and you may see daily what good it does. If you ever wish to see, go to the College; go to the Almshouses; .go to the Orphanage; go and see what God has done through your liberality.

“I have coveted no man’s silver or gold!. I have desired nothing at your hands, but that you love the Lord Jesus Christ, and serve Him with all your might. But I have coveted, and I do still covet to have a generous people about me, because I am sure that it is to God’s glory and to your own advantage to be liberal to His cause. Poor men should give that they may’ not be always poor. Rich men should give that they may not become poor. These are selfish motives; but, still, they are worthy to be mentioned. ‘ There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty.’ As a general rule, he that keeps his substance will not find it multiply under his hands; but he that gives shall find that it is given back to him, ‘good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over.” Besides, I do not think much of giving when I have plenty to give with; I like it better when I can I pinch myself. If you pinch yourself, there is a sweetness about giving to the Lord. What you do not want, you can dispense with, and exhibit small lows; but when you come to what you do want, and give that to the Lord, then there comes to your own heart the comfortable assurance that you are really doing it unto the Lord, because of the needs of His cause.

“Now I thank everybody who has given a hundred pounds, and everybody who has given a penny. God bless you, and return it to you in every way! One of our brethren told you, the other night, what once happened to me. I had been preaching in a country place, and a good woman gave me five shillings. I said to her, ‘Well, my dear friend, I do not want your money.’ She said, ‘ But you must take it; I give it to you because I got good from you.’ I said, ‘Shall I give it to the College?’ She answered, ‘I don’t care about the College; I care about you.’ ‘Then I ‘will give it to the Orphanage.’ ‘No,’ she said, ‘you take it yourself.’ I said, ‘ You need it more than I do.’ She replied, ‘ Now, do you think that your Lord and Master would have talked like that to the woman who came and broke the alabaster box over Him? I do not think He would.’ She added, ‘I know you do not mean to be unkind; I worked extra to earn it, and I give it to you.’ I told her that she owed me nothing, and that woman owed the Lord everything, and asked, ‘ What am I to do with it?’ She said, ‘Buy anything you like with it; I do not care what. Only, mind, you must have it for yourself.” I mention the incident because it is much in that spirit that the friends have given this noble testimonial.

“The Lord bless you! The Lord bless you! The Lord bless you, yet more and more, you and your children!”

Mr. Spurgeon wrote many letters gratefully acknowledging the resolutions of congratulation which he received in connection with his Jubilee. One of the replies to friends at home, and another to those abroad, may be given as specimens of the thankful epistles then written; the first was addressed to the Western Baptist Association —

“Dear Friends,

I feel greatly comforted and humbled by receiving your most loving resolution. It is sweet to live in the affection of so many brethren, but it involves a. great responsibility. I join with you in praising God for His special goodness to me; and implore for you and all your churches renewed blessings of a like character. The gospel of the grace of God is dear to us, and we do not doubt that the Lord will bless its publication in every place. Every year binds us more fast to the eternal verities, and to Him in whom they center. Let us be of good courage, and play the man for our Lord and His Word. “With all my heart I thank you, and return the affection which suggested your considerate action.

“Your brother in our Lord Jesus,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”  
The Philadelphia Conference of Baptist ministers sent a loving resolution of congratulation. The following reply was written to the secretary — “Dear Sir,

“I beg you to thank all the brethren on my behalf. I am deeply affected by your brotherly love. One touch of grace has, in a truer sense than a touch of nature, made us all akin. I rejoice every day in the prosperity of the Church of God in the United States. Your nation is but in its youth, and you are educating it for a high career; ours is; old, and slow to learn, and we are with much difficulty lighting its candle, lending it spectacles, and opening the Bible before it. We cannot expect to teach Mr. Bull quite so readily as you teach Master Jonathan. We will, however, do our best and you will pray for us, and God will bless us.

“I feel as if I was even now squeezing the. hand of each minister, and receiving a return grip. Take it as done.. Thank you! God bless you!

“Yours heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

A Spurgeon Jubilee Album was issued by Messrs. Passmore and Alabaster in connection with the Pastor’s completion of his fiftieth year; he sent a copy of it to Lord Shaftesbury, who replied as follows —

“My Dear Friend,

“Your Jubilee Album reached me some time ago. I am deeply obliged to you for it, and still more for the touching and affectionate words you have inscribed on the fly-leaf.

“My daughter is writing for me, because I am still lying at full length in my bed, where I have been since Saturday last. I am now, thank God, a great deal better, but the attack has been very serious. I have been longing to come and see you, but both in the number and the importance of engagements I have had more than usual pressure this year; and now, you see, I have lost a whole week by this last attack.  
“Still, I shall hope to see you again before I die. May our Lord ever be with you, and bless you! You know how truly I love and respect you.

“Yours very affectionately,  
“SHAFTESBURY.”

CHAPTER 99.

THE “DOWN-GRADE” CONTROVERSY FROM MR. SPURGEON’S STANDPOINT.

Controversy is never a very happy element for the child of God he would far rather be in communion with his Lord than be engaged in defending the faith or in attacking error. But the soldier of Christ knows no choice in his Master’s commands. He may feel it to be better for him to lie upon the bed of rest than to stand covered with the sweat and dust of battle; but, as a soldier, he has learned to obey, and the rule of his obedience is not his personal comfort, but his Lord’s absolute command. The servant of God must endeavor to maintain all the truth which his Master has revealed to him, because, as a Christian soldier, this is part of his duty. But while he does so, he accords to others the liberty which he himself enjoys. — C. H. S., in address at the Tabernacle, 1861.

A Christian minister must expect to lose, his repute among men; he must be willing to suffer every reproach for Christ’s sake; but, then, he may re. st assured that he will never lose his real honor if it be risked for the truth’s sake, and placed in the Redeemer’s hand. The day shall declare the excellence of the upright, for it will reveal all that was hidden, and bring to the light that which was concealed. There will be a resurrection of characters as well as of persons. Every reputation that has been obscured by clouds of reproach, for Christ’s sake, shall be rendered glorious when the righteous shall “shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father.’ — C. H.S.

Just now, the Lord Jesus is betrayed by not a few of His professed ministers, He is being crucified afresh in the perpetual attacks of skepticism against His blessed gospel; and it may be that things will wax worse and worse. This is not the first occasion when it has been so, fork at various times in the history of the Church of God, His enemies have exulted, and cried out that the gospel of past ages was exploded, and might be reckoned as dead and buried. For one, I mean to sit over against the very sepulcher of truth. I am a disciple of the old-fashioned doctrine as much when it is covered with obloquy and rebuke as when it shall again display its power, as it surely shall. Skeptics may seem to take the truth, and bind it, and scourge it, and crucify it, and say that it is dead; and they may endeavor to bury it in scorn, but the Lord has many a Joseph and a Nicodemus who will see that all due honor is done even to the body of truth, and will wrap the despised creed in sweet spices, and hide it away in their hearts. They may, perhaps, be half afraid that it is really dead, as the wise men assert; yet it is precious to their souls, and they will come forth right gladly to espouse its cause, and to confess that they are its disciples. We will sit down in sorrow, but not in despair; and watch until the stone is rolled away, and Christ in His truth shall live again, and be openly triumphant. We shall see a Divine interposition, and shall cease to fear; while they who stand armed to prevent the resurrection of the grand old doctrine shall quake and become as dead men, because the gospel’s everlasting life has; been vindicated, and they are made to quail before the brightness of its glory. — C. H. S., in sermon at the Tabernacle, 1878.

I protest that, if all the sages of the world were to utter one thundering sarcasm, if they concentrated all their scorn into one universal sneer of contempt, I do not think it would now affect me the turn of a hair, so sure am I that my Lord will justify my confidence. — C. H. S., in sermon at the Tabernacle, 1878.

A man. may sometimes seem self-assertive when, really, he has so completely lost himself in God that he does not care what people think about him, — whether they regard him as an egotist or not. Some men appear to be modest because they are proud, while others seem to be proud because they have sunk themselves, and on13, speak so boldly because they have their Master’s authority at the back of their words. — C. H. S.,*in exposition of* 1 Kings 17:1

As the Roman sentinel in Pompeii stood to his post even when the city was destroyed, so do I stand to the truth of the atonement though the Church is being buried beneath the boiling mud-showers of modern heresy. — C. H. S, *in sermon at the Tabernacle*, 1887. I might not have had such an intense loathing of the new theology if I had not seen so much of its evil effects. I could tell you of a preacher of unbelief, whom I have seen, in my own vestry, utterly broken down, driven almost to despair, and having no rest for the sole of his foot until he came back to simple trust in the atoning sacrifice. If he were speaking to you, he would say, “Cling to your faith, brethren; if you once throw away your shield, you will lay yourself open to imminent dangers and countless wounds; for nothing can protect you but the shield of faith.” — C. H. $., in address at’ College Conference; 1891.

I am well content to go shares with those who have gone before me to the skies. Some of them, as; they burned to death for Christ’s sake, cried aloud, “Christ is all.” I am quite willing to take my part with the apostles whom the wise men of to-clay count to be fools; and with those still greater fools, as many consider the Reformers who brought back into the light the great doctrine of justification by faith. I am satisfied to tread the path my sires have trod; I have an illustrious pedigree in the skies, and I will not snap that chain which links me with those who have entered the glory4and. This faith saved them in the time of poverty, and persecution, and martyrdom, and death and it will save me. At any rate, I would sooner risk my soul on all the difficulties of the old theology, so long tried and proved, than on all the beauties of the novel doctrine taught by so many nowadays. I believe we are all of one mind upon this matter, and some ,of us may live to see great alterations concerning the present popular teaching. We may learn a lesson from what happened in the last century; the style of much of the preaching was such as tended to the emptying of chapels, and the multiplication of spiders. Nonconformity gradually drifted away towards Unitarianism, and true religion would have become almost extinct in England if the Lord had not raised up those two believing men, Whitefield and Wesley, and others likeminded, who were a great power for good. in the land. And I believe the Lord has raised us up, together with many others who hold the same faith, that we may fight this battle, and win the victory, to the glory of His holy Name.

Whenever I have found myself represented as a fool because I cling so tenaciously to the old faith, I have thought to myself, “‘What man, by proclaiming any new doctrine, has been able to draw such congregations as have filled the Tabernacle for the last quarter of a century simply to listen to the preaching of Jesus Christ and Him crucified?” We do not set up to be anything great in ourselves; but we do claim to be servants of the great God, believers in the great Savior, proclaimers of His great salvation, and, God helping us, we shall keep on doing this till we die, and then, unto principalities and powers in the Heavenly places, we will make known the manifold wisdom of God. — C. H. S., in address to students of the Pastors’ College, I885.

M R. SPURGEON’S Standard Life could not be complete without a reference to, that most sorrowful but important episode, — The “Down-grade” Controversy; — yet how shall I dare to touch the strings of that rifted lute? The lightest and most skillful fingers could scarcely draw harmony from it now, and I would fain not be expected to awaken any of its discords. Oh, for the guiding Hand to be laid on heart and brain and pen, that gently and tenderly, albeit truthfully, the outlines of the sad story may be given!

There are many dear and able friends who could write the full history of the Controversy; but, after much thought and prayer, I have been led to allow the shadow of the past to rest ‘upon it in a measure, and to conceal, under a generous silence, most of the documentary and other evidence which could be produced to prove the perfect uprightness, veracity, and fidelity of my dear husband throughout the whole of the solemn protest which culminated in the “vote of censure” by the Council of the. Baptist Union! Therefore, in accordance with the autobiographical character of this record, the Controversy is sketched from Mr. Spurgeon’s own point of view; — he tells the story in his own way, so that only as much as he chose to make known of the deepest grief of his noble life is chronicled in these pages.

For the information of readers of the Autobiography, who are unacquainted with my beloved’s articles upon “The Down-grade,” I thought it might be well to include in this chapter a condensation, or summary of them; but, on reading them with that object in view, I find it impossible to strike out a single word of his protest. It is equally impossible to transfer it all to this work, so the only course open to me is to omit it altogether, and to leave the testimony still to speak for itself from the pages of *The Sword and the Trowel*. From August, 1887, to February, 1892, scarcely any number of the magazine appeared without some reference to the Controversy and its various issues. The most pathetic “Note” of all was written within a few days of my dear husband’s home-going, for in it he revealed the fact, already known to all who were nearest and dearest to him, that his fight for the faith had cost him his life. Yet he never regretted the step he had taken; for, throughout the whole affair, he felt such a Divine compulsion as Luther realized when he said, “I can do no other.”

So far as the Baptist Union was concerned, little was accomplished by Mr. Spurgeon’s witness-bearing and withdrawal. The compromise at the City Temple, in April, 1888, confirmed the position of the modern-thought men in the Union, and made “the vote of censure” the act of the whole assembly with the exception of the noble seven who voted against it. But, in other respects, I have had abundant proofs that the protest was; not in vain. Many, who were far gone on “the Down-grade,” were stopped in their perilous descent, and, by God’s grace, were brought back to the Up-line; others, who were unconsciously slipping, were made to stand firmly upon the Rock; while, at least for a time, in all the churches, Evangelical doctrines were preached with a clearness and emphasis which had long been lacking.

The ultimate results of the whole matter must be left in the hands of Him who never makes a mistake, and who will, in His own right way, vindicate His obedient and faithful servant from the “censure” so unjustly passed upon him.

Not long after Mr. Spurgeon’s withdrawal from the Baptist Union, he went to the South of France for much-needed rest; and the letters he there wrote, during that time of suffering and reproach, contained many allusions to the painful subject. Naturally, those written to me referred to the more personal and private aspects of the Controversy, as the following extracts will show —

“I was greatly surprised at the note from \_\_\_\_ (one of ‘our own men’), but when we are in a battle, we must expect calamities. It is a serious matter to know how to act; but one thing is plain enough, I must go on clearing myself of union with those who belong’ to the broad school. I felt so well, this afternoon, when sitting under the palms, and as happy as a birdie beneath the blue sky. Then came. the letter, just to sober me, and drive me from the sunshine to my Lord, who is the Sun itself. I can bear anything for Jesus while His everlasting arms are underneath me. The hills around Hyeres are called ‘the mountains of paradise,’ but the serpent comes even here. Ah, well! the Serpent-Killer is with us, and He will subdue all things unto Himself. I am sorry that the evil flood should carry away one of my men; but the wonder is, that more have not gone. It shows how much more evil was, abroad than I dreamed off I have done my duty, even if all men forsake me. Those who write in The Freeman and The Christian World show how everything I do can be misconstrued. Nevertheless, I know what I have done, and why I did it; and the Lord will bear me through. In. Him I rest, and I am in no haste to answer opponents, nor even to think about them in a depressing way. What a providence that I am here, out of call! Luther was best at the Wartburg, was he not? I did not plan this nor plan anything.

“What a farce about my seeing these brethren, privately, according to Matthew 18:15! Why, I saw the Secretary and the President again and again; and then I printed my plaint, and only left the Union when nothing could be done. Now, something will be done. Not until I took the decided step could I effect anything. Luther was very wrong to nail up his theses on the church door; he should have seen the Pope, and prayed with him! Do not let these things distress you, for my sake.. The Lord will give both of us the heroic spirit and we shall neither fear men, nor become ungenerous toward them.”

“Canon Sidebotham called yesterday ‘to assure me of the sympathy of all Christian Churchmen,. and his belief that my stand for truth will help all believers. He told me that he meets with amazing skepticism among young men whom he has been called to visit in sickness, and he believes there is an epidemic of it everywhere. He says the antidote was needed, and came just at the right time. So may God grant!

“How I do delight in the Lord! I am now consciously nearer to Him than ever before, and I revel in a sense of blessedness. I am delivered from all fear of failing in this battle; and the Lord, whom I sought to honor, bows me low at His feet in gratitude for H. is tender mercies. We are safe in. His hands. This is where I love to feel that I am, and that you are, and the dear boys, and the Church, and the College, and ‘ the Down-grade,’ and all!” “I trust I may be made stronger for the stern task which awaits me; but I try not even to think of that, but just to abandon myself to a bath of rest. This, I trust, is ‘the wisest course; and yet I keep on longing to be doing some good, or bearing some fruit unto the Lord. Little occasions for this do occur, and I am eager to use them aright.

“Yesterday was eventful. First came a telegram, saying that there had been a hot discussion, and that my brother had left the Council meeting in indignation because my veracity had been impugned. Just as I was going to rest came another telegram — ‘Council has appointed Culross, McLaren, Clifford, and myself to confer with you at Mentone, without delay, to deliberate with you how the unity of our denomination in truth, and love, and good works may be maintained. When can we see you? Letter sent. Booth.’ Think of four doctors of divinity coming all this way to see me! I was in great perplexity, and knew not what to reply. I don’t quite see what it all means. I lay awake till one o’clock, and then got a pencil, and wrote out a telegram — ’Cannot reply without further information. Respectfully request deputation to await my return. Tone of discussion suggests caution. W/ill write.’ Afterwards, I wrote a letter. Briefly, I urge them not to come so far ; — it would be four to one, and I should be at the disadvantage of having been the cause of effect expense. If the. y really mean brotherly conference, I will see them when I return, right gladly; that is to say, if I find there is any use in it. Now I shall need wisdom. I do not fear four doctors, but I think it a very wise move on their part. If it means that they will surrender, it is ‘well; but if it is meant to fix on me the odium of being implacable, it is another matter. In any case, the Lord will prepare me for all that is to happen. It is of His mercy that I am here, or I should not be able to fear it all; but being quiet, and rested, and not worried by personal assaults, I can look round the question calmly.

“The four doctors are not coming. Very likely my brother will call to tell you about the’ affray. He was justly wroth, and describes the Council meeting as ‘horrible.’ For Dr. Booth to say I never complained, is amazing. God knows all about it, and He will see me righted. I haw just received a letter from England in the words of Jeremiah 15:19,20.” That passage was so peculiarly appropriate to the circumstance of the case, that many friends afterwards sent it to my beloved, who was greatly comforted by the reassuring message which was thus repeatedly conveyed to him.

During that visit to Mentone, an incident occurred, to which Mr. Spurgeon often gratefully referred as a remarkable token of the Lord’s approval, of his protest against false doctrine, and worldliness. Before. I give extracts from his letters concerning it, a brief explanation is necessary. For many years before this eventful period of my dear husband’s life, he had been most generously aided in all his beneficent plans and purposes by a friend to whom God had given abundance of this world’s wealth. These supplies came with loving freeness, and invariable regularity; and more than a mere hint was given that they might be depended on while the donor had it in his power to be thus royally open-handed. However, Mr. Spurgeon’s attitude in the “Down-grade’ Controversy alienated the heart of this friend, and caused him to withdraw altogether the splendid help which had, for so long a period, exempted my beloved from much financial anxiety.

The letter, announcing this failure of friendship and sympathy, arrived during Mr. Spurgeon’s absence at Mentone, and it therefore became my duty to open and read it. Then followed one of those, hallowed enlargements of heart which leave their mark forever on the life of the person experiencing them. At once, I took the letter, and spread it before the Lord, pleading, as Hezekiah did, that He would “hear and see.” the words written therein; and He gave me so strong a confidence in. His overruling and delivering power that, as I knelt in His presence, and told Him how completely I trusted Him on my husband’s behalf, the words of petition ceased from my lips, and I absolutely laughed aloud, so little did I fear what man could do, and so blessedly reliant did He make me. on His own love and omnipotence!

In this exultant frame of mind, I wrote to Mentone, making light of the trouble, and endeavoring to parry the blow which I knew must sorely wound the sensitive heart of my beloved. I told him, too, how the Lord had “made me to laugh” as I was laying the matter before Him, and had filled me with righteous scorn and indignation at the means used to dishearten him in his sublime stand for the truths of the old gospel. So, as far as I was able, being absent from him, I comforted and upheld my much-tried spouse. In less time than I had thought possible, I received this telegram — “I laugh with you.’ The Lord will not fail us, nor forsake us;” — and, by the next post, there came a letter recording the Clear writer’s unswerving faith in the God, whose he was, and whom he served, and to whom he left all the issues of that painful trial. The following’ extract will indicate the spirit in which he wrote —

“Mentone,  
“November 18, 1887.  
“You are as an angel of God unto me. When I began to read your letter, I trembled, for I could not tell what was coming; but when I finished it, I could laugh with you. Bravest of women, strong in faith, you have ministered unto me indeed and of a truth. God bless thee out of the seventh heavens!

“I do not know that I have ever before really suffered any loss for Christ’s sake; I feel decorated and elevated by this honor. His yoke is easy, and His burden is light. But our friend uses a queer sort of argument! I am to be set right ; — therefore, stop the supplies to God’s work! The fire must be put out ;-whip the child! I do not see the connection between the end desired and the means used. Your loving sympathy has fully’ repaid me already. I rejoice in the Lord who has dealt bountifully with me hitherto. All that I possess belongs to Him.

***“‘There, take an inventory of all I have,  
To the last penny; ‘tis the King’s.’“***

While this correspondence was passing to and fro, the Lord was working on behalf of His; dear servant in a wonderful way. Writing to one of his deacons, Mr. Spurgeon said — ” I have had a very remarkable deliverance out of a pecuniary difficulty inflicted upon me in consequence of the ‘Down-grade’ Controversy. It is as nearly a miracle as anything I ever heard of. The living God guards me on every side, and covers my head. To Him be praise!”

A lady from the Antipodes, who was staying in London, afterwards related that, during the time under’ consideration, she felt an overpowering impression that she must go to Mr. Spurgeon, in the South of France, and carry him some financial help to meet a special emergency. She said that, on other occasions, when similar intimations had come to her, she had obeyed her Lord’s commands, and in each instance had found that she had been infallibly guided by Him, so she at once made arrangements for the thousand miles’ journey. The amount she was to give was not at first revealed-to her, nor did she know exactly where she was to go, as it had been announced that Mr. Spurgeon would be moving from place to place. However, the Lord, who had entrusted her with the commission, directed her to Mentone; and, on her arrival there, she was further guided to the Hotel Beau Rivage. What happened there, my beloved thus records —

“An awe is upon me as I write to you, for I feel the Lord to be so near. On Tuesday evening, there carne to this hotel three ladies who asked if Mr. Spurgeon were here, and left cards. The next morning, they were at our family worship; and, to-day, Mrs. R\_\_\_\_ gave me the enclosed letter, and cheque for £100! I told her of my trouble afterwards, I had not mentioned it before, and I read to her a few sentences of your dear letter. “There,’ she said, ‘that is the. Lord’s reason for moving me to give it to you; let it go to make up the lack for the next six months.’ I worshipped the Lord with a thrilling joy. She added, ‘I do not doubt but that the Lord will see you right through the difficulty.’ I believe so, too, and that all the help will come from someone who does not know of my special need., so that it will be the more conspicuously ‘ of the. Lord.’ The money will be surer from Him than from Mr.\_\_\_\_ although he promised it for life. It may be very childish of me, but I could not help sending you the very cheque and letter, that you may see with your eyes what the Lord sent me. How this lady came to know my hotel, I cannot imagine, but Mr. Harrald says that He who sent her knew where I was.

“Our College men have met, with grand result; the only dissentient being one who is, practically, out of the ministry. Yesterday, I went to see an afflicted gentleman,F9 whose deceased wife was Miss Havergal’s sister. His doctor met me, just now, and told me that I had done his patient great good. I was, however, the greater gainer’, for he read me three letters from his son, a clergyman in Islington, in which he told his father to be sure to meet me, and wrote very many kind things, which I am not egotistical enough to repeat; but he said that all who loved the Lord, whom he knew, were bearing me up on their hearts. Truly, I am delivered from all fear of failing in this battle, which is the Lord’s, not mine. I feel as if I must not write about anything else upon these two sheets. ‘ Holiness unto the Lord,’ is written on them; and the domestic matters must go on another sheet of paper. Oh, how I praise the Lord for you! You are dear to me, as a woman and a wife, beyond all expression; but now, more fully than ever, we wear the yoke of Christ tooether, and mutually bear the. double burden of service and suffering for Him.”

Less than a week after the above letter was received, my husband wrote as follows ...... Prepare for further rejoicing. We had been out driving all day, and when I carne in, I found your dear letter, and saw you sitting ‘;in Expectation Corner,’ with. the door often. Please receive the fresh token which the Lord has sent in the form of a second L1oo! Letter and cheque enclosed. What hath God wrought! I never gave Mrs. R — a shadow of a hint. I never thought she would do more. Why should she? But, as you say, the living God does deliver His children.’ How I praise Him! Or, rather, how I do wish I could praise Him, but I feel as if my gratitude was cold and superficial when contrasted with His great goodness! Blessed be His Name for ever!

“What a dear soul you are! How I love you! Our inward and spiritual union has come out in this trial and deliverance. We will record all this to the glory of the Lord our God. The weather here is rather of Heaven than of earth; warm, clear, bright, and yet lifegiving and refreshing. The toothache touches me every now and then; but, moderated by interludes of ease, I hardly ought to mention it, my mercies are so great. What are pains when God is so near? This one theme is so predominant in my soul, that I cannot write about anything else. The Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock!

“Send cheque to Bank. Sing the Doxology. Keep all my love, and rest under the blessing of the Lord our God.”

After the letters to myself, probably those written to the friends at the Tabernacle expressed most fully what was in the dear Pastor’s heart. Shortly after he reached the South of France, he wrote thus to them — .

“I wish to thank you all most heartily for your constancy of love during four-and-thirty years of fellowship. We have been many in number, but only one in heart, all through these years. Specially is this true in the present hour of controversy, for my heartiest sympathizers are in my own church. Several enthusiastic ones proposed a general meeting of church-members, to express their fervent agreement with their Pastor; but the ever-faithful deacons and elders had taken time by the Forelock, and presented to me a letter signed by them all as representing their brethren and sisters. Such unity comes from the grace of God, proves that His blessing is now with us, and prophesies future happiness. What can I do ‘but thank you all, love you in return, labor for you as long as strength remains, and pray for you till I die? The infinite blessing of the Eternal God be with you for ever!”

In reply to the letter from the church-officers, and to a further communication sent by them, the Pastor wrote —

“Mentone,  
“November 27, 1887  
“To the Co-Pastor and the Deacons,

“My Own Dear Brethren,

“I am touched by your loving letter. It is just like you; but it is so tenderly, so considerately done, that it has a peculiar sweetness about it. May the Lord deal with each one of you as you have dealt towards me, even in tender love and true faithfulness!

“The. more you know of this Controversy, the more will your judgments, as well as your hearts, go with me. It is not possible for me to communicate to anyone all that has passed under my knowledge; but I have had abundant reason for every step I have taken, as the day of day,; will reveal. All over the various churches there is the. same evil, in all denominations in measure; and from believers, in all quarters, comes the same thankful expression of delight that the schemes of errorists have been defeated by pouring light upon them.

“I cannot, at this present, tell you what spite has been used against me, or you would wonder indeed; but the love of God first, and your love next, are my comfort and stay. We may, perhaps, be made to feel some of the brunt of the battle in our various funds; but the Lord liveth. My eminent predecessor, Dr. Gill, was told, by a certain member of his congregation who ought to have known better, that, if he published his book, The Cause of God and 7’ruth, he would lose some of his best friends, and that his income would fall off. The doctor said, ‘ I can afford to be poor, but I cannot afford to injure my conscience ;’ and he has left his mantle as well as his chair in our vestry.

“I should like to see you all walk in here, and to hear your having voices in prayer, for I feel knit to you all more and more. “Yours for ever,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

Among the letters written by Mr. Spurgeon, at that period, is one that is of special and permanent importance, first, because it was the reply to a kind communication from Dr. Culross, the President of the Baptist Union; and, next, because it sets forth so clearly the reason for Mr. Spurgeon’s protest and action —

“Mentone.  
“November 26, 1887.  
“My Dear Dr. Culross,

“I think it most kind of you to write me. Your brethren have usually fired at me through the newspapers their loving appeals and advices. Of this I do not complain; but, assuredly, yours is a way which commands an answer. Letters to the papers are literature, and may or may not be worth one’s notice; yours is a letter sent to me, and I will at least heartily thank you for it.

“Do I need to say that, with you, and such brethren as Dr. McLaren, Mr. Aldis, and Dr. Angus, I have no sort of  
disagreement, except that you stay in the Union and I am out of it? We shall, according to our light, labor for the same cause. We are all Christians and Baptists, and can find many ways of cooperation.

“The ‘Metropolitan men’ London request the Union to devise some way by which I, with others, can return to it. This is very right from their point of view, but I wish you to understand, as President of the Union, that the request is not mine. I do not ask you to do what I am sure you cannot do. If I had thought that you could have done anything which would enable me to return if I retired, I should have asked you to do it before retiring.

“So long as an Association without a creed has no aliens in it, nobody can wish for a creed formally, for the spirit is there; but at a time when ‘strange children’ have entered, what is to be done? Whatever may theoretically be in your power, you practically have no power whatever. You will go on as you are; and, unless God’s grace calls back the wanderers, their numbers will increase, and their courage will cause them to speak out more plainly, to the sorrow of the faithful ones who shielded them in patient hope of better things.

“I have followed out our Lord’s mind as to private remonstrance by seeing Presidents and Secretary on former occasions, and I have written my remonstrances again and again without avail. I had no course but to withdraw. Surely, no sane person thinks that I should have made a tour to deal with the individual errorists. I have no jurisdiction over them, and should have been regarded as offensively intrusive if I had gone to them’ and justly so. My question is with the Union, and with that alone. I have dealt with it all along.

“Your very clear declaration, that the Union could not have a creed, or, as I read it, could not declare its doctrinal views otherwise than by practicing baptism and the Lord’s supper, closes the door finally against me. Neither do I knock at that door, nor wish for another door to be made. The good men who formed the Union, I fancy, had no idea that it would become what it now is, or they would have fashioned it otherwise. It has by its centralization and absorption of various Societies, become far other than at the first. This is a good thing, but it involves a strain on the frail fabric which it is ill adapted to bear. So I think; but time will be the best proof of that.

“I wish I could have worked with you in this particular way; but, as I cannot, we are not therefore deprived of a thousand other ways of fellowship. You feel union of heart with men who publicly preach Universal Restitution’ I do not. I mean, you feel enough fellowship to remain in the Union with them’ I do not. It is the same with other errors. Still, I am in fellowship with you, — Union or no Union. if I think you wrong in your course, — as I surely do, — I will tell you so in the same spirit as that in which you have written to me.

“From the Council of the Union I cannot look for anything which I should care to consider as the voice of the Union. It is too largely committed to a latitudinarian policy beforehand, and I have no question to refer to it.

“I am happily free from all responsibility for its actions, and all allegiance to its sovereignty.  
“Very heartily yours,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

I have received, from many friends, copies of my dear husband’s letters written during this trying period; but I do not think any good purpose can be served by the publication of more than I have here given. Those who sympathized with him in his protest need nothing to. convince them of the need and the wisdom of his action; while those who were ,opposed to him would probably remain in the same mind, whatever might be said, so there the matter must rest as far as I am concerned.

CHAPTER 100.

SPURGEON AS A LITERARY MAN.

God gave Elijah forty days’ meat at one meal do you, dear friends, ever get such meals as that? I do when I read certain books; — not modem — thought books. Give me no such fare as that, — a grain of meal to a. gallon of water; but let me have one of the good solid Puritan volumes that are so little prized nowadays,, and my soul can teed upon such blessed food as that, and be satisfied with it. — C. H. S., *sermon preached at the Tabernacle, June* 24, 1883.

If you can read a tainted book that denies the inspiration of the Scriptures, and attacks the truth of God, and if you derive any profit from it, you must be a very different being from myself. I have to read such books, I must read them sometimes to know what is said by the enemies of the gospel, that I may defend the faith, and help the weaklings of the flock; but it is a sorry business. When those who are qualified, to do so are reading these heretical works, if they are doing it really in the fear of God for the good of their fellow-men, they remind me of Sir James Simpson and the two other doctors when they discovered the medical and surgical value of chloroform. They sat at the table, and scarcely knew what was going to happen; but they took a dose each, risking their lives by so doing; and when they came back to consciousness, they had certainly made a great discovery. — C. H. S., in sermon preached at the Tabernacle, October 29, 1885.

The world gets more civilized; — so am told, though, when I read the newspapers, I am not quite sure that it is so. The world gets more intelligent ; — so I am told, though, when I read the magazines, — I mean the high-class quarterlies, — I am not certain that it is so, for, in that direction, the ignorance appears to me to become greater every day, I mean, the ignorance among the learned and scientific men, who seem to me, in their discoveries, continually to wander further and further, not only from that which is revealed and infallible, but also from that which is rational and truthful. — C. H. S., in Sermon preached at the Tabernacle, May 28, 1882.

What a storehouse the Bible is, since a man may continue to preach from it for years, and still find that there is more to preach from than when he began to discourse upon it! What pyramids of books have been written upon the Bible, and yet we who are students find no portion over-expounded, but large parts which are scarcely touched! If you. take Darling’s Cyclopaedia, and look at a text which one divine has preached upon, you will see that dozens have done the same; but there are hundreds of texts which remain like virgin summits, whereon the foot of preacher has never stood. I might almost say that the major part of the Word of God is in that condition; it is still an Eldorado unexplored, a land whose dust is gold. — C. H. S., in speech at a Bible Society meeting, 1882.

N O life of Mr. Spurgeon would be complete unless it contained all available information concerning the books he read, or wrote, or owned. All who have been intimately acquainted with him, from his childhood, or in later years, have testified to the omnivorous character of his reading. In the earlier part of the present work (Vol 1., Chapter 3.), he has himself recorded the delight with which, while he was but a little lad, he revelled in the study of such works as Foxe’s *Book of Martyrs*, Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress,* and the huge folios of Puritanic theology which he had discovered in the windowless room in the upper portion of the old Stambourne Manse. The boy and the books were inseparable companions; and when he returned From Stambourne to Colchester, and afterwards went to his uncle’s school at Maidstone, the same experience was repeated. Even as a youth, he intermeddled with all knowledge, and so began to accumulate those treasures, of literary love which have led many to describe his wisdom as ency-clopaedic. His essay, entitled Popery Unmasked, written when he was only fifteen years of age,. affords abundant proof of the wide extent of his reading at that early period of his history; and he often mentioned, with much merriment, the curious arrangement that had to be made in connection with the school-boy debates in which he took part. He knew so much more than the rest of the pupils upon almost all the subjects which they wished to discuss, that he was too formidable a.n antagonist for any of them to overthrow; and, consequently, the only way in which he could fairly compete with his young companions was to allow him to speak on both sides of the question under consideration! It must have both amused and amazed his fellowscholars to hear him refute his own arguments, which, when he had first uttered them, they had thought to be unanswerable!

When he advanced from the position of scholar to that of teacher, he gladly availed himself of the increased opportunities of reading and learning everything that might be turned to good account in his future career; and when he had become a follower of Christ, and an earnest worker for his Lord, he spent all that he could honestly afford it, the purchase of the classical and theological books which were likely to be of the greatest service to him. His letters at that period, as given in the first volume of this work, contained frequent mention of those volumes; and his tutor and friend. Mr. Leeding, confirmed his own testimony as to the diligence with which he Was mastering their contents. One of his favorite subjects of study, at that time, was natural history; and some of his pupils have acknowledged, even since his home-going, how intensely interesting and instructive were the lessons and lectures he gave them upon that topic; and all the while he was, perhaps unconsciously, laying up useful and telling illustrations which were to be of service to himself and his hearers throughout his long ministry.

Mr. Spurgeon did not often refer to his own literary acquirements, as he preferred to let the work he had accomplished speak for him; and he could afford to ignore, the unfounded assumptions of his critics with regard to his supposed ignorance. Very occasionally, possibly when there had been some unusually virulent attack upon him which he thought should not pass unnoticed, he would briefly mention the matter to some of the choice friends by whom he was surrounded, and prove the utter groundlessness of his assailants’ statements. At the close of one of the annual College Conferences, there occurred an incident of this kind, which is, to this day, remembered with delight by many who were present. One of the brethren, who was there has recorded his reminiscences of the occasion; he writes — ” It was after the dinner on the Friday, ‘when we had been cheering the beloved president with such cheers as we shall never give to any man again; I think they must have touched his loving heart, for he left his place at the table, stepped forward among the flowers that decorated the platform, and talked to us in a homely, confidential way. I cannot recall his exact words, but I know that he told us how welcome we were to all the privileges of the Conference, and I remember that he had at special message of sympathy for those of us who came from the smaller churches. Then he went on to speak of himself. He related how, even as a schoolboy, he had made such progress with his mathematical studies that he had been able to calculate the tables which he believed were still used in a certain Life Insurance office in London. I distinctly recollect that he also said he could easily have taken a degree at Cambridge if the University had been open to Nonconformists, and he referred to the knowledge of Greek and Latin which he possessed at that time, adding, in his own inimitable way, that, since then, he had also learned at least some Hebrew, and a few other things! He urged the brethren to be diligent students, to read all books that would help them to understand the Scriptures; but, above all, to study the Word itself, in the original languages if possible, and to saturate themselves with what he termed Bibline, the very essence of The Book. I always knew’ that dear Mr. Spurgeon was a great scholar as well as a great preacher, but it was delightful to have the fact confirmed from his own lips; yet he concluded by saying, ‘Still, brethren, like the apostle Paul, I am become a fool in glorying.’ But our renewed cheers must have assured him of our delight in listening to what he had told us, and he said that he had been driven to speak by what others had been saying, and for the honor of the College of which he was President. The address was evidently quite unpremeditated; it seemed to be the overflowing of his heart to those who, he knew, we. re not only in perfect sympathy with him, but regarded him with the deepest reverence, esteem, and love.”

Although Mr. Spurgeon so seldom referred to his own attainments and qualifications for his great life-work, yet frequently, in depicting some of the Lord’s most useful and successful servants, he drew likenesses of them which might admirably serve for full-length portraits of himself. For instance, preaching upon John the Baptist’s words, “He must increase, but I must decrease,” the Pastor said — ” Oh, how grandly he witnessed for Christ by sinking himself until he was lost in his Lord and Master!! And, my brother, it must be the same with you; if you would be a true witness for Christ, you must say that which glorifies Him, even though it dishonors yourself. Perhaps there is a very learned man sitting over yonder, and the temptation to the preacher to say something that shall make him feel that the minister to whom he is listening is not so ignorant as some people suppose; but if there is an unlearned, simple sinner anywhere in the place, the preacher’s business is just to chop his words down to that poor man’s condition, and let the learned hearer receive the same message if he will. Luther said, ‘ When I am preaching, I see Dr. Jonas sitting there, and OEcolampadius, and Melancthon, .and I say to myself, “Those learned doctors; know enough already; so I need not trouble about them. I shall fire at the poor people in the aisles.”’ That is the way Luther preached, and God richly blessed his ministry because he did it. Though he was a truly learned man, he was willing to be reckoned as knowing nothing at all if by that means,’ he could the better serve his; Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.”

On another occasion, in a sermon at the Tabernacle, his reference to John Bunyan was equally applicable to his own writings and words — ” Oh, that you and I might get into the very heart of the Word of God, and get that Word into ourselves! As I have seen the silkworm eat into the leaf, and consume it, so ought we to do with the Word of the Lord ; — not crawl over its surface, but eat right into it till we have taken it into our inmost parts. It is idle merely to let the eye glance over the words, or to recollect the poetical expressions, or the historic facts; but it is blessed to eat into the very soul of the Bible until, at last, you come to talk in Scriptural language, and your very style is fashioned upon Scripture models, and, what is better still, your spirit is flavored with the words of the Lord. I would quote John Bunyan as an instance of what I mean. Read anything of his, and you will see that it is almost like reading the Bible itself. He had studied our Authorized. Version, which will never be bettered, as I judge, till Christ shall come; he had read it till his whole being was saturated with Scripture; and, though his writings are charmingly full of poetry, yet he cannot give us his Pilgrim’s Progress — that sweetest of all prose poems, — without continually making us feel and say, ‘Why, this man is a living Bible!’ Prick him anywhere; and you will find that his blood is Bibline, the very essence of the Bible flows from him. He cannot speak without quoting a text, for his; soul is full of the Word of God.”

In the compilation of the illustrative extracts for *The Treasury of David*, it was from lack of time rather than from personal inability that Mr. Spurgeon was glad to avail himself of the assistance of a few friends, whose help he gratefully acknowledged in the Prefaces to the various volumes as they were issued. One of these references will serve as a specimen of the whole, and at the same time it will indicate to careful readers the heavy labor which had been undertaken, and the  
conscientiousness with which it was being performed. In the Introduction to Vol. 3., Mr. Spurgeon wrote — ” ‘Art is long, and life is short,’ hence I found myself unequal to the unaided accomplishment of my task, and I have had to call in the aid of my excellent friend, Mr. Gracey, the accomplished classical tutor of the Pastors’ College, to assist me in the work of winnowing the enormous heaps of Latin comments. Huge folios, full of dreary word-spinning, yield here and there some little material for thought; and this, I trust, will be valuable enough to my readers to repay my coadjutor and myself for our pains. For the selection of extracts, I alone am responsible” for the accuracy of the translations, we are jointly accountable. The reader will note that, not without much expense of money, as well as toil, he has here furnished to his hand the pith of Venema, Le Blanc, Lorinus, Gerhohus, Musculus, Martin Geier, Mollerus, and Simon de Muis; with occasional notes from Vitringa, Jansenius, Savonarola, Vatablus, Turrecremata, Marloratus, Palanterius, Theodoret, and others, as they were judged worthy of insertion. I can truly say that I have never flinched from a difficulty, or spared exertion, in order to make the work as complete as; it lay in my power to render it, either by my own endeavors or the help of others.”

Perhaps, among all Mr. Spurgeon’s published works, the one that gives the best idea of his familiarity with the whole range of expository literature, is his unpretentious half-crown volume, issued under the unattractive title, Commenting and Commentaries. The book has long since been accepted as a most reliable standard of appeal, and its commendations and valuations are frequently quoted in catalogues of theological works. The purpose of the volume, and the labor necessary for its completion, are thus described by its author —

“Divines who have studied the Scriptures have left us great stores of holy thought which we do well to use. Their expositions can never be a substitute for our own meditations; but, as water poured down a dry pump often starts it working to bring up water of its own, so suggestive reading set the mind in motion on its, own account. Here, however, is the difficulty. Students do not find it easy to choose which works to buy, and their slender stores are often wasted on books of a comparatively worthless kind. If I can save a poor man from spending his money for that which is not bread, or, by directing a brother to a good book, may enable him to dig deeper into the mines of truth, I shall be well repaid. For this purpose I have toiled, and read much, and passed under review some three or four thousand volumes. From these I have compiled my catalogue, rejecting many, yet making a very varied selection. Though I have carefully used such judgment as I possess, I have doubtless made many errors; I shall certainly find very few who will agree with all my criticisms, and s6me persons may be angry at my remarks. I have, however, done my best, and, with as much impartiality as I can command, I have nothing extenuated nor set down aught in malice. He who finds fault will do well to execute the work in better style; only let him remember that he will have my heifer to plough with, and therefore ought in all reason to excel me. I have used a degree of pleasantry in my remarks on the Commentaries, for a catalogue is a dry affair’, and, as much for my own sake as for that of my readers, I have indulged the mirthful vein here and there. For this, I hope I shall escape censure, even if I do not win commendation. Few can conceive the amount of toil which this compilation has involved, both to myself and my industrious amanuensis, Mr. J. L. Keys. In almost every case, the books have been actually examined by myself, and my opinion, ‘whatever it may be worth, is an original one. A complete list of all comments has not been attempted. Numbers of volumes have been left out because they were not easily obtainable, or were judged to be worthless, although some of both these classes have been admitted as specimens, or as warnings;. Latin authors are not inserted, because few can procure them, and fewer still cart read them with ease. We are not, however, ignorant of their value. The writers on the Prophetical Books have completely mastered us; and, after almost completing a full list, we could not in our conscience believe that a tithe of them would yield to the student anything but bewilderment, and therefore we reduced the number to small dimensions. We reverence the teaching of the prophets, and the Apocalypse; but for many of the professed expounders of those inspired Books, we entertain another feeling.”

Some. of the readers of Mr. Spurgeon’s sermons and other works, noticing how seldom he inserted classical quotations, or referred to the language, in which the Scriptures-; were written, may have imagined that he was not acquainted with those treasures of wisdom and knowledge. The real reason for the omission can be gathered from his warning words to his students in his lecture on “Commenting”— “Avoid all pedantry. A pedant, who is continually quoting Ambrose and Jerome, Piscator and OEcolampadius, in order to show what a copious reader he has been, is usually a dealer in small wares, and quotes only what others have. quoted before him; but he who can give you the result and outcome of very extensive reading, without sounding a trumpet before him, is the really learned man. As a general rule, it may be observed that ‘those gentlemen who know the least Greek are the most sure to air their rags of learning in the pulpit; they miss no chance of saying, ‘ The Greek is so-and-so.’ It makes a man an inch and a-half taller, by a foolometer, if he constantly lets fall bits of Greek and Hebrew, and even tells the people the tense of the verb and the case of the noun, as I have known some do. Those who have no learning usually make a point of displaying the pegs on which learning ought to hang. Brethren, the whole process of interpretation is to be carried on in your stud)’; you ;are not to show your congregation the process, but to give them the result; like a good cook, who would never think of bringing up dishes, and pans, and rolling-pin, and spice-box into the dining-room, but without ostentation sends up the feast.”

In the volume of lectures to students, on The Art of Illustration,, the President incidentally indicated his wide acquaintance with all kinds of literature from which anecdotes, illustrations, emblems, metaphors, and similes might be culled. The following extract shows how Mr. Spurgeon turned an illustration used by Henry Ward Beecher to quite a different purpose from the one intended by the eminent American preacher —

“When a critical adversary attack,; our metaphors, he generally makes short work of them. To friendly minds, images are arguments; but to opponents, they are opportunities for attack; the enemy climbs up by the window. Comparisons are swords, with two edges, which cut both ways; and, frequently, what seems a sharp and telling illustration may be wittily turned against you, so as to cause a laugh at you expense; therefore, do not rely upon your metaphors and parables. Even a second-rate man may defend himself from a superior mind if he can dexterous}j; turn his assailant’,; gun upon himself. Here is an instance which concerns myself, and I give it for that reason, since these lectures have all along been autobiographical. It is a cutting from one of our religious papers — ‘Mr. Beecher has been neatly tripped up in *The Sword and the Trowel* In his Lectures on Preaching, he asserts that Mr. Spurgeon has succeeded “in spite of his Calvinism ;” adding the remark that “the camel does not travel any better, nor is it any more useful, because of the hump on its back.” The illustration is not a felicitous one, for Mr. Spurgeon thus retorts ...... Naturalists assure us that the camel’s hump is of great importance in the eyes of the Arabs, who judge of the condition of their beasts by the size, shape, and firmness of their humps. The camel feeds upon his hump when he traverses the wilderness, so that in proportion as the animal travels over the sandy wastes;, and suffers from privation and fatigue, the mass diminishes; and he is not fit for a long journey till. the hump has regained its usual proportions. Calvinism, then, is the spiritual meat which enables a man to labor on in the ways; of Christian service; and, though ridiculed as a hump by those who are only lookers-on, those who traverse the weary paths of a wilderness experience know too well its value to be willing to part with it, even if a Beecher’s splendid talents could be given in exchange.’ —

The twenty-eight volumes of *The Sword and the Trowel*, from 1865 to 1892, contain notices of many thousands of books that the beloved Editor either read through, or examined sufficiently to be able to write reviews of them. He also read many that he did not review, for he was well aware that a, unfavorable notice in his; magazine would help to advertise erroneous teaching, and he thought the wiser course was to ignore such works altogether. His usual method of dealing with a thoroughly bad book, — either morally or doctrinally, — was to tear it into little pieces too small to do harm to anyone, or to commit it bodily to the flames. This was the sentence executed upon many volumes that cast doubt upon the Divinity of our Lord, the efficacy of His atoning sacrifice, or the inspiration of the Scriptures, though some works of that kind were allowed to remain as evidences of the character of the writings of some of the religious leaders of the day. In one notable instance, a volume by a very prominent Baptist minister — with whom Mr. Spurgeon was personally friendly, but from whom he was widely separated theologically, — was adversely criticized with considerable severity. Before publishing the notice the Editor sent a proof of it to the author of (he book, and ‘then, at his urgent request, omitted it from the magazine. On the other hand, publishers and writers have frequently testified that a commendation in *The Sword and the Trowel* has been the means of selling a whole edition, or of materially helping to ensure the success of their works, while all who are well acquainted with the magazine are fully aware of the unique character of the Editor’s “Notices of Books.”

Even on his holiday trips to Mentone, Mr. Spurgeon was always; well supplied with material for reading, for not only did he take large quantities of books with him, but many others were sent out to him during the time of his enforced absence from home. He generally took care, in making his selection for this purpose, to include some. biographies, and one or two of his favorite Puritans, such as Manton or Brooks.  
On one occasion, there seemed to be some little likelihood of his literary luggage being confiscated by the French officials. It may be that they were specially suspicious, at that time, because the ex-Empress Eugenie had crossed the Channel by ‘the same steamer, and they could not tell how much Imperialistic literature, was being smuggled into the Republic. Although they could find nothing of a contraband nature, they carefully examine, d several volumes of the dear Pastor’s own works which were intended as presents for friends, and others which had been sent to him for review; but, finding nothing to which they could object, they at last appended the mystic mark which gave free admission to all that the huge portmanteau contained.

Mr. Spurgeon was a very quick reader, but the rapidity of his; glance at the did not interfere with the completeness of his acquaintance with its contents-page,

He could read from cover to cover of a large octavo or folio volume in the course of a very short space of time, and he would thus become perfectly familiar with all that it contained. Dr. William Wright, the late Editorial Superintendent of the British and Foreign Bible Society, gave a remarkable instance of this combination of speed and accuracy, as well as a notable testimony to Mr. Spurgeon’s literary ability, in the reminiscences which he wrote for The British Weekly in February, 1892. In the course of a lengthy article, Dr. Wright said — ” Mr. Spurgeon visited Belfast in 1858. I was then preparing to enter College, with a hankering after the Indian Civil Service. Mr. Spurgeon preached in Dr. Cooke’s church. He singled me out, — as I thought, — and spoke to me as if no one else was present. There was no thrumming of theology, and no pious posing; but a clear, direct, hot, living, personal appeal that dare not be resisted — Fifteen years later, I went to the Tabernacle, on my way home from Damascus. The same straightforward Englishman was; preaching the same straightforward gospel in all its fullness, and without any apology for its severity. After the service, I walked into the vestry’ without being announced. He had not seen me for ten years, but he recognized me in the crowd without a moment’s hesitation. He ran over a list of the books on Syria and Palestine, stating the merits of each, and ended by saying, ‘ I suppose Thomson’s The Land and the Book is still the best on the manners and customs;.’ He had the whole literature of the Holy Land at his finger-ends.  
“When I came to be Mr. Spurgeon’s near neighbor, I found that his knowledge of all literature was wonderful. His power of reading was perhaps never equaled. He would sit down to five or six large books, and master them at one sitting. He sat with his left hand fiat on the page at the left side of the book, and pushing his right hand up the page on the right side until the page projected a little, he turned it over with his; finger, and proceeded to the next page. He took in the contents almost at a glance, reading by sentences as others read by words, and his memory never failed him as to what he read. He made a point of reading half-a-dozen of the hardest books every week, as he wished to rub his mind up against the strongest minds’ and there was no skipping. I several times had an opportunity of testing the thoroughness of his reading, and I never found him at fault.

“Drummond’s Natural Law in the Spiritual World reached him and me about the same time. I called on Mr. Spurgeon when he was fresh from a perusal of the book. It was then unknown to fame, and he had read it with five or six other books. At tea, we were speaking of the freshness of the illustrations, and the peculiarity o£ the doctrines taught; when a third party challenged Mr. Spurgeon’s recollection of certain points. Mr. Spurgeon thereupon quoted a whole page to show that Drummond spoke of the natural and spiritual laws being identical, and another important page to show how the book erred by defect. On my return home, I looked over the. passages quoted, and I believe he scarcely missed a word in the repetition. His power of swift and effective reading was one of the greatest of his many talents —

“I was at first surprised to find Mr. Spurgeon consulting both the Hebrew and Greek texts. ‘They say,’ said he, ‘that I am ignorant and unlearned. Well, let them say it; and in everything, by my ignorance, and by my knowledge, let God be glorified.’

“His exegesis was seldom wrong. He spared no pains to be sure of the exact meaning of his text. On one occasion, he was going to preach on the subject of the olive tree; and he sent his secretary to the keeper of the Natural History Department of the British Museum, with a series of questions regarding the peculiarities of the tree. Mr. Carruthers, the keeper, was so much interested in the enquiry ‘that he wrote out several pages for Mr. Spurgeon; but when the sermon came to be preached, the information had been passed through the crucible of Mr. Spurgeon’s mind, and came forth in a few Bunyanesque sentences — Sometimes, when I left him on Saturday evening, he did not know either of his texts for Sunday. But he had a well-stored mind; and when he saw his lines of thought, a few catchwords on a half-sheet of notepaper sufficed. Before we parted, he used to offer up a short prayer which was an inspiration to both of us.

“Mr. Spurgeon had a marvelous combination of gifts which contributed to his greatness. A voice that you heard with pleasure, and could not help hearing. A mind that absorbed all knowledge — whether from books or nature — that came within its range. An eye that tool, in a wide angle, and saw everything within view. A memory that he treated with confidence, and that never disappointed him. A great heart, on fire with the love of God and the love of souls. And then he showed a practical common sense in doing things, both sacred and secular, and a singleness of aim, joined with transparent honesty, that ensured the confidence of all who knew him. You could not help loving him if you came within his spell.”

On two occasions, Dr. J. Stanford Holme wrote, specially for Transatlantic readers, articles upon Mr. Spurgeon’s printed sermons and other works, in which he endeavored to trace some of the sources of the preacher’s literary and spiritual power. The first critique was published in the American edition of The Christian Herald, in January, 1879. In that paper, Dr. Stanford Holme wrote —

“It is a fact worthy of especial notice that the sermons of Mr. Spurgeon have had a circulation in this country entirely without precedent. Of the American edition of his sermons, there have been sold not less than 500,000 volumes. And when, to this vast number, we add the almost innumerable republications of single sermons in the transient periodicals of the day, it is safe to say that no other preacher has had so extensive at hearing in America as Charles H. Spurgeon.

“Many of the causes of the wonderful popularity of this distinguished preacher are not difficult to discover. In freshness and vigor of thought, in simplicity and purity of language, in grasp of gospel truth, and in tact and force in its presentation, he is perhaps without a peer in the pulpit.

“When, in early life, Mr. Spurgeon commenced his ministrations in the New Park Street Chapel, in London, he quickly filled the old house to overflowing. Soon, he attracted the attention of all England. But he was regarded by many as at brilliant meteor that would soon fade away. Yet Mr. Spurgeon is, today, a vastly more efficient and even a more brilliant preacher than he was twenty years ago. He continues to grow in brilliancy as well as in efficiency year by year. No one can yet point to the slightest indication of exhaustion in either his faculties or his resources.

“This, doubtless, is attributable, in a measure, to his industry and welldirected application, as well as to natural ability and great personal piety. But Mr. Spurgeon’s peculiar views of the Word of God, and his manner of preparation for the pulpit, also tend in no small degree to secure the inexhaustible variety which so strikingly characterizes his sermons. It is not his manner to spin his web out of himself. The resources from which he draws are not measured by the. strength and the store of his own faculties, but rather by the infinite fullness of the Divine Word.

He never preaches from a topic. He always has a text. His text is not a mere motto, but in it he finds his sermon. He uses his text with as much apparent reverence and appreciation as if those few words were the only words that God had ever spoken. The text is the germ which furnishes the life, the spirit, and the substance of the discourse. Every sermon has the peculiar flavor, and fragrance, and color of the Divine seed-truth of which it is the growth. Thus, as the Bible is a storehouse of seed-truths, inexhaustible and of infinite variety, so Mr. Spurgeon’s sermons are never alike. Every seed yields its fruit after its kind. If he brings you up again and again to the same old truths, it is always on a different side, or in a new light, or with new surroundings.

“A very strong confirmation of this view has been afforded to the author in the preparation of an edition of Mr. Spurgeon’s works. In making up the index of subjects, it was necessary to go carefully through the entire fourteen volumes, page by page, and to note the different topics discussed, and then to arrange them in alphabetical order. When. this work was finished, such was the wonderful variety of subject, of thought, and of illustration, that, in many thousands of references, no

two subject, or thoughts, or illustrations, were found exactly to correspond. The preacher is discussing essentially the same familiar truths over and over again. He is presenting the same great Savior to lost sinners, with what might seem slavish fidelity to the spirit and even to the letter of the written Word. And yet his setting forth of truth, his shades of thought, and his modes of illustration, always arrange themselves in new forms and colors with well-nigh the endless variety of the combinations and tints of the clouds at the setting of the sun.

“It is not surprising, therefore, that sermons so varied, fresh, and Evangelical, should have so large a circulation in this country, nor that a newspaper, one of the special attractions of which is the weekly sermon of Mr. Spurgeon, should have the reception which is already accorded to The Christian Herald.”

Dr. Stanford Holme’s second article was published in The New York Homiletic Monthly, February, 1882. An extract from it will show in what esteem Mr. Spurgeon’s magnum opus was held by the writer —

“It is with no little satisfaction that I have seen the announcement of an American edition of Mr. Spurgeon’s Treasury of David. It is not only a most valuable Commentary on the Psalms for general use, but I regard it as the most important homiletic work of the age.

“Mr. Spurgeor, is a good Hebrew scholar. He is a man of deep practical piety. He has a fine poetic taste, a wonderful insight into the depths of the human heart, and a quaintness of expression, and a vigor and vivacity of style, that have the effect of genuine wit in giving point and life to his expressions.

“These, it will be acknowledged, form a rare combination o£ qualifications for an expositor of the Book of Psalms. But, to these, Mr. Spurgeon adds two other especial qualifications for the work, still more rare and valuable. His appreciation of and reverence for the inspired Word are among the most characteristic and remarkable features of the man. The Word of God is to him a thing of life and power, ‘and sharper than any two-edged sword.’ He sees God in the very words of the Bible. Like the bush on Horeb, a chapter, or a single verse, at times, glows with celestial splendor, and, to use his own words, ‘ Hundreds of times have I as surely felt the presence of God, in the page of Scripture, as ever Elijah did when he heard the Lord speaking in a still small voice.’ He seems never to be satisfied, in his study of the Scriptures, till every single verse is thus verified by the Spirit, and becomes to him a living word.

“Another special qualification of Mr. Spurgeon for this work, not less important and extraordinary, is a desire that knows no bounds — a passion — to help others preach that gospel of ‘which he himself would seem to be the greatest living herald. When Sir Joshua Reynolds, who was regarded as the greatest painter of his time, scraped off the paint from some of ‘he works of Titian and Da Vinci, in order that he might find out the secret of their wonderful skill in the mixing and blending of colors, he refused to make known his discoveries to his pupils. As far as he could, he threw down the ladder by which he had himself attained to greatness. Mr. Spurgeon is a man of another spirit. Himself one of the greatest of living preachers, and excelled by few of former ages, he does all he can to reveal the secrets of his power to the world, and, if possible, to make others greater than himself; and that which, in our estimation, *makes The Treasury of David* of such value to a minister is, that its spirit and. peculiar construction introduce us, as witnesses, into Mr. Spurgeon’s workshop, and enable us to see more clearly his method and manner of preparation for the pulpit than we can in his printed discourses, or even in his lectures to his students. Here we may examine sermons in all stages of development, — here we may learn how sermons grow. Indeed, a careful study of The Treasury of David reveals the whole secret of the strength of this Samson of the pulpit. The work might with propriety be called The Treasury of David, and the Arcanum of Spurgeon.

Many other tributes to Mr. Spurgeon’s literary ability and achievements have been borne, both during his lifetime and since his home-going. One of the most representative and comprehensive of these testimonies was given by Dr. James Stalker a.t the unveiling of the C. H. Spurgeon Memorial, at the Stockwell Orphanage, on June 20, 1894. After speaking of the loving esteem in which, in common with the great bulk of his fellow-countrymen, he held Mr. Spurgeon, Dr. Stalker said —

“Perhaps you will allow me to say a word or two about his power as a writer, — his power to express himself in writing. In this democratic age, when sympathy with the masses is on everyone’s lips, it often see. ms to me wonderful that the power of communicating with the multitude is so rare. We have scores of ministers who are ambitious of writing for the world of the cultivated; but a book frankly and successfully addressing the average man, in language which he can understand, is one. of the rarest products of the press. It really requires very exceptional power. It requires knowledge of human nature, and knowledge of life. It requires common sense; it requires wit and humor; and it requires command of simple and powerful Saxon.  
“Whatever the requirements may be, Mr. Spurgeon had them in an unexampled degree, To find his match in this respect, you have, I think, in England,, to go back to John Bunyan. Luther is the unapproachable master in this department, and I am not surprised to see so many pictures of Luther, on the walls to-day, collected by Mr. Spurgeon, because there’, is the closest resemblance between the two men. It is wonderful, in Luther’s life, to find how he cultivate, d this power. When he was at the height of his fame, we find him writing to Nuremberg, that he might have sent to him all the chap-books, songs, and children’s stories that could be found, that he might exercise himself in simplicity of expression. F10 He said himself that he watched the peasant in the field, the mother in the home, and the boys on the street, that he might learn to speak and to write. He translated AEsop’s Fables, and made a large collection of popular proverbs with his own hands. This reminds us of Mr. Spurgeon, who did the same thing on a still larger scale in his excellent books called The Salt-cellars. And I am not surprised that Mr. Thomas Spurgeon referred to John Ploughman’s Talk, because, in my opinion, that is a collection of wit and wisdom that is certain of immortality among the popular classics of England. But it was into the sermons that, year after year, he poured without stint; all the resources of his genius, and these fitted the mind and the heart of the multitude of the Anglo-Saxon race as no writings of our day have even approached doing.

“But I should like to be allowed to say that while he thus addressed himself so frankly to. the common men, he had far more learning than was generally understood. I do not know whether he often refused the degree which you, Dr. Spurgeon, so much adorn. I suppose he did; but I am sure of this, — that he earned the degree of a doctor of divinity over an,5. over again. For many years, it has been my wont, week after week, every season, to read over his Commentary on the Psalms along with the best and most learned Commentaries in existence on this subject. That is the best test, and the severest test, to which a minister can put the writings of any author, and Mr. Spurgeon stands the test well. Not only do you everywhere feel the presence of a vigorous and vigilant mind, and a heart in thorough sympathy with the spirit of the Psalms, but I wish to say that I have often been perfectly astonished to observe how, without any parade of learning, he shows himself to be thoroughly acquainted with the results of the most advanced, scholarship; and the truth is, that there is scarcely a point in the Psalms of real importance, — scarcely a point upon which scholarship can give us anything of real importance, — as to which there are not sufficient hints to the intelligent reader in Mr. Spurgeon’s work.”

To give anything like an approximate idea of the extent of Mr. Spurgeon’s reading during’ his thirty-eight years ministry in London, it would be necessary to make a list of nearly all the principal theological and biographical works published during that period, and to add to it a large portion of the other standard literature of the present and previous centuries, and almost the whole of the volumes issued by the great divine of the Puritan period. The number and value of Mr. Spurgeon’s own copies of the writings of those masters of theology are probably unique for a private library, and he was always on the look-out for any that he did not possess, so that he might make his collection as complete as possible. Booksellers’ catalogues, in which they were mentioned, were always examined quickly; and an order for the missing volumes that might be on sale was at once sent, or, more probably, a messenger was despatched to make sure of getting them. This promptness on the Pastor’s part enabled him often to secure treasures which other collectors would have been glad to obtain. In some instances, they endeavored to persuade him to relinquish his bargain in their favor; one gentleman induced Dr. McLaren to write this letter, on his behalf, to Mr. Spurgeon —

“Manchester,  
“7, 5, ‘85.  
“My Dear Friend,

“A friend of mine is very wishful to get a book, which you unwittingly took out of his mouth from some catalogue. I enclose copy of title. The reason for his special desire to get it is that he is descended from the Fleetwoods to whom it is dedicated, and that, somehow or other, it proves some point of family history in which he and his people are much interested. If you would allow him to purchase it of you at its value, whatever that may be, he would be very much obliged, and would undertake that, if ever he heard of another copy, you should have it with many thanks. Seeing his anxiety to have the book, I offered to ask you if you would part with it.  
“I hope you are. able for your work, and are walking in the light. It is sorely shadowed for me, and it is hard to sing or even to say in a darkened cage.

“I am,  
“My dear friend,  
“Yours faithfully,

“ALEXR. MCLAREN.”

The following is the title of the volume, which was dedicated to Sir William Fleetwood, ,Sir George Fleetwood, and “Lord Fleetwood, Lieutenant General of the whole army in England and Scotland” when Oliver Cromwell was Lord Protector ....

*Old Jacob’s Altar newly repaired ; or, the Saint’s Triangle of Dangers, Deliverances, and Duties, personal, and Nationa1, practically improved in many Particulars, seasonable and experimental, Being the Answer of his own Heart to God, for eminent Preservations; humbly recommended, by way of Teaching, unto all; and, as a special Remembrancer to /he Ransomed of the Lord, to awaken in them a sense of rich mercy; that they may sing the song of Moses .for temporal, and the song of the Lamb, for spiritual Deliverances ; and, to provoke them to Love, and good works;* BY NATANEEL WHITING, *Mr of Arts, and Minister of the Gospel, at Aldwinckle. London Printed by R. T. for Nathaneel Ekins, and are to be sold at his Shop, at the Signe of the Gunne, in, S. Paul’s Church-yard, 1659*.

Mr. Spurgeon explained to Dr. McLaren his reasons for wishing to retain the volume, and received, in reply, a post card bearing this message confirming his own decision “I would not part with it either, if I were in your place. — A. MCLAREN.”

The next year, Mr. Spurgeon and Dr. Angus saw, in a catalogue, the particulars concerning a second-hand volume which each of them desired to possess. An exact copy of the entry will show the kind of book for which the Pastor was always on the look-out —

“1040 — Turner (J.) Choice Experiences of the kind dealings of

God before, in, and after Conversions, laid clown in Six General Heads;, together with some brief Observations upon the same, etc., 1653. — Allen (W., General in Ireland) Captive taken front the Strong; or a true relation of the,. gratious release of Deborah Huish front the Power of the Tempter, etc., 1658.-The Just Man’s Defence, or the Royal Conquest; being the declaration of the judgment of JAMES ARMINIUS of Leyden, concerning the principall points of Religion before the STATES OF HOLLAND and WESTFRIEZLAND, translated by TOBIAS CONYERS, of Peter House, Cambridge, 1657. — Faith and Practice of Thirty Congregations, gathered according to the Primitive Pattern, etc, 1651 — etc., in a thick vol, sm. 8vo, old binding, 16s.”

Mr. Spurgeon secured the volume; and Dr. Angus, on finding this out, wrote to him as follows —  
“College, Regent’s Park,  
“March 22, 1886.  
“My Dear Friend,

“You and I are often of a mind and very pleasant it is. But now and then it works inconvenience. You ordered, on Saturday, a book in Bull and Auvache’s list, which I ordered on Saturday, too; but I was behind you — Turner’s Choice Experiences, etc. Do you want them all?’ I especially want (1) Faith and Practice of Thirty Congregations, and (2) Turner, for the sake of what I expect is there, — Spilsberie’s recommendations.

“If you do not want both these, I will take one or both; and will leave you ‘The Captive’ and ‘The Judgment of Arminius, which last ought to have some value, though not quite sound, I suspect. I will take what you can spare, and give you what you ask for them. If you wish to keep them all, I will not grumble, as it is all ‘ in the family.’ With all best wishes,

“Yours very truly,  
“J. ANGUS.’

In this instance, it appears that Mr. Spurgeon gave up his purchase, as Dr. Angus was so anxious to obtain some of the treatises bound up in the one volume, and it seemed a pity to separate them.

Mr. Spurgeon not only possessed a large number of volumes by Puritan writers, but he was fully conversant with their comments and, from the earliest days of the Pastors’ College, he sought to interest his students in them. He also helped them to purchase considerable quantities of the new editions issued by Mr. Nichol, Messrs. Nisbet and Co., and other publishers. In later years, the President prepared a series of lectures on several of the principal Puritan divines, and delivered them at the College, accompanying the sketches of their lives with extracts from their works, thus enabling the brethren to become acquainted with his opinions of their comparative merits, and of the characteristics of their style. The lectures have not yet been published; but just a hint as to the labor involved in compiling them, and some idea of the way in which the writers were compared and contrasted, may be gathered from the Preface to one of Mr. Spurgeon’s smaller volumes, *Illustrations and Meditations or, Flowers From a Puritan’s Garden*,’ Distilled and Dispensed by C. H. Spurgeon; in which he wrote

“While commenting upon the one hundred and nineteenth Psalm, I was brought into most intimate communion with Thomas Manton, who hits discoursed upon that marvelous portion of Scripture with great fulness and power. I have come to know him so well that I could pick him out from among a thousand divines if he were again to put on his portly form, and display among modern men that countenance wherein was ‘a great mixture of majesty and meekness.’ His works occupy twenty-two volumes in the modern reprint ; — a mighty mountain of sound theology. They mostly consist of sermons; but what sermons! They are not so sparkling as those of Henry Smith, nor so profound as those of Owen, nor so rhetorical ,is those of Howe, nor so pithy as those of Watson, nor so fascinating as those of Brooks; and yet they are second to none of these. For solid, sensible instruction, forcibly delivered, they cannot be surpassed. Manton is not brilliant, but he is always clear he is not oratorical but he is powerful; he is not striking, but he is deep. There is not a poor discourse in the whole collection they are evenly good, constantly excellent. Ministers who do not know Manton need not wonder if they are themselves unknown. “Inasmuch as Manton used but few figures and illustrations, it came into my head to note them all, for 1 felt sure that they would be very natural and forcible. I thought it worth while to go though volume after volume, and mark the metaphors’ and then I resolved to complete the task by culling the best figures out of the whole of Manton,’s works. Thus my communing with the great Puritan ends in my clearing his house, of all his pictures, and hanging them up in new frames of my own. As I leave his right to them unquestioned and unconcealed, I do not rob him; the rather, I increase his influence by giving him another opportunity of speaking for his Lord and Master. One kind of work leads on to another, and labor is lightened by being diversified, had it not been for The Treasury of David, I might not have been found spending so much time among the metaphors of Manton.”

To successive generations of students, Mr. Spurgeon read Dr. James Hamilton’s four’ volumes of Christian Classes. It was a treat to the brethren to hear such a work read by one who could so thoroughly appreciate it, but they probably enjoyed even more the comments and criticisms upon the various writers and their works with which the readings were interspersed. It was rarely indeed that the President found any mention of an author with whose writings he was not thoroughly familiar. He also constantly gave the students helpful hints, garnered from his own experience, with regard to, the books likely to be most useful to them, both during their College course and afterwards when settled in the ministry or in the foreign mission field. The informal gatherings under “The Question Oak” at “Westwood” afforded many opportunities for the brethren to ascertain Mr. Spurgeon’s opinions upon literary matters in general, and especially to learn from him all that they could concerning the books which most affected them as theological students. One of the questions put to the president was, “Should novel-reading be indulged in by ministers?” His reply was — ”That depends upon what you mean by a novel. The Pilgrim’s Progress and many of the best books we have are novels, in the sense that they are not actual records of fact, though they are absolutely true to Christian experience. Then, again, there are such works as Sir Walter Scott’s; many of them are founded on fact, and are well worth reading as a picture of the people and places he so ably describes, as well as for the style of his writing. Their value lies largely in their historical truth. Some of Charles Dickens’ works are worth reading, although he has given gross caricatures of the religious life of his times. As for the general run of novels now being issued in such shoals, you will probably be wise to leave them alone; few of them would be likely to do you any good, and many of them are morally tainted, or worse.”

At one of the meetings under’ the oak, Mr. Spurgeon told the students that he had read Bunyan’s *Pilgrim’s Progress* at least a hundred times, and that, as a kind of mental relaxation, he had constantly returned to the study of various branches of natural history, and, for a change, he had turned his attention to astronomy, botany, and other sciences. In his published lecture on “Astronomy as a Source of Illustration,” he showed the brethren how all the sciences could be utilized as illustrations of Christian life and work. He also said that he always liked to have a few good biographies handy, so that he could turn to the record of what the Lord had enabled His servants to do in the past. His own collection of the “Lives” of notable individuals was a very extensive one, and in conversation with him it was soon evident that he was fully aware of the main facts in the careers of almost all of them. Indeed, it was impossible to mention anyone who had been eminently useful, or notorious, in the world, and to find that Mr. Spurgeon was ignorant of the man or woman referred to; in most instances, he had made himself more completely acquainted with their histories by giving lectures upon them to his congregation or students, or by writing summaries of their biographies for the benefit of the readers of his magazine.

Pastor W. Williams has preserved, in his Personal Reminiscences of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, the following jottings concerning his beloved President’s allusions to literary matters, which will serve as specimens of the remarks that Mr. Spurgeon frequently made when conversing with his friends — ”’ What books are you reading now?’ he asked me, one day. ‘Carlyle’s French Revolution,’ I answered. ‘Very good; it is a fine work, full of nervous, bracing thought and stirring facts; but I think it cannot be appreciated at its true worth unless simpler histories of France have been read before, beginning it. I would not advise anyone to take Carlyle as a first study. Scott’s Life of Napoleon is a good history. That first Napoleon was a really great man. He had a mind, and no mistake; his successors have been insignificant in comparison.’ ‘You like Boswell’s Johnson, sir, of course.’ ‘Oh, yes! that is the biography; it stands unrivalled, and probably ever will; and I think Lockhart’s Life of Scott and Mrs. Oliphant’s Life of Edward frying come next.  
You’ve not read Pickwick, Williams?’ ‘No, I have not yet.’ ‘Oh, dear! I was going to say I ‘wish I had not, for I should like once more to enjoy it as I did at the first reading. You have a. treat in store. The humor of it is about perfect.’

“The Story of the Nations series greatly interested him. He read Egypt through at least three times, and eagerly took up the others as they came out. It was exceedingly entertaining and instructive to hear him talk about the people and countries with which the volumes deal .... We had several talks, on different occasions, about Shakespeare. He had read all his plays, and some of them many times — Saturdays at ‘ Westwood’ gave me an education in the matter of many choice books, and I seldom came away without one or two. But it was a greater treat still to hear Mr. Spurgeon himself read some charming poem or instructive chapter. I remember, when Miss Havergal’s poems, Under the Surface, were issued, how he reveled in them. The one entitled ‘ From Glory unto Glory’ he read one evening ‘over the tea-cups.’ His eyes sparkled with delight, and filled with tears of joy, as he reached the third and fourth stanzas of that magnificent song.”

On several occasions, Mr. Spurgeon found himself in the company of a number of High Church clergymen, and they were always (greatly surprised to find that the Baptist minister was far more familiar with the works on their side of the controversy than they themselves were. They also discovered that, while he spoke heartily in commendation of all that appeared to him to be Scriptural in the writings of Dr. Pusey, Dr. Neale, Dr. Littledale, Isaac Williams, and other divines of their school of thought, he was able; to give good reasons for not accepting their sacramentarian and sacerdotal theories. The same characteristic is very manifest in his remarks upon the Ritualistic works referred to in his Commenting and Commentaries. Space can only be spared for one fairly representative instance, — Dr. John Mason Neale’s Sermons on the Canticles, Preached in a Religious House, — upon which Mr. Spurgeon thus comments —

“By that highest of High Churchmen, Dr. Neale. These sermons smell of Popery, yet the savor of our Lord’s good ointment cannot be hid. Our Protestantism is not of so questionable a character that we are afraid to do justice to Papists and Anglicans, and therefore, we do not hesitate to say that many a devout thought has come to us while reading these ‘ Sermons by a Priest of the Church of England.’“  
Other people beside theologians often noticed the extensive and varied knowledge that Mr. Spurgeon possessed. On one of his visits; to Mentone, he was in company with art eminent medical man, and, after a while, the conversation drifted round to anatomy, physiology, various diseases to which flesh is heir, and the different modes; of treatment adopted for their removal. The doctor was quite astonished at the completeness of his; companion’s acquaintance with every part of the subject, and he afterwards said — “Mr. Spurgeon is one of the most remarkable men I ever met. He seems to know as much about the human body as any medical man might have done; he would have made a splendid physician.’

Among the Pastor’s hearers at the Tabernacle, or in various seaport towns, many sailors have often been found, listening with intense eagerness; and the men of the sea have often testified that they have never known him make a mistake in his nautical allusions; and, only recently, Revelation James Neil, M.A., who spent twenty years in Palestine, has borne similar witness to the accuracy of Mr. Spurgeon’s descriptions of Bibblical manners and customs, thereby confirming the verdict by Dr. Wright, mentioned in a previous part of the present chapter.

Many of “John P1oughman’s” readers have wondered that he could tell them so much about how “to plough and sow, and reap and mow.” Part of that familiarity with farming affairs;, no doubt, dated back to his early visits to Stambourne, and his walks among the furrows by the side of the godly ploughman, Will Richardson; and part must be attributed to his constant preaching in different parts of the kingdom, and to the opportunities thus afforded of obtaining further information concerning agricultural pursuits; but extensive reading also added to the effectiveness of his references to such matters. Pastor Charles Spurgeon related, in the previous volume of this work, the testimony of a farmer who said that the Pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle knew far more about sheep than he did, though he had been keeping them all his life! The explanation of that fact can probably be found in the President’s observation to his students that, at one time, he had made a special study of sheep and their habits. The library at ‘Westwood” still contains the volume to which Mr. Spurgeon then referred, — an antiquated folio, entitled. A System of Sheep-grazing and Management, as Practiced in Romney Marsh, by DANIEL PRICE (Richard Phillips, Blackfriars). Singularly enough, at a later period, the Pastor’s attention was, through someone’s mistake, again attracted to the same subject. He had written for a number of books on quite a different theme; but, in some unaccountable way, there came, in the place of one of them, a large, octavo volume, entitled Sheep their Breeds, Management, and Diseases, by WILLIAM YOUATT (Simpkin, Marshall, and Co.). Mr. Spurgeon was amused at the blunder, but he kept the book, which still retains traces of having been carefully examined and used by him.

At another time, he had collected all the old herbals he could buy, and he had found much of interest and instruction in them. Topography was also one of the side subjects to which he devoted a portion of his scanty leisure; and, in the course of his; researches upon this subject, he was brought into association with lovers of antiquarian and topographical lore in various parts of the country; and by their kind assistance he was able to make further welcome additions to his already well-stored library. If he was going to preach in a district that was new to him, he usually tried to find out everything of interest in its history, surroundings, manufactures, or products’ and these would, in due course, guide him in his local allusions and illustrations, and materially help to impress his message upon his hearers’ minds and hearts. Everything was made subservient to the one great object he had heft)re him, the glory of God in the salvation of sinners and the extension of the Redeemer’s Kingdom.

CHAPTER 101.

MR. SPURGEON AS A LITERARY MAN (CONTINUED)

A T the time of Mr. Spurgeon’s home-going, he possessed at least 12,000 volumes. The number would have been far larger if he had not given so generously to the libraries of the Pastors’ College and of many of the ministers trained within its walls, and if he had not also, from his abundant stores, so freely enriched other friends His; books almost filled the shelves of two large rooms, — the study and the library; one smaller room, — “the den”; and the vestibule adjoining the study. There are even more volumes at “Westwood” today than there were in 1892; for, while all that belonged to the beloved owner remain just as he left them, many newly-published works have been added to his collection. He knew the proper place and at least the principal contents of nearly every book in his possession; he could have fetched almost any one of them in the dark, and if any had been taken away by a dishonest visitor, he would speedily have missed them. Probably, a great many of his precious treasures did become permanently lost to him through being lent, for all who borrowed from him were not as particular in returning other people’s property as he himself was. Addressing his students, on one occasion, he said —

“I lately met with a statement, by a clergyman, which has very much raised my opinion of human nature; for he declares that he has a personal acquaintance with three gentlemen who have actually returned borrowed umbrellas! I am sorry to say that he moves in a more favored circle than I do, for I have personal acquaintance with several young men who have borrowed books, and never returned them. The orher day, a certain minister, who had lent me five volumes, which! have used for two years or more, wrote to me a note to request the return of three of them. To his surprise, he had them back by the next Parcels’ Delivery, and with them two others, which he had forgotten. I had carefully kept a list of books borrowed, and, therefore, could make a complete return to the owner. I am sure he did not expect their prompt arrival, for he wrote me a letter of mingled astonishment and gratitude; and when I visit  
his study again, I feel sure I shall be welcome to another loan. You know the rhyme which has been written in many a man’s book, —

***“‘If thou art borrowed by a friend,  
Right welcome shall he be  
To read, to study, not to lend,  
But to return to me.  
Not that imparted knowledge doth  
Diminish learning’s store;  
But books, I find, when once they’re lent,  
Return to me no more.’***

“Sir Walter Scott used to say that his friends might be indifferent accountants, but he was sure they were good ‘book-keepers.’”

It Mr. Spurgeon could return to his study, he would have no difficulty in finding his books, for they are still arranged according to the method he long ago adopted. Beginning at the right-hand side of the cupboard in the center of the illustration on the previous page, the volumescommence with Commentaries on Genesis, and continue in consecutive order, through the whole of the long side of the room, to the end of Revelation. Then follow Cyclopaedias of anecdotes, illustrations, and emblems, with dictionaries and other works of reference indispensable to a literary’ man. These books fill up half the end of the study. Then, on the other side of the doorway leading into “the den,” and partly hidden by the revolving bookcase, is a choicely-bound set of the,. Pastor’s sermons. These formed part of the background of one of the latest and best of his photographs that was ever taken, and which is here reproduced.

On the, shelves above and below Mr. Spurgeon’s volumes of sermons, is a large assortment of theological works, sufficiently numerous to overflow to the revolving bookcase, which also contains biographies and miscellaneous literature for general reading. — At the opposite end of the room, on the left-hand side of the cupboard shown in the illustration on page 287, are more theological works, somewhat less modern than those mentioned on the previous page.

Several thousands of the books that belonged to Mr. Spurgeon occupied the spacious shelves in the library here represented. In Vol. 2, one view of this room was given; by comparing it with the above illustration, the whole can be seen. The volumes here preserved, like those in the study, are also arranged in sections. Beginning at the side nearest the windows, one whole bay’ is filled with works on natural history and the sciences; the next is devoted to records; of missions, travel,;, and adventures; then follow biographies, which require almost the whole of the space in the two wide sets of shelves, the remainder being allotted to books on Bible lands. The shelves visible on the left-hand side of the picture in Vol. II. are filled with poetry and the hymnals used in the compilation of Our Own Hymn Book, with later additions, and some sermonic and other literature not usually needed in the study. Beyond the doorway, bound volumes of periodicals, both for juveniles and adults, and more general literature, with a large store of books of proverbs and anecdotes, need several sets of shelves; next follow historical and denominational works, the topographical books described on page 286, a great number of old folios, mostly the writings of Latin authors; and last, but certainly not least, more than a whole bay is required for the American and other reprints of Mr. Spurgeon’s sermons and other works, and the translations of them into various foreign languages. He was never able. to procure anything like a complete set of his writings as reproduced!in other tongues, and the number of translations has been greatly increased since his home-going; but those now at “Westwood” include Arabic, Armenian, Bengali, Bulgarian, Castilian (for the Argentine Republic), Chinese, Congo, Czech, Danish, Dutch, Esthonian, French, Gaelic, German, Hindi, Hungarian, Italian, Japanese, Kaffir, Karen, Lettish, Maori, Norwegian, Polish, Russian, Servian, Spanish, Swedish, Syriac, Tamil, Telugu, Urdu Welsh, with sermons in Moon’s and Braille type for the blind, making, with the dear preacher’s mother-tongue, nearly forty languages in which he continues, from the printed page, to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ. The text most commonly used concerning him is, “He’. being dead yet speaketh.” Dr. Newman Hall, referring recently to Mr. Spurgeon, gave it new rendering to that passage -”Then, as he yet speaketh, he is not dead.” Verily, it is so.

The foregoing account of the arrangement of Mr. Spurgeon’s books is necessarily incomplete, and many hundreds of his highly-valued volumes may thus have escaped classification; but it gives a general idea of the books he owned, and loved, and used, and with which he was so well acquainted that he was prepared to discuss their contents with any visitor who called to see him.

On removing to “Westwood,” and fitting up with oak bookshelves two sides of the room used by the former occupants of the house as a drawingroom, Mr. Spurgeon found that the space at his disposal proved too large even for the thousands of books which had overtaxed the accommodation at “Helensburgh House.” The Pastor therefore purchased many works which he had long desired to possess, and added them to his previous store; and, as he had still to say, “Yet there is room,” he hit upon an ingenious expedient for temporarily filling the empty shelves at the top of the library and study. He had a number of dummy volumes made by his bookbinder, and had some of them lettered to correspond with the sets of books already in his possession, such as Carlyle’s Works, Macaulay’s Works, Alison’s History of Europe, Hume’s History of England, The Homilist, etc. In other cases, the titles were reversed; as, for instance, Job on Caryl, made to stand not far from Caryl on Job. The lettering of some of the large sets of dummies was amusing. Anyone who handled the volumes entitled Wretched Scandals, by the Talkers’ Sisters, would find that there was nothing in them! Similar sets bore the titles, Mischief by Boys, Windows Ventilated by Stone, Gunpowder Magazine by Plumstead, and Padlock on the Understanding. But it was upon the names of the single volumes that the Pastor exercised the greatest ingenuity. He often referred to the meaning of Mrs. Spurgeon’s Christian name, Susannah, a lily, and associated it with Shushar, so it was not surprising that one of the titles he used was Lilies of Shushan, while the name of Mrs. Spurgeon’s companion suggested Thorn on Roses. The Pastor’s two secretaries were represented by the volumes entitled Mysteries Opened by J. L. Heys, and The Character of William the Conqueror, by Harrald. The tutors and students of the Pastor’s College were represented by the fallowing and other titles — Joseph, Samuel, and Abraham, corrected by G. Rogers; Sublime and Beautiful, by D, Gracey, Goodly Pearls, by Marchant; Eastward Ho! by A. G. Brown,’ Cuff on the Head; Knell on Death ; Carter on the Road; Cricket on the Green, by Balls; Over the Stream, by Bridge ; Hook and I; Tydeman on Cleanliness; Hammer and Tongs, by Smith; Aches and Pains, by Feltham (felt ‘em); Country Retreats, by Greenwood, Grindery), in all its Branches, by Miller; Do it again, by Dunnett (done it); Standing, Swift, Finch, and another Bird,’ and Flight on the Wings of a Dove.

The internationa1 or political allusions included Bull on Bragging, and Jonathan on Exaggeration (placed side by side.); Bulls, by Patrick; The Art of Wasting Time, by an Irish Member ; The Elevation of Parliament, by Guido Faux ; and Benjamin Disraeli on Honesty. The temperance titles were, Rags and Ruin, by a Brewer, Brains Addled by John Barleycorn; and Madness, by L. L. Whiskey; while among the..amusing descriptions might have been found Purchase of Land, by L. S. D.; Hints ,on Honey Pots, by A. B.; The Composition of Milk, by a Dealer, Weaver’s Meditations among the Looms, Gilpin on Riding Horses,. Absalom on the Mule ; Balaam on the Donkey; Tick on Sheep; Skid on the Wheel; Cat on Hot Bricks; Pancakes on Shrove Tuesday ; Pilgrim’s Progress hindered by a Bunyan (bunion) ; Lectures to my Servants, by a Shrew,’ and Slicking up for One’s Sell, by a Pole.

Before very long, the number of books increased at such a rapid rate that, instead of dummies being required to fill vacant shelves, real and substantial volumes were standing or lying about, in various directions, because there was no proper place available for them. It was then decided that Mr. Spurgeon must have the use of the bookshelves in the vestibule between the hall and the study, which up to that time had been employed as the depot and packing-room for the works distributed in connection with Mrs. Spurgeon’s Book Fund. The accompanying illustration, which shows only about a quarter of the space available for books, gives a good idea of the appearance of the vestibule on “packing-day.” At the time the photograph was taken, there were between twenty and thirty Book Fund grants arranged ready to be made up into separate parcels, and despatched to ministers in all parts of the United Kingdom. The nearness of this set of shelves, to the study made it a very valuable annex and a room in another part of the house was adapted and fitted up for the use of the Manager of the Book Fund and her helpers.

Still later, a greater alteration was made, by which additional accommodation was provided for the ever-multiplying books. During Mr. Spurgeon’s absence at Mentone, one winter, a new room was built, connecting the study with the small conservatory, where he liked to sit for a few minutes, in the chair here represented, admiring the choice flowers, watching the fishes and grasses in the miniature aquarium, and reading or meditating upon the theme of some anticipated address or sermon. One result of the altered arrangements was that, in wet weather, the Pastor could have a continuous walk, under shelter, from the fernery at one side of the ‘house to the greenhouses at the other end. By steadily tramping’ the whole distance, backwards and forwards, several times, a very fair amount of exercise could be obtained when it was not possible to be out of doors. It had also ‘long been felt that Mr. Spurgeon needed another and more private study, into which he could retire for devotion and pulpit preparation, or for interviews with special visitors. This room was always called “the den,” though it was a very different kind of place from Bunyan’s apartment in the Bedford prison to which the immortal dreamer gave that name. In this favored spot, the works of the Puritan divines were lovingly arranged by the one who always repudiated the title many times accorded to him, — Ultimus Puritanorum, the last of the Puritans, — for he believed that he had helped to train hundreds of men who would continue the Puritanical succession after he was gone from their midst, and he also knew that there were, in other denominations and other lands, multitudes of believers in the truths which the Puritans taught, and for which many of them suffered even unto death.

The empty chair, in the corner of “the den,” is the one in which Mr. Spurgeon used to sit at the head of the study table. After he was “called home,” it was put away so that no one else should occupy it. In addition to the Puritans, “the den” contains a large quantity of homiletical, exegetical, and proverbial literature, with a number of miscellaneous volumes for general reading. The new room was a great boon to the busy Pastor, and many a powerful sermon for the congregation at the Tabernacle, or weighty address for the students of the Pastors’ College, or bright article for The Sword and the Trowel, first saw the light in the quiet seclusion of “the den.”

Mr. Spurgeon never cared to buy a book simply because it was rare, unless it was one of the Puritans that he needed for his collection. He valued literary works for their usefulness, not simply for their market price; yet he possessed a great many volumes, bearing their authors’ autograph inscriptions, which he highly prized; and, among them, some of Mr. Ruskin’s were always accorded a prominent position as reminders of the early and cordial friendship which existed between hint and the Pastor. Sir A. H. Layard, Dr. Livingstone, M. Paul B. Du Chaillu, Mr. C. W. M. van de Velde, Dr. W. M. Thomson, Dr. William Wright, Dr. Lansdell, Mr. John MacGregor {“Rob Roy”), and many other travelers are represented at “Westwood” by their works duly inscribed, or by letters from them fastened in their books. It was one of Mr. Spurgeon’s few “hobbies” to have the photographs and autographs of all authors, as; far as he could, with portions of the manuscripts of their works, or other specimens of their handwriting, inserted in one or more of their volumes, thus materially increasing their value, at least in his estimation. Perhaps it was this fancy which made him so freely give his own signature to other collectors of autographs, even if they did not always enclose stamps with their applications; and the same reason may also have prompted him to write in the many hundreds of books that he gave to his friends, who now prize them all the more because of the tender and loving inscriptions with which he enhanced the intrinsic worth of his gifts.

One of his letters shows that, in his anxiety to secure the signature of a friend whose writings he valued, he unintentionally wrote a second time to the same individual —

“Nightingale Lane,  
“Clapham,  
“May 11.

“Dear Sir,

“I have to apologize, for having troubled you twice about so small a matter as your autograph; but the fact is, I did not recognize Dr. David Brown, of Duncan’s Memoir as the David Brown of the Commentary. Pray excuse me.

“I am getting to fear and tremble about the Browns. You must know that the President and Vice-President of our Baptist Union are both Browns, and that the chairman of our London Association is also a Brown. Browns to the right of us,

Browns to the left of us, etc. God bless them all!  
“Yours heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

The following genial note, from Sir Emilius Bayley, was written in reply to a request for his photograph and autograph to be inserted in his book, Deep unto Deep —

“14, Hyde Park Street, W.,  
“May 29, 1878.  
“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“Thanks for your very kind reply to my letter, and also for the photograph you were so good as to send me.  
“I should have sent an earlier acknowledgment, but I had to get the enclosed portrait taken, and some little delay ensued. I very readily fall in with a ‘whim’ which is so flattering to your friends.

“May our gracious Father bless your labors very abundantly! “Believe me,  
“Yours very faithfully,  
“EMILIUS BAYLEY.”

In reply to a letter from Mr. Spurgeon to Dr. Andrew A. Bonar, asking for his portrait and autograph to insert in hi Commentary on the Book of Leviticus, the beloved author sent his photograph, and the following characteristic note —

“Dear Brother,

“I cannot refuse what you are so kind as to ask. But if you had only waited a little while, it would have been really worth having, — for we shall be LIKE HIM (1 John 3. 2)., Meantime, the enclosed may hint to you that sometimes you should pray for me.

“Yours, with all brotherly love,  
“ANDREW A. BONAR.”

The same writer’s volume, Christ and His Church in the Rook of Psalms, contains the inscription — ”This book was given to me by my dear friend, Mr. Bonar, and the corrections are made by his own hand. — C. H. SPURGEON.” Dr. Horatius Bonar’s volume, Earth’s Morning,’ or, Thoughts on Genesis, is thus commended — ”A deeply thoughtful and thought-creating book.”

In The Book of Psalms, a New Translation, with Introductions and Notes, Explanatory and Critical, by J. J. Stewart Perowne, B.D., Mr. Spurgeon wrote — ”For a modern book, this has become very rare. It is most accurate and valuable.” The volume also contains a letter from the author (now the Bishop of Worcester), written while he was Dean of Peterborough, in which he said — “I thank you heartily for your kind words about my book on the Psalms. I am the more sensible of your approbation, because you have yourself conferred so inestimable a boon upon the Church by the publication of your Treasury of David. There is no book like it as an aid to devout meditation on one of the most precious portions of God’s Word. I hope someday you will visit Peterborough. It would be a pleasure to me to show you our beautiful cathedral.”

The volume of Expositon Thoughts on the Gospels, by the present Bishop of Liverpool (Dr. J. c. Ryle), contains his portrait, and a letter which he wrote to Mr. Spurgeon, in 1875, when he was vicar of Stradbroke, in which he said — “You want no praise of man, and you know its worthlessness. But I must tell you how much I like your Lectures to my Students. I have rarely seen so many nails hit right on the head. I should like to give a copy to every young clergyman in the Church of England! I hope you are pretty well. I have had much illness in the last four years, and feel nearer home than I ever felt before.”

Yet he has been spared to continue his faithful testimony for nearly another quarter of a century; and only towards the close of 1899 has he felt compelled to intimate his approaching resignation of his bishopric, while his younger friend, to whom he wrote so heartily, has been “at home,,” for nearly eight years!

Mr. Spurgeon desired to possess a specimen of the manuscript of Dr. Charles Hodge, Professor in the Theological Seminary, Princeton, New Jersey, U.S.A.; and, in reply to a note to that effect, addressed to his son, Dr. A. A. Hodge, the latter wrote the kind letter printed next.

“Princeton,  
“New Jersey,  
“July 1st, 1879.  
“Rev. Charles H. Spurgeon,

“Dear Sir,

“I thank you very much for your kind note, relating to the Outlines, received yesterday. Your many friends, on this side of the ocean, have been anxious about your health, as we have received irregular, and imperfect, and perhaps irresponsible reports of it from time to time. I sincerely trust that it is re-established fundamentally and permanently. ‘Yet I am sure that God has warned you, as the trusted steward of His gifts, not to work so hard and continuously. “I send you, herewith, two of my father’s papers, prepared for the Conferences held by the Professors and students, every Sabbath afternoon, in our Oratory. ‘Nelson, of Edinburgh, has just published a volume containing 249 of them. These I send you are originals in my father handwriting.

“May the Father, and the Son, and the Spirit, bless you with all blessings in Christ Jesus our Lord!  
“Give my best respects to Mrs. Spurgeon.  
“Yours sincerely,  
“A. A. HODGE.”

Mr. Spurgeon’s copy of Dr. A. A. Hodge’s *Outlines of Theology* contains his autograph, and this entry in Mr. Spurgeon’s handwriting “Autograph written in my study, August 8, 1877. — C. H. S.”

Dr. Fergus Ferguson, of Glasgow, in thanking Mr. Spurgeon for the notice of his *Life of Christ*, wrote, in 1882: — “You must be well-nigh overwhelmed with literary work alone, — not to speak of the pastoral — I cannot close this letter, which I hope you will not think intrusive, without venturing to express my high admiration of your Christian worth and character, as well as my lofty estimate of the position which, in providence, you have been called to fill. The influence you wield, both by pulpit and press, in a perhaps unexampled degree in the annals of the Christian ministry, is to me the very zenith and beau ideal of what human influence should be. May you yet be long spared to wield such influence! God has chastened you not a little by personal and domestic affliction, — thus putting you into the highest class of His spiritual seminary, like the scholars whom Continental teachers call privatissimi, — those to whom they give advanced lessons in their own dwellings.”

In addition to the letters manuscripts, photographs, and autographs of the authors, which Mr. Spurgeon preserved in his copies of their works, whenever he could obtain them, he also wrote his own name in many of the volumes, with an expression of his opinion of their contents. There are, perhaps, among his books, some hundreds of these inscriptions; many of them are autobiographical, and for that reason deserve a place in the present work. It is worthy of note that, while this chapter has been in course of preparation, the compilers have met with an interesting article by Mr. Andrew Lang, entitled “Scrawls on Books,” which shows that he approved of the custom which the Pastor so extensively observed. Among other things, he wrote — ”The practice of scribbling on fly-leaves and margins has many enemies. I confess that I am not among these purists. I like to see these footprints on the sands of literature, left by dead generations, and to learn from them something about previous owners of books, if it be but their names .... We should all write our names, at least; no more of us may ever reach posterity.... As a rule, tidy and selfrespecting people do not even write their names on their fly-leaves;, still less do they scribble marginalia. Collectors love a clean book, but a book scrawled on may have other merits. Thackeray’s countless caricatures add a delight to his old school-books; the comments of Scott are always to the purpose; but how few books once owned by great authors come into the general market! Where is Dr. Johnson’s library, which must bear traces of his buttered toast? Sir Mark Sykes used to record the date and place of purchase, with the price, — an excellent habit. These things are more personal than book-plates, which may be and are detached by collectors, and pasted into volumes. The selling value of a book may be lowered even by a written owner’s name; but many a book, otherwise worthless, is redeemed by an interesting note. Even the uninteresting notes gradually acquire an antiquarian value, if contemporary with the author. They represent the mind of a dead age. and perhaps the common scribbler is not unaware of this; otherwise, he is indeed without excuse. For the great owners of the past, certainly, we regret that they were so sparing in marginalia.”

The first volume of the Autobiogaphy, (page 254)proves that Mr. Spurgeon commenced, quite early in his, ministry, the practice which Mr. Lang commends, for the inscriptions in Dr. Gill’s Commentary, there quoted, date back to 1852. In Martin Luther’s Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians, is written — ”This volume is one of my earliest friends; — needs no letter of commendation. — C. H. SPURGEON, 1852.”

The following remarkable commendation is inserted on the fly-leaf of the first volume of A Compleat History and Mystery of the Old and New Testament, logically discussed and theologically improved, by Christopher Ness — “Reader, — Here is something worth all thy time, though thou read it all day long. Give eyes and heart a feast here. Here is goodly wordpainting and rich heart-breathing. — C. H. SPURGEON.”  
The third volume is marked “much valued;” and the fourth has this inscription — ” I reckon these four volumes to be worth their weight in gold, They may contain some eccentric conceits, but these are as the dust upon a palace. I doubt not that Matthew Henry borrowed very extensively from Ness, and certainly showed his wisdom in so doing. If these volumes shall become the property of another, I charge him either to read them carefully and prayerfully, or else to give or lend them to some godly person who can appreciate them. Such a treasure should be out at interest. — C. H. SPURGEON, Nov., ‘58.”

In 1857. Mr. Spurgeon wrote in Matthew Pool’s Annotations — ” Pool is a most excellent expositor.” Dr. John Mayer’s *Commentarie upon the New Testament* bears the inscription “Mayer is one of my greatest favorites. — C. H. SPURGEON, 1859.” The same author’s volume on the Historical Books is described as “excellent, full of research, and rare learning.”

Two volumes of Dr. Adam Clarke’s Commentary contain lengthy but not commendatory notes. In Vol., Mr. Spurgeon wrote, just below the portrait of the commentator — ”who discovered that an ape, and not a serpent, deceived Adam.” At the top of the title-page is this warning — ” Take heed, reader! This is dangerous ground for those who are not grounded and settled.” Vol. VI. has this inscription — “Adam Clarke is as immortal as his monkey, and other errors; see notes on Genesis., He is always to be read with caution, for his sentiments are, in my judgment, most unscriptural. — C. H. SPURGEON.” On the title-page, after the words, “A Commentary and Critical Notes,” there is added — “Adapted to blind the eye, and prevent ‘the truth in Jesus from shining’ upon the soul,” by Adam Clarke, — ” Arminian twister of the Word.”

By way or contrast, it may be mentioned that Dr. Gill’s Exposition of Solomon’s Song contains Mr. Spurgeon’s autograph, and the following note — “This price, less work of my learned predecessor has always been helpful to me.” In different volumes of John Trapp’s Annotations upon the Old and New Testaments, Mr. Spurgeon wrote — Prized for its quaintness; .... A great favorite; .... Trapp is ever my favorite, 1873.” A large folio edition of Ralph Erskine’s Works has two inscriptions .... “The Revelation Joseph Irons, the gift of his father ;” and underneath, “Valued all the more by me as having been the property of Joseph Irons. — C. H. SPURGEON.” Bloomfield’s GREEK Testament, with English Notes, is inscribed — ” I value Bloomfield exceedingly I can always make more out of him than out of Alford. — C. H. SpurgeoN, September 1872.”

Taking, almost at random, the works of various authors who wrote on separate Books of the Bible, the following inscriptions will serve as specimens of the comments, favorable, and otherwise, inserted in them

In Dr. James Morison’s *Practical Commentary on the Gospel according to Matthew*, Mr. Spurgeon wrote — “Volume greatly valued for its scholarship. Difficult to find much Morisonianism here.” *The Genius of the Gospel*, by Dr. David Thomas, contains this note — ” A suggestive volume, but rather bombastic.” On the title-page of the same writer’s work, *The Book of Psalms Exegetically and Practically Considered*, opposite the author’s name, — David Thomas, — Mr. Spurgeon added — ” Not David, nor Thomas. David scrabbling, Thomas doubting.” The same writer’s *Homiletic Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles* contains his photograph, autograph, and the. following remarks .... Many of the homiletic outlines strike me as ‘much ado about nothing;’ still, if a man should read this work, and get no help from it, it would be his own fault — C. H. SPURGEON, 1874.”

Three books on the Epistle to the Romans naturally have references to the writers’ doctrinal views. Of Dr. F. A. Philippi, Mr. Spurgeon wrote “Frequently goes out of his way to have a fling at what he thinks to be Calvinism.” Revelation William Tyson’s Expositor7 Lectures are said to be “Excellent for an Arminian. I find him sweetly Evangelical in many places.” Dr. David Ritchie’s Lectures, Explanatory and Practical, are described as “Unsound in many respects. Of the Moderate School, I should judge.”

James Fergusson’s Brief Exposition of the Epistles of Paul contains the autograph and date, C. H. SPURGEON, 1878; and this note — ”A volume of great worth. Few books have been more frequently consulted by me. — C. H.S.” John Barlow on 2 Timothy 1 and 2 is thus commended — “Though apparently unattractive, this book will richly repay a careful reader. — C. H. SPURGEON.” Nicholas Byfield, on 1 Peter 1, 2, and 3, is wittily criticized — ” Byfield is discursive, and takes in every by-field which he had better have passed by. Yet, in his Preface.,. he calls this an abridgment! I am glad it was not my lot to hear him. — C. H. SPURGEON.” Nathanael Hardy on The First Epistle of John, is said to be “a rare divine, this Hardy; an Episcopalian Puritan.”  
In Frederick Denison Maurice’s Prophets and Kings of the Old Testament, Mr. Spurgeon wrote . — ” Herein we find a great deal of wild doctrine, but yet there is thought of no mean order We can wash out the gold.” The work of a writer of quite another stamp — Notes on the Book of Genesis, by C. H. M., — is thus described — “Good in its line, but too cramped. There is also error concealed here and there.” Lange’s Genesis is said to be “one of the best of the series ;” but his Isaiah is characterized as “very poor.” Dr. Pusey on The Minor Prophets bears the unique distinction of being highly commended in a single word — ” Invaluable. — C. H. SPURGEON, 1878.” Sermons on Judges, by Richard Rogers, contains this note — “C H. Spurgeon much prizes this book. — 1882.”

Among other brief but notable note’s are the following —  
Durham’s *Christ Crucified* — ” Much prized.”

*Practical Reflections on Every Verse of the Holy Gospels,* by a clergyman”Good, simple, marred.”

*Poetical Works of George Herbet* — ‘Much valued by C. H. Spurgeon.” Darling’s *Cyclopaedia Bibliographica* .’ — “An invaluable tool.”

Joseph Taylor’s volume *, Naturales Curiosae Curiosities in Natural History*, contains the warning,” Believe not too readily. — C. H. SPURGEON.”

In *Whitefield’s Sermons* is the autograph, with the inscription following — ”C. H. Spurgeon, who admires Whitefield as chief of preachers.”

*The Sabbath in Puritan New England* , by Alice Morse Earle, probably contains the last inscription written by the Pastor, and a very expressive one it is “An amusing’ but saddening book. The seamy side of New England religion exposed. The authoress is the wife of that *Ham* of whom we read in Genesis. — C. H. SPURGEON, Dec., 1891.” He knew that there was a “seamy side” even to his beloved Puritanism; but he felt that it ought not to be thus exposed to the public gaze but to be kindly and charitably concealed.

CHAPTER 102

MR. SPURGEON AS A LITERARY MAN (CONCLUDED).

N OT only did Mr. Spurgeon, to the end of his life, continue to read vast numbers of the works written by ancient and modern authors, but he also kept on writing books for other people to read; and when he was “called home” he had so many in course of preparation that his posthumous works already form quite a numerous company, and there are many more yet to be published. Whoever is spared to see a complete set of his volumes will probably find that they will then number not less than a hundred and fifty.

During the period covered by the present portion of the Standard Life *, The Treasury of David* was completed, and the regular issue of *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, The Sword and the Trowel, and Spurgeon’s Illustrated (Book) Almanack*, and John Ploughman’s (Sheet) Almanack was continued, as indeed they have been since the Pastor’s home-going. Marty people appear to have thought that it was hardly possible for Mr. Spurgeon, with the almost incessant demands upon his time and strength, to devote much personal attention to certain portions of his literary labors, so they attributed to his helpers a good deal of the toil that devolved upon him. One person was credited with the compilation of the BooK Almanack, although its Editor never entrusted it to anyone but himself until the year of his long illness; and on one occasion, at least, he felt it needful to remind his readers; that his connection with *The Sword and the Trowel* was not by any means a merely nominal one, but was very real and practical. In his “Notes” for April, 1885, anticipating his return from Mentone, he wrote —

“A kindly reviewer speaks of our March number as vivacious and good, ‘notwithstanding the absence of the Editor.’ The fact is, that the Editor is never absent from the magazine; but personally reads every line of each number. Friends now and then write, blaming some supposed subordinate, if their tastes are not pleased; but the Editor hides behind nobody, friends must please blame him, for he is personally responsible. Our writers are able men, and are quite able to fight their own battles, should battles occur; but the Editor never wishes it to be imagined that he merely puts his name on the cover of the magazine, and leaves it to be produced by other people. No; it is our continual endeavor to make this serial as good as we can make it, and we would do better if we could. Notwithstanding illness, or absence from home, we have never been obliged to delegate our duties to anyone else; on the contrary, we have given all the more time to this work when we have been debarred from other labors.”

Many of the books published by Mr. Spurgeon during the last fourteen years of his busy life were briefly mentioned in Vol. 3, because of their connection with others then described, or they have been already referred to in previous chapters of the present volume. One ‘of the Pastor’s ardent admirers made an artistic arrangement of the titles of many of the works which had been issued up to the time of his Jubilee, with his portrait in the center, and allusions to the three spheres of his; pastoral service, and the chief educational and philanthropic Institutions with which his name is inseparably associated. The design is, reproduced on the opposite page, where it can be seen that the initials, C. H. S., are ingeniously introduced into the closing line of the tribute to Mr. Spurgeon’s loving and sympathetic service and world-wide influence.

Taking the later books in chronological order, the first to be noted is *The Clue of the Maze, a Voice Lifted up on behalf of Honest Faith*. The Preface describes its autobiographical character— “How I have personally threaded ‘the labyrinth of life, thus far, may be of helpful interest to some other soul which just now is in a maze.” The sub-title is thus explained — ”A great poet let fall the expression, ‘honest doubt.’ How greedily it was clutched at Modern unbelief is so short of the quality that it seized the label, and, in season and out of season, it has advertised itself as HONEST doubt. It was in dire need of a character. Feeble as our voice may be, we lift it on behalf of HONEST FAITH.” The book was first issued in a bijou edition, suitable for carrying in the waistcoat pocket, but it has since been reprinted in large type, to correspond with other shilling books by Mr. Spurgeon. He was greatly gratified as he heard, from time to time, that his purpose in writing it had been happily fulfilled; and he was specially cheered by the testimony of a notable literary man who had been, through reading it, lifted up from blank atheism to saving faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The little book has been translated into several foreign languages. About the same time as *The Clue of the Maze* was published, the Pastor was busily occupied with the first of his four volumes, entitled My SermonNotes. They were issued in response to an oft-repeated request for outlines of discourses which might be helpful to “lay” or local preachers who have but little time for their pulpit preparation, or who find a difficulty in selecting suitable subjects for sermons and addresses. In order that the notes might be of still greater service to such brethren, they were made rather more ample and detailed than when Mr. Spurgeon himself preached from them; and, for the same reason, appropriate extracts and illustrations were added to them. That the work met an urgent need, was speedily apparent; and it was not long before at “Note” to the following effect appeared in *The Sword And The Trowel* —

“Our first half-crown volume of outline sermons has met with a very cordial reception, the first edition of 5,000 being very nearly cleared out, though only so lately presented to the public. Taking this as a token for good, we shall soon issue the second portion, which contains our notes of sermons from Ecclesiastes to Malachi. Brethren whose time is much occupied with business cares, who nevertheless delight to preach the Word of God, will find these *Sermon-Notes* to be a great assistance, With that view we. have prepared them, and to that end we trust that God will bless them. They are not sufficiently in extenso to suit the idler, and yet we trust there’, is enough of them to aid the embarrassed worker. The preparation of this volume has enabled us to while away the evenings and the occasional wet and cloudy days of our rustication at Mentone. As its fragmentary nature allowed us to take it up and lay it down at will, it was just the sort of occupation to afford us happy recreation. To have nothing to do, is bondage; but such congenial employment as this has aided us in being perfectly at ease.”

In due time, the whole set was completed, and it has had a very large sale. Since the Pastor’s home-going, another volume of a somewhat similar character has been published, — *C. H. Spurgeon’s Facsimile Pulpit-Notes, will,’ the Sermons Preached from them in the Metropolitan Tabernacle*. The book originated in rather a singular way. A paragraph appeared in various newspapers, announcing that some of the notes used by Mr. Spurgeon, while preaching at the Tabernacle, were about to be reproduced in facsimile, and the writer intimated that the work would be certain to have a favorable reception. As a matte, r of fact, up to that time, no such arrangement had been made; but the idea seemed so good, and the publicity given to it was so helpful, that a dozen suitable outlines were selected, and, with the discourses delivered from them, were made into a volume which at once became an interesting memento of the “promoted” preacher, and a striking illustration of his method of sermon construction.

The book, which has the double distinction of having been translated into more foreign languages and of having been blessed 1:o the salvation of more souls than any other of Mr. Spurgeon’s works, is the shilling volume entitled *All of Grace. An Earnest Word with those who are Seeking Salvation by the Lord Jesus Christ*. Its opening sentences are — “The object of this book is the salvation of the reader. He who spoke and wrote it will be greatly disappointed if it does not lead many to the Lord Jesus. It is sent forth in childlike dependence upon the power of God the Holy Ghost, to use it in the conversion of millions, if so He pleases.” Almost the last paragraph contains these words, which now have a peculiar pathos attaching to them ..... “If those who are converted, become winners of others, who knows what may spring’ out of my’ little book? Already I begin praising God for the conversions which He will work by it, and by those whom it leads to Jesus. Probably the larger part of the results will hal)pen when my right hand, which is now leaving its impress on the. page, will be paralyzed in death. READER, MEET ME IN HEAVEN!”

One of the many instances of the usefulness of the little volume, of which the Pastor knew before he was “called home,” was reported to him in the following letter from a doctor who was a member of the Tabernacle Church —

“My Dear Sir,  
“I have a message to give you, and will do it as briefly as I can.

“For many years, I have had the friendship of a well-known medical man in \_\_\_\_ For some two or three years, he has suffered from diabetes; but he has lived just the same, entirely without Christ. Last Christmas, I sent him a copy of All of Grace. A short time ago, when I was at the seaside, I received a letter from a friend in which he said, ‘ I believe Dr.\_\_\_ is saved,’… the teaching has been all Mr. Spurgeon’s. This I was delighted to hear.

“Yesterday, I stood by his side. I found him very ill, suffering from inflammation of the lungs, consequent on the diabetes.. He took my hands, and, as well as he could between his tears, and the shortness of breath, told me that he was saved, that he was a child of God, that his sins were all forgiven, that he was washed in the blood of his Savior, and clothed in the robe of His perfect righteousness; and recovering his breath, he said, very’ solemnly, ‘Will you tell Mr. Spurgeon that this has all come, in God’s mercy to me a poor sinner, by that book, — pointing to All of Grace, which was; lying open on his bed, — ’ will you let him know what a blessing that book has been to me?’

“Dear sir, I have delivered the message. I know you will be pleased to receive it, and will you remember my dear friend in prayer? “Believe me to be,  
“Yours deeply-indebted,  
“\_\_\_\_\_\_”

The book having been so manifestly owned of God, Mr. Spurgeon prepared a companion volume, — *According to Promise ,’ or, the Lord’s Method of Dealing’ with His Chosen People* ,’ and, some time later, he issued *Around the Wicket Gate* ,’ or, a *Friendly Talk with Seekers concerning Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ*, both of which have h a(t a wide circulation, and have been greatly blessed.

The volume which, more than any other of Mr. Spurgeon’s writings, illustrates his power of rapid composition, is *The Cheque Book of the Bank of Faith*. It consists of 366 Scripture promises, arranged for daily use, with brief experimental comments; suitable for reading at family worship or as a help to private devotion. During the Pastor’s stay at Mentone., in the winter of 1887-8, there was one Monday when the rain poured down incessantly in such tropical fashion that he was compelled to remain indoors all day. His companions were not aware that he was contemplating the commencement of another new book, but they noticed how rapidly he was covering sheet alter sheet of foreign notepaper. After a while, he explained that he had begun a volume of daily meditations; and, before he went to bed, that night, he had finished the portions for the month of January, and handed them to Mr. Passmore to send off to London for the printers. They were so carefully written that they needed but little correction; and anyone who has the book, and. examines the first thirty-one pages in it, will be able to estimate both the quantity and the quality of one,. wet day’s work while the Pastor was supposed to be on his holiday in the,. sunny South.

The *Cheque Book* is, to a large extent, a record of Mr. Spurgeon’s own experiences of the Lord’s faithfulness during the “Down-grade” Controversy. Some of the most striking promises, on which he has commented, were sent to him by friends, who wished to uphold and encourage him in that season of sore sorrow and travail, and the book abounds in autobiographical allusions. In the Preface, the Pastor wrote — ”To the cheering Scriptures, I have added testimonies of my own, the fruit of trial and experience. I believe all the promises of God, but many of them I have personally tried and proved .... I commenced these daily portions when I was wading in the surf of controversy. Since then, I have been cast into ‘waters to swim in,’ which, but for God’s upholding hand, would have proved waters to drown in .... I do not mention this to exact sympathy, but simply to let the reader see that I am no dry-land sailor. I have traversed those oceans which are not Pacific full many a time I know the roll of the billows, and the rush of the winds. Never were the promises of Jehovah so precious to me as at this hour. Some of them I never understood till now; I had not reached the date at which they’ matured, for I was not myself mature enough to perceive their meaning. How much more wonderful is the Bible. to role now than it was a few months ago! In obeying the Lord, and bearing His reproach outside the camp, I have not received new promises but the result to me is much the same’, as if I had done so, for the old ones have opened up to me with richer stores.”

Remembering the origin of the book, it is noteworthy that, during the compilation of the present volume, a testimony’ to its helpfulness in times of trial has come from Christians; in South Africa, who have been reading the Dutch translation of it, and so have been comforted during their’ recent terrible experiences. Mr. Spurgeon had many proofs of the usefulness of the volume; one that interested and amused him was thus related by Pastor W. Williams, of Upton Chapel —

“Opposite my study-window are several gardens, affording during summertime a pleasant outlook; but, in the first of them, there was tied up, until recently, a large retriever dog. His incessant barking made study and thought quite out of the question. I let his owner know this in a quiet way; but still the dog was there. I wondered, if I Should pray about the matter it seemed rather comical to pray about the barking of a dog; besides, I could not bring to. mind a promise about such a thing which I could mention in prayer, until one day I opened Mr. Spurgeon’s Cheque Book of the Bank of Faith, where the text is, ‘ But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue,’ the comment on which begins, ‘What! has God power over the tongues of dogs? Can He keep curs from barking? Yes, it is even so.’ I was startled, for no dog ever laid hold with greater tenacity than this text did on me. There and then I knelt down, and asked that the dog might be removed. ‘The clog has gone, and the owner, too; but mark,, the arrangements to go were made by the owner just about the time that the prayer was offered! How true it is that —

***“‘More things are wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of!’”***

Following The Cheque Book, Mr. Spurgeon published two volumes of quite a different character, — The Salt-cellars, being a Collection of Proverbs, together with Homely Notes thereon. For nearly twenty years, he had issued John Ploughman’s Almanack, and the labor involved in collecting or composing so many thousands of proverbs, maxims, and mottoes, seemed to justify their preservation in a more permanent form than the annual broadsheet ensured. Accordingly, they were arranged alphabetically, in two sections, “Proverbs and Quaint Sayings,” and “Sayings of a more Spiritual Sort;” and, in nearly every instance, “Homely Notes” were added, concerning which one reviewer wrote — “The proverbs are excellent, but Mr. Spurgeon’s comments are perfect.”

Each of the volumes, as it was published, received a most hearty welcome both from the press and the public, and their contents have ever since been frequently quoted in the pulpit and on the platform. Mr. Spurgeon sent the two books to Mr. George Augustus Sala, with a request that he would review them in The Daily Telegraph if he judged them worthy of such a notice. In reply, Mr. Sala wrote a long and cordial letter, in the course of which he said — “You,’ two volumes were such pleasant reading that I thought the best way to meet your views would be to make The Saltcellars the text for a leading article, which I now have much pleasure in sending you. Naturally, I was struck (and amused) by the maxim, ‘Newspapers are the Bibles of worldlings.’ That is exactly so,’ and it is eminently fitting that it should be so; because, to a journalist who is aware of the usefulness and respects the dignity of his calling, the press is a pulpit whence,, on week-days, he preaches lay sermons, leaving Sunday to you and your brethren.”

Mr. Sala then proceeded to give quite a lengthy dissertation on the maxim which had so greatly interested him, but it need not be quoted here from his letter, as he referred to it again in his article, the opening and closing sentences of which were as follows —

“A really busy man has usually the largest amount of leisure at his disposal. and Mr. C. H. Spurgeon, amidst the multifarious labors and responsibilities which devolve on him as Pastor of an immense congregation, has found time to dig and delve very deeply indeed in that richest of colloquial mines, — the treasury of English proverbs. Under the title of The Salt-cellars, Mr. Spurgeon has just issued two comely and handy volumes, which will derive much value, not only from the fact that the work is one presenting evidence of indefatigable industry of research and considerable acumen in selection, but also from the circumstance that the compiler ‘has graced, his chosen proverbs with a running commentary of what he modestly calls ‘homely notes.” In reality, they are often humorous as well as homely, and are always replete with that spirit of cheerful piety, quite devoid of cant or bigotry, which renders Mr. Spurgeon’s utterances always acceptable even to those who differ from him most widely in dogma.....

“Mr. Spurgeon has chosen to select, as a proverb, that which appears to us to be more of the nature of a pulpit platitude, ‘Newspapers are the Bibles of worldlings;’ and to this we have the homely note, ‘ How diligently they read them! Here they find their law and profits, their judges and chronicles, their epistles and revelations.’ The newspapers, however, must take their chance of being abused, even by those who most diligently read them. Journalists are a long-suffering race, and it curiously happens that, among old Howell’s proverbs, collected more than two centuries since, we find this one, ‘A diurnal-maker is the sub-amner to a historian.’ ‘We have no quarrel, therefore, with Mr. Spurgeon on this account. What he says; about newspapers has long since,, been said at the Antipodes, where the vast weekly budgets of the. Sydney and Melbourne journals are habitually called ‘ The Bushman’s Bible,’ constituting, as they do, the almost exclusive reading of the shepherds and stockriders far away in the bush. Altogether, The Saltcellars may be welcomed as an equally entertaining and edifying compilation; and the scheme, as well as the actual accomplishment of the work, is alike creditable to the heart and the head of an estimable minister of religion who has long since won the rank of an English worthy.”

If there had been sufficient space available, an interesting chapter might have been compiled concerning “Mr. Spurgeon as a Poet and Hymnwriter.” As that is not possible, the specimens of his poetry included in the present and the previous volumes of this work will convey some idea of his gifts in that direction; and one more must find a place here, partly because of its autobiographical character, but also because it was the last that he ewer wrote. He put at the top of it, as the motto-text, “I will make the dry land springs of water;” and as the title, “The Drop which Grew into a Torrent. A Personal Experience.”

***~~“All my soul was dry and dead  
Till I learned that Jesus bled; —  
Bled and suffer’d in my place,  
Bearing sin in matchless grace.~~***

***~~“Then a drop of Heavenly love  
Fell upon me from above,  
And by secret, mystic art  
Reached the center of my heart.~~***

***~~“Glad the story I recount,  
How that drop became a fount,  
Bubbled up a living well,  
Made my heart begin to swell.~~***

***~~“All within my soul was praise  
Praise increasing all my days;  
Praise which could not silent be:  
Floods were struggling to be free.~~***

***~~“More and more the waters grew,  
Open wide the flood-gates flew,  
Leaping t0rth in streams of song~~***

***~~Flowed my happy life along.~~***

***~~“Lo! a river clear and sweet  
Laved my glad, obedient feet!  
Soon it rose up to my knees,  
And I praised and prayed with ease.  
“Now my soul in praises swims,  
Bathes in songs, and psalms, and hymns;  
Plunges down into the deeps,  
All her powers in worship steeps.~~***

***~~“Hallelujah! 0 my Lord,  
Torrents from my soul are poured!  
I am carried clean away,  
Praising, praising all the day.~~***

***~~“In an ocean of delight,  
Praising God with all my might,  
Self is drowned. So let it be:  
Only Christ remains to me.”~~***

The hymn was written in the early part of the year 189o, and was inserted in the programme used at the next College Conference. Those who were present, on that occasion, are not likely to forget the thrilling effect produced when the five hundred ministers and students joined in singing it to the tune “Nottingham.” At the commencement, all sat and sang; but as they came to the later verses, they spontaneously rose, the time was quickened, and Mr. Manton Smith’s cornet helped to swell the volume of praise expressed by the writer.

The next literary work was one of the smallest of Mr. Spurgeon’s many volumes, yet its history and associations place it among the most notable of his publications. At the College Conference, in 1891, the Presidential Address struck all who heard it as being a peculiarly timely and weighty utterance; and some who listened to it, and to the sermon which followed it, three days later, afterwards said that they had a kind of premonitory conviction ‘that their beloved President would never again meet the members and associates of the Pastors’ College Evangelical Association in conference on earth; and so it proved to be.

On the Monday evening .of that memorable week, at the public meeting in Upton Chapel, Mr. Spurgeon took, as the subject of his address, Ephesians 6:16: “Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.” This proved to be the prelude and preparation for the martial topic on which he intended to speak the next morning, and which he summarized under three heads, (1) our armory, the Word of God; (2) our army, the Church of God; and (3) our strength, the Holy Spirit. It was a fitting climax to the long series of Inaugural Addresses, which were always reckoned, by those who were privileged to hear the. m, as; the most solemn and forceful of all Mr. Spurgeon’s utterances. It was rapturously received by the crowded and enthusiastic assembly; and, at its close, such urgent requests were presented for its publication in pamphlet form, that consent was at once given, on condition that the brethren would help to make it known when it was issued.

During the week following the Conference, the reporter’s transcript was revised, considerable additions being made to the manuscript, and it was promptly published under the title’., The Greatest Fight in the World. It immediately attained a very wide circulation; it was reprinted in the United States, translated into French and German, and passed through several large editions. Then, after Mr. Spurgeon’s home-going, a generous gentleman, who had been with him on the platform during its delivery, felt that one of the best ways; of honoring his memory was to perpetuate hi,; testimony, and therefore arranged that a copy of it, bearing the additional title “C. H. Spurgeon’s Final Manifesto,” should be sent, through Mrs. Spurgeon’s Book Fund, to every clergyman and minister of every denomination in England. In this way, 34,500 more copies were circulated, with abundant evidence that the Lord had owned and blessed the effort. While. the present volume has been in course, of compilation, The Greatest Fight has been issued by the publishers., in cloth covers, to make it uniform with the Pastor’,; other shilling volumes, so its witness to the.. truth will still ;be continued, though several years have elapsed since its soul-stirring message was first uttered.

Another small volume, which has ‘very tender associations connected with it, is Memories of Stambourne. It was commenced before Mr. Spurgeon’s long illness in 1891, and it was completed during the time of partial restoration which was graciously granted to him later in that year. The little book has a special interest for readers of this work, for it was really the first portion of C. H. Spurgeon’s Autobiography telling the story of his childhood as he wished it to go forth to the public, and for that reason it was largely use. d in the compilation of Vol. I. of his Standard Life.. For several years, the Pastor visited Stambourne and its neighborhood, partly because of his; early recollections of his grandfather’s country, and partly that he might gather up all available material concerning some of the memorable, scenes of his; boyhood. On the last occasion, he took with him Mr. T. H. Nash, who kindly photographed a number of views for reproduction in the volume then being written. It was during that week that the “overpowering headache” came on, of which Mr. Spurgeon afterwards wrote, adding, “I had to hurry home, to go up to that chamber wherein, for three months, I suffered beyond measure, and was often between the jaws of death.” In answer to the almost universal prayer of believers in all lands, he was raised up for a time, and had the satisfaction of seeing his little book of reminiscences not only finished and published, but also widely welcomed and greatly enjoyed.

But there was another volume, in progress at the same time, which was destined to have a still more pathetic interest attaching to it. That was The Gospel of the Kingdom; a Popular Exposition of the Gospel according to Matthew, concerning which Mrs. Spurgeon ‘wrote, after her beloved’s promotion to glory — ” It stands alone in its sacred and sorrowful significance. It is the tired worker’s final labor of love. for his Lord. It is the last sweet song from lips that were ever sounding forth the praises of his King.. It is the dying shout of victory from the standard-bearer, who bore his Captain’s colors unflinchingly through the thickest of the fight .... Much of the later portion of the work was written on the very borderland of Heaven, amid the nearing glories of the unseen world, and almost within sight of the Golden Gates.’

Mr. Spurgeon’s intention in preparing the volume, was to produce a devotional Commentary, specially calling attention to the Kingship of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is the prominent feature of the Gospel according to Matthew. He proceeded with the work very leisurely, and a great part of it was written during his winter sojourns on the sunny shores of the Mediterranean. The accompanying facsimile of the first page of his manuscript will show the method he adopted, and he followed the same plan as long as he was enabled to continue the congenial task.

Towards the latter part of 1891, when Mr. Spurgeon was sufficiently restoredto be able to travel to Mentone, he eagerly resumed his delightful service of expounding the first Gospel, and he wrote some portion of it, day by (lay, until he was finally laid aside. To the last, his handwriting was as clear, and distinct, and firm as ever, and there,, was no sign of the rapidly approaching collapse which was to send such a thrill of sorrow through the whole of Christendom. Mentally and spiritually, the work was equal to the best efforts of his brightest )’ears; but he was not permitted to finish it, for he was called up to see the King of whom he had been writing, and to share in the glories of the Kingdom of which he had so long been preaching to others.

After due consideration, it was resolved that, instead of leaving his last literary work to stand like a broken column, it should be completed as nearly as possible in the way he would himself have ended it had he been spared long enough. tie had so often expounded the closing chapters of Matthew’s Gospel that there was abundant material for the latter portion of his Commentary to be compiled entirely from his own spoken and written words. This delicate duty was entrusted to his private secretary. When n the volume was issued, it met with a most hearty reception, and it has continued in great favor-ever since. The Editor of The British Weekly indirectly paid a high compliment to the complier of the later chapters when he said that there should have been some indication as to where Mr. Spurgeon’s manuscript ended. Evidently, the worker in mosaics had so skilfully joined together the precious treasures committed to his charge that even this keen critic could not discover any break in the connection.

Another literary work, upon which Mr. Spurgeon was busily occupied when the home-call came to him at Mentone, was Messages to the Multitude, the eighth volume in “The Preachers of the Age” series, issued by Messrs. Sampson Low, Marston, and Co. It was intended to set forth the style of the Pastor’s preaching at various periods of his long ministry; and, to that end, the sermons selected ranged from one delivered in the Surrey Gardens Music Hall, in 1859, to another, which was almost the last preached in the Tabernacle, in. 1891. The revision of the latter part of this book also fell to Mr. Harrald’s share. Although tell out of the twelve discourses contained ill it had been previously published, the work has had a large sale; and, quite’ recently, a popular edition of it has been produced, thereby still further increasing its sphere, of usefulness.

Many other volumes had been either commenced or planned by Mr. Spurgeon; and several of them have already been completed. The first of these was The Art of Illustration, forming the third series of Lectures to my Students, and containing exceedingly valuable information concerning the use of illustrations in preaching, and the books in which anecdotes, illustrations, fables, emblems, and parables are to be found.

Next followed one of the choicest volumes in the whole of Mr. Spurgeon’s works, — ” Till He Come.” Communion Meditations and Addresses. It consists very largely of the quiet, homely talks of the Pastor to the little,, companies of Christians who gathered with him around the table of the Lord in his sitting-room at Mentone; but it also includes some of his more public utterances when thousands of believers met for communion in the Tabernacle. The value of the ordinance, and the spiritual benefit to be derived from its frequent observance, are clearly set forth; and it see. ms impossible for any lover of the Lor to read the book without being brought into still closer fellowship with the Savior, and a deeper appreciation of the great atoning sacrifice symbolized by the broken bread and the filled cup. The volume has proved invaluable as an aid to private devotion, and as a guide to those who are called to preside at the celebration of the sacred feast of love.

Another book, which Christian workers have found to be of great service to them, is The Soul-winner; or, How to Lead Sinners to the Savior. Containing several lectures to the students of the Pastors’ College, addresses to Sunday-school teachers and open-air preachers, and sermons upon what Mr. Spurgeon termed “that most royal employment, — soulwinning,” it must greatly help those who desire to become wise in winning souls, while it explains some of the secrets of the author’s own power as one of the greatest soul-winners who ever lived.

These posthumous works specially deserve mention in the present volume, for all of them are largely autobiographica1, and, here and there, extracts from them have been given in previous pages where they appeared needful for’ the complete-hess of the narrative. All of them have been extensively sold, and highly prized, perhaps all the more because the’. voice that uttered so much of their contents is no longer audible here below.

Beside the new works published since Mr. Spurgeon’s home-going, there have been already issued no less than eight different sets of his sermons — The’ Parables of our Lord,’ The Miracles (two volumes); “The Most Holy Place,” — (fifty-two discourses, on the Song of Solomon); — The Messiah, our Lords Names, Titles, and Attributes,’ Christ in the Old’ Testament,’ The Everlasting Gospel; and The Gospel for the People. Ten smaller volumes contain shorter passages from his writings, suitable for various classes of readers — Teachings of Nature in the Kingdom of Grace, Words of Wisdom, Words of Warning, and Words of Cheer for Daily Life, Words of Counsel for Christian Workers, Words of Advice for Seekers,  
“The Endeavor,” “Come, ye Children,” Gospel Extracts from C. H. Spurgeon, and Glorious Themes for Saints and Sinners. The last-named book is printed in very large type so as to adapt it to old people and little children. Although it has been only recently issued, it has already found much favor, and is likely to be exceedingly useful in making known the essentials of the faith in the simplest and plainest language.

It is impossible to estimate the total number of volumes of Mr. Spurgeon’s works that have been issued in this country, in the United States, and in many other lands in which they have been translated into foreign languages. Many millions of copies must. already have been sold; and, although it is now eight years since he was “called home,” there is, apparently, no diminution in the demand for them. Indeed, the many new works from his lips and pen published since his promotion to higher service, the still larger number of reprints or extracts from hi,; writings, and the ever-increasing circulation of his sermons, make it almost certain that his publications are distributed even more widely now than they were during his lifetime on earth, while testimony to their usefulness is constantly being received from all quarters of the globe. It may, therefore, be concluded that, great as was his influence in the pulpit, his power through the press is not a witness; and there seems to be no valid reason why his testimony to the truth should not be continued, by means of the printed page, until the Lord Himself returns.

CHAPTER 103

GROWTH OF THE INSTITUTIONS, 1878-1892.

College, Orphanage, Colportage Association, and Society of Evangelists, might any one of them be regarded as; works of Christian inventiveness, but it would be by far the smaller half of the truth to look at them from that point of view. These enterprises have succeeded each other, by a natural rule and order of Providence, as inevitably as the links of a chain follow one another. We have heard kind friends speak of “genius for organization” and “great practical common sense” as abiding in the leader of these various works for the lord; but, indeed, it would be far nearer the truth to say that he followed with implicit, and almost blind, confidence what he took to be the intimations of the Divine will, and hitherto these intimations have proved to be what he thought them. At the close of twenty-five years, we see a vast machinery in vigorous operation, in bette’ working condition than ever it was; and, a; to means and funds, perfectly equipped, although it has no other resources than the promise, “My God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” Gratitude bows her head, and sings her own song to her Well-beloved, to whom it belongs. — C. H. S., in Preface to “The Sword and the Trowel” volume for 1878.

T HE last fourteen years of Mr. Spurgeon’s earthly life proved to be a very profitable period both for the Tabernacle Church and the various Institutions connected with it. Towards the close of his address, at the meeting held in the Tabernacle, on May 20, 1879, in connection with the celebration of his pastoral silver wedding, he said —

“Let us go forward, brethren, let us go forward. We have made a very fair beginning’, in God’s strength, and to Him be the honor of it; but I regard to-night not as the goal, but as the starting-place. We have truly laid underground foundations of a structure which now we trust will rise into open day. Here is one point for a new departure. Listen and consider it. A day or two ago, the lady, who founded the Boys’ Orphanage sent me £50 for the Girls’ Orphanage. I wrote to her somewhat to this effect — ‘I am very grateful for the proposal; but I am not very well, and the times are not very hopeful, so I had rather not begin any new work just yet.’ I proposed to keep the £50 in case we did build an Orphanage for girls; and if not, to hand it over to the boys. ‘ No,’ said our friend, ‘ you a. re right in your judgment, but take the £50 as the first brick, for I am fully assured that many more bricks will shortly be added.’ Now I propose that £50 of the testimonial should be placed with my dear friend’s £50 that we may found the Girls’ Orphanage together. I do not mean to press this new enterprise just now; but only to moot it, and see whereunto this thing will grow. Other eggs will conic to the nest-egg, and the nest will become full, and then we shall have another family of little chicks. I feel as though I was laying’ the first stone of the Girls’ Orphanage, and you were all saying, ‘Go ahead.’ This is a good note for our present page of history, — ‘second twenty-five years of pastorate commenced by the inauguration of project for Girls’ Orphanage.’ ‘What next?’ says somebody. I cannot tell you what I may suggest to you next; but, you see, I am driven to this Girls’ Orphanage. I have this £50 forced upon me, and I cannot get rid of it; would you have me refuse to use this money for poor fatherless girls? No, your hearts would not so counsel me. Thus, of my own free will, compelled by constraining grace, I accept a further charge, and look to see prayer and faith open a new chapter of marvels.”

One friend, who heard the Pastor’s speech, at once gave him £50 for the new project, and other contributions speedily followed. Shortly afterwards, Mr. Spurgeon wrote — ” At the very’ time at which we began to move in this matter, it pleased God, in His providence, to put within our reach the house and grounds known as ‘ The Hawthorns,’ at which we had looked wistfully for a long while. A few years ago, this house was to be sold, and the Trustees of the Boys’ Orphanage attempted to purchase it at the auction; but the price was run up to several hundreds of pounds beyond its value. On June 6, this house was; again offered for sale, and we bought it for the exact sum which we had proposed to give on the former occasion. There is only one paddock between its garden and the Orphanage grounds; and, by the goodness of God, and the kindness of its owner, we hope that this meadow also may one day become ours; we should then be able to make the Orphanage into a complete, square by erecting similar buildings to those which are there already. This must be a work of time, but it is something to have a place whereon to put our fulcrum, and apply our lever. We believe that the Lord has led us forth by a right way, that we might go to a city of habitation. We have purchased the house and grounds for the Girls’ Orphanage, but we have only about L360 in hand with which to pay FOR it; and we are specially desirous that, when the time shall come for the absolute payment of the entire sum, we may be able to count out the whole £4,000. That time will be here in a few days, but time is not an object with the Possessor of Heaven and earth. 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. If this land had not been put up to auction there and then, we should have waited until we had received the purchase-price from our great Master’s stewards; but, as the site was so extremely desirable, and as the purchase had to be made at once or not at all, we thought it wise to secure it. We cannot think that we erred in this decision. None of our beloved counselors and fellow-helpers think so, but one and all advised the step. The money for the payment must come from somewhere, and the questions now to be answered are, — Where is the money? Who has charge of it at present? Who feels called upon to send it? The silver and the gold are the Lord’s, and He has but to incline His servants to apportion some of their Master’s money to this particular work, and the thing will be done. If they can do better with their substance, by all means let them do so; but if they count us faithful, we are prepared to accept this further trust, and do our best with it.

“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, lout then we could not take them; and, however urgent the case, we have been unable to relieve very deserving mothers, simply because their children weft not boys. This is one reason why we need a Girls’ Orphanage.

“Here is a grand opportunity for Christian people with means to take their places among the thunders of this new Institution; and if they judge that such a work will be good and useful, we hope they will, without fail, and without delay, come to our assistance in this fresh branch (of service. We cannot afford to lose a single penny from the funds for the boys, bet this work for the girls must be something extra and above. You helped Willy and Tommy; will you not help Mary and Maggie?”  
The scheme quickly secured the sympathy of the Christian public; the money for the purchase of “The Hawthorns” was ready by the date on which it was required, and the first family of girls was soon installed there. It was found that the trust-deed of the Orphanage provided for the reception of fatherless children, without specifying either sex, so no alteration was needed in it; and arrangements for the completion of the Institution were made in due time. The Pastor and his publishers and the Trustees nobly led the way with generous gifts, many thousands of donors followed their example, and thus, block by block, the Orphanage gradually attained the appearance depicted in the bird’s — eye view.

It is not possible to tell all the blessing that the Orphanage has already been to hundreds of bereaved families; and ‘its beneficent influence is still continued. Up to the time of Mr. Spurgeon’s home-goings, nearly sixteen hundred boys and girls had been sheltered within its walls. They have often expressed their gratitude for all that has been done for them in the Institution; and many of them have, at various times, given practical proofs of their interest in the happy home into which they were received in the hour of their helpless orphanhood. One instance of this is described in the following letter, the receipt of which gave great joy to the President

“Stockwell Orphanage,  
“Clapham Road  
“London, S.W.,  
“February 14th, 1888.

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“In closing the list, today, for March Sword and Trowel, you will I am sure, be pleased to know that it contains donations from ‘some of the old boys’ (about forty), to the amount of £17. 17. 0. Everyone, in forwarding his subscription, wishes it were ten times or a hundred times as much; and it is accompanied with every expression of gratitude for the benefits received at the Stockwell Orphanage, and of warmest love to yourself, — the earthly father to this large orphan family; and they all pray that our Heavenly Father may spare you, for many, many years, to lead and direct this blessed work of caring for the widow and the fatherless.  
“I am,  
“Dear Mr. Spurgeon, “Ever yours sincerely,

“F. G. LADDS.”

A letter from one of the girls, after she had left the Orphanage, will show that there was equal gratitude on that side of the Institution —

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“You must excuse the liberty I am taking in writing to you; but you will not mind when you know the reason. I must, first of all, tell you that I am one of your old orphan girls; but the Lord having found me, and made me His child, before I left the Orphanage, I knew it would cheer your heart if I wrote and told you. I thought, when my father died, 1 could never have another to equal him; but when I came to your Orphanage, I discovered my mistake, for I found a better and truer Father, ‘who will never leave me nor forsake me, and to whom I can take my every trouble, however small it may be. It seems almost too good to be true that Jesus was really crucified to save me. When I think of all the years I grieved and pained Him, it only makes me want to try and please Him ever so much more tot the future.

“I must tell you that I was in the Orphanage seven and a-half years, and was very happy indeed, and wish myself back again. Now I think I must close, thanking you for your kindness in giving us such a beautiful home to live in. It will always be something to look back on with pleasure for the rest of our lives, and for which we can never thank you enough. I myself hope shortly to come forward, and, by baptism, publicly let the world know that I have accepted Jesus as my Savior; or, rather, I should say, that He has accepted me as His child.

“1 remain,  
“One of your old orphan girls,

“\_\_\_\_”  
On a memorable afternoon, in the autum of 1890, Mr. Spurgeon paid a visit to the Orphanage under circumstances which are not likely to be forgotten by any who were then present. Almost immediately afterwards, he wrote the following account of the “happy scene in a storm,” which may fitly conclude the references to the Orphanage in his Standard Life, for it shows how, right to the last, he sought the spiritual welfare of the children, which had been the principal aim both of Mrs. Hillyard and himself in founding the Institution —

“I went to the Stockwell Orphanage, on Tuesday, September 23, to walk round with an artist, and select bits for his pencil, to be inserted in a Christmas book for the Institution. We had not gone many yards before it began to rain. Umbrellas were forthcoming, and we tried to continue our perambulation of the whole square of the boys’ and girls’ houses but the rain persisted in descending, and speedily increased into a downpour. Nothing short of being amphibious would have enabled us to face the torrent. There was no other course but to turn into the play-hall, where the boys gave tremendous cheers at our advent, — cheers almost as deafening as the thunder which responded to them. Go out we could not, for the shower was swollen into a deluge, so I resolved to turn the season to account. A chair was forthcoming, and there I sat, the center of a dense ‘throng of juvenile humanity, which could scarcely be kept off from a nearness which showed the warmth of their reception of their friend. Our artist, who, standing in the throng, made a hurried sketch, could not be afforded space enough to put in the hundreds of boys.

“It was certainly a melting moment as to heat, and fresh air was not abundant; but anything was; better than the storm outside. Flash after flash made everybody feel sober, and prompted me to talk with the boys about that freedom from fear which comes through faith in the Lord Jesus. The story was told of a very young believer, who was in his uncle’s house, one night, during a tremendous tempest. The older folk were all afraid; but he had really trusted himself with the Lord Jesus, and he did not dare to fear. The baby was upstairs, and nobody was brave enough to fetch it down because of a big window on the stairs. This lad went up to the bedroom, brought the baby to its mother, and then read a Psalm, and prayed with his relatives, who were trembling with fear. There was real danger, for a stack was set on fire a short distance away; but the youth was as calm as on a summer’s day of sunshine, not because he was naturally brave, but because he truly trusted in the Lord.

“While I was thus speaking’, the darkness increased, and the storm overhead seemed brooding over us with black wings. It was growing dark before its hour.

Most appropriately, one of the boys suggested a verse, which all sang sweetly and reverently, —

***~~“Abide with me!  
fast falls the eventide;  
The darkness deepens;~~***

***~~Lord, with me abide!  
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,  
Help of the helpless, O abide with me!’~~***

“This ended, there followed a word about the ground of the believer’s trust he was forgiven, and therefore dreaded no condemnation; he was in his Heavenly Father’s hand, and therefore feared no evil. If we were at enmity against God, and had all our sins resting upon our guilty heads, we might be afraid to die; yes, and even afraid to live; but, when reconciled to Him by the death of His Son, we said farewell to tear. With God against us, we are in a state of war; but with God for us, we dwell in perfect peace, Here came flashes of lightning and peals of thunder which might ‘well make us start; but no one was afraid. It is true we all felt awed, but we were restful, and somehow there was a quiet but general cry for ‘perfect peace.’ On enquiring what this meant, I was answered by all the boys singing right joy fully, —

***~~“Like a river glorious is God’s perfect peace, Over all victorious in its bright increase, Perfect, yet it floweth fuller every day; Perfect, yet it groweth deeper all the way. Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are fully blest, Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.~~***

***~~“‘Hidden in the hollow of His blessed hand, Never foe can follow, never traitor stand; Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care, Not a blast of hurry touch the spirit there.~~***

***~~‘Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are fully blest, Finding, as He promised, perfect peace and rest.’~~***

“This sung, we covered our faces reverently, and the boys were very silent, while I lifted up my voice in prayer. Then we opened our eyes again, and it was very dark, as if night had come before its time. While the flames of fire leaped in through the windows and skylights, the noise of the rain upon the roof and the tremendous thunder scarcely permitted me to say much upon Jesus as being our peace, through His bearing our sins in His own body on the tree. Yet, as well as I could, I set forth the cross of Christ as the place of peace-making, peace-speaking, and peace-finding, both for boys and men; and then we all sang, to the accompaniment of the storm-music, —

***How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds  
In a believer’s ear!  
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,  
And drives away his fear.’***

“Never did the power of that Name to drive away tear appear more sweetly. To me, the words came with a soothing, cheering force, which filled me with intense delight; so we very joyfully and peacefully sang the third verse, —

***“‘ Dear Name! the rock on which I build,  
My shield and hiding-place;  
My never-failing treasury, fill’d  
With boundless stores of grace.’***

‘Just as we came to ‘my shield and hiding-place,’ there was a peculiarly blue flash, with a sort of rifle-crack, as if something very close to us had been struck. The boys looked at one another, but went on, in subdued tones, singing of the ‘boundless stores of grace.’ Teachers and others were mixed with the little army of boys, but we were all welded together in common emotion. I then reminded them that, to such a Protector, we must give our heart’s love. It was a duty to love one so good as the Lord Jesus, but even more a delight to do so, since He gave Himself For us, and, by bearing our punishment, delivered us from all harm. As if by instinct, someone led off —

***“My Jesus, I love Thee, I know Thou art mine, For Thee all the follies of sin I resign;  
My gracious Redeemer, my Savior art Thou,  
If ever I loved Thee, my Jesus, ‘tis now.’***

“Here was a good opening to press home the question, — ’ Is this true of each one of you? The great desire of all who conduct the Orphanage is to lead you to take Jesus {or your gracious Redeemer, that so you may love Him. Oh, that you loved Him now/ It may be that, if you leave us unsaved, the Lord will yet bring you in; but it would be far better that you should go, out from us ready for the battle’, of life, and covered with a holy armor, so that you might not be wounded by the arrows of sin.’ Then I picked out Mr. May, who is employed at the Orphanage, and bade him tell the boys about himself. May was a boy’ with us at the Orphanage, — a restless spirit, so he went to sea; and, after many hardships and adventures, he was converted to God at Malta, and then came back to us, and we found him a post at his own school. As the lads knew the most of his story, May did not say very much; and what he did say was rather overborne by the rain on the roof, which sounded like ten thousand drums. The thunder added its trumpet voice, and only allowed us pauses of silence. I went on With the talk till there came a burst of thunder loud and long. I stopped, and bade the children listen to the voice of the Lord. We all hearkened to it with awe and wonder. Then I reminded diem of Psalm xxix ‘The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars; yea, the Lord breaketh the cedars of Lebanon. The Lord sitteth upon the flood; yea, the Lord sitteth King for ever.’ I told them how often I had sung to myself Dr. Watts’s verses, —

***~~“‘The God that rules on high,  
And thunders when He please,  
That rides upon the stormy sky,~~***

***~~And manages the seas:~~***

***~~“‘This awful God is ours,  
Our Father and our love;  
He shall send down His heavenly powers  
To carry us above.~~***

***~~“‘There shall we see His face,  
And never, never sin;  
There from the rivers of His grace,  
Drink endless pleasures in.~~***

“As they did not know the old-fashioned tune ‘ Falcon Street,’ to which I had been wont to sing the words, we kept quiet till, suddenly, there came another roll of drums in the march of the God of armies; and then, as an act of worship, we adoringly sang together, with full force, the words of the Doxology — .

***~~“‘Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,  
Praise Him all creatures here below,  
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host,~~***

***~~Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.’~~***

“This was a grand climax. The heavens themselves seemed to think so, for there were no more thunder-claps of such tremendous force. I need not write more. The storm abated. I hurried off to see enquirers at the Tabernacle, but not till one and another had said to me, ‘The boys will never forget this. It will abide with them throughout eternity.’ So be it, for Christ’s sake! Amen.”

Like the Orphanage, the Pastors’ College made great advances during the fl0urteen years from 1878 to 1892. Up to the time of the President’s homegoing, nearly nine hundred brethren had been educated in the Institution, of whom a large number had gone to the foreign mission field or to other distant, spheres of service. The statistical account for the year 1891-2 showed that, in the churches under the charge of the ministers who furnished the figures for that Annual Report, — and it was never possible to get returns from anything like all of them, — nearly 100,000 persons had been baptized since the year 1865, when the statistics were first collected; and, after making all deductions, there had been a clear increase of 80,000 members. Truly, if Mr. Spurgeon had done nothing beyond founding and carrying on the Pastors’ College, it would have been a noble life-work; yet that was only one of his many forms of labor for the Lord.

The four tutors, whose portraits appear on the opposite page, were in charge of the College classes during the greater part of Mr. Spurgeon’s presidency. “Father Rogers,” who was spared to see his first student succeeded by more than eight hundred others, continued to hold the office of Principal until 1881, and he afterwards rendered occasional help at the College until 1884, when he finally retired. Then, after spending seven restful years in his peaceful home at South Norwood, at the ripe age of ninety-two, he entered the glory-land only about four’ months before the Pastor and President with whom he had been so long and so happily associated in the important work of training men for the Christian ministry. Professor Gracey, was appointed Principal in 1881, and he faithfully discharged the duties of that responsible position until he also was “called home” just a year after Mr. Spurgeon. Professor Fergusson remained at his post until the end of 1891, when increasing infirmities necessitated his retirement; and he is now (in 1899,) the sole survivor of the early tutorial staff of the College. Professor Marchant, who had himself been a Pastors’ College student, became one of the tutors in 1881; he continued in that post until 1898, and only a few months more elapsed before he also received the home-call, just a week or two after the sudden summons reached Pastor J. A. Spurgeon, the former Vice-President, and afterwards the President of the Institution.

One of the most important events in the later history of the College was the formation, in 1888, of the Pastors’ College Evangelical Association. This was one of the direct results of the “Down-grade” Controversy. When Mr. Spurgeon found how many of his own former students had accepted various forms of modern-thought teaching, he felt compelled to withdraw from further fellowship with them in the annual Conferences, at which they were practically his guests for the week. The only method of attaining that end, so far as he could see, was to reorganize the Association, and to define more clearly the doctrinal basis, which had been in existence from its commencement, although there had been no need to call attention to it while all had been heartily united in the “one faith” as well as the “one Lord” and the “one baptism.” It was a great grief to the President that some brethren, who were firmly attached to Evangelical doctrine, remained outside the new fraternal band; but the gap in the ranks, which was caused by their absence, was quickly filled by a.n equal number of ministers, who, though not trained in the Pastors’ College, were in heart and soul one with Mr. Spurgeon, especially’ in his great protest against error and worldliness in the Church. A special clause was inserted in the constitution of the reorganized fraternity by which they were admitted, as associates, to share the privileges enjoyed by’ the members. Two of these brethren — Pastors Hugh D. Brown and R. Shindler — are in the group reproduced on the opposite page from a photograph, taken at the Orphanage, on the Tuesday afternoon of the Conference week in 1888. The artist desired to secure a portrait of the beloved leader who had, that morning, been unanimously and enthusiastically elected “Perpetual President of the Pastors’ College Evangelical Association,” although he always insisted upon the observance of what all regarded, in his case, as the pure formality of an annual election, for he foresaw that a time might come when that right would have to be exercised in real earnest, — and all too soon it happened .as he had prophesied. He was in one of his happiest moods, that afternoon, and he called to him seven brethren who were near him at the time, and then told the photographer to take them all. This he did, with the most satisfactory result, as the illustration clearly shows.

The chapter on “Jubilee Joys” contains a reference to Mr. Spurgeon’s objections to an endowment for his College; but he was, in a very singular way, and quite unintentionally, the means of providing a large portion of the funds for its maintenance for several years after he had been “called home.” The story greatly’ amuse, d him when he heard it related; it was to this effect. The conductor of an omnibus, while waiting on the City side of London Bridge, endeavored to attract passengers by shouting out, “Over the water to Charlie!” A gentleman enquired what he meant by this unusual cry, and he explained that the ‘bus was going over the Thames, and past the Tabernacle, where C. H. Spurgeon was announced to preach. It happened that the stranger had never heard the Pastor; indeed, as the tale ils told, it appears that he was not in the habit of attending any place of worship; but he went on that occasion, and for the rest of his life he was a diligent reader of the printed sermons, and when he made his will, he bequeathed a very large sum to Mr. Spurgeon for the Pastors’ College and for building chapels for the ministry of brethren trained in that Institution. The Law of Mortmain prevented the carrying out of the latter part of his bequest, and a long Chancery suit reduced the.. residue which he intended for the College; but several thousands of pounds were received from his estate by the Trustees, who were thus enabled to continue the President’s important work of preparing preachers of the Word for home and foreign service.

An important outgrowth from “Mr. Spurgeon’s First Institution” was the Pastors’ College Society of Evangelists. The students, from the very beginning, had been noted both for the Evangelical doctrines which they held in common with their beloved President, and for the evangelistic fervor with which they proclaimed those truths. Many of them possessed the qualifications for the offices of pastor and evangelist to a very remarkable degree, and contemporary records abundantly prove how greatly the Church of Christ in general, and the Baptist denomination in particular, have been strengthened and increased through the labors of “our own men” in London, throughout the British Islands, on the Continent of Europe, in the United States, in most if not all of our numerous Colonies, and in the great mission field at large.  
Still, Mr. Spurgeon long felt the need of a number of brethren, specially called and fitted to “do the work of an evangelist ;” and it was a great joy to him as, one after another, suitable men came forward, and offered themselves for the service on which his heart had been set. Mr. W. Higgins, now pastor at Wymondham, Norfolk, was the pioneer of this new movement; to which a great impetus was given by the appointment of Messrs. A. J. Clarke and J. Manton Smith. Then, when the temporary failure of Mr. Clarke’s health made it advisable for him to accept an invitation to Australia, Mr. W. Y. Fullerton took his place, and so commenced that happy partnership in labor for the Lord which has made the names of “C.. H. Spurgeon’s evagelists, Fullerton and Smith,” familiar as household words in tens of thousands oF homes in various parts of the United Kingdom. Other College. brethren, who have been more or less closely connected with the Society of Evangelists, are Messrs. J. Burnham, E. A. Carter, A. A. Harmer, J. s. Harrison, j. T. Mateer, and F. Russell. The “little band of brothers’ entirely set apart for evangelistic work has been decreased by’ Messrs. Fullerton, Harmer, and Russell’s acceptance of pastorates; but some compensation for their loss has resulted from Mr. Carter’s generous aid and self-sacrificing devotion to the Pioneer Mission, by which the number of earnest evangelists, seeking to serve the Savior, has been largely augmented. It should also be mentioned that, long before the College Society of Evangelists was organized, there had existed two large and useful companies of so-called “lay” brethren, — the Tabernacle Evangelists’ Association and Country Mission, — under the leadership of devoted elders of the Tabernacle Church. Many of the students first began to speak for the Lord in connection with one or other of these useful agencies; and, during their College career, they continued, by this means, helping in the evangelization of the metropolis, and its suburbs, and the towns and villages in the adjacent counties. The total result of these many forms of Christian service, only eternity can reveal; but it is already known that, through their instrumentality, multitudes of sinners have been led to repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and many new churches have, been formed, which are now self-supporting, and, in their turn, are centres of evangelistic effort in “the regions beyond.” To God be all the glory.

One other useful branch of the College work, in which Mr. Spurgeon greatly rejoiced, was the Pastors’ College Missionary Association. Without any kind of antagonism to existing organizations, when sufficient sums were placed at his disposal, he guaranteed the necessary amount for the support of Mr. Patrick and Dr. Churcher in North Africa; and, through the same agency, contributed toward the maintenance of Messrs. Blamire and Wigstone in Spain. He hoped that the way might have been opened for sending out large numbers of missionaries to various lands that are still destitute of gospel light; but, as the means for carrying out this purpose did not reach him, he was glad that so many of his students were enabled to go, under the auspices of the Baptist Missionary Society, the American Baptist Missionary Union, or the China Inland Mission, to the different portions of the foreign field to which they believed themselves to be called of God. They also have done and are doing a work which “the day shall declare.”

Not much need be added to the account of the Colportage Association given in the previous volume. In the last year of Mr. Spurgeon’s life, 96 colporteurs we. re employed, — a larger number than in any previous part of the history of the work; and their sales amounted to £11,255 0S. 6d., — a higher total than they had ever before reached. During 1891, they had sold nearly 20,000 Bibles and Testaments, and more than a quarter of a million of Scripture texts and cards. The total of their sales, from the commencement of the Association to the close of 1891, was £153,784 3s. 6d.; and, during that quarter of a century, they had recorded 11,822,637 visits to families. It is impossible to tabulate the blessing that these earnest Christian workers have taken into the homes of the people, or that they have been the means of conveying by the services, Sunday-schools, missions, and temperance meetings which they are continually conducting; for, happily, this work is still being’ carried on, though with a smaller number of agents, and with even greater anxieties as to finances than Mr. Spurgeon experienced. It was always a marvel to him that the Lord’s stewards did not more quickly realize the value of the colporteurs’ labors, and more generously aid this Protestant, Evangelical, Home Mission service

During the period that these various institutions were growing and flourishing, the Tabernacle Church, the foster-mother of them all, was prospering beyond all precedent. At the time of Mr. Spurgeon’s home-call, the number of members on the church-roll was 5,31I; and, during his long pastorate, no less than 14,691 persons were received into fellowship. At the end of 1891, there were 22 mission stations, and 27 Sunday and Ragged Schools, with 612 teachers, 8,034 scholars, and accommodation for 3,840 worshippers in the various halls used for public services. Comparing this great host with the little company of anxious but praying people to whom “the boy-preacher” delivered his first discourse, in New Park Street Chapel, on that historic morning, in December, I853, one can only say, as he said, times without number, when speaking of the blessing which the Lord had graciously vouchsafed to his ministry, —

**“WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT!”**

CHAPTER 104

LAST LETTERS FROM MENTONE.

BY MRS. C. H. SPURGEON.

T HE love-letters of twenty blessed years have been reluctantly lifted from their hiding-place, and re-read with unspeakable love and sorrow. They are full of brightness, and the fragrance of a deep and filled with every detail concerning my beloved and doing his doings which could be precious to the heart of a loving wife. But, alas! each year, some part of the holiday time at Mentone was overshadowed by what appeared to be an inevitable illness, when the dear preacher was laid aside, and days and nights of wearisome pain were appointed to him. He had always worked up to the latest moment, and to the utmost point of endurance, so it was not surprising that, when the tension was relaxed, nature revenged herself upon the weary body by setting every nerve on fire, and loading every vein with gout-poison, to act as fuel to the consuming flame. “I feel as if i were emerging from a volcano,’ he wrote, at the beginning of a convalescent period; and even at such a time his sense of humor asserted itself, for his pen had sketched the outlines of a conical hill, out of the crater of which his head and shoulders were slowly rising, while the still-imprisoned lower limbs set forth the sad truth that all was not yet well with them.

These Chronicles would scarcely be complete without some further particulars concerning his life on the Riviera, — how he enjoyed his pleasures, how he bore his pains, how he worked when God gave him relief from sickness, and how, always and ever his loving heart was “at home” with’ me. He kept up a daily correspondence with unflagging regularity’ and when unable to use his pen, through severe suffering or weakness, the letter came as usual, either dictated by him, or altogether written by his devoted secretary.

I have selected, as the material for this chapter, the last letters which were written to me from Mentone, and which cover a period of nearly’ three months, for he left London on November 11, 1890, and returned February 5, 1891. The next time he visited the place he loved so well, God gratified his longing, — cherished for years, — o have me with him; but, alas! “I went out full, and the Lord brought me home again empty;” for, after enjoying three months of exceeding’ sweetness, I unexpectedly found that I had gone to Mentone to see my beloved die!

Passing over the days of travel, which had no special interest, the arrival at Mentone is thus recorded on a post card — “What heavenly sunshine! This is like another world. I cannot; quite believe myself to be on the same planet. God grant that this may set me. all right! Only three other visitors in the hotel, — three American ladies, — room for you. So far, we have had royal weather, all but the Tuesday. Now the sea shines like a mirror before us. The palms in front of the windows are as still as in the Jubilee above. The air is warm, soft, balmy. We are idle, — writing, reading, dawdling. Mentone is the same as ever, but it has abolished its own time, and goes by Paris.”

This bright opening of the holiday was quickly overclouded, for the next day came the sad news that o, out had fastened upon the poor patient’s right hand and arm, and caused him weary pain. Yet he wrote — “The day is like one in Eden before our first parents fell. ‘When my head’s better, I shall enjoy it. I have eau de Cologne dripped on to my hot brain-box; and, as I have nothing to do but to look out on the perfect scene before me, my case is not a bad one.” But, alas! the “case” proved to be very serious, and a painful time followed. These sudden attacks of the virulent enemy were greatly distressing and discouraging; one day, Mr. Spurgeon would be in apparent health and good spirits; and the next, his hand, or foot, or knee, would be swollen and inflamed, gout would have developed, and all the attendant evils of fever, unrest, sleeplessness, and acute suffering, would manifest themselves with more or less severity.

In the present instance, the battle raged for eight days with much fury, and then God gave victory to the anxious combatants, and partial deliverance to the poor prisoner. My daily letters, written by Mr. Harrald, during this period, were very tender records of the sick-room experiences, — every detail told, and every possible consolation offered ; — but it was a weary season of suspense for the loving heart a thousand miles distant, and the trial of absence was multiplied tenfold by the distress of anxiety.

In the first letter Mr. H. wrote, he said — “The one continual cry from Mr. Spurgeon is,’ I wish I were at home! I must get home!’ Just to pacify him, I have promised to enquire about the through trains to London; but, of course, it would be impossible for him to travel in his present condition. Everyone is very kind, sympathetic, attentive, and ready to do anything that can be done to relieve or cheer the dear sufferer. I have just asked what message he wishes to send to you. He says, ‘ Give her my love, and say I am very bad, and I wish I were at home for her to nurse me; but, as I am not, I shall be helped through somehow.’“

Curiously enough, The Times of the following day had a paragraph to the effect that “Mr. Spurgeon will stay at Mentone till February;” and when Mr. Harrald read this aloud, the dear patient remarked, “I have not said so, but I am afraid I shall have to do it;” and the prophecy was fulfilled.

After eight days and nights of alternate progress and drawback, there came to me a half-sheet of paper, covered with extraordinary hieroglyphic characters, at first sight almost unreadable. But more deciphered them, and this is what they said — “Beloved, to lose right hand, is to be dumb. I am better, except at night. Could not love his darling more. Wished myself at home when pains came; but when worst, this soft, clear air helps me. It is as Heaven’s gate. All is well. Thus have I stammered a line or two. No quite dumb, bless the Lord! What a good Lord He is! I shall yet praise Him. Sleeplessness cannot so embitter the night as to make me rea; when He is near.” This pathetic little note is signed, “Your own beloved Benjamite,” for it was the work of his left hand.

I think the effort was too much for him, for two more letters were written by Mr. H.; but a tender little joke, recorded in one of them, showed me that my beloved was on the road to recovery, “Our dear Tirshatha,” says Mr. H., “has been greatly pleased with your letter received to-day; your exhilaration appears to have favorably affected him. He says that he hopes the time will speedily arrive when he will be able to offer you his hand!”

After this, the daily correspondence from his own pen is resumed, and in the first letter he strikes his, usual key-note of praise to God — ” Bless the Lord I feel lighter and better; but oh, how weak! Happily, having nothing to do, it does not matter. I have nearly lost a whole month of life since I first broke down, but the Lord will restore this breach.”

The next day, — date of letter, Dec. 1, 1890, — he writes to his “poor lamb in the snow” to tell her that “this poor sheep cannot get its forefoot right yet, but it is far better than it was,” — followed by the quaint petition, “May the Good Shepherd dig you out of the ,;now, and many may the mangolds and the swedes be which He shall lay in the fold for His hallfrozen sheep!”

Our Arctic experiences in England were balanced by wintry weather on the Riviera. “We have had two gloriously terrific storms,” he says; “the sea wrought, and was tempestuous; it flew before the wind like glass dust, or powdered snow. The tempest howled, yelled, screamed, and shrieked. The heavens seemed on fire, and the skies reverberated like the boom of gigantic kettledrums. Hail rattled down, and then rain poured. It was a time of clamors and confusions. I went to bed at ten and left the storm to itself; and I woke at seven, much refreshed. I ought to be well, but I am not. and don’t know why.”

December 3, 1890. — ”We had two drives yesterday, and saw some of the mischief wrought by the storm. The woodman, Wind, took down his keenest axe, and went straight on. his way, hewing Out a clean path through the olives and the pines. Here he rent off an arm, there he cut off a head, and yonder he tore a trunk asunder, like some fierce Assyrian in the days ere pity was born. The poor cottagers were gathering the olives from’ the road, trying to clear off the broken boughs before they bore down other trees, and putting up fences which the storm had leveled with the ground. They looked so sad as they saw that we commiserated them. Today, so fair, so calm, so bright, so warm, is as a leaf from the evergreen trees of Heaven. Oh, that you were here!”

For the next four days, I received post cards only. There was a loving arrangement between us that these missives should be used when we were busy, or had not much to tell; but my beloved could always say a great many things on these little messengers. He knew how to condense and crystallize his thoughts, so that a few brief choice sentences conveyed volumes of tender meaning. I have commenced this chapter with facsimiles of two of his poetical post cards of earlier date; here are two specimens belonging to the period of which I am writing —

“Mentone,  
“Sunday, December 7, ‘90.  
“Mia Carissima,

“Your praise of my letters prompts me to write more; but your royal commands restrict me to a card; and they are wise. Much love. Parcel has arrived, — all that I want. If specially good books come, you might get Mr. Keys to take two or three to Cook‘s office, for Haskoll to bring to me. He travels every week to and fro.

“It was wet yesterday; but I went out a very little walk. Mean to walk every day, but find my feet painful, as if I could count all my bones, yet I am each day better. Today is dull, and by no means tropical; but, oh, so quiet! I am praying that the ‘Report’ flow as streams in the desert. In our port, some vessels have all sails spread, but it is; only to dry them; better have ever so little a bit of canvas filled with the breath of heaven. I feel as if I were drying; may ‘you have the breeze!”

“Mentone,

“Monday, 8/12/90. “Out of that obedience which has so long been habitual to me, I did not write this morning; but, finding that there is an evening post, my rebellious nature seized the occasion to indulge itself. TODAY I DRESSED MYSELF! A childish glee is on me as I record the fact. To have the use of ones hands again, is a big mercy. We have had a heavenly day, and spent the morning in a long drive, Afternoon, I went for a walk. I was entreated to attend laying of first stone in Scotch Church, but I would not yield. H. went, and it was cold and draughty, — enough to lay me up again. Wisdom did me a good turn when she. bade me walk in the sun. Mr. A. has sent home some flowers; he despatched some rosebuds to you from me.. They will be perfumed a parfait amour. You write so sweetly. Yours is a hand which sets to music all it writes to me. God bless you! But you don’t say how you are. If you do not, I will write every day. We have fifteen in the hotel now. I have not commenced morning prayer with them yet, but think of doing so soon. Remember me to T. and. old George.”

Such post cards were as good as letters, and I could have been well content had my husband sent me only these; but he was lavish in his love, and insisted that the letters should outnumber the smaller missives. I had long protested, and sincerely, too, against what I feared was a tax upon his precious holiday time; but, to the end, (for these are his very last letters to me,) he persevered in his tender, self-imposed task and, now, the memory of his goodness is inexpressibly precious.

In the succeeding communication, there is a reference to the burning question of the hour, — Home Rule, — which may interest readers who indulge a /)enchant for politics .....

“We have had two of the loveliest of days; and, after a morning drive, I have had an afternoon’s walk, each day walking just a little more. It is not much now, but it was and is much to me. The Dr. says that, in the heart-cure, they have a zigzag up a mountain, and the patient tries a turn each day; and when he can walk to the top and down, he goes home. My little perambulations; are somewhat after this fashion. This place is delicious. It is just 8 a.m., and I have both windows open, and I am writing to the low soft cadence of a rippling sea. Oh, that you were here!

“That Irish stew! The last dose was well peppered, and served up hot! Perhaps now that they are separated they will get together, they’ seem to have been greatly divided while they were united! Poor G.O.M.! How he must feel the insults of those for whom he has forfeited everything! Yet he seems to hold on to their scheme though he knows that it is not only dangerous, but unattainable. I am glad I am neither of Gladstone nor of Parnell. He that wades not up to the ankles, will not go in up to the loins.”

Midwinter in England brought also to Mentone some cold, wet days, and these acted on the Pastor’s sensitive frame as the atmosphere operates on a barometer. Dull and dreary days depressed him; but when they came, they’ were welcomed, for he would then turn to his literary work with redoubled energy, and get through an amazing quantity of it in an incredibly short space of time; but he revelled in the sunshine, and enjoyed basking in its warm beams; and his pity for those who had to endure the severities of fog, frost, and snow, was very real and sincere.

“Poor darling,” he wrote, “to be so cold. The Lord will soon hear prayer, and send the soft South wind upon you, and then I also shall get well, and go out for walks, and praise His Name. I wish I could think of something to cast a gleam of sunlight over ‘Westwood.’ If rny love were light, you would live. in the sun. I shall send some roses to-morrow, and they will prophesy of better days.” Alas! the “better days” moved very tardily towards him on this occasion; and, though of course we. did not know it at the time, the deadly mischief, which afterwards proved fatal, had already begun to work in his poor body. “I cannot say that I am as I should like to be,” he writes; “two cold, windy afternoons have kept me in, and so I have missed my walk; and my hand, inside, is white and chalky, and outside, on its back, it is still somewhat swollen, and you see I cannot write so well. Today, I have been for a drive, but it was rather’ cold. I sleep well, take physic often, and try to be right, and am really much better, but the mischief hang,; about me.” Undoubtedly it did, and this was “the beginning of the end,” though our eyes were holden, so that we could not see it.

The loving ministries of his Mentone life began again, however. He “went to see a sick Baroness, and prayed with her, and helped her to feel at rest through submission to our Lord’s will;’ and the morning meetings for worship were recommenced, the conduct of which gave him much joy and encouragement, with results only fully known in Heaven.

Next morning, the aneroid marks a higher figure, but only for a few hours — “This has been so far a lovely, sunny, warm day’, and we have been out for a long drive, and enjoyed it much. Seen the mountains of Italy covered with their white millers’ hats; and fields of roses, red, white, and yellow! We had a drink of very cold water from the fountain which gushes, apparently, from the he. art of an olive. Now the day is darkening down with clouds, and probably a cold blast will come. Yes, the angels are letting loose the winds from their fists, and the palm trees are waving their fronds in token of victory over the sun which has retreated behind the clouds. These palms in front of the windows constantly remind me of the words in the Revelation, ‘with palms in their hands,’ for we are on a level with their grand fronds. ‘should think they measure ten or twelve feet from where they start. They are magnificent emblems of victory. We shall wave better than these when we are with the Lord, and celebrate His triumph!”  
Day after day, these barometric fluctuations agitated the dear patient, and seemed to retard his recovery’ but they were only the outward indications of the deep-seated internal trouble. It is wonderful how blind we were.; so used, I expect, to the alternations of my beloved’s; condition, and so happily accustomed to see his “rare power’ of recuperation,” as the Dr. called it, manifesting itself at the end of all illness, that we had learned to anticipate complete recovery from all his sicknsses. God be praised for’ the. merciful veil which hides the future from our eyes!

“Mentone,

“December 18, ‘90. “Yesterday morning was wet and cold, and we rejoiced in the fire of olive logs. After lunch, the clouds were gone, the winds fell asleep, the sun in beneficent splendor gave us two hours of summer, during which your Prince Charlie went forth in his chariot, and was so pleased with the light, color, warmth, and tone of everything, that he felt no spot or time could ever be more enjoyable unless his dear consort could be with him. I want someone to show these things to, — and there is only one ‘someone’ who would fulfill my ideal.

“After morning prayer, we went down town to get the parcel from Cook’s man. All right. Books well selected. Hearty thanks. The tracts from Drummond’s we can give away. We sent sermons and other periodicals to a Shields collier which has been in this port with coals. After getting our parcel, we returned, for the clouds came up in black armies, and the wind rushed forth. It may alter again, and then ‘out we go;’ but nothing seems to be settled, and I suppose the weather here cannot be quiet, while it is so terrible with you. If the Lord will, I trust the worst of the winter will soon be gone. I have plenty to do, so that a day indoors is not dull, but I wish I could get my walk. This, too, may come. I have one finger purple and swollen, but I feel so greatly better that I could clap my hands if’ {t were not for hurting theft poor weak member.”

Till Christmas-day, the letters tell of cold and rain, tornadoes of wind. and other evils, with occasional glimpses of the lovely spring weather so much desired. My husband ,greatly sympathized with us in our endurance of the very severe winter of 1890; it was quite touching to note how constantly he referred to it, and seemed almost to suffer with us in our long period of frost, fog, bitter cold, and darkness. “I keep on praying for change of weather for you, and the poor and sick,” he writes; “I wish I could send you a brazier of the coals of my heart, which have a most vehement flame.”

Oh, how ‘true this was! God had made him a real philanthropist, and the woes of others we. re felt, and commiserated, and brought before the Lord, with as much earnestness and sincerity as though they had been his own. His heart was so big, it had room for others’ griefs; and it was so full of love and pity that he had always some to spare for those who needed it. A carriage drive, to Ventimiglia gave him great pleasure just at this time. From a certain part of the road, the Col di Tenda and a considerable portion of the Maritime Alps are visible, in their winter dress of snow; and visitors from Mentone are fond of driving there to see a picture quite unique in its grouping, — a foreground of roses, and palms, and tropical vegetation luxuriating in the sunshine, — on the one side, the blue waters of the Mediterranean rivalling the brightness of the sky; on the other, the valley of the Roya, with picturesque hamlets on both banks of the river, and, for a distant background, those solemn white Alps proclaiming, in a language which cannot be misunderstood, the greatness and majesty of their Maker.

Christmas-day was grey and cold, and was spent in work, “digging away at books and letters..” Friends had lavished upon him a wealth of lovely flowers, — roses, carnations, hyacinths, tuberoses, cyclamen, — in vases; and a pot of that sweetest of sweet blossoms, lily of the valley; but he could scarcely enjoy them. All night, his bones had “cried and. groaned” with rheumatism; and he must, I think, for the first time, have had some premonition of danger, for he says, “There is some deep-seated gout in me.”

But even this passes, and the five following days each bring a bright, cheerful little post card to reassure and comfort me. One, written on Monday, December’ 29, 1890, tells of “a delightful meeting, last night, in the room above ours. Piano, with hymns ad lib., and I preached from Deuteronomy 32:10, glad to review the goodness of Him who found, led, taught, and kept me;” and the last of the five — on December 31, 1890, — testifies thus graciously to the goodness and faithfulness of God — “The old year is nearly out, — a good old year, a year of lovingkindnesses and of tender mercies. I cannot dismiss it with a complaint, but with thankfulness. Oh, for more holiness for myself in the new year, and more health for my beloved spouse! I think I shal1 get home for February 1, or first Sunday in February, for I now feel as if life had come back to me with enjoyment, and a measure of sprightly thought, for which I would praise the Lord practically by employing it in His service. We had twenty-three to morning prayer today, — nearly as many as the room cart hold. How they do come! Wet and cold do not hinder, and they are so grateful.”

“New Year’s Day, Jan. 1, 1891.

“A happy new year to you, my sweetest and best! I would write it in the biggest of capitals if that would show how happy I wish the year to be. I had a praiseful evening yesterday, blessing God for the old year; and now, this morning, we have had a good meeting. We sang’ No. 1,042 in Our Own Hymn Book, having made copies for our twenty-four friends. Then I read and expounded Psalm ciii., and prayed. There were flowers, and cards, and contributions; and, this afternoon, we are going to give our landlord and his wife a present, for the house is not full, and the keeping of the hotel is; not profitable. So there will be joy among many as we meet for tea. God is indeed gracious to me, for I feel well, and I turn my face homeward in desire. I have been for a drive in the delicious summer sunshine. Oh, that you had been at my side! I have just read your sweet, sweet letter. You best-beloved of my heart, how I wish I could change your weather! I can only pray; but prayer moves the hand which moves winds and clouds. The Lord Himself comfort you, and ‘bear you up under all troubles, and make up to you, by His own presence, the absence of health, warmth, and husband!”

When my beloved felt fairly well, his Sundays at Mentone were a great joy and rest to him. He made the day full of sweet, devout service, and still sweeter communion with the Lord! In the morning, after having family prayer, he would, perhaps, go to the Presbyterian place of worship in Mrs. Dudgeon’s garden; and afterwards write to me — “Capital sermon from Mr. Somerville on Revelation 2:12,17, splendidly witnessing against the ‘ Down-grade.’“ In the afternoon, there would be breaking of bread, and one of those choice little addresses, on the love and grace of the Lord Jesus, which melted all hearts, and rekindled the latent fires of devotion in some inconstant breast; and the evening would be spent in singing God’s praises, and listening to a brief sermon by Mr. Harrald, or someone else who might have a message to deliver. “Quite a full day,” he remarks, after one of these occasions, “but it seemed very short, and as sweet as short. Oh, that you were here!”

The holy, happy influence of these Sabbaths overflowed into the days of the week, which to my beloved were as much “Lord’s-days” as those set apart by law and gospel. The company at morning worship grew larger every week, the adjoining room had to be thrown open, and one very cold day he wrote — ” I wondered to see my visitors assemble to the great number of forty.-one, and they do not want to go away from what some of them call ‘ this dear room.’ Truly, the Lord is here, and His Word is sweet both to them and to me, as we read it morning by morning. What a text is Isaiah 62:7, in the Revised Version ‘Ye that are the Lord’s remembrancers, take ye no rest, and give Him no rest..’ Oh, for such importunate prayers for His Church now that evil times have come!”

A tender, loving’ birthday letter, which set all the joy-bells in my heart ringing, comes next in order, and I quote a few extracts from it — “I trust this will reach you on your own dear birthday. Ten thousand benedictions be upon you!… What an immeasurable blessing you have been to me, and are still! Your patience in suffering, and diligence in service, are works of the Holy Spirit in you, for which I adore His Name. Your love to me is not only a product of nature, but it has been so sanctified by grace that it has become a spiritual blessing to me. May you still be upheld; and if you may not be kept from suffering, may you be. preserved from sinking!… Mylove to you grows, and yet I do not know how at any time it could have been greater. I am thinking which I shall do, — drive out, and send you flowers, or walk, and get Mr. A. to send them. I know which way your vote would go, and I shall act accordingly, if our friend will undertake the commission. If flowers do not come, please know that it was in my heart to send them.”

A few days after, a reference is made to my reply in these words — ” I had your letter, last night, which was written on your birthday. I am so glad ‘the flowers reached you, and made you glad. ‘There is a happy tone about ‘the old woman’s’ letter which does the old man good. God bless you, darling, and delight your heart with trucks and sacks of good things for others!” This latter sentence refers to the generous action of one of our near neighbors, on Beulah Hill, who, knowing that I was interesting myself for the poor in Thornton Heath, had placed a truckload of coals at my disposal for them. The long and dreary winter had severely tried them, and we opened a soup-kitchen at “Westwood,” which ministered daily to their necessities. My beloved felt sorely troubled for the distress which came so close to our doors, and did not fail to take his share in the pitying help rendered to those who could not help themselves during’ the time of that awful frost. “I am so glad you feed the poor,” he wrote; “.spend L10 for me, please; don’t stint anything. As I look at the pictures in The Graphic, my spirits sink, but my prayer rises.” And a few days later he returns to the same subject

“I pray clay and night for a thaw to come, and end this great distress by allowing the people to work. Do spend my L10, which I will send by next post.”

The gray, cold days, which prevailed at Mentone during the early part of the year 1891, gave the dear preacher an opportunity for working hard, of which he willingly availed himself. He heartily enjoyed the pleasurable leisure of driving, which seemed to soothe his brain, and refresh both body and spirit; but he was never idle; and, after returning from his excursions, he would apply himself immediately to the work in hand, and his busy pen would fly over the sheets, of paper with untiring energy. The secret of the amazing wealth of literary labor, which he left as a legacy to the world, lay in the tact that he was constantly gathering up the seed-pearls of small opportunities while never neglecting the greater occasions of enrichment.. Receiving and imparting, gaining that he ,night give, laboring not for himself but for others, the redeemed minutes soon multiplied into hours, and the hours grew into days, and so his lille, like a field well-dressed and tended, bore hundredfold crops to the praise and delight of the Great Husbandman..

Sabbath, Jan. 18, 1891, he wrote — ” I have not gone to service this morning, as I had sermons to revise, and one to get for this afternoon. I have chosen Psalm 32:9, and want to show the joy of having a good understanding with the Lord, so as to nee. d no bit, but to be left free to go on in His way with liberty. Two things are to be dreaded, — Irreverent familiarity.’ ‘lest they come near unto thee ;’ (A.v.) .... Disobedient departure.’ ‘else they will not come near unto thee. (R.v.) Are not the two renderings curious? To me, they set forth the same thing in different lights. Note, in p,.v., ‘whose trapping’s must be bit and bridle,’ as if even these were made ornamental, and our inflictions and afflictions became our decorative equipment, — yet even then not desirable. Oh, to be guided by the Lord’s eye!”

Further on, I am told that he had “a good service from the text mentioned,” and then that he had been able to revise six sermons ready for printing when double numbers were wanted, or “to be used if I should be ill.” Was this another premonition? If it were, the shadow soon passed, for the next letter describes a visit to Beaulieu, — ” a lovely drive, in the warm sunshine, to a place which I should like to stop at for a time another year, if it please God.” This little outing must have benefited the dear patient, for, the next morning, he writes — ” I am working with windows wide open; and when I have done, I hope to take my long walk round the red rocks. I forgot to tell you that, on Thursday, Mr. Cheyne Brady came over from Cannes, and we walked out a mile or more, and talked, and prayed, and then came back. He returned alone because he had to hurry to catch a train, but I walked both ways with great pleasure; indeed, it was the best time I have spent since I came here. The sun, the air, the sea, all ministered to me; and I ministered to the Lord in grateful praise.”

Mr. Spurgeon had consented to open the new Scotch Church on Thursday, January 29, 1891; but, on the Wednesday, while out walking, a sudden seizure of gout in both hands and one foot threatened to lay him aside once more. It is most touching to read how he fought the disease both with physic and by dieting. “The enemy is going,” he writes; “driven out by medicine, starved out by oatmeal and nothing else for lunches and dinners.” He took the service at the Scotch Church, though so utterly unfit for it, and “got through the sermon with trembling knees, and the bell gone out of my voice.” So extremely sensitive as my beloved was to any degree of pain, it was simply marvelous how he overcame this wen/mess of body, and served while suffering, when work for the Master called forth his spiritual energies. Many a time, at the Tabernacle, has he painfully limped into his pulpit, leaning heavily on his stick, and, unable to stand, has preached, kneeling with one knee on a Chair; but even then, the astonished congregation has seen him, warning to his work, and inspired by his allconsuming zeal, push the chair aside, and, grasping the rail of the platform with both hands, stand there for the rest of the service, apparently forgetful of his bodily distress, because absorbed by’ his passionate desire to persuade poor sinners to come to Christ.  
But this is a digression. We must return to Mentone for the few days yet remaining.

One of the dear preacher’s last ministrations, on this occasion, was to hold a funeral service over the body of the Baroness von H., whom he had so often visited and comforted in her last sickness. He writes — ”There was a .great blaze of candles on both sides of the coffin, and palm branches and white flowers upon it. She is now to be carried to Russia, and I should think the journey will occupy a fortnight. Why can’t they let a booty be? I would prefer to be buried wherever I might die; yet, as she wished to lie in the same tomb with her husband, there is an argument on that side also.”

Now the record draws quickly to a dose. It had been a time of strangely mingled experiences of rest and rack, of cold and heat, of storm and sunshine, of pain and pleasure ; — but, over all, the peace of God brooded like a dove, and the home-corning was safe and happy” not even a shadow of the dark dispensation, which fell upon us in June, then rested on our spirits. The very last communication from Mentone was a post card? which, from the extracts I give, will be seen to have been written in quite good spirits, and suitably closes this chapter —

“Mentone,’  
“Monday, February 2, ‘91.  
“Mine Own,

“I telegraphed you to-day, and I hope your anxiety has ceased. There! at this moment, a mosquito popped on my nose, and Harrald has killed him! So may all your fears end i I am very much better; indeed, well. Archibald Brown has been with me for an hour; and the sight of him, and a little prayer with him, have set me up. I rested well yesterday. We are all in a muddle packing; H., in his shirt-sleeves, almost wants to pack me up! I am writing notes of ‘Good-bye’ to friends. I hope. soon to follow where this card is; going; how delighted I am with the prospect! If you don’t hear again, do not wonder; if anything should be’. wrong, I will wire at once. I am already with you in spirit. My heart has; never left you. Blessed be God that we are spared to each other!”

CHAPTER 105.

LONG ILLNESS.

“I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.” — This has long been the motto fixed before our eye upon the wall of our bedchamber, and in many way,; it has also been written on our heart. It is no mean thing to be chosen of God. God’s choice makes chosen men choice men .... We are chosen, not in the palace, but in the furnace. In the furnace, beauty!is marred, fashion is destroyed, strength is melted glory is consumed; yet here eternal love reveals its secrets, and declares its choice. So has it been in our case .... Therefore, if to-day the furnace be heated seven times hotter, we will not dread it, for the glorious Son of God will walk with us amid the glowing coals. — C. H. S., in “The Cheque Book of the Bank of Faith.”

T HE first Sabbath after his return from the sunny South, — February 8, 1891, — the Pastor preached at the Tabernacle from Isaiah 62:6, 7, using both the Authorized and Revised Versions, as he had done when speaking upon that passage at Mentone. On that occasion, he said to his secretary, “You need not transcribe your report, for I expect to have this subject again when I get home.” He had been specially struck with the Revisers rendering of the text, Ye that are the Lord’s remembrancers, take ye m)rest, and give Him no rest, till He establish, and till tie male{,. Jerusalem a praise in the earth.” The sermon was intended to be the key-note of the year’s service for God; it was a powerful call to prayer and testimony, yet probably even the preacher himself did not then fully realize how appropriate was his message in preparing the people for that long season of almost ceaseless intercession while he was enduring the heaviest affliction of his life, and from which the was never really to recover.

Although there were ominous indications that his health was by no means all that could be desired, he did not spare himself, but labored with the utmost earnestness and zeal to extend his Master’s Kingdom. A brief “Note in The Sword and the Trowel of that period gives just a glimpse of the great spiritual prosperity which was being enjoyed only a little while heft)re the startling breakdown which proved to be “the beginning’ of the end “ “The month of March has been a memorable one for the church in the Tabernacle. Pastor C. H. S. continued to see persons who wished to join the church, and out of these he had eighty-four to propose for fel1owship. How much of joyous labor all these involved, is best known to the Pastor and the sympathizing reapers who shared his delightful toil. To God alone be glory.”

The last College Conference, at which Mr. Spurgeon was present, was held from Monday, April 20, to Friday, April 24. In the May number of The Sword and the Trowel, the Editor inserted the following “Note” concerning the Sabbath night after the meetings .... “To the President, the week of Conference was one of exhausting delight. Every day, everything went well .... Of course, there was a reaction for the one who was the center of all this; and, for the first lime in a ministry of forty years, we entered the pulpit on the Sunday evening, and were obliged to hurry out of it; for a low, nervous condition shut us up. Happily, Mr. Stott could take up the story there and then; and he did so.” It was very remarkable that, in his letter, written to Mr. Stott, four months previously, concerning his appointment as assistant-minister for the year 1891, Mr. Spurgeon said — ” It would be. a great relief to me if I knew that someone was on the spot to take the pulpit should I suddenly fail.” That expression almost implies a premonition of what took place on that Sabbath night, April 26, 1891.

This unprecedented experience was an indication of a very serious state of affairs; yet, the following Lord’s-day morning, May 3, the Pastor was in his pulpit again; and he delivered the discourse which he had prepared for the previous week, prefacing it with a reference to the “overpowering nervousness” which had then oppressed him, and pointing out the lessons which that strange occurrence was probably intended to teach to himself and his hearers. He preached again at night; on the following afternoon, he was at the Tabernacle, seeing enquirers and. candidates for churchfellowship; and in the evening, he presided at the prayer-meeting. In the course of the proceedings, he asked for earnest supplication on behalf of the special services in which he was to be occupied during the week. These comprised the annual sermon to Sunday-school teachers, at Bloomsbury Chapel, on the Tuesday evening; a sermon at the Tabernacle, on the Thursday night, in aid of the British and Foreign Sailors’ Society, preceded by a prayer-meeting in the lecture-hall; and two meetings at Hendon, on the Friday, in connection with the “Fraternal” of which Mr. Spurgeon was a member. In the June number of The Sword and the Trowel, the Editor gave a brief account of all these gatherings, and some others that followed Shortly afterwards; and his “Notes” indicate that the long illness had commenced, although he was not then aware of its serious nature or its probable duration. The concluding paragraphs were as follows —

“Friends will note that all the above meetings were held in one week, which also included two Sabbath services and the great communion at the Tabernacle, beside all the regular home-work, correspondence, etc. In addition, the Lord’s-day morning sermon had to be revised, and published the following Thursday; and the sermons to Sunday-school teachers and sailors were received for revision, and duly attended to. Is it any wonder that the worker gets weary, and has to beg friends not to impose further burdens on one who is already terribly overladen?

“On Friday evening, May 15, Mr. Spurgeon spoke at the Presbyterian missionary meeting at Exeter Hall. It was a time of peculiar bodily weakness;, and of special spiritual strength. God bless our Friends who so kindly received the message and the messenger!

“On Sunday evening, May 17, Mr. Spurgeon could not preach; and on the Monday, the doctor found him laid aside with congestion of the lungs and other matters, which forbid his quitting his chamber for some little time to come. ‘ My times are in Thy hand.’ We would always be preaching howbeit, the Lord thinketh not so.”

The text quoted by the Pastor was the subject of his Sabbath morning sermon on May 17, which many have supposed t,, be his last discourse in the Tabernacle. It was not, however, for there was one more message which he was to be permitted to speak to the great congregation before that “long silence” which was only temporarily broken at Mentone on the following New Year’s Eve. On Lord’s-day morning, June 7, 1891, Mr. Spurgeon stood for the last time on that platform which, for thirty years, had been his pulpit throne, and from which he had proclaimed the gospel to at least twenty millions of hearers, while, by means of the printed page, he had been brought into communication with a far greater number of readers in all quarters of the globe. His text, on that ever-memorable morning, was 1 Samuel 30:21-25; and the sermon was published, as No. 2,208 in the regular weekly issue, under the title, “The Statute of David for the Sharing of the Spoil.” The whole discourse, was a noble conclusion to the Pastor’s ministry in the beautiful sanctuary which was ever to him what Zion was to the Jews; but the final sentences were so noteworthy that they are inserted here, in full, to correspond with “C. H. Spurgeon’s First Word, at the Tabernacle,” given in Vol. 3.

**C. H . SPURGEON’S LAST WORDS AT THE TABERNACLE**

If you wear the livery of Christ, you will find Him so meek and lowly of heart that you will find rest unto your souls. He is the most magnanimous of captains. There never was His like among the choicest of princes He is always to be found in the thickest part of the battle. When the wind blows cold He always takes the bleak side of the hill,The heaviest end of the cross lies ever on His shoulders, If He bids us carry a burden. He carries it also if there is anything that is gracious, generous, kind, and tender, yea lavish and superabundant in love, you always find it in Him His service is life, peace, joy. Oh, that you would enter on if at once God helps you to enlist under nea ner of JESUS CHRIST!

On the following morning, Mr. Spurgeon went into the country, to be the guest of Mr. Gutteen, of Haverhill, in order that he might again visit Starebourne and its neighborhood, that his photographer friend might take the views which he wished to have reproduced for his little volume, Memories of Stambourne. The gout-mischief that was lurking in his system, with the deadly effects of the mysterious malady so strangely misnamed influenza, combined to produce such alarming symptoms that he had to hurry home on the Friday; and then, for three months, he. was completely laid aside.

One of the additional trials of the early part of his illness was; the fact that he was unable to preach or speak in connection with the opening of the Surrey Gardens Memorial tall, which had been erected partly with the view of providing Sunday suitable accommodation for the workers connected with the Carter school, but also as a permanent memorial of the Pastor’s ministry in the Surrey Gardens Music Hall. On October 20, 1890, Mr. Spurgeon and Mr. S. R Pearce had laid the foundation stones of the new building Mr. W. Higgs had erected it in his usual excellent and generous fashion; and in the meantime, the whole of the amount required to pay for it had been raised. The opening services were postponed from June 2, to June 23, in the hope that the Pastor might be sufficiently restored to take part in the in; but by that time, his illness had assumed so serious a form that the hope had to be abandoned, and the premises had to be set apart for the Lord’s service under the shadow of an impending calamity which threatened to add still greater solemnity to the memorial character of the work.

About that time, Dr. Kidd was called in to consult with Dr. Miller, of Upper Norwood, who had been in attendance upon Mr. Spurgeon since May 18, and Dr. Russell. Reynolds was also consulted. For a while, all that medical skill, patient watching, and careful nursing could do, appeared to be of no avail; and, with the use of all means that seemed wise and right, prayer was being offered, unceasingly, by believers all over the world. The Tabernacle Church, beginning with a whole day of intercession for the suffering Pastor, continued to meet, morning, noon, and night, to plead for his recovery. In hundreds and perhaps thousands of Nonconformist places of worship, sympathetic petitions were presented on his behalf; — the Chief Rabbi being a conspicuous representative of those who held very different views from Mr. Spurgeon’s, but who remembered him at the throne of grace in his season of suffering. Many of the clergy of the Established Church, with their congregations, were equally earnest in praying for him, the ecclesiastical dignitaries officiating at St. Paul’s Cathedral and Westminster Abbey joining with the Archbishops and many of the Bishops in interceding on his behalf.

The secular and religious press of our own and other lands devoted much space to accounts of his illness, and particulars of his work, — not always accurate, though, on the whole, exceedingly kind and appreciative. Telegrams, letters, and resolutions of sympathy poured, into “Westwood” in a continuous stream, while those, who called or sent to enquire for the beloved sufferer were of all ranks, from the Prince of Wales and a great proportion of the nobility of the country to the poorest of the poor. A volume might be filled with the letters from notable individuals who wrote, during that trying time, (and the period of bereavement that followed it, either to the Pastor or to Mrs. Spurgeon; but space can only be spared here to just a small selection of the most representative communications. The one that probably had the most tender associations connected with it was written by Mr. Gladstone, who had recently lost his eldest son. He was staying with his friend, Mr. Colman, from whose house he sent the following touching epistle —  
“Corton,  
“Lowestoft,  
“July 16, 1891.

“My Dear Madam,

“In my own home, darkened at the present time, I have read with sad interest the daily account of Mr. Spurgeon’s illness; and I cannot help conveying to you the earnest assurance of my sympathy with you and with him, and of my cordial admiration, not only of his splendid powers, but still more of his devoted and unfailing character. May I humbly commend you and him, in all  
contingencies, to the infinite stores of the Divine love and mercy, and subscribe myself, —

“My dear madam,  
“Faithfully yours,  
“W. E. GLADSTONE.”  
“Mrs. Spurgeon.”  
In reply, Mrs. Spurgeon wrote as follows —  
“Westwood,  
“July 18, 1891.  
“Dear Mr. Gladstone,

“Your words of sympathy have a special significance and tenderness coming from one who has just passed through the deep waters which seem now to threaten me. I thank you warmly for your expression of regard for my beloved husband, and with all my heart I pray that the consolations of God may abound towards you even as they do to me. Although we cannot yet consider the dear patient out of danger, the doctors have today issued a somewhat more hopeful bulletin. I feel it an honor to be allowed to say that I shall ever be —

“Your grateful friend,  
“S. SPURGEON. (MRS. C. H.)”

Mr. Gladstone’s letter arrived at “Westwood” just when Mr. Spurgeon was enjoying one of the brief intervals between the long periods of delirium which were so painful a feature of his illness. He was delighted to hear the great statesman’s epistle read, and said that he should like to add a few words to his dear wife’s grateful acknowledgment of it. Accordingly, with his own hand, he wrote this postscript, — the first words that he had penned for weeks —

“P. S. — Yours is a word of love such as those only write who have been into the King’s country, and have seen much of His face. My’ heart’s love to you. — C. H. Spugeon.”

The following letter from Earl Fortescue is a good specimen of the expressions of sympathy from many of the truly noble men and women of the land —

“48, Grosvenor Gardens, S. W.,  
“July 18, ‘91.  
“Dear Madam,

“I had hoped to have called, some days ago, to testify my deep regret, on both public and private grounds, at Mr. Spurgeon’s serious illness, and to express my sincere sympathy with you in your long and terrible anxiety. But I found I unfortunately could not manage, to do so.

“I therefore intrude upon you with this line instead, which requires no answer. I will just add that I am, from saddest experience, only too well able both to appreciate your anxiety, and to feel for you under the severe trial with which the Almighty, in His infinite love and inscrutable wisdom, has seen fit to visit you and your honored husband. May God, as He alone can, support and cheer you both, whether He, in answer to the prayers of thousands, shall vouchsafe to prolong that precious life, or whether He shall decide to call up His faithful servant to rest and glory!

“Yours truly,  
“Mrs. Spurgeon.  
“FORTESCUE.

Quite a number of letters came from Bishops of the Church of England; two of the choicest of them were written by the Bishops of Worcester Dr. Perowne) and Exeter (Dr. Bickersteth). They were as follows —

“Hartlebury Castle,  
“Kidderminster,  
“23 July, 1891.

“Dear Mrs. Spurgeon,

“May I ask you to convey, for me to Mr. Spurgeon, if he is able to bear it, the expression of my heartfelt sympathy in his illness, and my earnest prayers that, of God’s great mercy, he may be restored to health? I am very thankful to see, by today’s bulletin, that there is; some slight improvement. God grant that it may continue!

“Permit me to offer to you also the assurance of my respectful sympathy in the long and anxious watch that you have had by your husband’s sick-bed. I do not know him personally; but he has written me some very kind letters, and all the world knows him by his work, and every Christian heart must feel for him, and for you, and his family, and pray for his recovery.

“Believe me,  
“Yours very faithfully,  
“J. J. S. WORCESTER.”

“The Palace,  
“Exeter,  
“28 July, 1891.

“My Dear Madam,

“May I venture to assure you that we have mingled our prayers with those of countless others on behalf of your beloved husband in this time of need in a wife and I have prayed for him together, and also with our children and servants. God will be with you; and, as the trial of your faith hats been so long, the consolation of His love will supply all your wants, and breathe the peace of God into your heart and home.

“I have ventured to enclose two hymns one of which your husband has so kindly spoken of, and possibly he may like to have them with in reach.

“Believe me,  
“Yours in true sympathy,  
“Mrs. Spurgeon.”

“E. H. EXON.”

The hymn referred to was Bishop Bickersteth’s well-known one, “Peace! perfect peace!” on which Mr. Spurgeon had spoken when visiting a sick friend at Mentone. His address was published in The Sword and the Trowel for July, 1891, just at the most critical period of his own illness; and many readers were comforted by his comment on the lines —

***“Peace! perfect peace! death shadowing us and ours? Jesus has vanquish’d death and all its powers.”***

Archbishop and Mrs. Benson called or sent many times to enquire for the suffering Pastor. The following letter belongs to the period of partial convalescence when Mr. Spurgeon had been able to drive as far as Addington; but it seems to fit in more appropriately after the Bishops’ epistles —

“Addington Park,  
“Croydon,  
“1 October 1891.

“My Dear Mr. Spurgeon.

“I was surprised and delighted to see your handwriting, and to see it so firm and clear. I only lamented that, as you were actually here, it had not been my good fortune to see you. We do earnestly hope that when (and may it soon be!) you are able to leave your carriage, and come in, you will do so; or, in the middle of your ride, let us bring you our. a glass of wine or a cup of tea.  
“We know how much you must have suffered, and we have watched your retardations and advances with hearts full of regard and hope. It has been given to you, not only to labor for Christ, and to bring many souls within the knowledge and feeling of the Atonement; but — it seems to follow with so many of those who have come nearest to Him in that great way, to be drawn into closest sympathy with His sufferings, — to catch the reality of those mysterious words, kai< ajntanaplhrw~ ta< uJsterh>mata tw~n qli>yewv tou~ Cristou~ ejn th~| sarki> mou. No doubt there are also some verses in the Psalms which you can now, more than ever, make your own.

“I do greatly rejoice it, according to your own kind thought, it has been possible that expressions of sympathy have been unlocked to you. But you may be quite sure that the sympathy was most genuine in all who have shown it. They had shown it to their Master, long before, in prayer that He would lay His hand on you in healing, and give you yet time for garnering fo Him.

“We join in sincerest wishes and sympathies for Mrs. Spurgeon also. Pray let us see you on some other drive.  
“Yours most sincerely in the one Lord,  
“EDW. CANTUAR.”

“P.S. I think it must have been your sick handwriting on a wrapper of The Greatest Fight before I went away. If so thank you more and more.”

The progress towards a measure of recovery may be briefly traced. On August 9, the following letter, the first written by the Pastor’s own hand after his long illness, was read to the congregation at the Tabernacle, and was received both as art answer to prayer, and an encouragement to continued intercession

“Dear Brethren,

“The Lord’s Name be praised for first giving and then hearing the loving prayers of His people! Through these prayers my life is prolonged. I feel greatly humbled, and very grateful, at being the object of so great a love and so wonderful an outburst of prayer.

“I have not strength to say more. Let the Name of the Lord be glorified.  
“Yours most heartily,  
“C. H. SPURGEON.”

Even after the first signs of improvement were manifest, a long and wearisome time followed, hopeful advances alternating with disappointing relapses. At last, the dear patient was able to be carried downstairs, and to be wheeled round his garden, where the fresh air seemed to work wonders for him. On entering his study, for the first time, and catching sight of the final proofs of John Ploughman’s Almanack and Spurgeon’s Illustrated Almanack, and then asking for copies of the recently-issued sermons and magazine, he exclaimed, “‘Why! you have carried on everything just as if I had been here.” Those who were responsible for the work felt that, if possible, nothing must be allowed to suffer during his absence; and it was a great joy to them to find how highly their services were appreciated by the Pastor. It was also a providential arrangement by which the issue of the various works was, at first, temporarily undertaken during the dear author’s, illness, for then, when it became necessary to publish them, after his home-going, his helpers had only to continue the plans which had already been for some months in operation.

As the autumn advanced, and the patient’s weakness did not disappear, it became certain that he must go to Mentone for the winter if he could journey so far. The renewed offer of Dr. Pierson, to cross the Atlantic if he could be of any service to the Pastor, appeared to everyone as the providential arrangement; and, ultimately, it was settled that he should commence his service at the Tabernacle on Lord’s-day, October 25. In order to test the invalid’s power to travel, an experimental ‘visit was paid to Eastbourne from October 3 to 16. This proved most satisfactory, and it also further indicated the absolute necessity of a prolonged rest in the sunny South. Accordingly, on Monday, October 26, Pastor and Mrs. C. H. Spurgeon, Pastor and Mrs. J. A. Spurgeon, and Mr. Harrald started on their thousand miles’ journey. They were accompanied as far as Calais by two of the Tabernacle deacons, Messrs. Allison and Higgs. It was stated in various newspapers at the time that Baron Rothschild had placed his saloon carriage at Mr. Spurgeon’s disposal. This was not the case, for Messrs. Alabaster, Passmore, and Sons and Mr.. John M. Cook most generously defrayed the cost of the saloon carriage from Calais to Mentone, and so enabled the whole party to travel in ease and comfort, and to arrive at their destination on Thursday, October 29. After the return to England of Pastor and Mrs. S. A. Spurgeon, Miss E. H. Thorne, who had then been for a quarter of a century Mrs. C. H. Spurgeon’s devoted companion and friend, arrived. Her services had been invaluable throughout the whole of that long period, and especially during the trying experiences of the past summer; and her presence at Mentone was a great comfort and help, particularly in the last anxious days and nights of Mr. Spurgeon’s illness. Blessed with good health, and a bright, cheery spirit, she was able most lovingly and loyally to minister to the clear sufferer right to the end of his earthly life, and then remained to share the sorrow of the bereaved one until together they returned to “Westwood” to carry on the many forms of Christian service still associated with that hallowed home.

CHAPTER 106

THE LAST THREE MONTHS AT MENTONE: — AND AFTERNOONS.

*“And there was given unto them a short time before they went forward.”*

***~~“Upon this sunny shore.  
A little space for rest. The care and sorrow,  
Sad memory’s haunting pain that would not cease, Are left behind. It is not yet to-morrow.  
Today there falls the dear surprise of peace; The sky and sea, their broad wings round us sweeping, Close out the world, and hold us in their keeping. A little space for rest. Ah! though soon o’er, How precious is it on the sunny shore!~~***

***~~“Upon this sunny shore  
A little space for love, while those, our dearest, Yet linger with us ere they take their flight  
To that far world which now doth seem the nearest, So deep and pure this sky’s down-bending light. Slow, one by one, the golden hours are given, A respite ere the earthly ties are riven.  
When left alone, how, ‘mid our tears, we store Each breath of their last days upon this shore!~~***

***~~“Upon this sunny shore  
A little space to wait: the life-bowl broken,  
The silver cord unloosed, the mortal name~~***

***~~Are bore upon this earth by God’s voice spoken, While at the sound all earthly praise or blame, Our joys and griefs, alike with gentle sweetness~~***

***~~Fade in the dawn of the next world’s completeness. The hour is Thine, dear Lord; we ask no more, But wait Thy summons on the sunny shore.” — Author unknown.~~***

I T was a tender token of the Lord’s lovingkindness that husband and wife were, for once, permitted to travel together to Mentone, and to spend there three months of perfect happiness before the sorrowful separation which had been so long dreaded, but which came at last almost without warning. Mr. Spurgeon’s oft-expressed longing, — ” Oh, that my dear wifey could see all the beauties and glories of this land of sunshine and flowers!” — was at length realized; and he had the joy of pointing out to, her the many scenes with which he had been familiar for years, but which became doubly precious to him under such delightful circumstances. The rooms in the Hotel Beau Rivage, which he and his friends had occupied year by year, soon began to give evidence of a lady’s presence in them. A very special adornment was commenced for the large sitting-room which had become a peculiarly hallowed spot to all the members of the Pastor’s Mentone circle because of the morning gatherings there for the reading of the Word and prayer, and the still more sacred Sabbath afternoon meetings, around the table of the Lord.

At the ceiling top of the sitting room, several texts of Scripture can be read. They form part of the series of passages which Mrs. Spurgeon worked upon perforated cards as; a grateful memorial of God’s goodness in taking them both safely to the sunny South after all their painful expeiences in England during the preceding summer and autumn. In the above view of the sitting — room, the partly-drawn curtains reveal the extra space where many worshippers and communicants assembled when the first room was filled with the earlier comers. Mr. Spurgeon’s weakness prevented him from resuming those much-prized services, during his last sojourn “on the sunny shore,” except on ‘the memorable occasions hereafter mentioned; but he lost

no time in beginning such literary work as he felt able to accomplish. He spent many hours in the “cosy corner” here represented, and was not willing to admit that he was doing too much for an invalid. He wrote many post cards and letters while sitting at that table, but his chief employment was the continuation of his Exposition of the Gospel according to Matthew, to which reference has been made in Chapter CII. Some articles for The Sword and the Trowel, with “Notes” and reviews of books, also came from his busy pen; but he expressly said that he only occupied the editorial chair while he wrote the Preface to the magazine volume for 1891. The important work of sermon-revision was also left almost entirely in the hands of those upon whom it had devolved during his; long illness, the only exceptions being the two notable discourses, “Gratitude for Deliverance from the Grave,” and “A Stanza of Deliverance,” intended for reading on the first and last Lord’s-days in January, 1891.  
The December number of *The Sword and the Trowel* opened with an article by Mr. Spurgeon under the suggestive title, “???” In his usual graphic fashion, he described his own physical condition, and made use of it in suggesting enquiries concerning his readers’ spiritual state. In that paper, he referred to the two things which were’, characteristic of a great part of his time of partial convalescence, — the deceptive appearance of a return to health, and the fact that the deadly disease was still firmly entrenched within his system, and ready at any moment to end his earthly existence.

One great help to him was the bright sunshine in which he was able to spend so much of his time. He almost lived in the open air, usually going for a drive in the morning’, and in the afternoon having a ride in a Bath chair, along the Promenade St. Louis. This was the scene of the walking exercise in which he engaged so perseveringly in the winter of 1890-1, and of which he wrote in the letters mentioned in Chapter 104.

A favorite route for a short drive was, around the Boulevard Victoria, and along the breakwater, as Mr. Spurgeon always; admired the view of the old town across the harbor.

One of the longest and latest drives that the Pastor and Mrs. Spurgeon took too-ether was mentioned on a post card, written to Mr. Passmore, and which is reproduced in facsimile on the opposite page, with a view of the fountain to which Mr. Spurgeon alluded.

The “telegram of sympathy to Sandringham” related, of course, to the death of the Duke of Clarence. The scene upon which the travelers gazed as they started on their return journey to Mentone is depicted in the following illustration.

The events of those memorable months were described in detail in The Sword and the Trowel and the memorial volume, From the Pulpit to the Palm Branch, but the principal incidents can only be briefly outlined here. On the New Year’s Eve and the following morning, Mr. Spurgeon gave, to a privileged circle of friends, the two charming addresses, which he afterwards revised for publication in the magazine, under the title, “Breaking the Long Silence.”

He also conducted two short services in his sitting-room, on January 10 and 17, when he was persuaded not to attempt to give a new address, and rather reluctantly consented to read portions of his early sermon on Psalm 73:28, and his Exposition of Matthew 15:21-28. On the second Sabbath evening, — January 17, 1892, — before offering the closing prayer at the final service in which he took part on earth, he gave out the last hymn he was ever to announce to a company of worshippers here below. If he could have foreseen what was to happen only a fortnight later, he could hardly have chosen a more appropriate farewell than the poem founded on some words of the sainted Samuel Rutherford, —

***“The sands of time are sinking,  
The dawn of Heaven breaks,  
The summer morn I’ve sighed for, —  
The fair, sweet morn awakes.  
Dark, dark hath been the midnight,  
But dayspring is at hand,  
And ‘glory, glory dwelleth  
In Emmanuel’s hind ‘“***

On the two following days, the wind was very rough, so Mr. Spurgeon went only for short drives; but on Wednesday morning, he was able to go as far as the little village of Monti. In the afternoon, signs of gout appeared in his right hand; later in the day, other serious symptoms were manifest, and he had to retire to the bed from which he never again rose. Dr. FitzHenry, a faithful friend as well as the Pastor’s skillful medical adviser, had been in attendance upon him from the time of his arrival at Mentone; he did all that was possible to relieve his pain, and prolong his precious life. Miss Thorne undertook the onerous duties of night nurse in addition to almost continuous help to Mrs. Spurgeon during the day; Mr. Allison, Mr. Harrald, and Pastor G. Samuel rendered all the aid in their power; but it was soon evident that a great crisis was approaching, though there were intervals of improvement which gave ground for slight hope. Towards the end of the week, the Pastor said to his secretary, “My work is done,” and spoke’ of some matters in a way that indicated his own conviction that he was not going to recover.

Tuesday, January 26, was; the day on which thank-offerings were brought to the Tabernacle, in grateful acknowledgment of the Pastor’s partial restoration. By that time, he had become so much worse that he was for a long while only partly conscious; but he had not forgotten the special character of the day, and he sent a telegram which, under the circumstances, was peculiarly significant — ”Self and wife, L100, hearty thank-offering towards Tabernacle General Expenses; Love to all Friends.”’ That was his last generous act, and his last message; for, shortly afterwards, he became, totally unconscious, and remained so until five minutes past eleven on the Sabbath night, — January 31, 1892, — when, like his namesake, Mr. Valiant-for-truth, “he passed over, and all the trumpets sounded for him on the other side.” The five who “accompanied him to the riverside” were Mrs. Spurgeon, Miss Thorne, Mr. Harrald, Mr. Allison, and Mr. Samuel. When all was over, Mr. H. offered prayer, and Mrs. Spurgeon thanked the Lord for the precious treasure so long lent to her, and sought, at the throne of grace, strength and guidance for all the future. The answer to part of her supplication came at once, for she was able to send to “Son Tom” at the Antipodes the brief but comforting message, “Father in Heaven. Mother resigned.”

In the meantime, the news was being flashed all over the world, and in every quarter of the globe many felt a sense of personal loss as they read or heard it. The telegraph wires at Mentone were speedily blocked with the multitudes of messages to Mrs. Spurgeon, — the Prince and Princess of Wales being among the first to “desire to express their deep sympathy with her in her great sorrow.”

The local regulations necessitated the removal of the precious body, from the hotel to the cemetery, within twenty-four hours, and then the bedroom was left as it appears in the accompanying illustration.- Mentone being the home of the flowers, many beautiful wreaths were sent by friends; but Mrs. Spurgeon intimated her preference for palm branches as the most suitable emblems of her dear husband’s victorious entrance into “the presence of the King.” At the head and foot of the olive casket, were plates bearing the following inscription —

In ever-loving memory of  
**CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON,**  
Born at Kelvedon, June 19, 1834;  
Fell asleep in Jesus at Mentone, January 31, 1892. “*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.”*

In the early years of his visits to Wotton, in Surrey, the Pastor had always said that he should like to be buried in the churchyard of that village. Later, he expressed the wish to lie in the center of the Stockwell Orphanage grounds, for he thought that many would come to look at his grave, and then help the orphans in whom he took so deep an interest; but when the Electric Railway caused such a disturbance to the Institution, he abandoned that idea. At one time, he said he would like to be buried at Menton; but, after he had attended the funeral of a friend there, he gave up that notion. Last of all, it was mentioned that he had pointed to a site in Norwood cemetery, — in a far less conspicuous position than the one ultimately chosen, — and asked that it might be reserved for him; so that, in death, as in life, he might be surrounded by his church-officers and members, many hundreds of whom are buried there. The Tabernacle deacons sent an urgent request to Mrs. Spurgeon, asking that this might be the arrangement, and generously offering to defray all expenses, and the matter was so settled. Before proceeding to the railway station, a touching memorial service was held in the Scotch Church, at the opening of which Mr. Spurgeon had preached at year before. At the station, a photograph of the cortege was taken, and it is reproduced here. The memorial and funeral services at the Tabernacle, from February 7 to 11, were probably attended by not less than a hundred thousand people. A full account of the proceedings appears in the volume, From the Pulpit to the Palm Branch, but many volumes would be required to describe the different gatherings held simultaneously, or on the following Sabbath, all over the world. Mrs. Spurgeon’s request that friends, who wished to send wreaths, would instead give the amount they would have cost to the Institutions founded by her dear husband, was very generally complied with, though there were a few choice floral offerings of love. Most of the palm branches, which surrounded the olive casket, were cut from the very trees in the garden of the Hotel Beau Rivage, of which the Pastor wrote in the letter.

The Bible on the top of the casket was the one Mr. Spurgeon had so long used in the Tabernacle. It was opened at Isaiah 45:22  
“Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth;”

— the text which, on January 6, 1850, had been blessed to his conversion. The volume remained in that position all the way from Newington to Norwood, — as the sword of the warrior accompanies him to the grave. Never had the South of London witnessed such a procession as, that day, slowly moved from the Tabernacle to the cemetery; attend never had such crowds assembled along that route. More than eighteen years before, the Pastor had given a description of the scene; but probably even he had no conception of the throng that would gather to do honor to his memory. At the close of his sermon, on Lord’s-day evening. December 27, 1874, he said — “In a little while, there will be a concourse of persons in the streets. Methinks I hear someone enquiring, ‘What are all these people waiting for?’ ‘Do you not know? He is to be buried today.’ ‘And who is that?’ ‘It is Spurgeon.’ ‘What! the man that preached at the Tabernacle?’ ‘Yes;’ he is to be buried today.’ That will happen very soon; and when you, see my coffin carried to the silent grave, I should like every one of you, whether converted or not, to be constrained to say, ‘He did earnestly urge us, in plain and simple language, not to put off the consideration of eternal things. He did entreat us to look to Christ. Now he is gone, our blood is not at his door if we perish.’ God grant that you may not have to bear the bitter reproach of your own conscience! But, as I feel ‘the time is short,’ I will stir you up so long as I am in this Tabernacle?’

Though the scene along the route was striking, that presented at the cemetery was, in some respects, even more so. The long line of ministers, and students, and other friends, all in mourning garb, reaching from the entrance to the grave itself, was a sight that could never be forgotten by those who saw it. At length, the vast throng clustered in a dense mass around and upon the slope outside the cemetery chapel, where the last service was to be conducted. The principal part in the closing ceremony fell to the share of Pastor Archibald G. Brown, and nothing could have been more beautiful, or more suitable, than his solemn and touching words. They came straight from his heart they entered thousands of other hearts. With great pathos and many pauses, he said —

“Beloved President, Faithful Pastor, Prince of Preachers, Brother Beloved, Dear Spurgeon, — We bid thee not ‘farewell,’ but only for a little while ‘good-night.’ Thou shalt rise soon, at the first dawn of the resurrection day of the redeemed. Yet is not the “good-night’ ours to bid, but thine. It is we who linger in the darkness; thou art in God’s own light. Our night, too, shall soon be past, and with it all our weeping. Then, with thine, our songs shall greet the morning of a ‘day that knows, no cloud nor close, for there is no night there.

“Hard Worker in the field, thy toil is ended! Straight has been the furrow thou hast ploughed. No looking back has marred thy course, Harvests have followed thy patient sowing, and Heaven is already rich with tlnine ingathered sheaves, and shall be still enriched through years yet lying in eternity.

“Champion of God, thy battle long and nobly fought is over! The sword, which claw to thine hand, has dropped at has the palm branch takes its place. No longer does the helmet press thy brow, oft weary with its surging thoughts of battle; the victor’s wreath from the Great Commander’s hand has already proved thy full reward.

“Here, for a little while, shall rest thy precious dust. Then shall thy Wellbeloved come, and at His voice thou shalt spring from thy couch of earth, fashioned like unto His glorious body. Then spirit, soul, and body shall magnify thy Lord’s redemption. Until then, beloved, sleep! We praise God for thee; and, by the blood of the everlasting covenant, we hope and expect to praise God with thee Amen.”

The memorial number of The Sword and the Trowel contained the following paragraphs, which will fitly close the account of that memorable season — “While we gathered around the grave, a little patch of blue sky appeared, just over our heads, as if to remind us of the glory-land above; and while Mr. Brown was speaking, a dove flew from the direction of the Tabernacle towards the tomb, and, wheeling in its flight over the crowd, almost seemed to pause. In ancient days, it would have been an augury to us, it spoke only peace. As the service proceeded, a little robin poured forth its liquid note all the while from a neighboring tombstone; the redbreast made appropriate music, fabled as it was to have had its crimson coat ever since it picked a thorn from the Savior’s bleeding brow. Well, we do not believe that; but we believe what we sang at the grave, the truth that Mr. Spurgeon lived to preach, and died to defend, —

***“Dear dying Lamb, Thy precious blood  
Shall never lose its power,  
Til all the ransomed Church of God  
Be saved to sin no more,’***

“Many remarked that the whole of the memorial services, unique as they were, were characterized by a simplicity and heartiness completely in harmony with the entire life of the beloved Pastor; and it was most significant that, when the olive casket was lowered into the vault, not even the glorified preacher’s name was visible; — it was just as he would have wished it there was nothing to be seen but the text at the foot of the coffin, and the open Bible. Of course, the Bible was not buried; it is not dead, it ‘liveth and abideth for ever;’ and who knows whether it may not prove, more than ever, the means of quickening the dead, now that he who loved it dearer than his life, can no longer proclaim its blessed truths with the living voice? God grant it!”

On the day that the Pastor said to his secretary, at Mentone, “My work is done,” he added, with very peculiar emphasis, “Remember, a plain slab, with C. H. S. on it; nothing more.” The allusion evidently was to a gravestone, and it was another indication of his humility. Those who were, at that time, responsible for the arrangements were unwilling to carry out his wish, so they gave instructions for the erection of the monument represented on the next page. The inscription on the lower part is copied from John Ploughman’s Talk, with the substitution of Mr.

Spurgeon’s full name instead of “John Ploughman.” On the right-hand side of the upper portion is the verse he always wrote in friends’ albums, when they asked for his autograph and a quotation, —

***“E’er since by faith I saw the stream  
Thy flowing wounds supply,  
Redeeming love has been my theme,  
find shall be till I die;” —***

with the following verse, describing his present joyous employment, —

***“Then in a nobler, sweeter song,  
I’ll sing thy power to save,  
When this poor lisping, stammering tongue  
Lies silent in the grave.”***

Thus, even from the tomb, be continues to preach the gospel he loved to proclaim while here, — the gospel of salvation by grace, though faith in the precious blood of Jesus, — the gospel that tells of “redeeming love ‘ and Jesu’s “power to save.” Oh, that those who refused his message from the pulpit might accept it from the grave and from the glory!