

PASTOR SPURGEON:

HIS CONVERSION, LABOUR, AND SUCCESS.

"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."—*Mal. ii. 6.*

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Contents.



	PAGE.
<i>The Conversion of the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon . .</i>	5
<i>Sketch of the Sermon under which Mr. Spurgeon was Converted</i>	16
<i>Pastor Spurgeon's Success at the Metropolitan Tabernacle</i>	19
<i>The Metropolitan Tabernacle . .</i>	21
<i>The Church at the Metropolitan Tabernacle</i>	22
<i>The Pastor's College</i>	29
<i>The Almshouses and the Stockwell Orphanage</i>	31

The Conversion of the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon:

UNDER WHOSE MINISTRY WAS IT ACCOMPLISHED?

THE conversion of a sinner to God is an event which not only influences time, but also eternity. It shakes "not the earth only, but also heaven." Blessed are those followers of Jesus whom their Lord uses to lead sinners to his open side. Their honour shall be coeval with the imperishable blessedness of the souls they have blessed. They that turn many to righteousness "shall shine as the stars for ever and ever."

There is a day coming in whose light the victories of Salamis and Sedona, Marathon and Magdala, will be regarded as trivial occurrences compared with the conversion of that poor collier whom "Sammy Hick" found in the last hour of his mortal pilgrimage, or of that magnificent though youthful wreck of humanity whose conversion is narrated in that thrilling little book, "The Prodigal Son," by Rev. J. Simpson.

If such surpassing glory connects itself with the conversion of a sinner at the eleventh hour, who shall describe the honour conferred on that man who is successful in leading into the liberty of Christ one who through a long life of blessed toil enriches thousands with the knowledge of the Lord's Anointed!

We are not forgetful that the excellency of the power is of God and not of man. But He generally uses human agency in human salvation. Let us not be misunderstood. There are two stages in conversion. *First, arousing a man to feel his need of salvation.* This is often performed by the Spirit's direct agency on the heart without the intervention of human aid. *Second, directing an embarrassed soul to Him who alone is "mighty to save."* It is with special reference to this point that we remark human agency is generally employed.

The Spirit convinced Cornelius of his need of something he did not possess; and an angel told him his prayers were heard, but neither informed him what he should do to be saved. Man must do that. "Send to Joppa and call for one Simon, * * * he shall tell thee what thou oughtest to

do." Acts x. 5, 6. The eunuch was an anxious inquirer, but he understood not until Philip preached Christ unto him. Even the Lord Jesus Himself since His ascension does not tell men what to do to be saved. He has committed this work to men who yet dwell in Meshech. Hence, when He appeared and arrested the Tarsean persecutor, saying, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest," he sent him to Damascus to learn the way of life from the lips of Ananias.

And it is a matter calling for adoring thankfulness that our Almighty God still condescends to employ mortal men as His agents in steering wrecked souls in the lifeboat of promise to the harbour of peace. It argues no high state of grace in a preacher when he professes to be perfectly satisfied because he has disseminated no heterodoxy, and manifests indifference concerning the effects of his preaching on his hearers.

The minister who, when reminded that his congregation was dwindling away, and that no souls were converted through his preaching, replied, "God is glorified by the simple fact of my preaching, whether any one be converted or not," could not, we think, have had much sympathy with him who addressed the souls God had given him at Phillippi, as his "joy and crown," and at Corinth as the "seal of his apostleship;" and yet less with Him who "was made perfect through suffering," that He might bring "many sons unto glory." Rarely is a man able to edify saints in their most holy faith, who has not induced sinners to lay on the firm rock of promise the foundation of their hope. They have the most tender solicitude for the well-being of other men's spiritual children, who know what it is to yearn for the perfection of many of their own.

What tongue or pen can tell the ennobling emotions with which success in soul-winning fills the heart? If need be, such men can afford to do without the dear morsels of distinction this vain world delights in. When stigmatized as "out of the succession," "mere laymen," "unordained," &c., their numerous children stand up to "speak with the enemies in the gate," such preachers can say of them: "These are our letters of commendation, our credentials written by the finger of the Eternal Spirit."

Transferring for a moment these remarks from individual men to that Connexion whose interests the "PRIMITIVE METHODIST" seeks to advance, we may affirm, without fear of successful contradiction, that, as a whole, it is intensely solicitous to bring souls to Jesus. Nor have its Heavenly aspirations been unrealized. One-hundred-and-sixty thousand members are no mean result of half-a-century's evangelistic toils. Nor is this all. Its zeal has provoked many sections of the Church to greater diligence. Its fruits may also be seen in the pulpit at Regent's Park, Dr. Landels; at Paddington, Dr. Burns; at Gosport, Rev. T. Matson; at Canterbury, Rev. A. H. Hertridge; at Grace Church, Philadelphia, U.S.A., Dr. Suddards; besides many more: but better known than any of these, at the Metropolitan Tabernacle—REV. CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON.

The writer distinctly remembers his first interview with the well-beloved Pastor at the Tabernacle, when, after many kind words from him concerning the Primitive Methodist Connexion, its doctrines and polity; he said: "Well, friend Sheen, I was converted among your people, and as a mark of my gratitude to your Connexion, I shall be very glad to welcome you among us in the college. Come and get all the good out of us you can." The writer was always known in the college as the "Primitive Methodist Brother." What but real grace in the heart could have induced the president of the college—and upwards of fifty students, all Calvinists and Anti-Pædo Baptists—so kindly to receive and so lovingly to fraternise with an Arminian and Pædo-Baptist? Yet this is the "Primitive Brother's" testimony: those were very happy and unanxious, although laborious days. Notwithstanding that this exception has been attended with only good, yet it is not desirable that it should be repeated; neither is it necessary; as Primitive Methodism now has a college of its own. How can the favoured student show his gratitude better than by acting worthily for that Saviour whose honour is so dear to the president of the Metropolitan Pastors' College?

We always reflected with pleasure on the fact that the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon was converted among our people, yet it sounded strange to hear him say he did not know who the preacher was, and that he never expected to look on his face "until the morning of the resurrection." If any member of our church or congregation were permitted to rise and preach when he desired, that is to say, if Primitive *Methodists* had no *method*, then we might consent to leave the identification of this preacher until that morning. But when it is considered that none but duly accredited preachers are allowed to occupy our pulpits, and that their appointments are advertised on a printed "plan," it ought not to be deemed a very difficult matter to ascertain who preached at Colchester, or any other place, on a given date, ten or eighteen years ago. But it is this given date that is the "missing link." We have never yet heard on what day of the month Mr. S. *looked and lived*.

But in the absence of this, we have at hand an amount of circumstantial evidence, which to our mind makes it morally certain that the preacher Mr. S. heard cry, "*Look! Look! Look!*" (should he live till this appears in print) may be seen by our dear and honoured friend, Mr. Spurgeon, before the "morning of the resurrection." The manifestation of Mr. S.'s catholicity of spirit, in admitting us to the advantages of his excellent college, in spite of our difference of creed, and his uniform gentleness of manner towards a timid young man, in addition to his well-known excellences, enkindled in us a veneration and an affectionate attachment that made us prize everything he touched, and treasure up every favourable mention we heard of his name.

When preaching in the eastern counties some years ago, the reader will imagine how natural it was for us, possessing these feelings, to inquire who

it was that preached the great "*Look*" sermon. The reply of the Rev. Thos. Swindell was: It is generally said to be a local preacher, but we think it was the Rev. ROBERT EAGLEN. From that very hour forth we were anxious to see Mr. Eaglen. We found him a modest, retiring, kind, and deeply pious man, who had learned to seek that honour that cometh from God only, to rejoice in Christ Jesus, and to have no confidence in the flesh.

A person might be in his company ten years and never hear him mention the fact, that he is the spiritual father of the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon. And when asked concerning the matter, he looks as if he really wished you had allowed it to rest till the "morning of the resurrection." But, as a true gentleman, he feels bound to give an answer to the straightforward question put to him; and his reply generally is, "Such is the simple fact, sir." And if pressed for more information, in a few simple but expressive words he soon satisfies the inquirer of his identity with the man so often spoken of by Mr. S. as a local preacher; probably from the fact that at that time he generally wore a black stock instead of a white cravat. It seems that Mr. S. was converted about 1850, in the Primitive Methodist chapel, Colchester. On turning to our Conference Minutes for that year, we find R. Eaglen appointed to the Ipswich circuit, and O. Jackson to Colchester branch.

From a "plan" now before us of Ipswich circuit and Colchester branch for "Oct. 20—Jan. 12, 1850-1," it appears that R. Eaglen, of Ipswich, was appointed to occupy the pulpit at Colchester two Sundays during the quarter, viz., on Nov. 24th and Dec. 15th, on one of which days, probably the latter, he preached the memorable sermon from Isaiah xlv. 22. Although he does not recollect using the expression, "Young man, you are in trouble," etc., which Mr. Spurgeon mentions, yet he distinctly remembers preaching the sermon referred to that morning. He cannot forget it, because of the extraordinarily rich, heavenly influence he felt while preaching on that snowy morning. All preachers who do not chain themselves to MSS. know that it is a very common occurrence to be told they said certain things of which they have no recollection whatever.

The Rev. G. Onions, now of Bradford, under whose ministry we were converted, frequently directed his attention to a crowd of young men standing at the door of a large hall in which we used to hear him preach, and said: "Young man, by the door there; I mean you." And he would begin to describe his character and point him to Christ, and the arrow shot from the "bow at a venture" (or, as the margin says, "In his simplicity," the preacher knowing nothing whatever of the young man addressed) was in some cases guided by the Holy Spirit with unerring certainty between the joints of the harness,—

"And Satan has a captive lost,
And Christ a subject won."

Sometimes a preacher can see a hearer's wants depicted in his countenance,

and may depart considerably from the prepared plan of discourse. Possibly Mr. Eaglen thus read the wants of the then youthful Spurgeon, and addressed him in the language alleged to have been uttered on the occasion. He might very easily forget all about the special remarks, for (assuming that Dec. 15th is the correct date) we see from the plan for that quarter that he had five services to attend the same week, besides pastoral visitation and matters of discipline and travelling, all of which would tend to banish from his mind many little incidents connected with the Sunday's services, especially as he did not hear of this important conversion until a long time after. His appointments that week lay at Bradfield, Dovercourt, Harwich, and Ipswich. But he remembers that it was a very snowy morning when he went from Ipswich to Colchester to preach from Isaiah xlv. 22, and that the heavy fall of snow and drifts considerably retarded his progress, and, being very weary on entering Colchester, he called on one of the members of the Society for some refreshment, etc., before going into the chapel, and that, under these circumstances, he was late. Some of the officials present commenced the service, and by the time he arrived the congregation was ready for the sermon.

In reference to Mr. Eaglen's history and appearance, we may observe that he commenced preaching while a very little boy, in his teens. Many a hoary sinner shed floods of tears as the beardless youth told out in melting strains the Saviour's dying love to man. And many a pure-hearted matronly lady met him at the pulpit stairs as he came down from discharging his duty, saying: "God bless thee, lad; where did you come from, and who is your mother?" But now he has seen upwards of fifty summers, and to him hoary hairs are certainly a crown of glory. In build he is slender, and has even now but little flesh upon him, a sort of spiritual Cassius, whom the Devil dreads and hates. No doubt Satan *sometimes* feels, if he must be troubled with, and opposed by preachers, he would prefer the easy-going and the sleepy ones, saying:—

"Let me have men about me that are fat,
Sleek-headed men, and such as sleep o' nights;
Yond' Cassius has a lean and hungry look!
He thinks too much: such men are dangerous."

"He *prays* too much," is no doubt the real form of Satan's accusation against Mr. Eaglen. But we are assured that his leanness now is nothing like it was eighteen or twenty years ago—the days in which Mr. Spurgeon was converted. Indeed he is corpulent now, compared with what he was then. By the simple mention of two little incidents (assuming that he was the "thin man" Mr. Spurgeon saw come in and open his Bible), we may realize a vivid conception of the good man's "lean-fleshed" appearance in those days. His excellent wife, in giving a description of him to a gentleman who did not know him, but expected to meet him in a certain direction, said, in her own pleasant and lively manner: "Sir, if you meet anyone that looks

like a *churchyard deserter*, you have found him!" We were reminded of this when in conversation with the Rev. Thos. Lowe, who knew Mr. Spurgeon in 1852, in Cambridge. Mr. Lowe tells us that he himself was the first to inform Mr. Eaglen of the high honour God had conferred on him when preaching at Colchester. He has not a doubt about the fact himself: "And," said he, "on one occasion I introduced Mr. Eaglen to Mr. Spurgeon at Lowestoft as his spiritual father, Mr. S. looked for a moment, and said: "No, I don't think this is the man. The preacher I heard was as *pale as death, and as thin as a skeleton.*"

We can hardly imagine what a *churchyard deserter* would be like, but we think we should be content if we succeeded in describing him in the language of our dear friend: "As pale as death and as thin as a skeleton."

Mr. L. did not tell us what was the impression made on his mind at the moment when Mr. S. made this reply. Possibly he thought he had been under a wrong impression.

But he *did* inform us that on subsequent reflection this reply strengthened his previous convictions. He remembered that it was a long time since Mr. S. saw Mr. E., and then only once; and at that time he was in such a perplexed or ecstatic state of mind as not to be able to make a minute and accurate observations with regard to a man's countenance; and, above all, that since that time Mr. Eaglen had ceased to resemble in so striking a manner Pharaoh's "ill-favoured and lean-fleshed kine." This is the substance of Mr. Lowe's thoughts; but for the manner in which they are expressed we alone are responsible, as we did not make notes at the time, and cannot now produce his very words.

We know also from the testimony of members of Mr. Eaglen's family, that so rapidly and greatly did he gather flesh after the time he left Ipswich circuit, that he became too stout for his clothes, and that without enlargement they were useless to him.

Let us now hear Pastor Spurgeon's account of his own conversion:—I will tell you how I myself was brought to the knowledge of the truth. It may happen the telling of that will bring some one else to Christ. It pleased God in my childhood to convince me of sin. I lived a miserable creature, finding no hope, no comfort, thinking that surely God would never save me. At last the worst came to the worst—I was miserable; I could do scarcely anything. My heart was broken in pieces. Six months did I pray, prayed agonizingly with all my heart, and never had an answer. I resolved that, in the town where I lived, I would visit every place of worship in order to find out the way, of salvation. I felt I was willing to do anything and be any-

thing if God would only forgive me. I set off, determined to go round to all the chapels, and I went to all the places of worship; and though I dearly venerate the men that occupy those pulpits now, and did so then, I am bound to say that I never heard them once fully preach the Gospel. I mean by that—they preached truth, great truths, many good truths that were fitting to many of their congregation—spiritually-minded people; but what I wanted to know was—How can I get my sins forgiven? And they never once told me that. I wanted to hear how a poor sinner, under a sense of sin, might find peace with God; and when I went I heard a sermon on “Be not deceived, God is not mocked,” which cut me up worse, but did not say how I might escape. I went again another day, and the text was something about the glories of the righteous; nothing for poor me. I was something like a dog under the table, not allowed to eat of the children’s food. I went time after time, and I can honestly say, I don’t know that I ever went without prayer to God, and I am sure there was not a more attentive hearer in all the place than myself, for I panted and longed to understand how I might be saved.

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

“I now think I am bound never to preach a sermon without preaching to sinners. I do think that a minister who can preach a sermon without addressing sinners, does not know how to preach. If he can, he shall not preach to me, for he cannot be fit to preach to saints. There may be some

people there who would be dead before he could preach again. If it does not suit his subject he had better run away from his subject. His object is the winning of souls; let him go after that. O may God the Holy Ghost deliver you from legalism, and deliver you from your sins. Casting yourselves wholly upon him, may the grace of God be with you and your families and households, and may you and your children at last be gathered to the one fold, where the one Shepherd shall lead them to living fountains of waters. It is my earnest prayer; may God hear it for Jesus' sake."

This account appeared first in the *Christian World*, and was forwarded to the *Primitive Methodist Magazine*, Nov., 1857, by the Rev. J. Simpson: page 676. The intelligent reader will be struck with the remarkable manner in which this description coincides with, and corroborates the statement of facts already made. In this account Mr. S. gives no date, but from various sources we gather that he was converted about 1850. Mr. E. preached in the town and chapel in which Mr. S. was converted, about that time. Both accounts seem to agree as to the part of the day—morning. As it regards weather—snowy—this prevented the penitent going to the chapel he wanted to attend, and made the preacher late at the one he went to. Of this circumstance, being late, both accounts make mention. They agree as to text, Isaiah xlv. 22. We have also noticed a very remarkable coincidence with respect to the preacher's appearance, pale and death-like. When we had gone thus far in our inquiries, we felt morally certain that the Rev. Robert Eaglen was the man, under whose ministry our own much-revered and much-loved friend, Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, looked to Christ and lived; and we determined to give to Christendom an account of an event which has influenced it for the better, as much as anything that, to our knowledge, has occurred during this quarter of a century. But for the satisfaction of those who might read the narrative, we were desirous to meet with some one who could say in the language of the medallions of the heroes of Leipsic: "I was there." Some time ago, in the order of Divine providence, we met a gentleman whose integrity of character may be inferred from the fact that once or more he has been appointed delegate to district meeting—Mr. Elsdon, formerly of Colchester, now of London, to whose kindness we are indebted for the "plan" to which we have referred, who, singularly enough, introduced the subject to us, and said he knew both Master C. H. Spurgeon and Mr. Eaglen, and heard the sermon under which the former was converted. We said: "Did you see Mr. Spurgeon in the chapel on the occasion when Mr. Eaglen preached from 'Look unto me,'" &c.? His reply was in the affirmative. This we considered conclusive, except Mr. S. heard two sermons in that chapel from the same text. Had this been the case, the other must have been before or after the one under which he was converted. It could not have been before, for it seems, from his own account, he had never been in the chapel previously; had it been after, there certainly would have been some mention made of so singular a circumstance.

The following extract is from a letter we have received from one of our esteemed local preachers in Colchester, who has known the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon from a child, and was most intimately acquainted with his worthy father at the time of Charles Haddon's conversion :—

"I know that Mr. Eaglen preached the sermon under which Mr. Spurgeon was converted, for I was there myself, and heard it; and during the following week Mr. Spurgeon's father asked me who the preacher was, (that preached on that Sunday) and where he lived. I told him it was Mr. Eaglen, of Ipswich. I can as positively answer concerning the certainty of the preacher, as I can state that two or three of Mr. Spurgeon's children used to attend our chapel very frequently on Sunday mornings during the winter, on account of the distance to their own chapel. * * * I don't know that any other person is supposed to have been the preacher on that occasion; if there be, I should very much like to see him upon the subject. I have heard that there are some persons who doubt as to the identity of the preacher, but I don't know who they are nor where they live; I wish I did, I am prepared to settle that matter. To the best of my remembrance, Mr. Eaglen laid great stress on the word "*look!*" but I don't know whether he said "*young man,*" etc., or not. I know, perhaps, more of Mr. J. Spurgeon's family affairs than any one else out of the family, as we were both together nearly every day for seventeen years.

* * * * *

JOHN BLOOMFIELD, Colchester."

In another letter of Mr. Bloomfield's, after speaking of Mr. Spurgeon's children, he says :—"I well remember Charles's conversion, for his father told me of the change that had taken place in him; and I well remember his asking me who it was that preached; and I told him Mr. Eaglen, of Ipswich."

He goes on to state he would certainly have introduced Mr. Eaglen to the family, had it not been for the distance at which he lived from Colchester.

Mr. Spurgeon was evidently pre-disposed in favour of earnest Christianity, but he undoubtedly received an impulse among the Primitives, which lives and breathes in all his public ministrations. No one more heartily rejoices in his great abilities and learning than we do; yet from reading recently a volume of his early sermons, as well as from having occasionally heard him preach, we are bound to say that, in addition to the great truths he proclaims, one of the greatest elements of his success is his burning, downright, straightforward *earnestness!* And we firmly believe that these salient features in the character of his preaching are, very largely, traceable to those spiritual influences in which he was spiritually born. Mr. Spurgeon's preaching is, in many respects, very much like Mr. Eaglen's.

"Now," says Mr. S., "I think I am bound never to preach a sermon without preaching to sinners," and we are witness that he does so with melting tenderness.

Mr. Eaglen, as a minister, has been very successful in soul-saving, and no wonder, for he lives in the very atmosphere of heaven, bathes his soul in the light of the Saviour's smile, and emphatically dwells under the shadow of the Almighty. His sermons are full of Gospel from beginning to end. His manner is at once fervent, plain, kind, and winning. A member of one of the circuits he travelled in said to us, "He is one of the kindest men in the world." This witness is true. Another hearer describes his manner of preaching thus: "When he is preaching, he looks at you, and leans forward, as if he wanted his words to sink down, right into the very bottom of your heart." Last year he left Cambridge, not only having the love and esteem of his own people, of which they presented him with a substantial token, but also of the other churches and ministers in the town. One of them, the Rev. Mr. Campbell, said: "Wherever Mr. Eaglen goes, the Gospel is sure to go." It was well for the broken-hearted young Spurgeon that such a man was in the pulpit at Colchester that snowy morning, instead of a cold-hearted metaphysical, historical, scientific, or even a dogmatic, doctrinal preacher. Such men would only have bitterly disappointed him, and made him feel again, "Nothing for poor me," or at most, "cut him up worse." As surely as God sent the right man from Joppa to Cæsarea, when he sent Peter to tell Cornelius what he ought to do, so surely He sent the right man from Ipswich to Colchester, when He sent R. Eaglen to tell Charles H. Spurgeon—

"There is life for a look at the crucified One,
There is life at this moment for thee,
Then look, sinner, look unto Him, and be saved,
Unto Him who was nailed to the tree."

And as surely as God had that morning sent down the snow from heaven, so surely his word did not return unto Him void, but it accomplished that which He pleased, and prospered in the thing whereto He sent it.

Mr. Eaglen makes no pretension to high scholastic attainments, but he aims at glorifying God in the salvation of His creature, man; and knowing the shortness of time, he preaches like a man who understands and wishes to accomplish his work before the long shadows of the evening are stretched out. Thus he preached when Mr. Spurgeon heard him:

"No studied eloquence was there displayed,
No poetry of language lent its aid;
But plain the words that from the speaker came,
A preacher young and all unknown to fame;
While youth and age a listening ear inclined,
To learn the way the pearl of price to find."

We cannot help thinking that Mr. Eaglen's sweetness of spirit and loving manner have a great deal to do with his success in soul winning. He reminds us of Richard Baxter, who used to say: "I cannot look an unconverted man in the face without shedding tears." When he reproves an erring one, it is with love and pity. This is indeed "speaking the truth in love." In

the language of good Mr. Bloomfield, we say, may God spare him long, and give him many more Spurgeons; but when the day comes in which he shall have passed away to those mansions of peace whither he loves to invite others, no one need go to a poet for an epitaph for such a servant of Christ. It is already written :—

“ He bore his great commission in his look,
But sweetly tempered awe and softened all he spoke.
He preached the joys of Heaven, and pains of Hell,
And warned the sinner with becoming zeal;
But on eternal mercies loved to dwell.”

The Rev. R. Eaglen is now travelling at Fakenham, in Norwich district.



The Life-Look!

THE SERMON UNDER WHICH THE REV. C. H. SPURGEON WAS CONVERTED.

BY REV. R. EAGLEN.



"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else."—Isaiah xlv. 22.

Introduction. God wills the salvation of man. "Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. ii. 4. He makes use of various means that it may be realized. He threatens, entreats, promises, and exhorts. In His Word He clearly points out the means whereby we may be saved. Notice—

I. THE BLESSING OFFERED. Salvation.

1. *Salvation in general*—Deliverance from slavery or danger.

2. *Salvation spoken of in the text.* It is a spiritual one.

First—*Its need.* This will be best illustrated by considering man's moral condition. He is under, (1) The guilt of sin, which, like a chain, binds the soul. (2) The dominion of sin, which, like a taskmaster, keeps him in drudgery. "Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." John viii. 34. (3) The curse of sin; exposed to the wrath of God. "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness." Rom. i. 18.

Second.—*Its nature.* It is entire deliverance from all these evils. "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts xiii. 39. This salvation is, (1) *Free*—in its offers. "And 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." Rev. xxii. 17. In its communications. "But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost: which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Titus iii. 4-7. (2) *Full*—in the deliverance it effects. "For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be

dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you." "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." Rom. vi. 7-17, 22. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit." Rom. viii. 1. In the blessings it imparts—peace, patience, access to God, joy, hope, love, &c. "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Rom. v. 5. (3) *Present*—in its realization. "For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." 2 Cor. vi. 2.

II. THE MEANS USED. Look unto MR.

1. *The object of regard.* God. God in Christ, atoning on the cross for our sins. "The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John i. 29.

2. *What is meant by looking.* Refer to Israelites and the brazen serpent. Looking to Christ implies, (1) *A sense of our need of salvation.* "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Rom. vii. 24. "Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Acts ii. 37. (2) *A desire to obtain it.* "And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner." Luke xviii. 13. (3) *An exertion after it:* which consists, (1) In earnest prayer. "I cried unto God with my voice, *even* unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me." Ps. lxxvii. 1. "The angel said to Cornelius, Thy prayer is heard." Acts x. 31. (2) In strong faith. "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." Rom. x. 9.

3. *The reception of salvation is inevitably consequent on our thus looking.* "And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Acts xvi. 31.

III. THE REASON ASSIGNED. "For I am God," &c.

First.—*Consider the greatness of the Being giving the command.* "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place." Isaiah lvii. 15. Second. *There is no other way of being saved than by looking to Him.* "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." Acts iv. 12. "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father but by me." John xiv. 6. Apply the subject.

[This is the outline of the sermon so often adverted to; and this is all that has been ever committed to paper. Had the author thought that we wanted it for publication, very probably it would never have come into our possession; and, indeed, we did not fully intend publishing it when he was prevailed on to favour us with it in Oct., 1868. And had we sought his sanction for it to appear in print, we are sure his modesty would have led him to forbid its ever being seen, except in M.S. We, however, informed him *we had promised* it to the public through the *PRIMITIVE METHODIST*, and desired him to fill up the outline as far as he had time; to which he replied that the filling up depended so largely on the circumstances connected with its delivery, that it was impossible for him to write it as it had been delivered on any one occasion, and, if it must appear in print, it would have to go as a mere outline. We are glad to learn that very many besides the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon have been converted through the preaching of this sermon. But no preacher will be surprised at this; for from this very meagre outline it is clear that the structure and matter of the discourse are such as to make it a polished shaft in the quiver of any spiritual archer.—D.S.]

N.B.—We may add that on Oct. 11th, 1864, the Pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle preached a sermon to 500 hearers, in the chapel at Colchester (in which he was converted), on the occasion of the anniversary of that place of worship. He took for his text the memorable words, Isa. xlv. 22, "Look unto me, and be ye saved," &c., and, said the preacher, "That I heard preached from in this chapel, when the Lord converted me," and pointing to a seat on the left-hand under the gallery, he said, *I was sitting in that pew when I was converted.* "This honest confession," says the Rev. O. O. Britain, to whom we are indebted for the intelligence, "produced a thrilling effect on the congregation, and very much endeared the successful Pastor to many hearts."

Pastor Spurgeon's Success at the Metropolitan Tabernacle.

I.

God has invariably raised up, at all critical times of the world's history, men, who, by their varied attainments and noble qualities, were fit agents in his hands for the attainment of his own purposes. It was so at the time of the Reformation, in the days of Wesley and Whitefield; and also when the pioneers of Primitive Methodism preached through the length and breadth of our land the unsearchable riches of Christ. Nor is CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON less distinctly marked out by the great Head of the Church for the accomplishment of the work given him to do. A few years ago it was said, "He is a charlatan, a sort of puritanic Punch." "He will have his brief hour on the stage of popularity, and then be heard of no more." "He has gone up like a rocket, but he will fall like the stick." Others, in a manlier and broader spirit, burning with quenchless zeal to rescue the masses from sin and vice, and thankful that God had sent a needed workman to help in doing a needed work, replied to these carping critics: "Gentlemen, you have assumed to be prophets; we cannot argue against prophecies, but we can disbelieve them." The preacher's popularity increased; the mere stripling became a man; great purposes struggled in his soul, and at length, by his own firm will, strong understanding, and high Christian character, he succeeded, despite the slanders of the *Times*, the profane satire and pharisaic spite of the *Saturday Review*, and the ridicule of *Punch*, in rearing, clear of all encumbrance, the most massive structure belonging to the Dissenters of this country. Henceforth he was known as PASTOR OF THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE.

II.

It was in December, 1853, and when Mr. Spurgeon was in the seventeenth year of his age, that he was, by a surprising providence, invited to occupy, for one Sunday, the pulpit of Park-street chapel. It was an amusing circumstance that brought him there. While ministering at Waterbeach, in

Cambridgeshire, an elderly minister undertook to admonish the youthful pastor, and, amongst other things, said, "You've too much oil, young man," when Mr. Spurgeon, with characteristic bluntness, replied, "And you have too much palaver." The young pastor told his church what his brother minister had said, and they at once endorsed the opinion, by saying, "And so you have too much oil." A gentleman who was present thought it outrageous that a young minister should be thus treated, and on going to London told the deacons at Park-street chapel of the promising youth in the country, and this led to his being invited to occupy their pulpit. When Mr. Spurgeon informed his deacon of this, he said, "Don't go:" but afterwards relented, and said, "Go for one day." He went; and when he told his deacon he had been invited to stay, and should do so, the good man replied, "I thought you would."

When the late Dr. Campbell became pastor of the Tabernacle, Moorfields, London, he found a large congregation, which soon, from some cause or other, visibly fell off, so that in a short time the place was nearly empty. A minister hearing of this, wittily remarked that Moses had been successful in raising a tabernacle in the wilderness, but that Dr. Campbell had been equally successful in raising a wilderness in the tabernacle. Mr. Spurgeon, unlike the doctor, found Park-street chapel nearly deserted. The Church had decayed in piety, and decreased in numbers. The means of grace were neglected. The Word seemed to fall pointless and powerless on the small and languid congregation that listened to it. But with a grand earnestness of purpose, a sincere devotion, and a fervent zeal, the young preacher prosecuted his labours. Simple in manner, earnest in appeal, pointed in illustration, beautiful in simile, with the high and true eloquence which an experience of the truth as it is in Jesus alone can impart,—these, added to his extreme juvenile appearance, under God, won for him a large congregation, and in a few months the chapel, capable of holding 1,200 hearers, was filled to overflowing, while the Church soon numbered 1,178 members. The young preacher then began to conduct Sabbath services in Exeter Hall, with a view of obtaining funds for the enlargement of Park-street chapel, which were eminently successful. Thousands flocked to hear the Word; and though many scouted and derided these services at the time, the bishops and clergy of the Established Church, and many eminent Nonconformist ministers, soon followed the example, and that, too, with marked success. It was soon found, however, that the enlarged chapel was as crowded as before, and efforts were put forth to erect the "monster Tabernacle." Exeter Hall was again taken; and the second series of services were proving no less successful than the first had been, when Mr. Spurgeon, for some unexplained reason, was told that he could no longer have the hall, and that the services must be discontinued. The Church was in a dilemma. It was no use going back to their own chapel, for it would barely hold the members of the Church. The result was, the Surrey Music Hall was taken, and for months together,

every Sabbath morning, from 9,000 to 10,000 listened in a state of rapt attention to the youthful preacher. All ranks of society, from peers of the realm down to scavengers and street sweepers, formed Mr. Spurgeon's audience. Lord Campbell, after hearing the young preacher on one of these occasions, turned to the late Sir Richard Mayne, Chief Commissioner of Police, and said, "He is doing great good, sir, great good." Then came the "*great catastrophe*," by which several were killed and others maimed for life. The flock was scattered without a shepherd, while the youthful pastor's reason, to use his own touching words, "tottered and reeled;" but God helped him, and he was soon restored to his scattered people. As Sampson, amid the crash of falling timbers, and the outcries of expiring thousands, slew more of the Philistines at his death than during his life, so was this calamity at Surrey Gardens over-ruled to the good of the Church and the salvation of souls. Public curiosity was intensified. The sympathy and generous aid of the churches were excited. Thousands of prayers for pastor and people went up to God, and were answered in "showers of blessing." At length, Mr. Spurgeon and his people entered the Metropolitan Tabernacle for public worship; the pastor having made good his oft-repeated avowal, never to hold a Sabbath's service within its walls until every farthing of the cost, £30,000, had been obtained. Cæsar's celebrated dispatch might have been quoted by Mr. Spurgeon: "*I came, I saw, I conquered.*" "This was the Lord's doing, and it was marvellous in our eyes."

III.

And what a structure it is! Chapels, now-a-days, seem almost to spring up, like Aladdin's palace, in a night; but none can vie with the Metropolitan Tabernacle. As many of our readers may never see this magnificent building, we will give a brief description of it. Its external length is 200 ft., with a frontage of 104 feet. The principal architectural feature from the exterior is a noble portico; an easy flight of steps somewhat relieves the building from the disadvantage of the dead level upon which it stands. The interior of the chapel proper is 146 feet in length, by 81 in breadth, and the height from the ground floor to the lantern in the roof is 91 feet. Its shape is oval, and the symmetry and proportions of the whole present a most agreeable *coup d'œil*. Two tiers of galleries traverse the entire building; these are fronted with elegant iron scroll work. Each gallery has its own staircase in solid stone, supported by wrought iron carriages of extraordinary strength. By an ingenious arrangement each stream of people entering from either of the galleries will be entirely removed from the other. Sixteen doors admit of such facility of egress that an audience of 6,000 can with ease quit the building in five minutes. The ceiling is an oval dome, supported by twenty iron columns, which ascend from the basement, and apparently sustain the roof

on arches. The superficial measurement of the interior is as follows:—Ground floor, 10,227 feet; first gallery, 7,268 feet; second gallery and boxes, 7,730 feet; total, 25,225 feet. The number of sittings provided is 4,200, with standing room for an additional 2,000. Excellent acoustic properties have been secured by match-boarding the walls; the light green colour of these tones down the complexion of the whole, which would have been heavy but for the introduction of a lighter hue than that presented by the numerous tiers of seats. The pulpit is a platform, supported by white columns, picked out with gold, and rising from another platform of larger dimensions, which contains a white marble baptistry and communion-table. Mr. Spurgeon's voice can be distinctly heard from every part of the spacious building. The windows are numerous and large, and all double hung to admit of easy opening. The building is lighted with a hundred and forty or more burners, placed at equal distances round the basement of each gallery, and by above three hundred jets which adorn the capitals of the twenty columns. These illuminate the upper gallery, the burners round the base light up the lower gallery, and those at the base of this gallery light the area, while several subdued lights in the cupola contribute to the general effect. We need scarcely say that the Tabernacle, when thus brilliantly lighted up, and shining upon a congregation of 6,000 persons in the solemn act of worshipping the Almighty, is one of the most extraordinary sights in London. Ample ventilation is secured by means of the lantern in the roof, which, although it does not enhance the external beauty of the structure, bids fair greatly to contribute to the comfort of the worshipper. *The only warming apparatus which is contemplated is the pulpit.* In addition to this large chapel, the Metropolitan Tabernacle, like the ancient Temple, is furnished with numerous accessory apartments. In the basement there are a school-room, which will seat 1,500; and a lecture-hall, or secondary chapel, that accommodates 1,000. There are eleven vestries and six class-rooms, all spacious, well-lighted, and replete with convenience for minister, deacons, elders, students, and committees.

IV.

The Church at the Tabernacle contains 3,860 members, while during Mr. Spurgeon's pastorate about an equal number have gone to the church triumphant or to other parts of the church militant. The average congregation at each service on the Sabbath is upwards of 6000. This dense mass of human beings listening with bent forms, rapt attention, and glistening eyes, to the preacher's utterances, doubtless exerts a great power on his mind and heart, adding much force to what he says. Great congregations, it has been said, make good preachers. It is easier to preach to the many than to the few.

There is of necessity a more elevated tone of feeling, a higher sense of responsibility, and a greater dependence on Divine aid. We have never heard Mr. Spurgeon preach so well and powerfully in the provinces as we have in his own Tabernacle. The constitution of the church, as embodied in the trust deed, is purely democratic and independent. Every member, female as well as male, has the right of voting at all church meetings. The church exercises exclusive jurisdiction over its own members, and is not, and cannot be, controlled in its action by the authority of any external body. It has the right of electing and of dismissing its minister and every other officer connected with its organization, and from its decision there is no appeal. The officers of the church consist of an assistant minister, ten deacons, and twenty-three elders. Candidates for church-membership have an interview, first, with one of the elders, and afterwards with Mr. Spurgeon, and if their religious experience is satisfactory the pastor gives them the right hand of fellowship. The labours of Mr. Spurgeon are multifarious and incessant, and we have sometimes thought that he would furnish a first-rate case for "The Society for the Suppression of Cruelty to Animals," if that excellent institution included two-legged creatures within the scope of its objects. Twice every Sabbath he preaches in his spacious Tabernacle to upwards of 6000 hearers, and again on Tuesday night to a congregation of 2000 persons. Every Monday and Friday he meets the young men connected with the Pastor's College, often delivering, from the president's chair, addresses of more than an hour's length. For years he preached six sermons weekly, in addition to those in his own chapel. On one occasion 24,000 listened to him at the Crystal Palace. At Paris, in the cathedral at Geneva, and elsewhere on the continent, and also in America, he addressed thronging thousands with the most gratifying results. One of his sermons is published weekly, with Mr. Spurgeon's careful revision. They have been translated into the French, German, Dutch, Swedish, Welsh, and Italian languages, and have sold extensively over a considerable portion of the continent of Europe. They have also been republished in Canada, the United States, and Australia, where they have secured a circulation only second to that obtained in England. It has been estimated that the astonishing number of ten millions of these sermons have been sold. Mr. Spurgeon has contributed largely to all the Baptist periodicals of the day, and has also written several large books of sterling and permanent worth.* When Luther was asked how he had found time

* Mr. Spurgeon's epistolary correspondence is really amazing. My esteemed friend, the late Rev. B. H. Klubb, of Gravesend, wrote thrice to Mr. S., reminding him of a promise he had made to preach two sermons on behalf of the Independent chapel, but got no reply. A fourth letter, however, secured an answer, with a promise that he was prepared to fulfil his engagement. He came; and during some brief after-dinner speech making, Mr. K., good humouredly, twitted Mr. S. about his long silence. Mr. S., brimful of *bonhomie*, replied in something like the following terms: "Perhaps my friend will be surprised when I tell him of the number of letters I have to answer. In postage stamps alone I spend £60 a year, exclusive of all the stamps which my friends consider-

to translate the Bible, his reply was, "I did a little every day." A capital plan, which all would do well to adopt; and when we hear some "youngsters" complain of the "vast amount" of labour they have to put forth in preparing for their work, we are often reminded of what Dr. Clarke once said to a person who doubted the possibility of carrying on the study of two or three languages at a time, "If I could not do so, I think I should be tempted to run out into the streets and dash the place where the brains should be against the first post I met." The men who are everlastingly complaining of what they have to do are, as a rule, the men who do nothing, or what amounts to nothing. Let us think of what Charles Haddon Spurgeon, now only in the thirty-third year of his age, has done, and then prosecute our pulpit, pastoral, and other duties with increasing avidity and with growing delight.

It is impossible to give with arithmetical precision the results of spiritual agency in the same way as a school inspector would report the results of school instruction; suffice it to say that during Mr. Spurgeon's pastorate 7000 members have been admitted to his church. It is to the united efforts of pastor and people that this remarkable success, under God, is due. That the Gospel should be made known by all who have themselves been made partakers of its saving benefits is a fact that none, except Romish and Ritualistic priests, will deny. The traveller may preach Christ in the railway carriage or on the steamboat, the peasant in his cottage, the artisan in the shop, the merchant on the exchange, the physician in the chamber of sickness; while the parent should preach Christ to his children, the friend to his friend, and the neighbour to his neighbour. It is out of this state of feeling that there has sprung up at the Tabernacle a system of agency truly surprising to contemplate. One might suppose that Mr. Spurgeon and his people had taken for their motto Mr. Wesley's advice to his preachers, "*At it, all at it, always at it.*" Dr. Woodhull, of New Jersey, once asked that flaming evangelist, George Whitefield, "Who commissioned you, brother Whitefield, to go about the country begetting children, and then leave them without care for their spiritual wants, and without training one of them in the Christian life?" "I am fitted," was the reply, "for this one work. Others are fitted to take these children in charge, feeding them with the needed provision, and instructing them in duty. That is not my vocation. Were I to settle down as a pastor,

ately enclose in their letters. One man is employed throughout the year in doing little else but answering letters. People write me on all kinds of subjects, sacred and secular, grave and gay. For instance, a letter came from Australia, saying, 'Sir,—The enclosed is for my sister, who lived at a public-house at the corner of ——— Street. Be sure to see that she has it.' Of course we enclosed it in an envelope, duly stamped and directed, and sent it to its destination. Another read, 'Sir,—I am a milk-seller, residing at ———. Will you be sure to inform me, by return of post, what milk is selling at per gallon in London?' A third, 'I am a deacon of a ——— Church, and have had the misfortune to lose several cows. I have managed to raise ——— pounds, and fifteen or twenty pounds would enable me to repair my loss. The Lord has greatly blessed you, sir, and I trust you will find it in your heart to help me to the sum I need,—' Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.'"

trying to do all work, I should in one year be dead as a door nail." Whether Whitefield was right in thus speaking we cannot say; however, he failed to organize his converts into societies, and hence but few monuments of his zeal remain. John Wesley, with less power and eloquence than Whitefield, formed a connexion which has covered England with chapels, and which has been one of the mightiest agencies in the spread of the gospel during the last one hundred years. It is when the scattered rays of the sun are brought into a focus that they are most powerfully felt. Unity is strength. Mr. Spurgeon has not only led thousands to the cross, but he has taken them under his charge, feeds them with needed provision, and instructs them in duty. He cherishes a warm affection for and a strong confidence in his people, while they, in return, hold their pastor in high admiration and reverent esteem. When at Venice—beautiful Venice—he thus wrote to his people: "I shall be more glad to return than to have come hither, which is saying very much, since it hath been one of the gems of my life. There are no buildings like the Tabernacle, no songs like ours, no people like my church, no days like the sabbath days at home." Mr. Olney, one of the senior deacons at the Tabernacle, recently said, "There has been one special characteristic of the people at the Tabernacle, and I always glory in it, and that is that whenever our beloved pastor calls us to a work to which we believe God has called him, he says 'Come on,' and we say 'Go on,' at once. There is no hesitation. From the first moment when he came to London up to the present time, I believe the people of his charge have been one with him in all the works of faith and labours of love to which God has called him." And how numerous and diversified are those works. As we sat in the Tabernacle some time ago, we thought the machinery of Mr. Spurgeon's church might be compared to the fingers upon the clock that adorns that magnificent building. We saw them move, but were not able to see the machinery within. Now, could we see the vast amount of prayer, work, and contribution that are daily put forth by the church at the Tabernacle, we should, perhaps, cease to wonder at the results. Sound philosophy teaches that no effect can be produced without a cause, and that every cause must be equal to the effect. Of course, as in all churches, a vast amount of free voluntary labour is performed by hundreds of people at the Tabernacle, which comes under no definite arrangement. About a dozen Ragged and Sunday-schools, totally disconnected with the Tabernacle, are, nevertheless, conducted by members of that church. The following agencies* are worthy of special notice.

V.

The Sunday services at the Tabernacle commence at half-past nine, at which hour a prayer-meeting is held, attended by several hundred persons.

* For the following facts and figures we are principally indebted to an article in the "Sword and Trowel," Feb., 1869, by the Rev. J. A. Spurgeon, assistant-pastor at the Tabernacle.

At the same hour the Sunday-school, numbering 1,077 scholars, who are taught by 90 teachers, assemble in the adjoining school-room. Besides, there are branch schools; for instance, there is one at the alms-houses, containing 180 children, with 20 teachers; another at Manchester-hall and Richmond-street, with 320 children and 25 teachers; while there are many other schools connected with rooms and preaching stations which we cannot record here. There is an elder's class for the children of the officers of the church; two young men's catechumen classes are formed for the advantage of young men who are desirous of acquiring biblical knowledge and instruction in the doctrines of the New Testament; while a devout lady, Mrs. Bartlett, conducts a weekly bible class of young females, which numbers *six hundred members*. Since the formation of this class, a few years ago, upwards of five hundred of its members have avowed themselves on the Lord's side. In one year fifty young women attending this class joined Mr. Spurgeon's church. During six months the class contributed upwards of £100 to the support of the "Pastors' College." Meetings for prayer are held every day in connection with the church, in the morning at seven and again in the evening. Two prayer-meetings are held every Sabbath, besides some dozens of others, held in the houses of kind friends, both in the week and on the Lord's-day. Railway porters, letter sorters, and others who cannot get to evening meetings, meet for prayer in the middle of the day. In several large houses of business bible classes are held. Several members are connected with the "Rescue Society," and have visited the homes of abandoned women with encouraging success. A Tract Society, with 69 districts, circulated 2,336 copies of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons every week in the last year, and these sermons, when they have gone the round of the districts, are given away at the workhouses which are visited. Two brethren are maintained in connection with Mr. Oncken's work on the continent. A Colportage Society employs eight colporteurs, who visited during the year 1868, 91,328 families, and regularly visit two hundred villages every month. Several members of the church work amongst the police, and visit the government stores, while others call at shops open on the Lord's-day, to try and speak a word for the sanctity of the Sabbath. Several elders of the Tabernacle Church have regular preaching stations, with all the organizations for worship and service which are usually connected with separate churches. Two singing-classes, on the tonic sol-fa system, are held, and one for choral music of a superior class. A bible class for the young is held on Wednesdays, and a public bible class, presided over by Mr. Rogers, president of the "Pastors' College," on Mondays, at half-past eight. There is also a flourishing day-school, under a most efficient master. Popular and scientific lectures are given during the winter months, by Professor Selway and others, to which the public are admitted on a merely nominal payment, so as to provide interesting and instructive pastime for the young.

There is also an Evangelists' Association, which secures, according to a

plan very much like those used among ourselves, that the Gospel shall be preached in the blackest slums of London. These men, upwards of two hundred in number, never receive a penny for what they do, but, like the local preachers in Methodism, go anywhere and everywhere preaching the Gospel. "Services have been conducted even in the thieves' lodging-houses in the Borough. During the year thousands of open-air and in-door services are held, in addition to innumerable temperance and prayer-meetings and bible classes. Something approaching a quarter of a million of tracts are distributed. Mission houses have been established in such places as Hartsborn-court, Golden-lane, City, at a cost, owing to the voluntary character of the work, incredibly small." Suitable books are placed at the disposal of these evangelists free of charge; a feature which we Methodists might imitate, to some extent at least. Many of our own local preachers, now numbering fourteen thousand, have to make great sacrifices in order to procure such books as will prepare them to meet the advancing intelligence of our age. They feel that they need to be better informed than were their predecessors; and we have known hundreds of them part with the last few shillings they had in order to procure Wesley's "Notes on the New Testament," Garner's "Theology," "Sketches and skeletons of sermons," "The Primitive Pulpit," and that celebrated old book, so often talked of but scarcely ever read, "*Josephus*." Many of them burn their midnight lamp rather than go unprepared to their Sabbath appointments. Now could not a few of our well-to-do friends, in each circuit, place in the vestry of each circuit-town chapel, say a copy of Clarke's "Commentary," Kitto's "Cyclopædia of Biblical Literature," Horne's "Introduction to the Holy Scriptures," Dr. Angus's "Hand-book to the Bible," and Webster's Dictionary? Eight pounds would purchase the lot. Surely there are eight gentlemen in each circuit who could show their appreciation of our local preachers, who walk so many dreary miles while they themselves are ensconced in their easy pews, by contributing eight sovereigns to aid them in their work! A few might not appreciate the kindness, but the vast majority would. The thing once done would not need to be repeated during the present generation. Mr. Wesley always saw that his "lay-helpers" were well supplied with good standard works.

The Holy Spirit is the source of Church prosperity, and apart from his influences the utmost efforts of man in securing an able ministry, in building splendid sanctuaries, and in adorning them with costly materials, and in organizing a vast and varied machinery, are all vain and futile. And it is to be feared that the tendency of our age is to place too much dependence upon mere human agency, to the neglect of faith and prayer for the Divine blessing. There is too much formality in the Church, and until a warmer ardour, a brisker life, and a stronger faith be cultivated, no extensive revival can take place. Now Mr. Spurgeon has evidently sought to create and nourish among his people a spirit of prayerful dependence upon God. We have seen, on a

previous page, what a vast number of prayer-meetings are held, morning, noon, and night, in connection with the Tabernacle. The two principal prayer-meetings are attended by upwards of 1,000 persons. A devotional spirit is cultivated amongst the students in the "Pastors' College." The last time Mr. Spurgeon visited Gravesend, he gave us an account of the then state of his Church, and a most surprising account it was. "Now to what," said he, "do I attribute this great success?" He replied, "Principally to the prayers of my people. Be where I may, undertake whatever I will, I know they are praying for me; and we now need prayer more than ever, for though we have a noble structure, overflowing congregations, and a vast system of agency, yet, deprive me of the prayers of my people, and I should be of all men the most miserable. Some say that I am uneducated, that my periods are not polished, that my manners are rough, that I myself am a fool. Well, let them gather together all the epithets they can, yet I ask this question, can they deny that souls, great numbers of souls, have been saved? And if the instrument is so mean, the more glory redounds to God who employs it. We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." Believing prayer honours God, and God will never fail to honour believing prayer. Jabez Bunting used to say, "You may have a revival when you will, only use the means; and God will fulfil his promise." And Christ says, "If ye abide in me and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will in my name, and it shall be done unto you." In these words we have the conditions of spiritual prosperity. There must be communion and intercommunion with the Saviour. The more our churches get into sympathy with God, the more will they feel that they ought to make known their requests unto Him. All Church history shows that those periods in which there was the greatest amount of prayer on the part of Christians, were the very periods in which the Holy Spirit was realized in his fulness.

VI.

Never, perhaps, were our countrymen more full of earnestness, more interested in religious ideas, or more susceptible to whatever the rarest intellectual ability and the ripest scholarship can lend to the gospel message, than at present. "Never," remarks a living preacher, "since the days of the Reformation has it been more necessary that we show ourselves to be, not only men of labour and of zeal, but of disciplined and sympathising thought, and of high Christian culture." Heaven forbid that we should intimate that a man cannot be a good and successful preacher of the gospel unless he understands Hebrew and Greek, have the facts of Church history at his finger ends, and be able to write with learning and ability on all the contested points of dogmatic theology. Were that the case, what would become of

many of us? "There are instances of preachers of unpolished manners, but of strong minds and of right hearts, who have been more successful in winning souls than men of higher intellectual attributes, of more cultivated tastes, and possibly of equal piety." Numbers who are not eminently gifted, nevertheless possess great powers of usefulness which they can bring advantageously to bear upon the masses of society, and when such men enter the Christian ministry they render great and good service in securing the salvation of souls, and the spread of scriptural religion throughout the land. But this cannot be done by sermons which insult the intelligence of thoughtful, well-read mechanics, and which are beneath the mental efforts of a decently educated school-boy. When men ask for bread it is not enough that we give them a stone.

It was the recognition of this fact that led to the formation of the "Pastors' College," in connection with the Metropolitan Tabernacle. A young man of some promise, but whose circumstances prevented his entering Regent's Park College, in order to qualify him to discharge the functions of a Baptist minister, was placed by Mr. Spurgeon under private tuition: he did well; other young men, possessed of good natural abilities, but lacking education, asked of Mr. Spurgeon a similar favour, and obtained it. The numbers increased, and six years after the first young man's application, a college was formed with thirty students, who were placed under competent professors.

The progress made by these students soon demonstrated to Mr. Spurgeon that the Great Head of the Church had called him to this work, and, with redoubled ardour, he began to increase the instrumentality with a view to train a greater number of young men to preach the gospel. He saw the masses perishing through the lack of knowledge, amongst whom a "rougher class" of men than the older colleges were turning out might be useful; men who would go into the obscure lanes, crowded alleys, and village greens of our land, and preach the gospel with a "dogmatism unshaken by metaphysics, and a zeal unbilled by doubt." Mr. Spurgeon says, "The first work, which is dearest to my heart, is the college. I see more and more the need of maintaining it. Throughout Germany a very large proportion of the ministers do not even believe the truth of the Scriptures, and this arises, I think, from their having neglected to take proper care to train and educate a scriptural ministry. It will be a dark day for England if ever we should see our pulpits filled with men who preach what they do not believe, or who covertly attack the gospel under the pretense of proclaiming it. Our college will, under God, be a bulwark for the truth. Our first aim has been to educate men of native talent, with good speaking powers, who believe themselves to be called to the work of the ministry. We persistently refuse men who are recommended to us as persons of character and studious habits, who, nevertheless, have not actually tried their powers of speech. We must have speakers; we can give a man education, but it would be useless to profess to bestow oratorical powers. We expect the men to have had two or

three years' preaching at the least, and to have had evidences of usefulness following their labours, and then our object is to remove the rudeness of ignorance and supply the knowledge in which they are deficient. Scholarship we do not despise or neglect, but our main object is to educate the practical rather than the learned man. We want, by God's help, in the first place, to send out good preachers, good pastors, good evangelists; and secondarily, good scholars—good scholars, however, only with the view of their being efficient preachers. We think that God uses every variety of talent, but that the shrewd, common-sense, rough-and-ready brother when anointed with holy zeal, be he learned or not, is usually the successful man: such men we seek for, and such men seek for us." And what has been the result? The college, despite the sneers of some more refined seminaries, has now upwards of eighty students, while not fewer than one hundred and sixty have been sent forth as preachers, some of whom have gone to India, others to Canada, and others to Australia.

"There are eight tutors, including the president (Mr. Spurgeon) and the vice-president (Rev. J. A. Spurgeon), and the instruction embraces Latin, Greek, Hebrew, English, Natural Science, Logic, Mathematics, and Theology." The grand object kept in view is to lead the students, as far as the limited period of their studies will permit, to the *sources of knowledge*, and especially to make them able ministers of the new testament. Ample opportunities are devised for developing their powers of speech; a sacred debating society is held weekly, when some religious topic or some difficult passage of scripture is discussed; better still, these young men may often be found at the corner of some street in the metropolis, or on the green of some suburban village, where, like many of our own preachers, they are opposed by sneering sceptics, or subjected to the insults of inebriates. Many of them are young men of strong common sense, of bold and familiar diction, of burning zeal, and large compass of voice, and they are organizing churches for which future generations will thank Mr. Spurgeon. The Londoners are said to be good judges of ministerial ability, and there are not fewer than forty students of the "Pastors' College" settled over London churches.

There is also connected with the college a "night school," which supplies a sound elementary, commercial, and classical education, by properly qualified tutors, to two hundred young men. Except the books, which the students receive at trade price, the education is free. From these evening classes there has proceeded some of the most promising of the students for the ministry. "Some idea of the amount of work done in the shape of classes, lectures, &c., may be gathered from the fact that last year the gas bill was £270.

The college has no funded property; free-will offerings are its only pecuniary endowments, and these last year amounted to £6,300. Each student costs £50 annually. In many cases the students are sustained entirely, even to the extent of providing clothes and pocket money. Others are married men, and receive extra allowance. Several have been sent to our colonies,

and in most instances the college paid their outfit. Twenty-two chapels have been erected in different parts of our country—a work of great difficulty for young ministers and infant congregations. But, to encourage the hearts and strengthen the hands of such pioneers, Mr. Spurgeon, with his accustomed generosity, guarantees one-tenth of the sum that may be required in such instances. A fund of £5,000 was formed some years ago, from which the students of the "Pastors' College" can draw, when they begin the erection of new chapels. "After the young men 'settle,' their connection with the college is still kept up. Boxes of books are sent on at intervals of two months from pastor to pastor, and thus books, some of them perhaps very expensive, are placed within the reach of men otherwise not affluent enough to procure them. Then every year there is a conference, when all the ministers educated at 'the Pastors' College' come up to London. At one of the last conferences, among the subjects discussed was that of life insurance in connection with their work. Mr. Spurgeon suggests that the churches throughout the country should insure their pastors' lives for the benefit of their families, and he has devoted the profits on the sale of the *Sword and Trowel* to the payment of a portion of the annual premiums on the lives of those who have been educated at his college." Oliver Goldsmith has a financial joke about the incumbent of Auburn living upon £40 a year; but a parson, now-a-days, cannot live on that sum. It is a notorious fact, that many Baptist Village Pastors are but poorly paid for their toil, and in more than one instance that has come under the writer's notice, Mr. Spurgeon has supplemented the scanty income of his former students by the gift of a ten pound note.

The Church at the Metropolitan Tabernacle is given to understand that the "Pastors' College" is an important part of the Church's proper work, and a report of its financial and general condition is read at its ordinary church meetings. A box is also placed at each door of the Tabernacle, with a request that every person attending the Sabbath's services will put in a penny for the "Pastors' College." For the year 1868 the sum thus raised was £2,000, and on a recent Sunday they realized upwards of £40. The donations last year were £4,300, which, with the £2,000 raised at the doors of the Tabernacle, make the year's income £6,300. "Scarce a day passes," says Mr. Spurgeon, "without the receipt of some spontaneous gifts to its funds from the most opposite quarters of the world. Churchmen, Independents, Presbyterians, and Methodists, as well as Baptists, contribute to the support of this college." A clergyman of the Established Church, who was laid aside from active work, sent Mr. Spurgeon £20 in aid of the institution, of which he highly approved.

Now, may not other denominations—may not our own denomination especially—learn a lesson from this movement? The demand that those who assume the ministerial office should be men of solid acquirements and mental power, as well as of deep piety and fervent zeal, has been rising every year

throughout the Connexion, as the natural result of the increased intelligence of our people; but, coupled with this demand for higher ability, do we find a proportionate willingness to aid our recently-formed training institution at Sunderland? Some of our good people think that preachers can pick up learning as the swallow picks up its food—*while flying*. They call their ministers from the humblest walks of life—the field, the factory, the shop—and, with scarce forty-eight hours' warning, usher them into some commodious chapel, and then if they happen to emascuate their "H's" or betray their rustic manners or provincial speech, the hearers drop their heads, or half terrify the poor youths with their frowns! Others talk and act as though a little education, under an able tutor, would make a lot of pious youths vain, proud, pedantic, and unfit for the ministry. Has such a course of study made our friend, the Rev. Danzy Sheen, vain, proud, and unfit for the work of a Primitive Methodist minister? Are our people ashamed when they see the pale devout young man enter their pulpits, and then listen to him as, with becoming diction and in good, plain Saxon language, he tells them of the solitary mourner in Gethsemane's garden, the slaughtered Lamb of Calvary, the risen and triumphant Saviour? Are the young men who were taught at "York School" by the devout, learned, and much-lamented Rev. John Petty, lacking in that zeal, simplicity, and outspoken faithfulness so befitting a Primitive Methodist preacher? The fact is, the more thoroughly a man is educated, the more plain will be his style of address. Inflated grandiloquence is rarely found, except in connection with a superficial education, and is most certainly cured by a sound and thorough education. Besides, how is it, we would ask, that some who opposed the "new school of the prophets" at Sunderland, and who still refuse to contribute to its support, are so anxious for the services of the students that the young men are with difficulty retained for the short space of two years? How is it that so many applications for ministers contain this postscript?—"N.B. ONE OF THE STUDENTS WILL BE GREATLY PREFERRED." Such people find their type in the cuckoo, which is said to be very indifferent who builds the nest, if she can only find, for her own ease and enjoyment, undisturbed possession.

The fact is, it is arrant nonsense to say that education will unfit a man for the christian ministry. The sooner that long-cherished, deep-rooted prejudice is torn up the better. Look at the Wesleyan Methodist community. Everybody knows that John Wesley was a learned man. The first race of Methodist preachers, who were so successful in the conversion of souls, were, on the whole, far better educated than those who now occupy the Wesleyan pulpits. Dr. Coke, who in largeness of heart and boldness of enterprise resembled Mr. Wesley; Jabez Bunting, one of the best and most powerful preachers England ever produced, and whose practical administrative ability has left its mark upon Methodism; Richard Watson, a man of the sublimest genius and the most captivating eloquence, and concerning whom the great

Robert Hall, after hearing him, said, "He does not move in the ordinary rut, but goes into regions of thought where scarcely ever human beings have trodden before;" Dr. Clarke and Joseph Benson, whose pulpit power has never been surpassed since the days of the Apostles, and whose skill and discernment in interpreting the Scriptures are so well known; Dr. Newton, a man of great fluency of speech, plainness of language, and largeness of heart, which marked his ministry from the first flush of early manhood to the end of his glorious career; John Hannah, who presented as great an embodiment of evangelical preaching and a truly christian spirit as was ever witnessed; John Scott, the late "governor of the Westminster Training school," a man of feeble physical powers, but possessed of an imperial intellect, great kindness of heart, and more than ordinary practical wisdom;—all these were men of profound learning, furnishing illustrations and unanswerable proofs of the fact that, the richest learning, the ripest scholarship, need not interfere with the simplicity of piety, or with the fervour and passion of preaching. We believe that our ministry is strong in its theological unity, and in its passion for souls, and nothing will tend so much to preserve these elements of strength as institutions like the one at Sunderland, under the able governorship of the Rev. William Antliff. It is very little use enlarging our chapels and increasing their number unless, at the same time, the Connexion provide an efficient and decently educated ministry to instruct and edify the people.

VII.

We need scarce remind the reader that religion does not consist merely in meditation and acts of devotion, but also in genuine sympathy and brotherly love, showing itself in acts of benevolence. Christ had compassion on the multitude because they had been with him three days, and had had no food; and John, who, perhaps, had as much of the spirit of his Master as any one of the apostles, says, "But whoso hath this world's good and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? Let us love not in word neither in tongue" only, "but in deed and in truth." We rejoice to say that the benevolence of our British churches is unequalled. In London alone there are not fewer than 606 institutions devoted to the alleviation of human wretchedness, which are supported by an annual contribution of seven millions sterling. That which is done by elaborate organization and state machinery in other lands, is achieved by the free gifts of a generous people in our own. Indeed, it has been said that such is the benevolence of our churches that we have only to make out a case of real necessity, and put it into a practical shape, so that people may understand how their money is to reach the object for which it is sought, and we may rest confident that their

hearts and purses will open freely. Now Mr. Spurgeon has formed two institutions whose claims to public aid cannot be over estimated.

FIRST: There are the *Alms-houses*; a row of eighteen neat cottages near the Tabernacle, on which the sum of five thousand pounds has been spent. Mr. Spurgeon's church contains nearly four thousand members, made up, to a great extent, of working people, and he found that the number of widows belonging to the church had become exceedingly great. Hence the alms-houses. Connected with these are boys' and girls' schools, which are well attended, and where, for sixpence a week, a good English education may be had.

SECOND: There is the *Stockwell Orphanage*; a number of houses where two hundred poor children, who have lost their natural protectors, are to be housed, fed, clothed, and trained up to fight life's great battle. The orphanage originated in the following manner. In *The Sword and Trowel* for August, 1866, Mr. Spurgeon wrote an article on the different modes of usefulness which might be adopted by the Christian public. Mrs. Hillyard, the pious widow of a clergyman of the Established Church, but who had become a member at the Tabernacle, having determined to devote her substance to the work of maintaining poor fatherless children, wrote to Mr. Spurgeon, stating, "I have determined to devote £20,000 to the work of maintaining orphans; would you be good enough to come and see me about it." Mr. Spurgeon thought the lady must have made a mistake, and put in a cypher or two too many; or else that some one was, to use his own expression, "playing him a trick." However, he went to see the lady, and found that she had resolved to devote the above sum for the benefit of fatherless children. Mr. Spurgeon at first hesitated to undertake this scheme, because of the vast amount of work already pressing upon him. Mrs. Hillyard urged her request, and as the deacons at the Tabernacle, with characteristic zeal, offered to render all possible aid, Mr. Spurgeon undertook the work. The first stones of these houses were laid on Monday, Sept. 9th, 1867, by the Pastor of the Tabernacle. Each orphan house cost about £500, and the first four were given under the following pleasing circumstances.

1. A merchant, of the city of London, who forbade his name being mentioned, gave £500 to erect one of these houses, which was appropriately called *Merchant House*.
2. Mr. Olney, one of the senior deacons at the Tabernacle, lost his pious and devoted wife by death, some years ago; the offspring of this pious pair presented £500 in memory of their sainted mother. The house is called *Unity House*.
3. A pious lady and her husband had lived together in the bonds of imperishable love for twenty-five years, and on each anniversary of their wedded life had blessed the hour that made them one. About a month before the twenty-fifth wedding-day came round, the husband said to his wife, "My dear, I mean to make you a present, on our wedding-day, of £500." "Well," quoth the wife, "I have often wished for so large a sum as that, to give Mr. Spurgeon for some of

his good works." So away she went to her pastor with the £500, to erect an orphan house, which is called, "*Silver Wedding House*." 4. A number of workmen in the employ of Mr. Higgs, a member of Mr. Spurgeon's church, volunteered to raise the cost of one house. When these men made this noble offer it was at once agreed that should any of them be called away, and their children be left orphans, these children should be the first to gain a home in the orphanage. Now, four days before the foundation-stone was laid one of these men died, leaving two boys behind him; these now share in the benefits of the orphanage. Their house is called *Workmen's House*.

The ground on which these houses are erected cost £3,000. Part of the £20,000 given by Mrs. Hillyard is invested in railway debentures, and the full amount will, therefore, in all probability, not be realized. Not one penny of this handsome gift has gone for building the orphanage. The money spent up to the present time, amounting to upwards of £15,000, has been raised by general contributions; while the entire cost of the orphanage will be about £20,000. Mr. Spurgeon means to raise £60,000, as a permanent endowment of the institution when in full operation. The £20,000 have been already invested; and who that recollects what Mr. Spurgeon has already done, can doubt that the remainder will in time be raised. By the orphanage and the almshouses, those at whose door grim poverty would have waited are delivered; the fatherless are fed and clothed; those bowed down by the weight of years and the infirmities of age are sheltered and tended, and widows' hearts are made to sing for joy. Now if, as Coleridge says—

"An orphan's curse would drag to hell
A spirit from on high,"

what must be the potent power of a blessing upon Mr. Spurgeon from many widows and fatherless children, who, but for the above institutions, would have been ready to perish.

From the last year's report of the Church at the Tabernacle, which has just been issued, the following noble sums were raised during the past twelve months:—

	£	s.	d.
Donations for the "Pastors' College"	4,300	0	0
Weekly offerings at the doors of the Tabernacle for ditto	2,000	0	0
Communion-table contributions for the relief of poor members	770	0	0
For the erection of the almshouses	6,600	0	0
For Sunday and ragged schools, tract and other societies	1,000	0	0
Lent to other churches for the erection of chapels	1,760	0	0
Contributions to Stockwell Orphanage	7,000	0	0
	23,430	0	0
Raised by seat-rents, &c., for the use of the Church at the Tabernacle	4,500	0	0
Making a grand total of	£27,930	0	0

Now, the question naturally arises, whence come the funds for all this? The only answer is, from the long derided, but now everywhere admired, voluntary principle. "But, ah," says some staunch advocate of Church and State, "it is Mr. Spurgeon's surpassing eloquence that has gained so large a sum. What will happen when he ceases to be the pastor? The whole affair will dwindle and decay." We are always doubtful as to predictions, but we are never afraid to act upon recorded facts. Take, then, a startling fact, in connection with the Free Church of Scotland. Twenty-five years ago five hundred ministers of the gospel left the Scotch Established Church. They had neither churches nor parsonages, and their congregations were, as a rule, composed of the middle and working classes. In many instances the landed gentry refused to grant them land on which to erect new churches; and they were compelled to assemble for Divine worship on the sea beach, after the tide had gone out, or on any strip of waste or unclaimed land they could find. No trial of the voluntary principle was ever so sudden, crucial, serious, sharp. And what has been the result? In twenty-five years the Free Church has built 900 churches, 650 mansees, three theological colleges, two training institutions, and 500 schools. For some years the income has been £370,000 a year, and the aggregate amount raised since the secession has been £8,000,000. By a general sustentation fund the Free Church guarantees to each minister a minimum of £150 a year, so that the poorest parish is thus assisted in its work; while many of the clergy have incomes ranging from £600 to £1,000 a year. Poor and middle-class Scotchmen, not aided by their landlords, with no churches and parsonages to begin with, have performed this great work. "The peasants' pennies," said Dr. Chalmers, who was the leading spirit in this great movement, "are more valuable to us than the earl's pounds."

That Mr. Spurgeon's body may long remain strong and his mind vigorous, and that the blessings of thousands who are ready to perish may come down upon him, is our earnest prayer and sincere wish.

