

THE REV

H. SPURGEON



HIS LIFE & WORK

TO HIS FORTY THIRD BIRTHDAY.

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56, OLD BAILEY, LONDON, E.C.



# PASTOR C. H. SPURGEON:

HIS

## LIFE AND WORK

TO

HIS FORTY-THIRD BIRTHDAY.

BY

GEORGE J. STEVENSON, M.A.,

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## PREFACE.

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THE design of the Author, in collecting and publishing the historical and biographical details contained in the following pages, has been to preserve a record of the leading events which have contributed to place the Pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in the foremost place amongst the ministers of the gospel during the second half of the nineteenth century. Care has been taken to record only ascertained facts; just the kind of material which some biographer may one day be thankful for, and which thousands of readers of to-day may be glad to see in a connected form. Opinions only have been excluded; facts are both important and interesting.

The Author has been influenced by the desire to be a faithful chronicler of events, some of which he was personally present to witness, and the value of which, in contributing to raise the moral, social, and religious condition of the people, is seen, not only in the immediate locality of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, but throughout London and England, and in some instances it has extended far beyond the sea. The extent and variety of the blessings conferred upon our common humanity by the agencies originating in Mr. Spurgeon, and emanating from his Tabernacle, are believed to be without parallel.

From inquiries made every week for such information as will be found in the following pages, it is manifest that such a work is wanted; and it may probably be appreciated by thoughtful and earnest Christians of every denomination.

PATEBNOSTER ROW, LONDON,  
*July 7th, 1877.*



## PASTOR C. H. SPURGEON.

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### HIS ANCESTRY.



HEROIC deeds have often been the outcome of persecution and tyranny. Many quiet, earnest Christians were raised to the dignity of heroes by the cruelties of Black Bartholomew, in 1662. A spirit of chivalry and holy daring was quickened into unyielding boldness by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes. The austerities so frequently exercised on the continent of Europe have driven from the homes of their fathers thousands of the best citizens, who, to avoid sufferings they had not merited, quitted their native land for ever to find a welcome and a home in England.

The persecution of Alva a few centuries since drove from the Netherlands many families, who, crossing the German Ocean, found in the East Angles, Essex and Norfolk, a congenial resting place, and ready employment for themselves and their families. The withering policy of an ambitious and ungodly priesthood, whilst depopulating whole districts on the continent, served to enrich England with many of her most useful and most valued citizens. The ancestors of Mr. Spurgeon, who were amongst those driven to England for protection and safety, were distinguished during many generations for their piety; and finding on their landing on the eastern coast of England from the Netherlands a quiet refuge, they located themselves there, and have left their mark upon society, in both Essex and Norfolk, as industrious, pious, and honourable citizens.

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

straw for fifteen weeks, in extremely severe winter weather, without any fire. Out of such men God makes heroes.

The great-grandfather of Pastor Spurgeon was contemporary with the opening period of the reign of King George III. The record preserved of his memory is, that he was a pious man, and ordered his household according to the will of God. From that day to this their family has never wanted a man to stand before God in the service of the Sanctuary. His son James Spurgeon was in early life dedicated to God, and while yet a youth was set apart to the ministry amongst the Nonconformists, and was for considerably more than half a century pastor over one congregation, maintaining his usefulness and popularity to the end of a very long life. The mother of James Spurgeon the elder was a woman of remarkable piety, and she took deep interest in the spiritual welfare of her children.

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

In about middle life, he was intending to record his vote for the county at the general election, but the vote was objected to. He ascertained the cause to be that all the trustees of the chapel-house and land were dead, and he having had more than twenty-one years' possession, he was advised to go home, make his will, and leave the property to his children, as it had become his legally. His conscientious convictions led him to refuse the proposal, and he called a meeting of the church and subscribers, and put the entire property into trust, according to the wishes and intentions of the donor. Few men would have acted with so much disinterested generosity and integrity. When he had reached fourscore years, some of his friends advised his retirement from the pastorate: to these he replied, "No! God has blessed me; and I see at

eventide it will be light," alluding to a favourite sermon with that title by his grandson. At that time a revival of religion broke out in that locality, and several young persons joined his church. Prayer-meetings were held almost every night, and much good was done, which led him to say, "I will never give up so long as God inclines people to come, and souls are saved."

He was a great favourite with the people in Essex, and was widely known from his being so frequently invited to preach special and annual sermons. His own chapel held about six hundred people, and on the Sunday afternoon it was well filled, the farmers coming to hear him for many miles round. He had a long range of stables attached to the chapel, for the shelter of their horses. When the venerable man was eighty-six, his grandson, Charles, was on a preaching tour in Essex; and a letter of earnest entreaty was sent by the patriarch urging the young divine to call upon him. Arriving as early as eight in the morning, the aged saint was on the look-out for "his boy." His cheerful spirit led him to speak of his college tutor at Hoxton, of his early life, trials, deliverances, and the many friends whom he had known, but who had preceded him to heaven. He then related incidents of so much interest that his grandson embodied part of them in an article in *The Sword and the Trowel*, which the reader will be glad to see in Pastor Spurgeon's own words.

"My grandfather remarked that there was formerly a wood in what I think he called Honeywood Park, which was a very memorable place to him. In that wood he had groaned and wept before the Lord while under the burden of sin, and under a tree, an oak, then only a sapling, he had received the grace of faith, and entered upon the enjoyment of peace with God. It was a lonely spot, but henceforth it was to him no other than the house of God, and the very gate of heaven. Often he resorted thither and praised the name of the Lord.

"Some time after this happy event, having to go from Coggeshall to Halstead, his route was over the hallowed spot. On the night previous he dreamed very vividly that the devil appeared to him, and threatened to tear him in pieces if he dared to go along that footpath and pray under the oak as he had been wont to do. The evil one reminded him that there was another way through the farm yard, and that if he took the farm yard path all would go well with him. When my grandfather awoke, the impression on his mind was overpowering, and he reasoned thus with himself:—Whether it be a dream or really a temptation from Satan I cannot tell, but anyhow I will not yield to it, but will show the devil that I will not do his bidding in anything, but will defy him to his face. This was the good man all over. Like Luther, he had a vivid impression of the reality and personality of the great enemy, and was accustomed to make short work with his suggestions. One day when in the pulpit it came into his head that the place where the sand was kept for sanding the brick floor of his manse ought to be boarded in. His next thought was what business had the devil to make me think about the sand closet on a Sunday, and in the pulpit, too; it shall not be boarded in at all. I will let him see that he shall not have his way with me. But to return to the story, my grandfather, then a young man, went on cheerily enough till he came to the stile where the two



paths diverged, then a horrible fear came upon him, and he felt his heart beat fast. Suppose he really should meet the archfiend, and should find him too strong for him, what then? Better take the farm-yard path. No, that would be yielding to Satan, and he would not do that for ten thousand worlds. He plucked up courage and tremblingly pressed on. The stile was leaped, the narrow tract through the wood was trodden with resolution mingled with forebodings. The oak was in sight, the sweat was on his face, the pace was quickened, a dash was made, and the tree was grasped, but there was no Satan there. Taking breath a moment, the young man uttered aloud the exclamation, 'Ah, cowardly devil, you threatened to tear me in pieces, and now you do not dare show your face.' Then followed a fervent prayer and a song of praise, and the young man was about to go on his way, when his eye was caught by something shining on the ground. It was a ring, a very large ring, he told me nearly as large as a curtain ring, and it was solid gold; how it came there it would be hard to guess. Enquiries were made, but no claimant ever appeared, and my grandfather had it made into my grandmother's wedding ring, in memory of the spot so dear to him. Year by year he continued to visit the oak tree on the day of his conversion, to pour out his soul before the Lord. The sapling had spread abroad its branches, and the man had become the parent of a numerous family, but the song of gratitude was not forgotten, nor the prayer that he and his offspring might for ever be the Lord's; the angels of God, we doubt not, watched those consecrated seasons with delightful interest.

"To add to the solemnity of the secluded wood, his father, while passing by the spot, was touched by the hand of God, and suddenly fell dead. He could then feel even more deeply—how awful is this place! This made the annual visitations to the tree more deeply impressive, and we believe beneficial. They would have been continued till my grandfather's last year, were it not that the hand of modern improvement ruthlessly swept away tree and wood, and every relic of the past. His last prayer upon the dear spot was most ludicrously interrupted—as the wood was almost all felled, he judged by the pathway as nearly as possible where the long-remembered oak had stood; the place was covered with growing wheat, but he knelt down in it and began to bless the name of the Lord, when suddenly he heard a rough voice from over the hedge crying out, 'Maister, there be a creazy man a-saying his prayers down in the wheat over thay're.' This startled the suppliant and made him beat a hasty retreat. Jacob must wrestle somewhere else; the man of God looked at the spot and went his way, but in spirit he still raised an altar in that Bethel, and praised the God of his salvation. He has gone to his rest after having fought a good fight, but the prayers of Honeywood Park are blessing his children and his children's children to the third generation at this very hour. To them and all the world his testimony is, 'Resist the devil and he will flee from you,' and equally does he instruct us to 'Bless the Lord, and forget not all his benefits.'"

In the year 1856 Pastor C. H. Spurgeon preached a sermon at Stambourne, on the occasion of his grandfather completing the fiftieth year of his ministry. This was published under the title of "The God of the

Aged," Nos. 81-2 of the "New Park Street Pulpit." The old man had especial delight in promoting the sale of the sermons and other publications of his grandson, seeking always to get an early supply of any new publications. He was careful to supply the members of his church, annually, with a copy of "Spurgeon's Almanack," which the writer supplied him with several years before his death.

During the last two years of his life he was assisted by various ministers, himself continuing to preach as frequently as his health permitted; and he administered the ordinance of the Lord's supper to the end of his life. He peacefully entered into rest on February 12th, 1864, in his eighty-seventh year, and his remains were interred on February 21st in the neighbourhood of Stambourne chapel, attended by a large number of endeared friends. Mr. Bridge, of Ridgewell, preached on the mournful occasion; and the tears and sympathy of an immense concourse of people testified how much he was loved and respected, after a ministry of fifty-three years amongst them. His son John, at Cranbrook, Kent, and his grandson, Charles Haddon, at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, each preached memorial sermons to their respective congregations.

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

Such honour hath not all the saints. He left eight children, seven of whom were members of Christian churches, the eldest was deacon of the church at Stambourne, and John, the second son, was till very recently minister at the Upper Street Church, in Islington.

John Spurgeon, the father of Charles, was born at Stambourne, in 1811. He was the second of ten children, of whom four brothers and three sisters are still living. He is a portly-looking man, a good specimen of a country gentleman, and is nearly six feet in height. For many years he was engaged in business at Colchester, but, with so excellent an example of a minister as was his father, it is not strange that his mind should have run in the same direction, though he did not fully enter on the ministry till he reached the prime of life. For sixteen years he preached on Sundays to a small Independent church at Tollesbury, being occupied with business during the week. He next accepted a call to the pastorate of the Independent church at Cranbrook, Kent, a village of 3,000 persons, where he remained five years.

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

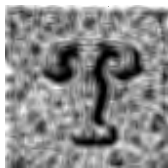
Mrs. John Spurgeon was the youngest sister of Charles Parker Jarvis, Esq., of Colchester, in which town her husband carried on business for many years. Wherever she has resided she has been known and esteemed for her sincere piety, her great usefulness, and humility. She is low in stature, and in this respect her son Charles takes after her, but not in features; in this particular their other son, James Archer Spurgeon, assimilates more to his mother. Even to a stranger visiting Mr. John Spurgeon's congregation it would not be difficult to distinguish the pastor's wife. She has a kind word and a smile for all who come in contact with her, but perhaps the least assuming lady in the whole assembly of worshippers. The prayerful solicitude with which she trained her children has been rewarded by each one of them making a public profession of their faith in Christ. Two of her sons occupy a

foremost place in the metropolis as preachers of the gospel, and one of her daughters, herself the wife of a minister, not only assists her husband in the preparation of his sermons, but she occasionally delivers addresses to small audiences. Speaking one day to her son Charles of her solicitude for the best interests of all her children, she said, "Ah, Charley, I have often prayed that you might be saved, but never that you should become a Baptist." To this Charles replied, "God has answered your prayer, mother, with his usual bounty, and given you more than you asked." Both Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon made great sacrifices of personal comfort to give a good education to their children, and the children were taught habits of thrift and self-denial. James, when a boy, did much of the house work at home, and could make and bake bread with anyone. Such are some of the surroundings of the parents and of the early life of Pastor C. H. Spurgeon.





## BIRTH AND EARLY LIFE OF PASTOR SPURGEON.



THE villages of England more than the towns have the honour of producing our great men. In the village the faculties develop themselves as nature forms them, whilst in the large towns a thousand delusive influences are continually diverting the minds of the young into channels of danger and error. The parents of Pastor Spurgeon were residing at the village of Kelvedon, in Essex, when, on June 19, 1834, their son Charles was born. The population of the place is only two thousand souls, and the resident clergyman at the time just stated, the Rev. Charles Dalton, lived long enough to celebrate his jubilee as minister in that parish. His long life of consistent piety was not without its good influence on his parishioners. The Spurgeon family belonged to the Nonconformists, and under its teachings they were all brought up. Charles and James Spurgeon both went to the same school together, in the village. Charles was of a larger and broader build than James, and the boys in the village gave them the names of "Big Chummy" and "Little Chummy," the term "chummy" indicating friendship or attachment. Charles had as a boy a larger head than his brother, and he is represented as taking in learning more readily than James, whilst the latter excelled more in domestic duties. Besides these two brothers, there are six sisters living, two of whom are said to resemble Charles in figure and mental energy. One sister is married to the Rev. William Jackson, of Willingham, Cambs., and another is the wife of Mr. Page, a solicitor, of Newington Butts, and for some years a member of her brother's Tabernacle. He has recently become the minister of a Baptist church in Lambeth, where a dense and needy population is receiving much benefit from his ministrations. Mrs. Jackson has the gift of being able to address an assembly of persons on religious topics in an interesting and impressive manner. The self-denial of their parents in securing for the children a good education is abundantly rewarded in the enlarged usefulness of their after lives.

When just old enough to leave home, Charles was removed to his grandfather's house at Stambourne, where, under the affectionate care of a maiden aunt, and directed by the venerable pastor, he soon developed into the thoughtful boy, fonder of his book than of his play. He would sit for hours together gazing with childish horror at the grim figures of "Old Bonner and Giant Despair"; or tracing the adventures of Christian in the "Pilgrim's Progress," or of "Robinson Crusoe." The pious





BIRTHPLACE OF C. H. SPURGEON, KELVEDON, ESSEX.

precocity of the child soon attracted the attention of all around. He would astonish the grave deacons and matrons who met at his grandfather's house on Sabbath evenings, by proposing subjects for conversation, and making pertinent remarks upon them. At that early period in life he gave indications of that decision of character and boldness of address for which he has since become so remarkable.

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

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

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

"When I was a very small boy," writes Charles H. Spurgeon, "I was staying at my grandfather's, where I had aforetime spent my earliest days, and as the manner was I read the Scriptures at family prayer. Once upon a time when reading the passage in the Book of Revelation which mentions the bottomless pit, I paused and said, 'Grandpa, what can this mean?' The answer was kind but unsatisfactory—'Pooh, pooh, child, go on.' The child intended, however, to have an explanation, and therefore selected the same chapter morning after morning, Sunday included, and always halted at the same verse to repeat the enquiry. At length the venerable patriarch capitulated at discretion by saying, 'Well, dear, what is it that puzzles you?' Now, the child had often seen baskets with very frail bottoms, which in course of wear became bottomless, and allowed the fruit placed therein to fall upon the ground. Here, then, was the puzzle: If the pit aforesaid had no bottom, where would all the people fall to who dropped out at its lower end? a puzzle which rather startled the propriety of family worship, and had to be laid aside for explanation at a more convenient season. Questions of the like simple and natural character would frequently break up into paragraphs at the family Bible reading, and had there not been a world of love and license allowed to the inquisitive reader, he would soon have been deposed from his office. As it was, the Scriptures were not very badly rendered, and were probably quite as interesting as if they had not been interspersed with original and curious enquiries."

On one of these occasions Mr. Knill, late of Chester, now of New Jerusalem, whose name is a household word, whose memory is precious to thousands at home and abroad, stayed at the minister's house on Friday, in readiness to preach at Stambourne for the London Missionary Society on the following Sunday. He never looked into a young face without yearning to impart some spiritual gift. He was all love, kindness,

earnestness, and warmth, and coveted the souls of men as misers desire the gold their hearts pine for. He heard the boy read, and commended : a little judicious praise is the sure way to a young heart. An agreement was made with the lad that on the next morning, Saturday, he would show Mr. Knill over the garden, and take him for a walk before breakfast; a task so flattering to juvenile self-importance was sure to be readily entered upon. There was a tap at the door, and the child was soon out of bed and in the garden with his new friend, who won his heart in no time by pleasing stories and kind words, and giving him a chance to communicate in return. The talk was all about Jesus, and the pleasantness of loving him. Nor was it mere talk; there was pleading too. Into the great yew arbour, cut into the shape of a sugar-loaf, both went, and the soul-winner knelt down, with his arms around the youthful neck, he poured out vehement intercession for the salvation of the lad. The next morning witnessed the same instruction and supplication, and the next also, while all day long the pair were never far apart, and never out of each other's thoughts. The mission sermons were preached in the old Puritan meeting-house, and the man of God was called to go to the next halting-place in his tour as deputation for the Society, but he did not leave till he had uttered a most remarkable prophecy. After even more earnest prayer with his little *protégé*, he appeared to have a burden on his mind, and he could not go till he had eased himself of it. "In after years he was heard to say he felt a singular interest in me, and an earnest expectation for which he could not account. Calling the family together he took me on his knee, and I distinctly remember his saying, 'I do not know how it is, but I feel a solemn presentiment that this child will preach the gospel to thousands, and God will bless him to many souls. So sure am I of this, that when my little man preaches in Rowland Hill's chapel, as he will do one day, I should like him to promise me that he will give out the hymn commencing—

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

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

"The prophetic declaration was fulfilled. When I had the pleasure of preaching the word of life in Surrey Chapel, and also when I preached in Mr. Hill's first pulpit at Wootton-under-Edge, the hymn was sung in both places. Did the words of Mr. Knill help to bring about their own fulfilment? I think so. I believed them, and looked forward to the time when I should preach the word. I felt very powerfully that no unconverted person might dare to enter the ministry. This made me the more intent on seeking salvation, and more hopeful of it; and when by grace I was enabled to cast myself on the Saviour's love, it was not long before my mouth began to speak of his redemption. How came that sober-minded minister to speak thus to and of one into whose future God alone could see? How came it that he lived to rejoice with his younger brother in the truth of all that he had spoken? The answer is plain. But mark one particular

lesson : would to God that we were all as wise as Richard Knill in habitually sowing beside all waters. Mr. Knill might very naturally have left the minister's little grandson on the plea that he had other duties of more importance than praying with children ; and yet who shall say that he did not effect as much by that simple act of humble ministry as by dozens of sermons addressed to crowded audiences. To me his tenderness in considering the little one was fraught with everlasting consequences, and I must ever feel that his time was well laid out." So far the little boy's own account.

Grandfather Spurgeon, in a letter to the writer, gives the following additional particulars : " Good Mr. Knill, laying his venerable hands on the child's head, said, ' I have heard old ministers and young ones read well, but never did I hear a little boy read so correctly before. I hope he will one day fill Rowland Hill's pulpit.' When Mr. Knill first heard of my grandson being in London he wrote to me for his address, The reason he gave was, being then from home with a large party of friends, at dinner, the conversation turned upon a wonderful preacher who was pastor of the New Park Street chapel. Enquiring his name, was told it was Mr. Spurgeon. ' I know him,' said Mr. Knill. ' No, no,' replied his friend ; ' I think not.' ' Yes I do, Sir,' returned Mr. Knill, ' I saw him at his grandfather's house some years ago, when I preached in the village for the missionary cause, and have always been convinced that he would one day be a most extraordinary character in the Christian world. I remember taking the lad into the garden : I conversed with him, and prayed with him, and found that he possessed a mind far beyond his years.' "

How literally all this has been fulfilled is known to thousands of persons. During several weeks, whilst Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle was being cleansed and repainted, the trustees of Rowland Hill's chapel volunteered to Mr. Spurgeon the use of that place in which to conduct his week-night services ; and the large audience room was crowded on each occasion. Amongst his published Sermons No. 768 is one of those preached by Mr. Spurgeon in Surrey Chapel.

During the fostering care of his aunt Ann, his father's unmarried sister at Stambourne, an attachment grew up which was as sincere in affectionate regard as that which usually exists between parent and child. This aunt had charge of the infant Spurgeon during most of the first six years of his life. He was the first grandchild in the family. Care was taken by his aunt to instruct him gradually as the mind was capable of receiving impressions ; but from his childhood his mind seems to have been framed after nature's model. The book he admired at his grandfather's, which had for one of its illustrations the portrait of Bonner, Bishop of London, was the cause of his mind receiving its first impressions against tyranny and persecution : and being told of the persecuting character of Bonner, the child manifested a great dislike to the name, and called the picture which represented the bishop " Old Bonner." Even at that early period of life, before he was six years old, he exhibited a marked attachment to those who were known as the children of God. To him it was not merely a pleasure to go, and a source of joy to remain, but a positive delight to go to the house of God. In one of his grandfather's letters to the writer he remarks, " I

do not remember ever hearing of his speaking anything but the truth ;” and again, “I cannot remember that we ever had occasion to correct him for any false tale.” Here, then, is a model for children to imitate. Always speak the truth : fear a lie. Nothing makes a man a greater coward than falsehood. When but a youth, scarcely in his teens, from a communication kindly furnished by his father, we learn that Charles was often found in the hay-rick, or the manger, reading aloud, talking, or sometimes preaching to his brother and sisters, so desirous was he to be doing good. Gathering up these reminiscences of childhood, it appears as though the boy was born to be a preacher. He was a boy of strong passions—and determined will, which gave much concern to his parents, and most earnestly did they both pray that the great Head of the church would give him grace to subdue those passions, and rightly direct that will. That prayer was fully answered.

Glancing at his educational advantages from the time he left his grandfather's, his father placed him in a respectable school at Colchester, conducted by Mr. Henry Lewis. The head usher in the school was Mr. Leeding, who afterwards left Colchester and opened a school for young gentlemen in Cambridge. Charles Spurgeon spent four years in the school at Colchester, in which he appears to have acquired a fair acquaintance with the Latin, Greek, and French languages. To Mr. Leeding he was indebted for nearly all the knowledge he there obtained. In every branch of study to which he devoted his attention young Spurgeon was sure to become master of it, and invariably at the examination he was the successful prize winner. In 1848 he spent a few months in an agricultural college at Maidstone, conducted by one of his relatives.

Very early in life the youthful Spurgeon imbibed theological opinions of a decided character. From early childhood he had attended the services of the sanctuary in which definite doctrinal teaching was a prominent feature. Whilst yet a youth not yet fourteen, about the time when he gave up school-boy studies to become an usher, he is said to have written a letter to one of his uncles, in 1848, or early in 1849, which has been preserved. For many reasons it deserves to be permanently preserved. It is as follows :

“MY DEAR UNCLE,—Dumb men make no mischief. Your silence, and my neglect, make one think of the days when letters were costly, and not of penny postage. You have doubtless heard of me as a top-tree Antinomian. I trust you know enough of me to disbelieve it. It is an object of my life to disprove the slander. I groan daily under a body of sin and corruption. O, for the time when I shall drop this flesh, and be free from sin ! I become more and more convinced, that to attempt to be saved by a mixed covenant of works and faith is, in the words of Berridge—‘To yoke a snail with an elephant.’ I desire to press forward for direction to my Master in all things ; but as to trusting to my own obedience and righteousness, I should be worse than a fool and ten times worse than a madman. Poor dependent creatures ! prayer had need be our constant employment : the foot of the throne our continued dwelling-place ; for the Rock of Ages is our only safe Hiding-place. I rejoice in an assured knowledge by faith of my interest in Christ, and of the certainty of my eternal salvation. Yet what

strivings, what conflicts, what dangers, what enemies stand in my way! The foes in my heart are so strong, that they would have killed me and sent me to hell long ere this, had the Lord left me; but, blessed be his name! his electing, redeeming, and saving love has got fast hold of me; and who is able to pluck me out of my Father's hand? On my bended knees I have often to cry for succour; and—bless his name! He has hitherto heard my cry. O, if I did not know that all the Lord's people had soul-contention, I should give up all for lost. I rejoice that the promises left on record are meant for me, as well as for every saint of his, and as such I desire to grasp them. Let the whole earth, and even God's professing people, cast out my name as evil; my Lord and Master he will not. I glory in the distinguishing grace of God, and will not, by the grace of God, step one inch from my principles, or think of adhering to the present fashionable sort of religion.

"O, could I become like holy men of past ages—fearless of men—holding sweet communion with God—weaned more from the world, and enabled to fix my thoughts on spiritual things entirely! But when I would serve God, I find my old deceitful heart full of the very essence of hell, rising up into my mouth, polluting all I say and all I do. What should I do, if, like you, I were called to be engaged about things of time and sense? I fear I should be neither diligent in business, nor fervent in spirit. 'But' (say you) 'he keeps talking all about himself.' True, he does; he cannot help it. Self is too much his master. I am proud of my own ignorance: and, like a toad, bloated with my own venomous pride—proud of what I have not got, and boasting when I should be bemoaning. I trust you have greater freedom from your own corruptions than I have; and in secret, social, and family prayer enjoy more blessed, sanctified liberty at the footstool of mercy.

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

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

"May the Lord bless you exceedingly.

Your affectionate Nephew,

C. H. SPURGEON."

In almost every sentence of this remarkable letter we discern the leading characteristics of what Mr. Spurgeon is at the present day. The remark of the poet, "The boy is father to the man," is strikingly illustrated in Mr. Spurgeon's case.

In the year 1849 he removed to Newmarket, and in his fifteenth year he engaged himself as usher in the school of Mr. Swindell, who was a Baptist. He had not been long there before he determined his future religious course by joining the Baptist church, of his own free will, before he was fifteen years of age. This fact is attested by a

letter of his father's. Whilst in Mr. Swindell's establishment he pursued the study of the Greek and French languages with considerable diligence, and there also his zeal for the Lord of Hosts was manifested remarkably. There he learned to practise much self-denial. The privations he voluntarily submitted to at that time showed how decided were his purposes to acquire knowledge, and as far as he knew to try and serve God. But the struggle which was going on in his mind preparatory to his giving his heart fully to God, can only be described in his own touching words, as recorded in one of his sermons. Speaking of a free-thinker, he remarks, "I, too, have been like him. There was an evil hour in which I dipped the anchor of my faith : I cut the cable of my belief : I no longer moored myself hard by the coast of Revelation : I allowed my vessel to drift before the wind, and thus started on the voyage of infidelity. I said to Reason, be thou my captain ; I said to my own brain, be thou my rudder ; and I started on my mad voyage. Thank God it is all over now ; but I will tell you its brief history : it was one hurried sailing over the tempestuous ocean of free thought." The result was, that from doubting some things he came to question everything, even his own existence. Here he conquered those extremes to which Satan often drives the sinner who is really repenting of his sins.

There are some persons who try to estimate the value of the work of a minister of Christ by arithmetic ; a process neither wise nor safe. It may be that a minister may add a hundred names to the church roll during the year, and yet not one of them may become an active worker for God. It may be that a minister may preach for a whole year and add only one name to the roll of the church ; but if that name should be a George Whitefield or John Wesley, or a Charles Spurgeon, wherein will be the greatest success ? The circumstances attending Mr. Spurgeon's conversion were almost unknown for many years after the event had taken place. All that was known was, it took place in a Primitive Methodist chapel in Colchester, on a cold, snowy, December Sunday morning ; the preacher, "a man as pale as death and as thin as a skeleton," was late in arriving, owing to the storm. He preached from "Look unto me and be ye saved," &c. "But," said Mr. Spurgeon himself to Danzy Sheen many years afterwards, "I never expect to look on the face of that preacher again until the morning of the resurrection." Mr. Danzy Sheen, a Primitive Methodist minister, has been at much pains to gather up the real facts of the case, and these he has published in a pamphlet entitled "Pastor Spurgeon : his Conversion, Labour, and Success." Before noticing these facts, the reader will be glad to hear Pastor Spurgeon's own account of his conversion.

"I will tell you how I myself was brought to the knowledge of this truth. It may happen the telling of that will bring some one else to Christ. It pleased God in my childhood to convince me of sin. I lived a miserable creature, finding no hope, no comfort, thinking that surely God would never save me. At last the worst came to the worst—I was miserable ; I could do scarcely anything. My heart was broken in pieces. Six months did I pray, prayed agonizingly with all my heart, and never had an answer. I resolved that, in the town where I lived, I would visit every place of worship in order to find out the way of



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

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

The result of the enquiries made by Danzy Sheen show that the Rev. Robert Eaglen was the Primitive Methodist minister travelling in the Ipswich Circuit in the year 1850-1, in which circuit Colchester was a branch mission. That Mr. Eaglen preached in the Colchester chapel

on Sunday morning, December 15th, 1850, that the snow storm delayed his arrival at the chapel considerably beyond the proper time, that he preached from the words, "Look unto me, and be ye saved," etc. Isaiah xlv. 22.

Mr. John Bloomfield, of Colchester, a Primitive Methodist local preacher of that town, who has known Charles Spurgeon from a child, and was intimately acquainted with all the family, thus wrote to Danzy Sheen :—

"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 like to see him on 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. John Spurgeon's family affairs than anyone else out of the family, as we were both together nearly every day for seventeen years."

Some years afterwards the Rev. Thomas Lowe introduced Mr. Eaglen to Mr. Spurgeon, at Lowestoft, as his spiritual father; but Mr. Spurgeon did not recognise him, because he had in the mean time gathered much flesh, and was neither so thin nor so pale as when the "Look and be saved" sermon was preached in 1850.

In October, 1868, Mr. Eaglen supplied Danzy Sheen with the outline of the sermon alluded to. In printing the outline in his pamphlet he remarks :—

"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 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.

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

Of his conversion Mr. Spurgeon takes delight in speaking on every

fitting opportunity, hoping thereby to benefit others. As an example of the advantage which he takes, under the title of "A Bit for Boys," he says, in *The Sword and the Trowel* for 1874, "When I was just fifteen, I believed in the Lord Jesus, was baptized, and joined the church of Christ. This is twenty-five years ago now, and I have never been sorry for what I then did ; no, not even once. I have had plenty of time to think it over, and many temptations to try some other course, and if I had found out that I had been deceived, or had made a gross blunder, I would have made a change before now, and would do my best to prevent others from falling into the same delusion. I tell you, boys, the day I gave myself up to the Lord Jesus, to be his servant, was the very best day of my life. Then I began to be safe and happy ; then I found out the secret of living ; and had a worthy object for my life's exertions, and an unfailing comfort for life's troubles. Because I would wish every boy to have a bright eye, a light tread, a joyful heart, and overflowing spirits, I plead with him to consider whether he will not follow my example, for I speak from experience."

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

In his last letter on this subject he says, writing from Newmarket, May 1st, 1851 (the day of the opening of the Great Exhibition in London), "If I know my own heart, I believe the sentiment uppermost there is, that salvation is not of man, that no works, however holy, contribute in the least to save my soul; that the work is all of God's sovereign electing love, and that if ever I am saved it will be by his power alone."

All the arrangements having been made, the young convert walked from Newmarket to Isleham, seven miles, on May 2nd, and staying with the family of Mr. Cantlow, the Baptist minister there, he was by that gentleman publicly baptized in that village, on Friday, May 3rd, 1851, being in his sixteenth year. He thus proceeds in his letter to his father, "It is very pleasing to me that the day on which I shall openly profess the name of Jesus is my mother's birthday. May it be to both of us a foretaste of many glorious and happy days yet to come." Who that has a heart to feel would not heartily respond to such a prayer, by such a son—AMEN.

Having thus publicly devoted himself to the service of God, he was more earnest than ever in his efforts to do good. Besides having himself revived an old society for distributing tracts, he undertook to carry out this good work in Newmarket thoroughly. Whenever he walked out he carried these messengers of mercy with him: he was instant in season, and, indeed, was seldom out of season, in his efforts to do good. His duties in school occupied him three hours daily, the remainder of his time being spent in his closet or in some work of mercy. The Sunday School very soon gained his attention, and his addresses to the children were so full of love and instruction that the children carried the good tidings home to their parents; and soon they came to hear the addresses in the vestry of the Independent chapel in that town. The place was soon filled.

At one of the examinations of the school he had consented to deliver an oration on missions. It was a public occasion, and in the company was a clergyman. During the examination the clergyman heard of the death of his gardener, and suddenly left for home; but on his way he

thus reasoned with himself—the gardener is dead. I cannot restore his life—I will return and hear what the young usher has to say on missions. He returned, heard the oration, and was pleased to show his approval by presenting Mr. Spurgeon with a sovereign.

Whilst he was resident at Newmarket, Mr. Arthur Morley, of Nottingham, cousin to Mr. Samuel Morley, M.P., offered a prize for the best essay on Popery. Only three essays were sent in, one of which was written by Mr. Spurgeon. The Rev. George Smith, D.D., of Poplar, was the adjudicator, who, after a delay of two years, wrote a kind and encouraging letter to Mr. Spurgeon, stating that, though his paper was not deemed entitled to the premium, yet the gentleman who offered it, and who was a relative, in approval of his zeal, and in the hope that he might employ his talents for the public good, sent him a handsome sum of money as a gratuity. This essay is entitled, “Antichrist and her Brood; or, Popery Unmasked;” and is thus endorsed—“Written by a boy under sixteen years of age.” This early production of Mr. Spurgeon’s pen has not been printed.

After a residence of one year he removed to Cambridge, and became usher under Mr. Henry Leeding, who had shortly before opened a school for young gentlemen in that University borough. Gratitude to Mr. Leeding for the instruction received from him at Colchester led Mr. Spurgeon to that establishment. There his duties were less arduous, and his comforts greatly increased. He maintained his faith in God unmoved, though often it was tested.

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

As this was one of the most important steps in Mr. Spurgeon’s life, the reader will be glad to learn from his own pen the circumstances which led to his first attempted sermon. In introducing the text, “Unto you therefore which believe he is precious,” 1 Peter ii. 7, Mr. Spurgeon remarks, in 1873, “I remember well that, more than twenty-two years ago, the first attempted sermon that I ever made was from this text. I had been asked to walk out to the village of Taversham, about four miles from Cambridge, where I then lived, to accompany a young man whom I supposed to be the preacher for the evening, and on the way I said to him that I trusted God would bless him in his labours. ‘Oh, dear,’ said he, ‘I never preached in my life; I never thought of doing such a thing. I was asked to walk with you, and I sincerely hope God will bless you in your preaching.’ ‘Nay,’ said I, ‘but I never preached, and I don’t know that I could do anything of the sort.’ We walked together till we came to the place, my inmost soul being all in a trouble as to what would happen. When we found

the congregation assembled, and no one else there to speak of Jesus, though I was only sixteen years of age, as I found that I was expected to preach, I did preach, and the text was that just given."

Considering the results which have followed that sermon, and that the preacher is now the author of more than twenty large volumes of published sermons, and that probably no less a number than fifteen hundred of his sermons have in various forms been printed since that day, it will be interesting to glance at some of the incidents belonging to that early period of his ministry. In the summer of 1875, from enquiries made in the locality, a correspondent of the *Baptist* newspaper reports as follows:

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

"Mr. C. D. remembers C. H. Spurgeon preaching at Somersham about twenty-four years ago, when he would be about seventeen years of age. He was then wearing a round jacket and turn-down collar. The words of the text were, 'Fear not, thou worm Jacob.' The boyish voice of the preacher afforded a striking and impressive contrast to the tones of the aged minister who was accustomed to occupy the pulpit.

"Mr. Spurgeon was then living near Cambridge, and his mode of preaching afforded promise that he would become a powerful and popular preacher. One old man, who was a Particular Baptist, went to hear him, and was careful to repeat the visit.

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

"Mrs. J. A. remembers Mr. Spurgeon preaching at Houghton when quite a lad. The sermon was a very impressive one, and could it have been heard without seeing the boyish preacher, anyone would have taken it to be the discourse of a staid and experienced Christian."

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

From an aged and experienced Christian, who heard Mr. Spurgeon preach before his call to London, we learn that his addresses were very instructive, and often included illustrations derived from history, geography, astronomy, and from other branches of school occupation, evidently adapted from his daily duties, and thus made to serve as instruments in religion as well as in training and informing the mind.

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

In some of the thirteen village stations around Cambridge and Waterbeach, to which Mr. Spurgeon devoted all his evenings, the preaching was held in a cottage, in others a chapel, and occasionally the open air alone could furnish the accommodation required. At the village of Waterbeach, Mr. Spurgeon was received in a marked manner

of approval. In most of the places in which he had preached the effect was very much alike, in the large numbers attracted to hear the word of God, and in the success which God was pleased to bestow on his labours. Even at that early period of his ministerial career, invitations to preach special sermons in towns and villages at a distance soon rapidly increased. At Waterbeach, however, the little church saw in the young man a suitability to their wants, and they gave him an invitation to become their pastor. He was well received by the people, and soon became quite popular. During the few months of his pastorate there the church members were increased from forty to nearly one hundred. One of the students from Mr. Spurgeon's College is now the pastor of the church at Waterbeach.

In a recent issue of *The Sword and the Trowel* Mr. Spurgeon has himself supplied an interesting reminiscence of his ministry at that village, which is worth preserving.

"When we had just commenced our youthful pastorate at Waterbeach in 1852, Cornelius Elven, as a man of mark in that region, was requested to preach the anniversary sermons in our little thatched meeting-house, and right well we remember his hearty compliance with our desire. We met at the station as he alighted from a third-class carriage which he had chosen in order to put the friends to the least possible expense for his travelling. His bulk was stupendous, and one soon saw that his heart was as large in proportion as his body. He gave us much sage and holy advice during the visit, which came to us with much the same weight as Paul's words came to Timothy. He bade us study hard, and keep abreast of the foremost Christians in our little church, adding as a reason, that if these men, either in their knowledge of Scripture or their power to edify the people, once outstrip you, the temptation will arise among them to be dissatisfied with your ministry; and, however good they are, they will feel their superiority, and others will perceive it too, and then your place in the church will become very difficult to hold. His sermons were very homely, and pre-eminently practical. He told anecdotes of the usefulness of addressing individuals one by one about their souls."

After a ministry of fifty years in his native town of Bury St. Edmunds, Mr. Elven passed away to heaven in July, 1873, on which occasion Mr. Spurgeon wrote of him the above notice, and added to it, "He was our friend in our youth, and preached for us soon after we came to London. He used with a merry laugh to tell the story of a lady who came to hear us at New Park Street, but putting her head inside the door, and seeing the vast form of Cornelius Elven, she retreated, exclaiming, 'No, no; the man has too much of the flesh about him; I cannot hear him.' He was full of faith and of the Holy Ghost."

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

In this respect there is not a bishop in the Church who has done so much by his pen ; and the uniform testimony of the press confirms the high excellence of his writings.

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

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

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

"Still holding to the idea of entering the Collegiate Institution, I thought of writing and making an immediate application ; but this was not to be. That afternoon, having to preach at a village station, I walked slowly in a meditating frame of mind over Midsummer Common to the little wooden bridge which leads to Chesterton, and in the midst of the common I was startled by what seemed to me to be a loud voice, but which may have been a singular illusion : whichever it was the impression it made on my mind was most vivid ; I seemed very distinctly to hear the words, 'Seekest thou great things for thyself, seek them not !' This led me to look at my position from a different point of view, and to challenge my motives and intentions. I remembered my poor but loving people to whom I ministered, and the souls which had been given me in my humble charge ; and although at that time I anticipated obscurity and poverty as the result of the resolve yet I did there and then renounce the offer of collegiate instruction, determining to abide for a season at least with my people, and to remain preaching the word so long as I had strength to do it. Had it not been for those words I had not been where I am now. Although the ephod is



no longer worn by a ministering priest, the Lord guides his people by his wisdom, and orders all their paths in love; and in times of perplexity, by ways mysterious and remarkable, he says to them, 'This is the way; walk ye in it.'"

One or two extracts from his letters written at the same time it is desirable to give to show how anxiously the matter was considered. In his reply to his father, dated March 9th, 1852, Mr. Spurgeon writes, "I have all along had an aversion to College, and nothing but a feeling that I must not consult myself, but Jesus, could have made me think of it. It appears to my friends at Cambridge that it is my duty to remain with my dear people at Waterbeach; so say the church there, unanimously, and so say three of our deacons at Cambridge."

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

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

The following verses were written by Mr. Spurgeon at the age of eighteen. A copy given by him to a friend was returned to the author in 1869, in which year the piece was printed in *The Sword and the Trowel*.

#### IMMANUEL.

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

When storms of sorrow toss my soul;  
When waves of care around me roll;  
When comforts sink, when joys shall flee;  
When hopeless griefs shall gape for me,  
One word the tempest's rage shall swell—  
That word, thy name, Immanuel.

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

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

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

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

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

However discouraging appearances might be, it was not likely that the church which had been raised mainly by Benjamin Keach, and extended so widely in its influence in both London and the country by Dr. Gill and Dr. Rippon, should thus decline without hope of recovery. Man's extremity is God's opportunity. Shortly afterwards the London deacon and his friend from Loughton met again, and again was the young preacher at Waterbeach recommended as the means, under God, of reviving the once prosperous church of "Horse-lie-down." Seeing that some change must be made, the good deacon thought there might be some hope in at least considering, and naming to other friends, what he had heard. Deacon Olney and Deacon Low consulted with their brethren, and a correspondence was commenced between Deacon James Low and Mr. Spurgeon, which soon resulted in

the latter receiving an invitation to come to London and preach before them in their large chapel. The work was altogether of God, man only made the arrangements. The motto of Julius Cæsar may be modified to express the results of the visit. Mr. Spurgeon came; he preached; he conquered.

Previously to giving fuller particulars, the reader will be glad to see a list of the names of those persons who have had the oversight of the church from its origin.

#### PASTORS OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH, SOUTHWARK.

| Appointed | Name                       | Died or Resigned | Years Pastor |
|-----------|----------------------------|------------------|--------------|
| 1652      | William Rider ...          | 1667 ...         | 15           |
| 1668      | Benjamin Keach ...         | 1704 ...         | 36           |
| 1705      | Benjamin Stinton ...       | 1719 ...         | 14           |
| 1720      | John Gill, D.D. ...        | 1771 ...         | 51           |
| 1773      | John Rippon, D.D. ...      | 1836 ...         | 63           |
| 1837      | Joseph Angus, D.D. ...     | 1840 ...         | 4            |
| 1842      | James Smith ...            | 1850 ...         | 8            |
| 1851      | William Walters ...        | 1853 ...         | 3            |
| 1854      | Charles Haddon Spurgeon... | ... ...          | ...          |

#### ASSISTANT OR CO-PASTOR.

1868 James Archer Spurgeon

Nine pastors during a period of two hundred and twenty-five years.

The last vacancy occurred in June, 1853, when Mr. Walters removed to Halifax. For some months the pulpit was vacant, the pews were forsaken, the aisles desolate, and the exchequer empty. Decay had set in so seriously that the deacons lost heart, and, until Mr. Spurgeon arrived, the cause seemed hopeless. In the autumn of 1853, he first occupied New Park-street pulpit. The chapel, capable of holding 1,200 people, had about 200 occupants at the first service. The preacher was a young man who had just passed his nineteenth year. In his sermon he spoke with the freedom and boldness which evinced that he believed what he preached, and believed that his message was from God. Some were disappointed; others resolved to oppose, and did oppose; but by far the greater proportion were disposed to hear him again. The result of the first sermon was proved, in a few hours, to have been a success. The evening congregation was greatly increased, partly from curiosity, partly from the age of the preacher, and his unusual style of address. During that first Sunday he found a suitable companion in Mr. Joseph Passmore, one of the members of the church, and the friendship commenced that day has been maturing ever since. Mr. Spurgeon was again invited to take the pulpit on another Sunday as early as possible, for a feeling of excitement was created, and it required to be satisfied. After consulting with his church at Water-beach, he arranged to supply the New Park-street pulpit during three alternate Sabbaths. The desire to hear the young preacher having greatly extended, it was determined to invite Mr. Spurgeon from his rustic retreat, to undertake the heavy responsibility of pastor of one of

the most ancient, and formerly the most influential, Baptist church in London ; and he entered on the duty in the month of April, 1854.

We are permitted to give two of Mr. Spurgeon's letters to the church at the time of his appointment, which will most clearly state the facts relating to his coming to London. The first of the following letters was written to Mr. Deacon Low, shortly before Mr. Spurgeon left Cambridge, and the second is dated from his first lodgings immediately after his permanent arrival in London. These letters will in future be considered interesting and important documents in the history of the church, in which form they were first used by Mr. G. Holden Pike.

“ No. 60, Park Street, Cambridge,  
January 27th, 1854.

“ To JAMES LOW, Esq.

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

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

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

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

“ Perhaps this is not business-like—I do not know ; but this is the

course I should prefer, if it would be agreeable to the church. Enthusiasm and popularity are often the cracking of thorns, and soon expire. I do not wish to be a hindrance if I cannot be a help.

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

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

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

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

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

"Yours truly,



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

"75, Dover Road, Borough,  
April 28th, 1854.

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

"DEARLY BELOVED IN CHRIST JESUS,—

"I have received your unanimous invitation, as contained in a resolution passed by you on the 19th instant, desiring me to accept the

pastorate among you. No lengthened reply is required; there is but one answer to so loving and cordial an invitation. I ACCEPT IT. I have not been perplexed as to what my reply shall be, for many things constrain me thus to answer.

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

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

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

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

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

A large, elegant handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "C. H. Spurgeon". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent, sweeping initial "C".

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

From the commencement of his labours in the metropolis he had a happy manner of turning to good account passing events. Great national events, royal marriages, deaths, or public calamities, furnished in their turn subjects on which he spoke, and out of which he drew lessons of practical good for his hearers. This disposition he manifested before

his sermons began to be regularly published. In the autumn, of his first year's pastorate he preached a sermon from the words, "Is it not wheat harvest to-day?" The sermon attracted attention, was much talked about by his hearers, and during the following week it appeared in the *Penny Pulpit*, under the title of "Harvest Time," and had a large sale. This led the publisher shortly afterwards to print another of his sermons, under the title of "God's Providence." The public at once took to his sermons, and by the end of the year about a dozen had thus been issued. This greatly increased his popularity; for many who had not heard him read those sermons, were interested in them, and soon found opportunity to go and hear him. The demand for his sermons being considerably greater than for the sermons of other ministers then being published, Mr. Spurgeon made arrangements with the first friend he met in London, who was a printer, and a member of his church, to commence the publication of one sermon of his every week, beginning with the new year, 1855. Through the good providence of God the sermons have appeared continuously, week by week, without interruption, for more than twenty-two years, with a steady, improving, and large circulation, which is in itself a marked indication of divine favour. No other minister the world has ever known has been able to produce one printed sermon weekly for so many years. The work still goes on with unabated favour and unceasing interest. These will be noticed hereafter with Mr. Spurgeon's other publications. Their present sale is 25,000 copies weekly.

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

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

fitted to the task he had assumed. In a few weeks the empty pews were crowded; every sitting in the chapel was let; and, ere twelve months had elapsed, the eagerness to hear him had become so great that every standing-place within the walls was occupied on each Sabbath; and it soon became evident that increased accommodation must be provided."

Within one year New Park-street Chapel had to be enlarged. It was then a serious undertaking; and at a meeting held in the house of good Deacon Olney, who always occupied a seat with his pastor in the pulpit, the work was resolved upon, and Mr. Thomas Olney was appointed treasurer of the church.

During the enlargement, from February 11th to May 27th, Exeter Hall was taken, and it was filled to overflowing every Sabbath morning to hear the young preacher. The chapel, which had been enlarged to the fullest extent of the ground, was reopened in June, but it was soon found to be far too circumscribed for the thousands who flocked to hear him; and by the end of the summer it became necessary to seek for a much larger place to satisfy the demand of the public.

All the sermons he had preached in Exeter Hall were bound in a small volume, and under the title of "Exeter Hall Sermons" they had an extensive sale amongst the general public, as well as amongst the thousands of his hearers.

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

At that period the first attempt to issue a penny weekly newspaper was made by Mr. C. W. Banks, and the "Christian Cabinet" was a very spirited publication. The value of a pure and cheap press was fully appreciated by Mr. Spurgeon, who generously furnished an article for the columns of that serial during nearly the whole of its first year's existence. The writer has preserved a set of those papers, chiefly for the interesting and useful articles written by Mr. Spurgeon. They have not been noticed by anyone previously, but they contain information which should some day be republished. They show a clear and sound judgment on many public events passing more than twenty years ago, and they are the first buddings of that genius which has since ripened so fully, and yielded such an abundant harvest of rich mental food. The books which have since come from Mr. Spurgeon's pen are equally marvellous for their number, variety, and usefulness, and some of them have had most unprecedented large sales. The first printed article from his pen, which appeared in No. 1 of the "Christian Cabinet," was entitled "The Pleasures of Religion." This was followed by one enquiring what was the use of a bishop. In that issue of the paper Mr. Spurgeon remarked that he "reads the newspaper to see how his heavenly Father governs the world."

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



"Cabinet." While the youthful minister was sojourning in Scotland, he wrote for the "Cabinet" "Hints on Preaching," which appeared in two successive issues. These were followed by a sketch of the life of Benjamin Keach, and articles describing his visit to the orphan houses of Mr. Müller at Bristol.

The work which he had undertaken was so abundantly blessed with prosperity that, in the summer of 1855, the Southwark Mission Hall was opened, and became a centre of much and varied usefulness to the poor.

On the bright evening of the 4th of September, he preached to about twelve thousand people in a field in King Edward's Road, Hackney. The sermon was printed under the title of "Heaven and Hell," and had a very large sale, doing at the same time a large amount of good. The sermon was closed by the preacher giving the following account of his own conversion, which had a good effect on his audience, proving that experience is the best teacher. There were thousands of young people present who were astonished at what they heard, and many turned that night from their sins. The preacher said:—

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

Preaching is the ordained means for the salvation of sinners: the power of appeal by the human voice is greater than any other; but there is another influence which is potent. Before Mr. Spurgeon had issued more than half-a-year's sermons from the press letters reached him from far-off places, recording the good which had been effected by reading them. A notice of these will be found in Nos. 43 and 45 of the sermons themselves. On one of Mr. Spurgeon's visits to Scotland he was taken to visit Annie Sims, an aged saint, living at the Brae of Killiecrankie, far away up the mountains, who had expressed intense

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

It is a gratifying fact, not generally known, that from the first year of Mr. Spurgeon's ministry in London, several clergymen took the most lively interest in himself personally, and in his work. One in particular, an aged and experienced divine, the Rev. Ferdinand Faithfull, residing near Epsom, was in the habit of providing for his own congregation a new year's motto text; one of these texts was annually sent to Mr. Spurgeon, and for several years he preached his first Sabbath sermon in the new year from the text thus furnished. When the sermon was published, it was the privilege of the writer to supply the venerable clergyman with as many copies as would give one to each person in his congregation. Not a few clergymen used Mr. Spurgeon's sermons weekly, with a little adaptation, in their own churches. This testimony has been given by the clergymen themselves, in person and by letter, to the writer. Some are using the sermons in that way at the present time.

The year 1856 was a remarkable one in the life of Mr. Spurgeon. It was the year of his marriage; in which he preached his grandfather's jubilee sermon, and one of the centenary sermons in Whitefield's Tabernacle in Tottenham Court Road. The Surrey Gardens catastrophe took place in October, and in December Lord Chief Justice Campbell twice attended his services at the Music Hall, and encouraged him with the assurances that by his labours great good was being done amongst the people.

During the first week of the year Mr. Spurgeon was delighting large audiences at Bath. The second week was made memorable by a service held in his own chapel, in which the young people more particularly took a very lively interest. Early in the forenoon of January 8th Mr. Spurgeon was married, by Dr. Alexander Fletcher, to Miss Susanna Thompson, daughter of Mr. Robert Thompson, of Falcon Square, London. An interesting account of the service appeared in the *Christian Cabinet* for January 11th. About two thousand persons were unable to enter the chapel on the occasion. The service was commenced by singing the well known hymn, "Salvation! oh the joyful sound." The One hundredth Psalm having been read, a solemn and affecting prayer

was offered, and an appropriate address given. The form of marriage used by Protestant Dissenters was then gone through, after which Ephesians v. was read, and the wedding hymn sung, commencing, "Since Jesus freely did appear." Dr. Fletcher again implored the divine blessing on the happy pair, who were both attended by their parents, after which they drove off amidst the cheers and prayers of a vast concourse of loving friends. After a brief sojourn on the Continent, Mr. Spurgeon resumed his active and earnest labours. Twin boys, Charles and Thomas Spurgeon, are the only additions to their family. Both are members of the Tabernacle and both are preachers. One of them has recently gone for the improvement of his health to Australia.

Early in February Mr. Spurgeon visited the Jews' Synagogue, attended the service, conversed with Dr. Adler (the chief Rabbi), then wrote and published an account of his visit, in which he expresses an earnest hope "that the church of Jesus will arouse itself to a more determined effort for the conversion of this ancient race." In March he preached to a large audience in Hanover Square Rooms, on behalf of Ragged Schools in that locality. In April he delivered a Lecture on the Study of Theology before the Young Men's Christian Association at Newington, in which he explained his own method of breaking up hard texts of Scripture, observing that when books failed him he offered this prayer,—“O Lord, teach me what this means;” and he added, “it is marvellous how a hard, flinty text struck out sparks with the steel of prayer.” On Good Friday he was at Cambridge, preaching to a large audience in the open air, and a similar service was held in the same town, on the same day, in the year following.

Daily Mr. Spurgeon was in the pulpit, often travelling many miles between the services held; and for months together he preached twelve sermons weekly, with undiminished force and unflagging zeal. In the achievement of such Herculean tasks he has, doubtless, been indebted to an excellent constitution, and to his simple habits of living. He is the very embodiment of nature without the usual make-up of art. He throws himself on the tide of social intercourse with the freedom of one who has no tricks to exhibit, and no failings to conceal. He is one of the most pleasant of companions; pious without any of the shams of piety; temperate without a touch of asceticism; and devout without the solemnity of the devotee. Preaching for his poorer brethren in the country, he declined to receive any contribution towards his personal outlay, excepting only in cases where the church could well afford to pay his travelling expenses. Under this head he was £25 out of pocket in the year 1856.

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

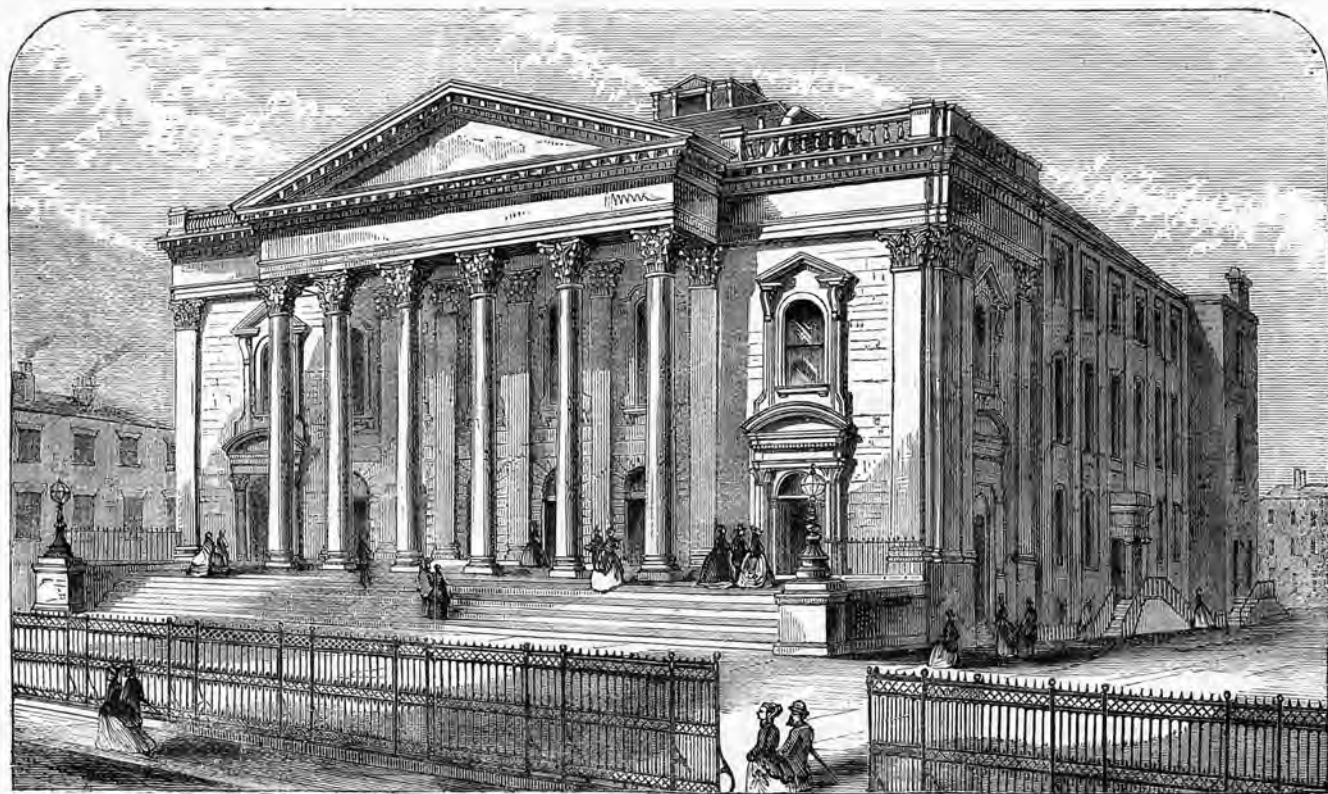
What is known as the Surrey Gardens catastrophe we need not do more than allude to. On October the 19th, a sad and fatal accident had well nigh put an end to the large Sabbath gatherings to hear

Mr. Spurgeon; but that fatality was overruled for good. Previous to this Mr. Spurgeon knew not what illness was; but this calamity, joined with the wicked calumnies of a portion of the press, laid prostrate even the strong man.

The history of the Metropolitan Tabernacle is a theme in itself so full of interest and remarkable incident, that a long and instructive chapter might be written out of the circumstances attending its origin, growth, completion, and opening free from debt. Such results as were then so fully realized were the source of astonishment alike to both Churchmen and Dissenters, very many of both, not of Mr. Spurgeon's communion, rendered willing, yea voluntary and generous aid on the occasion. In October, 1856, the first great meeting was held for considering the steps necessary to be taken for erecting a great Tabernacle. The proposal was very heartily taken up by Mr. Spurgeon's friends, and in every part of the country sympathy was largely shown with the movement. There were many who laughed at the idea of erecting an edifice as a place of worship to hold five thousand persons. Regardless of these obstructions the work went on, Mr. Spurgeon travelling all over the land preaching daily, with the promise of half the proceeds of the collection being devoted to the new Tabernacle. To further that object a prosperous young artist, Mr. Crittenden, produced an excellent bust of Mr. Spurgeon, copies of which (life size) were purchased at three guineas, and a cabinet sized one for one guinea. Every copy sold yielded help to the new edifice. The Foundation Stone of the New Tabernacle was laid by Sir Samuel Morton Peto, August 16th, 1859. A long and interesting account of the service was published as part of the weekly issue of the pastor's sermons.

During the progress of the works Mr. Spurgeon met on the ground, on one evening after the workmen had left, one of his deacons, good Mr. Cook. After some consultation, and meditation, surrounded by planks, piles of timber and bricks, in the dim twilight, they both knelt down where no eye could see them but that of God, and, with only the canopy of heaven for their covering, the pastor and his friend each poured out most earnest supplications for the prosperity of the work, the safety of the men engaged on the building, and a blessing on the church. Their prayers were not offered in vain, but were abundantly answered. Out of so large a number of men engaged on the work not one of them suffered harm, the divine protection was over them.

In 1860 a large and enthusiastic meeting was held in the building before it was finished. The floors were laid, but no pews were there; and amidst many discomforts a successful meeting was held, at which much money was given and more promised. Great preparations were made during the winter for the holding of a large bazaar in the spring, which was probably one of the largest and most productive of the kind ever held in London. The opening services were commenced on March 25th, 1861, and were continued without interruption for five weeks. The result of all these efforts was, the great Tabernacle to hold 5,000 people was free from debt at the end of the special services, and £31,000 of free-will offerings had been poured into the hands of the treasurer. Since then various improvements have been made in the audience room, and, using every facility modern invention could suggest,



THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE.

seats have been provided for 5,500 persons, and standing room for 1,000 more—total, 6,500.

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

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

The following figures are sufficient to set forth the results of the pastor's labours :—

| Year. |     |     | No. of<br>Members. | Year.        |     |     | No. of<br>Members. |
|-------|-----|-----|--------------------|--------------|-----|-----|--------------------|
| 1861  | ... | ... | 1178               | 1872         | ... | ... | 4110               |
| 1865  | ... | ... | 2881               | 1873         | ... | ... | 4417               |
| 1867  | ... | ... | 3410               | 1875         | ... | ... | 4754               |
| 1868  | ... | ... | 3634               | 1876         | ... | ... | 4851               |
| 1869  | ... | ... | 3860               | 1877 to June |     |     | 5152               |

During the period in which Mr. Spurgeon was preaching in the Surrey Music Hall large numbers of the nobility attended his ministry; amongst whom were Lord Chief Justice Campbell, the Lord Mayor and Sheriffs of London, Earl Russell, Lord Alfred Paget, Lord Panmure, Earl Grey, Earl of Shaftesbury, the Marquis of Westminster, the Duchess of Sutherland, Lord Carlisle, Earl of Elgin, Baron Bramwell, Miss Florence Nightingale, Lady Rothschild, Dr. Livingstone, and many other persons of learning and distinction, some of whom sought and obtained interviews with the preacher. It was during that interim that Mr. Spurgeon paid one of his visits to Holland, and was privileged to preach before the Dutch Court, and had a lengthened interview with the Queen of that country. It was reported that some members of the English royal family also were occasionally present at his services, and not a few distinguished clergymen and professors.

One of Dr. Livingstone's visits to the music hall was an occasion which led to a manifestation of that retiring humility which has always characterised the great preacher. Sitting on the platform near the pulpit was the Rev. Dr. Armitage, of New York, who had been introduced to Mr. Spurgeon the previous day. Nearer the pulpit sat the late Dr. Livingstone. The morning sermon was one of those appealing and heart-searching discourses, which had produced tears in hundreds of eyes during its delivery. Immediately the service was over the writer announced Dr. Livingstone's presence to Mr. Spurgeon, and inquired if he would like to be introduced. Just as Dr. Livingstone approached Mr. Spurgeon Dr. Armitage rushed forward to offer his congratulations, and to shake the hand of the preacher. Mr. Spurgeon withdrew his own hand, pleasantly remarking to the American divine, "No, shake hands first with Dr. Livingstone, he is the worthier man;" and the congratulations of both the doctors were given with equal sincerity, Mr. Spurgeon receiving them with the simple, unaffected modesty of childhood. During the brief conversation which followed, Dr. Livingstone remarked that

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

The occasion of the visit of Dr. Armitage to England was to invite Mr. Spurgeon to go to America to deliver a series of lectures in that country, for which service a large sum of money was offered to Mr. Spurgeon. The offer was again renewed when the Tabernacle was being built, the Americans thinking that his great undertaking would be too much for English benevolence to meet. Their request was again declined with thanks as recently as the summer of last year, the managers of the Redpath Lyceum Bureau, having noticed a paragraph in the Boston papers stating that Mr. Spurgeon was about to visit the United States, enclosed it to him, and wrote as follows :

“ Boston, Mass., June 22, 1876.

“ DEAR SIR,—

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

To this invitation Mr. Spurgeon returned the following reply :

“ Clapham, London, Eng., July 6.

“ GENTLEMEN,—

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

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

It will doubtless interest many to learn something of the personal appearance of the preacher as he stood before that vast audience. One

who had some skill in depicting natural life wrote of him in 1859 as follows :

"He is of medium height, at present quite stout, has a round and beardless face, not a high forehead, dark hair, parted in the centre of the head. His appearance in the pulpit may be said to be interesting rather than commanding. He betrays his youth, and still wears a boyish countenance. His figure is awkward—his manners are plain—his face (except when illumined by a smile) is admitted to be heavy. His voice seems to be the only personal instrument he possesses, by which he is enabled to acquire such a marvellous power over the minds and hearts of his hearers. His voice is powerful, rich, melodious, and under perfect control. Twelve thousand have distinctly heard every sentence he uttered in the open air, and this powerful instrument carried his burning words to an audience of twenty thousand gathered in the Crystal Palace. 'Soon as he commences to speak,' says an English critic, 'tones of richest melody are heard. A voice, full, sweet, and musical falls on every ear, and awakens agreeable emotions in every soul in which there is a sympathy for sounds. That most excellent of voices is under perfect control, and can whisper or thunder at the wish of its possessor. Then there is poetry in every feature and every movement, as well as music in the voice. The countenance speaks, the entire form sympathizes. The action is in complete unison with the sentiments, and the eye listens scarcely less than the ear to the sweetly flowing oratory.' To the influence of this powerful voice, he adds that of a manner characterized by great freedom and fearlessness, intensely earnest, and strikingly natural. When to these we add the influence of thrilling description, touching anecdote, sparkling wit, startling episodes, striking similes, all used to illustrate and enforce the deep, earnest home-truths of the Bible, we surely have a combination of elements which must make up a preacher of wonderful attraction and of marvellous power."

Amidst his incessant duties and almost daily journeys and sermons, he still found time to give instruction to the young men he kept under his careful ministry. His first student, Thomas W. Medhurst, had been his great helper during the first and second years of his pastorate at New Park-street. In January, 1857, Mr. Medhurst occupied the pulpit of his pastor, and rendered acceptable service there. The Bible-class he had conducted previous to his leaving London to enter on his first pastorate presented him with a large and handsome Bible. The services at the Southwark Mission Hall were carried on with zeal and energy, and Mr. Silvertown, Mr. Davies, and Mr. Genders, whom Mr. Spurgeon had under his training for the ministry, were of much service amongst the poor connected with the Mission. With Mr. Spurgeon it was work almost night and day, and all day long, with but little intermission, for several years in succession. The germs of what is now known as the Pastors' College were never absent from his mind and frequently occupied his attention when in London. In 1857 the first student was sent out in charge of a church ; in 1858 Mr. Silvertown went forth ; in 1859 Mr. Davies and Mr. Genders followed, both of whom have left their mark on society, and one still remains to do earnest work. In 1860 the two sent out had not a long career of usefulness, one died early, the other fell into ill health. Still the work went on.



Besides the opening of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in 1861, Mr. Spurgeon preached two sermons during the year which obtained great popularity, the first entitled "Fire! fire!" on the occasion of the great fire at London Bridge; the second, "The Royal Death Bed," on the death of the beloved Prince Consort. During the year three students were sent out to the care of churches, and others were being trained to follow them. The chief work of the year was to reorganize the various agencies connected with the New Tabernacle and adapt them to the enlarged sphere of operation which was before the church. The first sermon in the New Tabernacle was published with that title, so that it will be always known as the first sermon.

In January, 1862, Mr. Spurgeon's sermons were issued in an enlarged form, and in much larger type. The old title of *New Park Street Pulpit* was discontinued, and they have since been published as the *Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit*, of which there are now out fifteen volumes. During the autumn of 1862 Mr. Spurgeon preached a sermon on occasion of the great distress prevailing in Lancashire, owing to the war in America and the consequent failure in the cotton supply. The sermon had a very large sale, and made for the preacher many friends.

Probably as many as a dozen of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons have a sale approaching to one hundred thousand copies each. Large as is that number, and unparalleled, in fact, as far as regards the sale of sermons, yet there was a sermon preached and published in the summer of 1864, from Mark xvi. 15, 16, and entitled, "Baptismal Regeneration," which has had the marvellous sale of one hundred and ninety-eight thousand copies. The history of that sermon, and the results which followed its publication, would form a long, curious, and instructive narrative, and be one of the curiosities of English literature. It will suffice to say in this place that within two years, besides articles in newspapers, magazines, and reviews almost numberless, a friend of Mr. Spurgeon's made a collection of the separate pamphlets which appeared during the period named, both for and against the dogma of regeneration by baptism held by many in the Church of England; they are more than one hundred in number, and form several good sized volumes, and we believe they are deposited in the College Library at the Tabernacle. No sermon ever published excited so much public attention, or caused the employment of so many pens to defend or attack the position taken by Mr. Spurgeon.

It need scarcely be said that Mr. Spurgeon affirms that there is no such thing as regeneration in or by baptism. The controversy so earnestly carried on exhausted the arguments on both sides so fully that it is probably not possible to add anything new to the enquiry then instituted. One of the results which followed may be briefly noticed here, so far as it related personally to Mr. Spurgeon. It caused his entire withdrawal from the Evangelical Alliance. How that came about will be best explained by Mr. Spurgeon himself, who wrote a letter to the American newspapers in 1870, explaining the reason why he did not attend the General Conference of the Alliance held in New York during that year. The account in substance is as follows:—When the Baptismal Regeneration sermon was published, the Hon. and Rev. Baptist W. Noel wrote Mr. Spurgeon a brief remonstrance against certain

expressions in the sermon. Then came a letter from Mr. James Davis, Secretary of the Alliance, setting forth very strongly that Mr. Spurgeon had no alternative, but either to retract the harsh language, or withdraw from the Alliance. Having no intention to alter the terms in which he had exposed the false teaching of the clergy, and thinking that the Alliance Committee were of the same mind as their Secretary, he withdrew. He soon found that the letter of the Secretary was not authorized by the Committee, and several members wrote to Mr. Spurgeon expressing their regret at his withdrawal; but being done, he declined to again expose himself to such unjust treatment. The Alliance lost more than Mr. Spurgeon by the indiscretion of their paid servant.

One other result of this controversy was that Mr. Spurgeon plainly saw the advantage of having some medium of communicating directly with the public. Hence, before the end of the year, he issued the prospectus of a new monthly magazine. On January 1st, 1865, appeared the first number of *The Sword and the Trowel*; a record of combat with sin, and labour for the Lord. It had an ornamental cover representing a Jewish doorway of stone, and beyond and within was seen the zealous Jews at work rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, the sword in one hand, the trowel in the other. The work was so wisely planned, and it has been so ably conducted, that it now occupies a prominent, if not a foremost, place amongst the periodical literature of the land, and has a circulation of some fifteen thousand copies monthly, with a steady advancement.

The work opens with a statement of the aims and intentions of the editor, namely, to report the efforts of the church and the varied associations and agencies connected with the Metropolitan Tabernacle; to advocate their views and doctrines, and the order received among them. It was the organ of communication of the many plans for God's glory brought before their people; advocating revivals of religion, denouncing errors, witnessing for the truth, and to encourage labourers in the Lord's vineyard. Plying the Trowel with untiring hand in building up Jerusalem, and wielding in the other hand the Sword with vigour and valour against the enemies of the truth. A series of expository articles on the Psalms was commenced in the first issue, and they have been continued for ten years, resulting in the publication of an elaborate work on the Book of Psalms, which will live, be studied, valued, and be a standard work, so long as the English language itself endures. A series of one and two page illustrated tracts was also commenced in the magazine, which have since been published separately, and have sold by hundreds of thousands, and have done much good. "John Ploughman's Talk" was also written chiefly for its pages. Good and important as were each and all the objects named, other good works have resulted from the publication of that magazine. In the preface to the third volume of *The Sword and the Trowel* the Editor says that publication "led to the founding of the Orphanage, and was the foster-parent of the College and Colportage. By it minds have been enlightened, hearts quickened, and many good works promoted." Large sums of money have been gathered for benevolent purposes, through the objects for which the money was given being plainly stated in its pages; and

when the need was published, the manner of supplying the need has been shown in many ways. Again and again, when Mr. Spurgeon has made an appeal for the benevolent claims of the institutions belonging to his Tabernacle, as much as £1,000 has been sent, in two or three days, and frequently anonymously, desiring acknowledgment only in *The Sword and the Trowel*. When Mr. Spurgeon announced that he was about to preach and publish Sermon No. 1,000, in the summer of 1871, some friend sent him £1,000 for the College, without sending any name. In one of the issues of that work there is a list of about twelve hundred names of persons who had been collecting for the Orphanage, with the amount each person had brought in. By this means many ready helpers have been found who have supplied cheerful service in sustaining the various funds connected with the Tabernacle.

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

#### MARRIED LOVE.—TO MY WIFE.

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

\* \* \* \* \*

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

During the year 1865, Mr. Spurgeon held in the Tabernacle united meetings for prayer through one entire week attended by over 6,000 people, which were a source of so much blessing to those attending them, that a second series followed a month later. In May a Band of Hope was inaugurated at the Tabernacle, and at the end of the month the Pastor started for a month's tour in Italy and the South of Europe.

Rev. Dr. Campbell wrote and published a series of seventeen letters in the *British Standard* on the Baptismal Regeneration controversy, in which he supported Mr. Spurgeon's views. In the autumn, a set of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons was presented to the editor of the *Christian World*, for having collected, through the advocacy of his paper, £100 towards the Pastors' College.

In November of that year an association was formed of the students connected with the College, who are resident in and near London. Such a band of union will be helpful to them in their work.

Twenty-eight students left the Pastors' College during the year 1865, and entered on spheres of ministerial labour. Two of them went to Australia, four to Canada, one to St. Helena, and one to Ireland. Two of them have since died.

Conscious of the power of prayer, Mr. Spurgeon commenced the year 1866 with a month's continuous revival services, at which 120 ministers and students were present, knowing that he should have the sympathy and co-operation of his church in conducting them. In September the whole church had a day of fasting and prayer.

In June, in order to confirm his previous teaching against the errors and dangers dividing the Church of England, Mr. Spurgeon preached a sermon, published as No. 595, with the title of "The Axe at the Root : a Testimony against Puseyite Idolatry." Shortly afterwards a clergyman of the High Church school issued a pamphlet which so clearly indicated the nakedness of the land among that body that Mr. Spurgeon publicly thanked the clergyman for his testimony.

An important work, which had for a long time occupied Mr. Spurgeon's attention, was brought out in September of this year, under the title of "Our Own Hymn Book." The preparation of a new collection of

Psalms and Hymns for congregational use was felt to be an urgent necessity, but there was a nervous fear about the success of such a work. It was prepared with great care, and no pains were spared to make it complete in every respect, giving correct text, author's names to each hymn, with date of first publication, and other interesting particulars in the large edition of the book. The public at once saw the value of the collection, and since that time it has had a very large sale, having been adopted by and is now in use in scores, if not hundreds, of congregations.

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

At this time there was a feeling abroad which manifested itself in several articles in public papers, and notably in the *New York Independent*, that Mr. Spurgeon, by means of his College, and the large number of new chapels being erected all over the land for his students, was aiming at founding a sect, after the example of Wesley. So soon as this notion reached Mr. Spurgeon he took the earliest opportunity of repudiating the idea. In a short article entitled "Spurgeonism," in *The Sword and the Trowel* for March, 1866, the Editor thus records his views:—

"There is no word in the world so hateful to our heart as that word Spurgeonism, and no thought further from our soul than that of forming a new sect. Our course has been, and we hope ever will be, an independent one; but to charge us with separating from the general organization of the religious world, and even of the Baptist denomination, is to perpetrate an unfounded libel. We preach no new gospel, we desire no new objects, and follow them in no novel spirit. We love Christ better than a sect, and truth better than a party, and so far are not denominational; but we are in open union with the Baptists for the very reason that we cannot endure isolation. He who searches all hearts knows that our aim and object is not to gather a band around self, but to unite a company around the Saviour. 'Let my name perish, but let Christ's name last for ever,' said George Whitefield, and so has

Charles Spurgeon said a hundred times. We aid and assist the Baptist Churches to the full extent of our power, although we do not restrict our energies to them alone, and in this those Churches are far enough from blaming us. Our joy and rejoicing is great in the fellowship of all believers, and the forming of a fresh sect is work which we leave to the devil, whom it befits far more than ourselves. It is true that it has long been in our power to commence a new denomination, but it is not true that it has ever been contemplated by us or our friends. We desire as much as possible to work with the existing agencies, and when we commence new ones our friends must believe that it is with no idea of organizing a fresh community."

Twenty-six students were appointed, and were settled as pastors during the year 1866. Four of these went to Scotland, three to the United States of America, and one to Nova Scotia. Of this number one has since died, and three have resigned.

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

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

His magazine for 1867 opens with a review of the good which its advocacy of the various agencies at the Tabernacle had succeeded in accomplishing. In another article he sought to raise the stipends of his poorer Baptist brethren.

The month of February witnessed the usual week of prayer, which that year was marked, on the 18th, by a whole day of fasting and prayer, commencing at seven in the morning, and continuing, without a pause or breaking up for meals, until nine at night—a day of prayer in which the Holy Spirit was manifestly present all day. The account of the services held during that week, as printed in *The Sword and the Trowel* reads like a new chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. On the first day of the special services, the deacons and elders, by Mr. Olney, senior, presented their pastor with a handsome time-piece, which they had subscribed for. He had not expected any such evidence of their affection, and was moved to a deep sense of gratitude by this token of their love for him and his work.

The readiness with which Mr. Spurgeon can adapt himself to his audience, whether that audience consists of the educated and affluent, or the poor and the ignorant, was never more distinctly seen than on Tuesday, March 12th, when, in the Evangelists' Tabernacle, Golden Lane, City, he preached to a congregation of costermongers. Mr. Orsman, the missionary there, had distributed tickets among the street dealers in Whitecross Street, so as to secure the class for whom the service was intended. An amusing article might be written to describe the singular variety of countenances and callings of those present. The

hymns were heartily sung; the prayer won the hearts of the audience, when he offered supplication for those who had bodily aches and pains, and whose poverty deprived them of many desired comforts; many deep sighs followed those prayers. The sermon was preached from St. John iv. 15, and it was illustrated by allusions to the habits and manner of life of his congregation, whose acuteness relished the anecdotes and homely hits which the preacher so freely used. A costermonger's living depends much upon his voice. After the service the costers were free in their comments on the preacher's voice, which was described as "wonderful," "stunning," "I never," "would make a fine coster." After the sermon about two hundred remained to be prayed with, and much spiritual good was done that night.

Six years having elapsed since the Tabernacle was opened, the building had suffered much from the massive congregations which had assembled there from Sabbath to Sabbath, and it became necessary to close it for several weeks for repairs. During that period Mr. Spurgeon preached on the Sabbath morning to immense congregations in the Agricultural Hall, Islington. The first of the five special services was held on Sunday, March 24th, when about twelve thousand persons were present, a number far greater than ever before had listened to a preacher under one roof, so as to hear the sermon. The preacher's delivery was slow, measured, and emphatic; nothing laboured; and his voice lost none of its accustomed music. Many thousands heard the gospel at that time who were not accustomed to attend any place of worship. The result of the experiment was so satisfactory that since then hundreds of sermons have been preached in the Agricultural Hall, which probably never would have been. The evening services of the Tabernacle were divided between the Lecture Hall and the School Room, at the Tabernacle. Through the kindness of Mr. Newman Hall, Surrey Chapel was lent to Mr. Spurgeon for his Thursday evening services.

In the spring of that year Mr. Spurgeon and the Trustees signed the Deeds of Incorporation for securing the land on which the Orphanage was to be erected, the history of which building will be given hereafter.

The month of May witnessed the commencement of another benevolent work of Mr. Spurgeon's. The old Almshouses attached to New Park-street Chapel it had become necessary to remove. A suitable site having been secured, not far from the Tabernacle, large enough to erect thereon a new range of almshouses, and also large day-schools, the foundation stone was laid on the 6th May. In the new buildings the aged matrons have long been comfortably located, with additional advantages they had not formerly,

"John Ploughman's Talk" was commenced in the June number of *The Sword and the Trowel*, and was continued monthly until the subjects were sufficiently numerous to be reprinted in a volume, which at once became a favourite with the public; and in the three years one hundred and ten thousand copies of the work had been sold at one shilling each in paper covers, and eighteenpence in cloth.

The heavy responsibilities which rested on the Pastor of the Tabernacle in the early part of the year made it necessary for him to seek a little recreation, and with that he blended a friendly service for his esteemed friend Pastor Oncken, by preaching for him at the opening of

his new Baptist Church at Hamburg. Whilst in Holland Mr. Spurgeon preached before the Court and the leading aristocracy; and afterwards he had the privilege of a long personal interview with the Queen of Holland. He included in his travels a visit to Heligoland, which furnished for his ready and fertile pen most interesting matter for an article which extends to ten pages in *The Sword and the Trowel* a few months later, and which contains information both curious and valuable, not to be found elsewhere.

Returning home, the industrious pastor found abundance of important work awaiting him. During the April previous the land had been secured at Stockwell for the Orphan Houses. The work of preparation for their erection had been so far advanced that a great festival was arranged, and on Monday, September 9th, 1867, a party of some four thousand persons assembled at Stockwell, a large proportion of the company being collectors; and it was part of the programme for the foundation stones of three of the houses to be laid, and for the numerous collectors to lay on the stones their respective contributions. It was an auspicious day for Mr. Spurgeon, for his deacons, and church members. A widely extended interest had been felt in the work, and the occasion became a grand holiday in that southern suburb of London. Mr. Spurgeon himself was in feeble health, and it was designed that Mrs. Hillyard, the foundress of the Orphanage, should have laid the stones; but in her absence that honour was very fittingly undertaken by Pastor Spurgeon himself. Three of the houses were thus far advanced in their progress, namely, the Silver Wedding House, the Merchants' House, and the Workmen's House. The united sums the collectors laid upon the stones amounted to two thousand two hundred pounds. The entire spectacle was both novel and touching. Thousands of prayers were answered that day, and many more prayers were offered on the occasion, the influence of which it is believed will be felt throughout all time. Appropriate hymns were sung, each ceremony being conducted with verses specially prepared, the first of which was as follows:—

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

It was announced at the close of the ceremony that in addition to the twenty thousand pounds given by Mrs. Hillyard, the money in hand was then five thousand five hundred pounds. The assembly returned home highly delighted with the service, and the glad tidings they had heard, whilst the pastor, worn out with fatigue and anxiety, retired home to an afflicted wife to rest. It was, nevertheless, a day of joy and thanksgiving. *The Sword and the Trowel* for October contains the names of the eleven hundred and twenty collectors, with the amount each person sent in. This large number shows how wide-spread was the interest taken in the founding of the Orphanage. Amongst the collectors were persons of nearly all the religious denominations.

The mental and physical strain of such heavy responsibilities was too much for the pastor, who was soon after laid aside quite ill. Although physically prostrate, his mind was in active exercise; and after being



a sufferer for two months he wrote an article for his magazine, which he entitled "On my Back," in which he submissively said, that after two months of ill health and severe pain, yet he believed there was a limit to sickness, and that Jesus knew all about it, feeling assured that the design of sickness was divinely good. This long absence from the pulpit led to the appointment of his brother, the Rev. James Archer Spurgeon, as Co-Pastor to the Church at the Tabernacle, and he officially entered on those duties in January, 1868.

The first seven boys elected for the Orphanage were chosen before the buildings were completed, and before the end of the year 1867.

Amidst all these pressing claims of the Orphanage, the College was not forgotten, although Mr. Rogers had to become its earnest advocate instead of its President, but he did the work effectively. During the year twenty-nine students left the College to accept pastoral duties, amongst whom were two for Australia, one for Africa, one for Canada, and one for Scotland. The one sent to Scotland has since died, and one other of them has resigned. Nine of the students sent out this year were selected from the Metropolitan Tabernacle Church, a gratifying sign of the care taken of the young men who become members.

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

In *The Sword and the Trowel* for May a very correct likeness of the editor was given as a frontispiece; and a likeness equally correct of the good Deacon, Mr. Olney, senior, the Treasurer to the Tabernacle, was given in the number for June.

In the month of March a generous friend sent to the Pastor of the Tabernacle £1,000 for the College and £1,000 for the Orphanage; such instances of liberality amply testifying the high estimation in which the noble enterprises of Mr. Spurgeon were held by the public. On his birthday, June 19th, a great meeting was held, and liberal contributions made for the Orphanage.

Bright as are these spots in the life of the pastor, and in his work at the Tabernacle and its belongings, yet there hung over his home all the time a dark shadow which divine providence saw fit to place there. Mrs. Spurgeon had long been a great sufferer, and to alleviate her sorrows, if possible, a very painful operation had to be undertaken. The most skilful surgeons of the land were engaged, under the direction of Sir James Simpson, of Edinburgh. Prayer was made for her

by the whole church, and, by the blessing of God, the operation was so far successful that her sufferings were alleviated, and her life prolonged, but it has been a life of pain and weakness, though with less of anguish.

The great bazaar on behalf of the Orphanage, which it was intended to hold in 1867, was postponed for a whole year, in the hope that Mrs. Spurgeon might so far recover as to direct the proceedings. The bazaar was held in September, 1868, and it was assuredly a memorable evidence of the zeal and affection of his church and the public generally. It realized for the Orphanage no less than £1,400.

In November the Rev. E. P. Hammond, the American evangelist, conducted a series of services for children in the Tabernacle. In writing of these services in his magazine, Mr. Spurgeon describes Mr. Hammond as "the earnest servant of God, and prince of preachers to children."

During the year 1868 twenty-eight of the students accepted the pastorate of churches, five of whom went to the United States of America, one to Nova Scotia, and one to Scotland. Two of them have since died, and one has resigned. It is remarkable that both the students sent to Scotland, one in 1867 and one in 1868, died very shortly afterwards.

A gratifying fact is recorded by Mr. Spurgeon at the end of *The Sword and the Trowel* this year, where he publicly acknowledges the kindness of Dr. Palfrey, of Finsbury-square, for his gratuitous and generous professional attendance on the poor members of the Tabernacle.

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

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

From the very commencement of his ministry strange tales had been put into circulation by his detractors, most of which Mr. Spurgeon passed by in silence. Several very ludicrous speeches were attributed to him soon after he became popular in London. A minister's wife called upon the writer at the time to ascertain the truth of two of those fabrications. Mr. Spurgeon himself called upon the writer whilst the lady was present, who gave her himself the most complete and satisfactory proof of the falseness of the charges she had heard against him. In the midst of his work, at the opening of the year 1869, the voice, of the slanderer was again heard, and many were troubling the busy pastor to know how true were the statements in circulation respecting him. In reply to all these, under the head of "Silly Tales" he wrote in his magazine, "Friends who write us about silly tales may save themselves the trouble. We have been enabled in our ministry and in our walk before God so to act, through grace, that we have given no occasion for the slanderers, save only that we have kept the faith, and been very jealous for the Lord God of Israel. Many of the absurd stories still retailed everywhere are the very same libels which were repeated

concerning Rowland Hill and others long gone to their rest." This reply will serve its purpose in after years as well as now.

Numerous as were the students from the Pastors' College who had become pastors of churches, no new edifice had been erected. The first of the kind was opened by Mr. Spurgeon at Wandsworth, and was reported in *The Sword and the Trowel* for January, 1869. Since that time a considerable number of large and costly chapels and schools have had to be built for the various students, who have raised entirely new churches, mostly in neglected localities. The chapel at Wandsworth will always have the precedence of time.



EAST HILL CHAPEL, WANDSWORTH.

On several occasions during Mr. Spurgeon's pastorate in London very tempting offers have been made to him to go out to the United States of America, either to preach a series of sermons or to deliver a series of lectures. The first occasion of the kind was in 1857, when the Rev. Dr. Armitage, a leading Baptist minister, now of New York, was sent to London on purpose to secure his return. Mr. Spurgeon had the firmness to say No, though he might have had any reasonable sum he might ask! Another request of the kind was made which promised to afford him a large portion of the money to build his new Tabernacle. Again a refusal was sent. Early in the year 1869 the application was renewed, but with no better success. It did seem likely that in 1870 he would have found his way to America to attend the great gathering of the Evangelical Alliance, but that was frustrated by a meddling letter of the Secretary. In the spring of 1873 a renewed application came. To this the editor gives the following as one of several reasons for again declining the invitation. "An American firm offer £5,000 for Mr. Spurgeon to deliver twenty-five lectures in that country, at £200 each,

and further arrangements can be made for one hundred lectures. Although the remuneration offered is very far beyond anything our beloved people are likely to give us, we prefer to have the gospel according to our Lord's words, rather than to use the Lord's time for earning money for our own purse."

The care of the orphans, who were now rapidly increasing in number, had been for some time a source of anxiety to Mr. Spurgeon. Several persons had been selected as likely to superintend the Orphanage with advantage, but disappointments of various kinds arose. At length the hand of Providence in a very marked manner led the co-pastor of Mr. Newman Hall, at Surrey Chapel, Mr. Vernon J. Charlesworth, to write to the trustees, offering his services. The enquiries instituted were answered with so much satisfaction, the appointment of that gentleman was made in April, 1869, and it has proved a great blessing both to the Orphanage and its superintendent. Mr. Spurgeon has frequently acknowledged the hand of God in leading to that selection. The yearly reports of the Orphanage, written by Mr. Charlesworth, shew the deep interest he takes in the institution.

Having seen much of the folly too frequently exhibited at funerals, the editor of *The Sword and the Trowel* published in the March number for 1869, his views, with the apt title, "Funerals; or, a Black Business," in which, after exposing the folly of using feathers and gold-headed sticks in carrying a dead body to the grave, he observes: "I would sooner be eaten by crows than have pride and pomp feeding on my little savings, which are meant for my bereaved wife and children, and not for unsuitable, untimely, and unholy show. I have heard that more than four millions of money are squandered every year in funeral fopperies. The money buys or hires silk scarves, brass nails, feathers for horses, kid gloves and gin for the mutes, and white satin and black cloth for the worms. It seems to me to be mighty fine nonsense, more for the pride of the living than the honour of the dead, more for the profit of the undertaker than anyone else."

In June of that year the first report of the Orphanage was issued, which plainly set forth how earnestly the work had been carried on for it in having the houses erected, and in getting them furnished and occupied. Twenty-nine boys were then in residence, one of whom was the son of one of the workmen who had assisted in building the workmen's house, the father having died since the house was erected. All the children are chosen by the Trustees out of the most necessitous cases which come before them. There are no elections. The report was issued at a public meeting held at the Orphanage, June 19th, the Pastor's birthday, on which occasion £680 was sent in to the Orphanage Fund.

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

Spurgeon finds opportunities for doing good, and does it, whilst others are considering what had best be done. He even wrote directions "how to bear affliction."

Thirty students accepted pastoral charges during the year 1869. Three of them went to America, one to Canada, and one to Scotland. The last-named and one other has since resigned, and three of the others have since died. Scotland for three successive years seems to have disagreed with whatever students were sent there. Eight of the young men belonged to the Tabernacle Church.

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

From the commencement of Mr. Spurgeon's ministry in London it was the custom of the senior deacon, Mr. Thomas Olney, to accompany the pastor into the pulpit, and sit there with his young friend during every service. This arrangement was found often to be of advantage in various ways. By this means the face and form of the "good deacon" became as widely known as that of the pastor. To some persons such a privilege would have been a source of pride, but not so with Mr. Olney. Both the church and the pastor were served by his presence there. He was honoured to run through his fourscore years, and then fell on sleep. So close, intimate, and endearing was the attachment between Mr. Olney and his family and their pastor that they were as much at home together as if they had only been one family. Any notice of Mr. Spurgeon's life and work would be incomplete without a notice of this family, and especially its head.

Thomas Olney was born at Tring, Herts, November 10, 1790. His father, Mr. Daniel Olney, was for many years a deacon at Tring. Thomas was sent to London as a boy, and apprenticed to a City wholesale mercer, joining himself at once to the Baptist church under Dr. Rippon in Carter-lane. In early life he gave his heart to God, and was received into church fellowship in December, 1809. He remained for sixty years a consistent and useful member of that church. He was married to Unity, the daughter of Mr. Potter, deacon of the Baptist church, Amersham, Bucks, and for half a century they were permitted to live in happy union. Mrs. Olney died in April, 1863.

At Carter-lane Mr. Olney formed many friendships which death only severed; particularly was this the case with Dr. Rippon, the pastor. For many years he sat in the pulpit with him, assisting him in many of the duties connected with the church. In 1817 an early Sabbath morning lecture was commenced, and whilst it continued it was the delight of Mr. Olney to be at the chapel by half-past six to receive and welcome the various ministers.

When Carter-lane Chapel was bought by the City to be pulled down the new chapel in Park-street had to be erected, and during the change

many left the church. Dr. Rippon was old and feeble, this induced Mr. Olney to attach himself more closely to the cause, and for his attachment



THOMAS OLNEY.

he was permitted to be with and cheer his learned and venerable pastor, and he was present when Dr. Rippon died.

He was appointed one of the trustees of the new chapel, and he watched its erection with interest and prayer. It was his happiness to see all his four

sons baptized, and join the church in which he took such constant delight. In 1838, with his friend Mr. Winsor, he was chosen deacon of the church, and faithfully served the office for thirty-one years. He was ever remarkable for his early and constant attendance at the prayer-meeting and other week-day services. He truly loved the house of God.

By the providence of God, Mr. Olney took counsel with his old friend the late Mr. G. Gould, of Loughton, who, having heard the youthful Pastor of Waterbeach, urged deacon Olney to secure his services for New Park-street Chapel, and the result was the appointment of Mr. Spurgeon as their pastor. A year afterwards, when their chapel required to be enlarged, a meeting in Mr. Olney's house commenced the undertaking, and "Father Olney," as he was playfully styled by both pastor and deacons, was, in 1855, chosen treasurer of the church, which office, by the help of his sons, he faithfully fulfilled until his death. He was treasurer fourteen years, and deacon and elder to the end of his life.

His great delight was in the prosperity of the work of God at the Tabernacle. Every institution connected with the church received his cordial co-operation. The College, Orphanage, and Almshouses he aided to the extent of his ability. He esteemed it a great privilege to assist the Orphanage, and laid the foundation stone of the dining-hall. In memory of his beloved and venerable partner, Mrs. Olney, he joined his sons in erecting one of the houses, which is named Unity House. He shared the esteem and love of all the officers at the Tabernacle. He had a childlike faith and humility. He was true to his people as a Baptist, but a sincere lover of all good men. The poor, and especially those belonging to the church, found in him sincere sympathy and help. Not long before his departure hence he called on the writer to say he thought his days were nearly numbered, and with affecting simplicity he wished to shake hands and say good-bye. The next time I heard of good deacon Olney it was to learn that devout men had carried him to his burial, and that a loving church mourned its great loss. Of him Mr. Spurgeon himself wrote, "Never minister had better deacon, never church a better servant. We shall miss him in a hundred ways."

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

This remarkable picture of energy and activity will scarcely be surpassed by any man living, if indeed it can be equalled by more than one in a million, even in this industrious age. But there were other duties pressing on Mr. Spurgeon's mind, at the time, which he could not throw

off. For some months previously a controversy was warmly carried on in the columns of the *Christian World* newspaper, advocating a curious system of future punishment ending in annihilation. The editor of the paper prohibited in his columns the publication of any letters on the opposite side, excepting only what Mr. Spurgeon might write. Mr. Spurgeon wrote to the editor, pointing out that his conduct was not quite frank, and declining on his part to help the agitation, telling the editor that the words of our Lord—"These shall go away into everlasting punishment," finally settled the point; and he held that the publication of views which are opposed to that declaration, and the views themselves, were equally dangerous. It was properly styled a Farrago of Fanciful Heresies.

Although Mr. Spurgeon could not himself spare the time to combat at any length this dangerous heresy, yet he encouraged the Theological Tutor of his College, the Rev. George Rogers, to do so; and in *The Sword and the Trowel* for April, 1870, the whole question is examined in a comprehensive and masterly manner; and the folly, the sophistry, and mischief of the "extinction theory" sufficiently exposed.

A short time afterwards another doctrinal difficulty was thrown across Mr. Spurgeon's path; but with his accustomed skill he answered his opponent and removed a slander. A writer in the *Christian World* charged him with believing in the damnation of infants. Taking advantage of the pages of his own magazine he replies, "Never did we give any man an excuse for such a calumny; we loathe the notion as we detest murder."

About the same period the ponderous *Westminster Review* went out of its way to print, amongst other remarkable misrepresentations, the following: "We know on good authority that some of Mr. Spurgeon's deacons describe him as a regular pope." The reply of *The Sword and the Trowel* in February, 1872, is, "This is an unmitigated lie, for which there has never existed a shadow of foundation. Our deacons are brethren who load us with kindness, and rather err in giving us too much than too little respect. The *Westminster Review* is hereby challenged to send us his name and address, and we will give him the name and addresses of all our deacons, so that he can either verify his statement or admit himself to have uttered a gratuitous falsehood." Dr. Chapman may not have made the *amende honorable* in his pages, but the injured pastor did a wise thing to rebut the slander. Posterity will not look to the *Westminster Review* for what is correct and true in religion; though it may possibly be relied upon for presenting a portraiture of what is doubtful in theology.

In the summer of 1874 a great cry was raised against Mr. Spurgeon for a public utterance in favour of smoking tobacco, which was made use of by the press to lessen his influence. In his own defence he wrote as follows to the *Daily Telegraph*, under date of Clapham, September 23rd, 1874:—

"I demur altogether, and most positively, to the statement that to smoke tobacco is in itself a sin. It may become so, as any other indifferent action may, but as an action it is no sin. Together with hundreds of thousands of my fellow-Christians, I have smoked, and with them I am under the condemnation of living in habitual sin, if certain accusers



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

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

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

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

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

In May, 1870, Mr. Spurgeon sent forth a new work entitled "Feathers for Arrows," intended to supply preachers and teachers with useful

material for filling up their sermons, lectures, and addresses. Ten thousand copies of the book were sold in three months.

Early in the summer he visited Scotland on a preaching as well as a pleasure expedition: some of his observations formed an interesting article in his magazine. During his stay in Scotland he delivered an address to the United Presbyterian Synod in Edinburgh, on May 11th. He took part in the opening of the McCheyne Memorial Church on the 12th; he preached at Dundee on the 13th, at Cupar on the 15th, at Dingwall on the 17th, and Invergordon on the 18th. These are the kind of pleasure trips which usually fall to his lot.

In July the fact was announced that "John Ploughman's Talk" had been translated into Dutch, and was having a large sale in Holland; whilst the English edition had reached the large sale of one hundred and ten thousand copies, with an almost daily increased demand. In July, 1877, the sale had reached 260,000 copies.

The public mind was considerably agitated at that time by the action of the School Board in reference to religious teaching in their schools; some wanting to exclude the reading of the Bible from them, and so deprive the upgrowing population of the use of the best book in the language. A large meeting was held in Exeter Hall in July, in defence of the Bible being daily read in elementary schools. Mr. Spurgeon took the chair on the occasion. The result of the meeting was the Bible retains its place as a daily school book. The wisdom of the decision then made has been abundantly manifested since, and especially so by the great gathering of Board School children in the Crystal Palace, in July, 1877, when some thousands of prizes were publicly given to the pupils for proficiency in knowledge of the Bible, and when it was most convincingly shown that parents in London (excepting only a few Jews) do not object to their children being taught daily from the Word of God.

For recommending a gentleman publicly, whom he thought eminently suited to be a member of the School Board, some of the newspapers thought fit to abuse Mr. Spurgeon in no very measured terms; but in his own defence he was more than a match for his meddlesome opponents.

In response to an autograph circular letter, which was issued in the spring, with the object of erecting an Infirmary at the Orphanage, a Bazaar was held, commencing on June 19th, the pastor's birth-day, which secured much material aid, and gave an opportunity for many willing hands to help a good cause. On that occasion Mr. Spurgeon acknowledged all the gifts sent to him for the bazaar by sending the donor a copy of his portrait in photograph, with his autograph, so many having desired it.

The Franco-German war was occupying the attention of Europe at that time, and "John Ploughman" published his views on the war in *The Sword and the Trowel* for August. It was an article so forceful and convincing in its exposure of the sin and folly of the war, so plain and pungent, that most of the newspapers in the country noticed it, which secured for it an immense circulation; in many of the papers large portions of the article were reprinted.

In the autumn of 1870 Mr. H. E. Elliot, who had for many years

regularly reported Mr. Spurgeon's sermons, died. The care and accuracy with which he had performed the duty had endeared the reporter and pastor to each other, and the pastor felt that he had lost a real friend: but others have been raised up for that work.

The number of students who accepted pastoral duty during the year 1870 was smaller than usual; only twenty-one were located, of whom one was sent to each of the following places, namely—Australia, Tasmania, America, and Scotland. One has since resigned, and one from the failure of health has been laid aside. Six of the number had been members of the Tabernacle.

The Christmas festivities at the Orphanage, when the boys naturally expect to share the dainties of cake, oranges, fruit, and other extras, this year awakened more than usual concern. Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon had both promised to spend the day with the orphans, forgetting that Christmas-day was on Sunday. Good angels who had dainties to spare did not forget the orphans.

The Editor of *The Sword and the Trowel* announced in the opening of the January issue for 1871, that fifteen thousand subscribers patronized the work. Evening classes for young men in business were advocated in its pages, many having by the aid thus afforded not only made increased progress in business, but from their number the editor states he had selected street preachers, evangelists, and teachers. The classes were attended very regularly by a large number of young men, who cheerfully render service in other ways. There are no forms of service proposed which they do not undertake. In the same number of his magazine the editor remarks, "Half the world nearly comes to the Metropolitan Tabernacle for help, and three-fourths of that half do so to shift their own burden on to another shoulder." On the other hand, the grateful pastor does not forget to record his thanks for donations sent to the Orphanage—such as a load of turnips, a sheep, and a hundred and twenty pork pies, specially sent for the annual holiday and excursion of the boys. Nor does the editor forget to record that the orphans themselves collected from their friends in three months more than £22 on behalf of the funds of the institution.

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

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

The recovery of the pastor was immediately afterwards followed by the death of one of his deacons, one who had occupied a foremost place amongst his brethren. Mr. Spurgeon thus wrote of him: "our highly esteemed deacon, Mr. Thomas Cook, has fallen asleep. He was one who feared God above many; a spiritually minded, solid and stable Christian. During a severe illness he enjoyed constant peace; doubts were slain by full assurance." He died in August, 1871. He sent £5 to the Baptist Association Fund just before he died. In announcing to the readers of his magazine this event, the editor adds the following pleasant incident, "We know well the spot where this devout deacon knelt with his pastor, all alone, amid the materials of the unfinished Tabernacle, to implore a blessing upon those who should worship within those walls, and all who were engaged on the works. It was dark, and none saw or heard the two brethren, save the angels and their Lord; but who would desire a better consecration for any house of prayer than the secret pleadings of a godly man?"

Taking the advice of his friends, Mr. Spurgeon proceeded to the Continent for a short tour and for rest. His observant eye was constantly discovering some passing beauty which his ever ready pencil recorded in his note book, a book which contains a store of incidents which serve to enrich his conversation, and fill up his magazine. Accordingly, taking Jersey and Guernsey on his way, we find before the end of the year an interesting article from his pen, in *The Sword and the Trowel*, on St. Brelade's Bay.

The care of the College was safe in his absence under the guiding hands of Mr. Rogers and Mr. James A. Spurgeon. In like manner the orphans were protected and fed day by day by the diligent care of Mr. Charlesworth and his numerous helpers. A large bazaar held at the Orphanage in the summer yielded £500 to the funds of the institution, and the same hand which directed all the arrangements there prepared the annual report, which was issued to the subscribers during the autumn. Mr. Charlesworth has, we believe, written all the reports of the Orphanage since its foundation.

Having failed to support sound doctrine in the manner in which Mr. Spurgeon believed a Christian newspaper should do, he had to withdraw his patronage from the *Christian World*, but he readily hailed the appearance of another weekly paper, having a similar aim and purpose, and the *Christian Age* found in him a steady and firm supporter, although his numerous and responsible daily duties made it impossible for him to become one of its contributors.

The work of the College suffered no abatement; the claims made upon it during the year 1871 were heavier than usual, and nearly thirty of the students accepted pastoral duty. One of these was sent to Ireland, three to Scotland, one to Nova Scotia, one to Canada, and two to the United States of America. Three of the number have since resigned, and two have died. Several of the young men had been members of the church at the Tabernacle.

The year 1872 opened at the Tabernacle joyfully. The friends there presented £100 to the College as a new year's gift. *The Sword and the Trowel* that year was commenced with a stirring article from the editor's pen, entitled "The Year of Grace," in which the fact is recorded that

"our ministry has never been without large results in conversion, while as many as twenty conversions have been reported in one week by reading the printed sermons."

The usual revival services held in February were attended by large numbers, many of whom realized much good. As many as one hundred and eighteen were added to the membership as the result chiefly of those services.

During the first three months of that year the orphan boys collected as much as £36 on behalf of their own home. The success of this effort on behalf of boys again led Mr. Spurgeon's mind to the consideration of the subject of forming a similar institution for girls. For some time it occupied his thoughts; and when the annual College Supper was held in March, at which £1,700 was contributed, the pastor delivered an address on Faith, hoping thereby to stimulate their good works towards the object which he had at heart. It was necessary that he should himself possess and exercise a large measure of faith; for in the sunny month of May the Orphanage funds ran aground, and it became urgent that the condition of things there should be made known. Help soon came. To add to the trial Mr. Spurgeon was laid up for a week with severe neuralgic pains.

Joy and sorrow were again blended in connection with the students from the College. The joy consisted in the opening of the large new Tabernacle built in Burdett-road, in the East End of London, for the church gathered under the pastoral care of one of the students, Mr. Archibald G. Brown. It is a building for dimensions and extent, and for the variety of Christian work carried on there, second only to Mr. Spurgeon's. The sorrow was expressed in an article in *The Sword and the Trowel* by the Editor, entitled "The King's Mowings," in which he gave an account of the death of Mr. Benjamin Davies, of Greenwich, the third student whom Mr. Spurgeon sent out. A fund of £1,430 was raised for the benefit of his widow.

The boys at the Orphanage, who numbered 220 in August, 1872, had during that month their annual holiday at Merton: that excursion in the country is always a joyous day. As had been their custom for some years previously, Messrs. Tebbut, of Melton Mowbray, the celebrated pork pie manufacturers, sent a present to the Orphanage, a pie for each boy. This act of voluntary generosity was continued after the lamented death of the proprietor.

On September the 18th, the Annual Meeting of the Orphanage friends was held at Stockwell, but through a sudden attack of illness, the president was obliged to be absent from the meeting. Through the goodness of God he was enabled to preach once on each Sabbath without interruption during his illness.

A newspaper report of a public address given by Mr. Spurgeon at the laying of the foundation stone of a new chapel, led the editor of the *National Church* newspaper to go out of his way to misrepresent what he had said about underpaid ministers, desiring thereby to bring the dissenters into disrepute. A brief note in *The Sword and the Trowel* set the erring clergyman right. "A large proportion of the ministers of all denominations did not earn anything like as much money as the men who were laying the stones of that building."

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

In taking a survey of the work of the year, for the preface to his magazine, Mr. Spurgeon sums up the record by saying it had been a year of spiritual drought in the churches generally, but at the Tabernacle they had witnessed much prosperity, and the trained pastors who had gone out from them had been also blessed in like manner. Only eleven students were appointed to pastoral duty during 1872, two of whom had belonged to the Tabernacle church. One of the students, who came from Edinburgh to be trained, returned to Scotland as a pastor, and one who came from Ireland received his appointment in America. So small a number as ten had not left the Pastors' College during the previous ten years.

In the hope that the genial sunshine of southern Europe, in which he had passed out of the old into the new year, would have established his health for renewed efforts, the pastor appeared once more at the Tabernacle, and at the church meeting in January, 1873, he had the gratification of finding one hundred and thirty-five new members to be received into fellowship, thus demonstrating that there was life in the church, though its chief pastor had been away. The cold, raw, damp weather continuing with the new year, he was again prevented from leaving his own home, and for many weeks he was unable to preach on the Sabbath. How great a trial that silence was to the preacher none so well knew as himself. Sorrowing greatly at the privation both to himself and his church, yet he submitted without murmur to the will of God.

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

Whilst absent from England a large bazaar had been held at the Orphanage, at Christmas, which had produced twelve hundred pounds. With this encouraging support it was resolved at once to enlarge the buildings so as to hold two hundred and fifty boys.

It was by very slow degrees that the pastor recovered his strength, but before the end of January he was able to combine enforced rest with a little work. At this time a new form of agency for good took its rise at the Tabernacle, and James Hampton began his services for the blind, which have been made a blessing to many; they now meet for tea and worship at Walnut Tree Place, Kennington Road.

At the Annual Church Meeting held in February, 1873, the total membership was reported at 4,417. The losses during the previous year having been 263, the additions were 571, leaving a net increase for the year of 308 living members. Well may both pastor and deacons rejoice at the presence of the Lord God in their midst.

The College Supper held in March yielded the handsome sum of £1,900. About the same time an effort made by the pastors who had gone forth from the College promised a contribution of £1,990 towards the new College buildings. A still further effort was undertaken at that period, by which it was intended to make the alms-rooms self-supporting in which the aged pensioners resided.

In the early part of 1873 one of the baptismal services was more than usually interesting from the fact that the Rev. Vernon J. Charlesworth, who superintended the Orphanage, with five orphan boys, publicly ratified their vows to Christ and his church by being immersed. Mr. Charlesworth delivered an address on the occasion, in which he stated his reasons for taking that step.

Another interesting service was held at the Tabernacle shortly afterwards, which is known as the Butchers' Festival. Twelve hundred butchers' men, after having had a substantial meat tea in the school-room, were addressed by Mr. W. Cuff, Mr. H. Varley, and Mr. Spurgeon. A splendid Bible was given on the occasion by the butchers' men to Mr. Varley, as a token of their gratitude to him for his services on their behalf. The improved moral tone amongst the porters and market-men generally is acknowledged to be largely owing to the religious influence of Mr. Varley amongst them. He was for many years a butcher attending the market daily. He is now an Evangelist who has taken the world for his parish, and who has gone to the very ends of the earth to preach salvation by faith in Christ Jesus.

Good Friday, 1873, was good in many ways at the Orphanage. On that day the mothers and friends of the boys took tea together there; the boys sang, and the President talked some good things. He had to tell of five of the boys having come forward to confess their faith in Christ and who had joined the church; of another who had joined the church in the place where he was employed, and to add that many in the Orphanage were believed to be converted children. Good situations had been found for all the boys who had left the institution, and nearly every boy has sent part of his first earnings as a thank-offering to the funds at Stockwell. The venerable Dr. Moffatt was present on that occasion, and interested the boys with good advice and pleasing stories. It was a great delight to hear that grand old missionary speaking to children as if the dew of his youth was still resting upon him.

Always sympathizing with the oppressed, it did not surprise anyone to learn that the Fisk Jubilee Singers received an early invitation from the pastor and deacons to give one of their concerts in the Metropolitan

Tabernacle. It would be difficult to determine which party experienced the most delight, the coloured singers to go and see and hear Mr. Spurgeon speak in his own church, or his congregation to welcome with all the heartiness they could manifest those liberated slaves, whose vocal powers had by anticipation preceded their visit, to ensure them a hearty greeting. It was indeed a pleasant hour that which introduced the singers to the vast mass of people which crowded every inch of space in the building to hear them. Indeed, hundreds had to go away, unable to crowd in anywhere within sight or hearing. And the collection which followed it was right royal in amount. They cleared about £220 for their university by singing at the Tabernacle alone. The effect on the mind of the pastor himself he thus describes in his own magazine : "The melodies were rendered by our emancipated friends in a manner altogether unique : we have never heard anything like it ; pure nature untrammelled by rule, pouring forth its notes as freely as the wild birds in the spring. The people were charmed : our intercourse with the choir was very pleasant." As soon as the singers arrived in London on their second tour they received an earnest invitation to repeat their visit to the Metropolitan Tabernacle.

Newspaper writers always seem to reach a more elevated platform if they can but discover some new scrap or incident in the life of such a man as Mr. Spurgeon. Those who have the confidence of the Tabernacle pastor hear from him almost every week incidents both curious and interesting, though often purely imaginary, on the part of those who first communicate them. In July of that year a writer in the *Swiss Times*, published, "that C. H. Spurgeon owes the freshness of his ministry to the fine thoughts which he gleans from his eloquent body of students." To this Mr. Spurgeon replied, "Men will say anything rather than give the glory to God." "All my fresh springs are in thee." How little did the writer know of the students when he "hashed up" such a misconception.

Another incident may be here recorded, somewhat of the same character, which was as new to Mr. Spurgeon when he first read it as it was to the writer in the *Christian Age*. The Rev. Wm. C. Wilkinson, writing to the paper just named, said that during a visit he paid to London, in 1862, he breakfasted one Sunday morning with several gentlemen at his lodgings, when the conversation was directed to Mr. Spurgeon and his preaching. After several had narrated their opinion or their experience of "the famous preacher's eloquence," a rather fast young man in the company observed :

"I used to brag on Spurgeon a good deal. I went very often to hear him ; and I told all my friends there was no preaching like his. But one Sunday, whether he had noticed me before—I am sure I can't say how it was—but he spoke right straight at me, and pointed me out so to the whole congregation that everybody was looking at me. It wasn't right at all. He was downright personal, don't you see ; and I've never been to hear him preach since. He had no business to single a fellow out like that, and set people all to looking right at a fellow. Why, sir, he described my dress. I own I was dressed rather loud ; but that didn't make it right. He told what colour my coat was, and my waistcoat, and all that. He ought not to have done it, sir."



"Seven months after, I was guest at a dinner given by Charles H. Thompson, Esq., an American gentleman then resident at Paris, to a small party, which included Dr. McClintock, Dr. J. H. Vincent, and, among others, a young minister whose name I cannot now recall. The conversation happened at one point to turn upon Mr. Spurgeon, and I related the singular experience of this young Londoner to the company. I added that, the young man's confident asseverations to the contrary notwithstanding, of course Mr. Spurgeon could not have done as he represented. All agreed but the minister above alluded to. He said: 'I was present on that occasion, and I sat near the young man. What he said was all true. Mr. Spurgeon did unquestionably point his preaching for a moment directly and personally at him. He said: "That young man sitting under my eye, with such and such clothes on."'

The coincidence was so remarkable that we all had to be convinced.

To this Mr. Spurgeon replied thus in his magazine: "We believe the story told by the young gentleman to be a story in more senses than one, even though a second person supports him in it. Persons are to be met with who saw us slide down the rails of our pulpit stairs, and others will swear that they were present at the same time, and yet nothing ever occurred to give even a colouring of truth to that shameless falsehood. The present piece of imagination is less gross, but is equally fabulous. We have been personal, very personal, and mean to be so still. We do not wish to be 'relieved of the imputation of actual personality;' we plead guilty to it, and only wish we had been more chargeable therewith. But it so happens that we are quite incapable of noticing people's garments. When we have been told of some lady's excessive finery, we have betrayed our total oblivion of the fact, and if a gentleman were dressed in the loudest fashion we should never discover it unless it were pointed out. Our preaching and its effect absorb us; we watch faces with eagerness to see if our hearers feel our words, but whether men wear brown or black clothes we should never notice, for we are gifted with what we may designate an almost absolute incapacity for sartorial observation. We cannot imagine how a description of coats and waistcoats could point a moral or adorn a tale, and we do not believe that we ever wandered in that direction; if we did so, the description must have belonged to some personage in a narrative we were detailing, and could not have been drawn from anyone before us, though it is very possible that it may have corresponded exactly with the dress of some one in the assembly—in so large a congregation it would be remarkable if it did not.

"When persons in the congregation are inattentive or ill-behaved (which, by the way, has hardly occurred a half-dozen times in twenty years), we have given them some gentle hints which they could not help appropriating, and which we have no doubt they will never forget, but even these have had no reference to their garments. The whole matter is a misunderstanding. There could not have been the slightest truth in the statement, for the reason named, which is a marked peculiarity of our mind.

"Why do not people tell the scores of real instances in which we have painted men to the life, and made them feel that the Lord spoke to them by

us? Infinitely more singular than this incident are the cases which have come under our own knowledge, but which we care not to tell, for few would believe them. We aim at speaking personally and pointedly to all our hearers, and they are the best judges whether we accomplish it, and also as to whether we use language at which any man ought to be offended. Very seldom does a week occur without our receiving letters from persons unknown to us, thanking us for advising or comforting them in our sermons, the parties evidently being under the impression that some friend had communicated their cases to us, though, indeed, we knew nothing whatever of them. Frequently we have had apologetic notes acknowledging the justice of the rebuke, and correcting us in some minor details of a description supposed to refer to a special sinner; whereas we were unaware of the writer's existence. We have ceased to regard these incidents as curious, for we remember that the word of God is 'a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.' "

At the commencement of Mr. Spurgeon's ministry he related having received a letter from a poor shoemaker during the week, who said that he was the man who had kept his shop open on the Sunday, who had sold only one pair of old boots for one-and-eightpence, and that, having broken the Sabbath for so small a sum and been so publicly exposed, none but God could have told the facts to the preacher, he had resolved to break the Sabbath no longer. He became converted, and joined the church, but the preacher had no knowledge of the man till he wrote about himself.

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

In June he took part in the services connected with laying memorial stones for a new Baptist chapel near his own residence at Clapham. He stated that it had long been in his heart to build a chapel in that locality, and he had laid aside £200 to commence the work, but all his efforts had failed. He was glad that others were doing what he had not been able to do. He had himself been delighted that year to preach for the Wesleyans, and to speak for the Independents; but he urged all Baptists residing in that district to give to the church which intended to assemble in that new erection. In the early part of the year Mr. Spurgeon had made a collection at the Tabernacle on behalf of the new Surrey Chapel for Mr. Newman Hall, by which £105 was raised.

The Pastors' College is a place of work, where but few holidays are known. The 28th of August, 1873, was a red-letter day to the students. On that day the Rev. George Rogers, the senior tutor, celebrated his golden wedding. It was made an occasion of rejoicing and congratulation. The students got up a subscription, which enabled them to present their beloved tutor with a valuable gold watch, and to Mrs. Rogers they gave a silver tea urn.

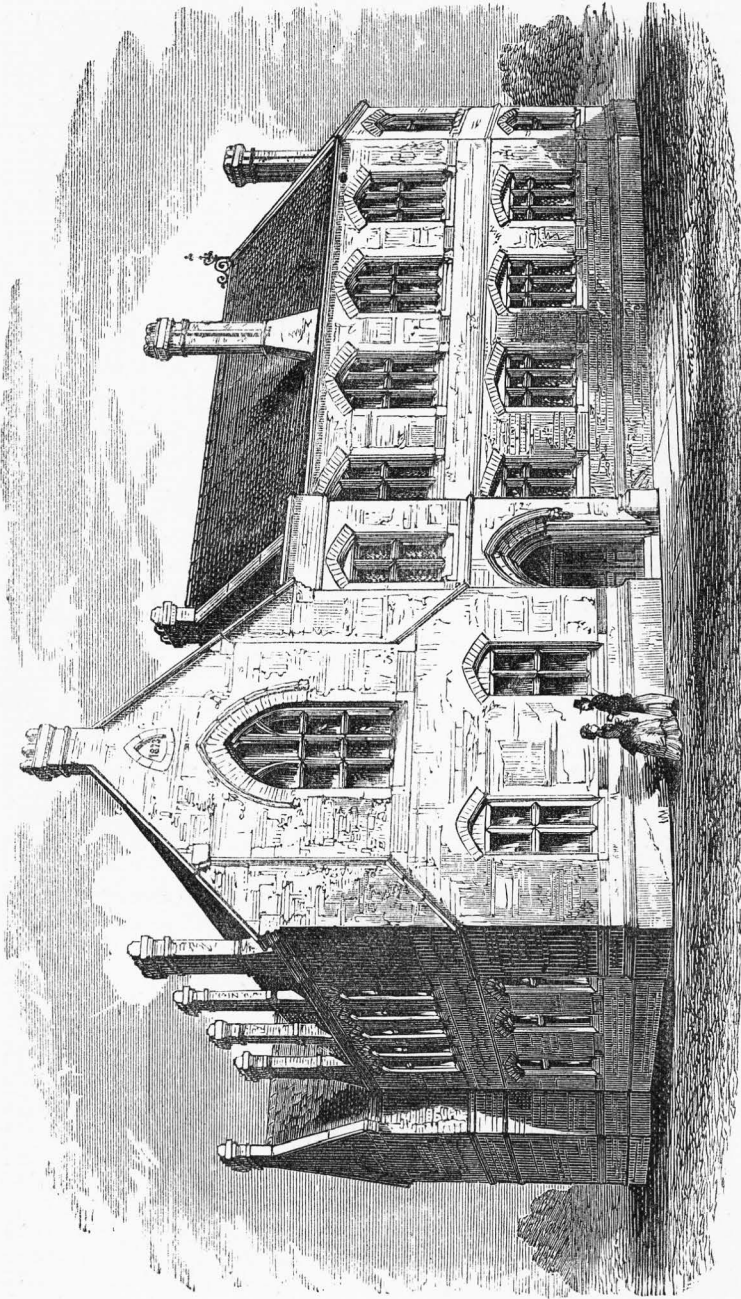
Having promised to take part in the opening services of Mr. Chown's church in Bradford, in October, the applications for tickets to hear

Mr. Spurgeon were so numerous, St. George's Hall had to be taken for the occasion, and the large audience filled the place. £250 was collected after the service, and as the debt on the new building had been previously paid, the money collected was divided, and £125 was given to the Bradford Infirmary and £125 to the Pastors' College.

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

The applications made to the College for pastors during 1873 were more numerous than had before been made. Thirty of these were supplied. Out of that number two were sent to Spain, one to India, one to China, one to Prince Edward's Island, one to Ireland, and one to Scotland. The church at the Tabernacle had supplied five of the thirty young men thus sent forth. On the 14th October the foundation stone of the new College buildings was laid by the president. It was a day which will long be remembered with delight. The people gave on the occasion £1,000, and the students gave £300 more, but the chief joy of the day was the whole-day prayer meeting which the students held, that the divine blessing might rest on the work, and upon all connected with the College.





THE PASTORS' COLLEGE.



## THE PASTORS' COLLEGE.



FOUNDED by God, and committed to the care of Mr. Spurgeon, the Pastors' College at the Metropolitan Tabernacle could not have attained such remarkable success with a less divine origin. The few plain facts of its early history will be eagerly enquired into in future years. They are of much interest, and may be fittingly recorded here. To many the College seemed

to be a very quixotic thing: it had its birth amid a storm of opposition, at the commencement of the pastor's ministry in London. It will one day be hailed as an institution by which God has done great things. The work was rather thrust upon Mr. Spurgeon than projected by him, and yet from its commencement the germs of its future growth were manifest.

Mr. Spurgeon accepted the pastorate of New Park Street Church in April, 1854. Before three months had elapsed many young persons had joined the church, having sought and found the Saviour. Amongst those young converts was a young man nearly twenty years old, who asked counsel of the youthful pastor whilst under the conviction of sin. The pastor himself, at that time only one month over twenty years old, in the following letter, exhibits how earnest he was in seeking to win souls.

“ 75, Dover Road, Borough,  
July 14th, 1854.

“ Dear Sir,—I am glad that you have been able to write to me and state your feelings. Though my hands are always full it will ever give me joy to receive such notes as yours.

“ You ask a very important question. ‘ Are you one of God’s elect ?’ This is a question neither you nor I can answer at present. I will ask you an easier one, ‘ Are you a sinner ?’ Can you say ‘ Yes.’ All say yes ; but then they do not know what the word sinner means. A sinner is one who has broken all his Maker’s commands, despised his name, and run into rebellion against the Most High. A sinner deserves hell, yea, the hottest place in hell ; and if he be saved, it must be entirely by unmerited mercy. Now, if you are such a sinner I am glad to be able to tell you the only way of salvation, ‘ Believe on the Lord Jesus.’

“ I think you have not yet really understood what believing means. You are, I trust, really awakened, but you do not see the door yet. I advise you seriously to be much alone, I mean as much as you can ; let your

groans go up to heaven if you cannot pray; attend as many services as possible, and if you go with an earnest desire for a blessing it will come very soon. But why not believe now? You have only to believe that Jesus is able and willing to save, and then trust yourself to him.

"Harbour not that dark suggestion to forsake the house of God; remember you thereby turn your back on heaven, and your face to hell, the moment you do that. I pray God that he will keep you. If the Lord had meant to destroy you he would not have showed you such things as these. If you are but a smoking flax there is hope; touch the hem of his garment; look to the brazen serpent.

"My dear fellow sinner, slight not this season of awakening: up and be in earnest. It is your soul, your own soul, your eternal welfare is at stake. There is the cross, and a bleeding God-man upon it; look to him and be saved! There is the Holy Spirit able to give you every grace. Look, in prayer, to the sacred three-one God, and then you will be delivered.

"I am, your anxious friend,

"Write again.

"C. H. SPURGEON."

There was deep significance in the words of the postscript, and the young scholar in the school of Christ was really in earnest to find the Saviour, he was soon after able to rest on Christ, and when the load of his sin was gone he did "write again." Here is the young pastor's reply:

"75, Dover Road, August 7th, 1854.

"My Dear Sir,—Your letters have given me great joy. I trust I see in you marks of a son of God, and I earnestly pray that you may have the evidence within that you are born of God.

"There is no reason why you should not be baptized: 'If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest.' Think very seriously of it, for it is a solemn matter. Count the cost. You are now about to be buried to the world, and you may well say, 'What manner of persons ought we to be in all holy conversation and godliness.' The friends who were with you in the days of your carnal pleasure will strive to entice you from Christ. I pray that the grace of God may be mightily manifest in you, keeping you steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord.

"I should like to see you on Thursday evening after six o'clock in the vestry.

"I am, yours faithfully,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

The personal interview which followed convinced the pastor of the genuineness of the work grace had wrought in the heart, but he found that the mind required cultivation and information. The young man was admitted into the church; he began visiting the sick, distributing tracts, taught in the Sunday-school, and he soon afterwards commenced outdoor preaching. In these labours he was made a blessing to many. It was evident that God had sealed his commission, and it only remained to equip the young convert for the service of the church. He thankfully accepted an offer from the pastor to be educated, who himself commenced the programme of that education, and for some months continued the work, devoting to it every available hour. Believing that

young man had gifts which the great Master had ordained should be devoted to the work of the ministry, after much prayer and consultation together, their thoughts and pursuits were directed in that channel. Finding how heavy were the daily claims pressing upon him even at that early period, the first year of his ministry, he made enquiry for a suitable tutor, and ultimately the young man was placed for a time under the tuition of the Rev. C. H. Hosken, of Bexley Heath, in Kent. Subsequently he became the first College student under the care of the Rev. George Rogers, of Albany Chapel, Camberwell, who has since that period been the honoured Principal and Theological Tutor of the Pastors' College.

How glad Mr. Spurgeon was thus to be able, even at much personal sacrifice of time and money, to aid that young man, will best be shown by the next letter which he sent to his young friend on the subject, and in which the germs of the future College will be found distinctly traceable. Read in the light of present experience, the letter seems like an inspired epistle.

“London, September 22nd, 1855.

“My Dear Brother,—Since your departure, I have been meditating upon the pleasure of being the means of sending you to so excellent a scene of preparation for the ministry. In prayer to God I have sought every blessing upon you, for I love you very much. Oh, how I desire to see you a holy and successful minister of Jesus. I need not bid you work at your studies : I am sure you will ; but be sure to live near to God, and hold very much intercourse with Jesus.

“I have been thinking that when you are gone out into the vineyard I must find another to be my dearly beloved Timothy, just as you are. I find it no easy task to get money, and I have been thinking I must get friends to give me a good set of books, which I shall not *give* you, but keep for those that may come after. So that by degrees I shall get together a good theological library for young students in years to come.

“If I were rich, I would give you all, but as I have to bear all the brunt of the battle, and am alone responsible, I think I must get the books to be always used in future. Those you will purchase to-day are yours to keep ; Mr. Bagster's books must be mine ; and I have just written to a friend to buy me Matt. Henry's [Commentary], which shall soon be at your disposal, and be mine in the same way. You see I am looking forward.

“Believe me ever your loving friend,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”

The young man who had awakened so much interest and kindness in the mind of Mr. Spurgeon was Thomas William Medhurst, a native of Bermondsey, where he was born in October, 1834, only four months after Mr. Spurgeon's birth. Seeing that he occupies the first place on the list of students which have been sent forth into the ministry, a few notes of his personal history may not be deemed out of place.

Mr. Medhurst was for many years a scholar in the Bethesda Chapel Sunday-school, Jamaica-row, Bermondsey. Under the ministry of the Rev. W. Dovey his mind was seriously impressed. He served an apprenticeship to Mr. John Porter, rope-maker, a deacon of East-street Baptist chapel, Walworth. He was always attached to the services of

the sanctuary, and was attracted to New Park-street Chapel soon after Mr. Spurgeon came to London, and under his ministry he was led to Jesus, was publicly baptized September 28th, 1854, and became Mr. Spurgeon's first student. His first pastoral charge was at Kingston-on-Thames, commencing in September, 1856; and during four years, more than two hundred persons were baptized and received into church fellowship. There he was married to Miss Mary Ann Cranfield, by Mr. Spurgeon, on Thursday, May 26th, 1859. In September, 1860, he removed to Coleraine, in Ireland, where he remained for two years, his labours being equally prosperous. In November, 1862, he became pastor of a Baptist church in Glasgow, where he remained till September, 1869, when he accepted a unanimous call to the pastorate of Lake Road Chapel, Landport, Portsmouth, where he continues to labour. Upwards of 950 believers have been baptized by Mr. Medhurst during his public ministry, and large sums of money have been collected and expended by him in the erection of chapel and school buildings.

Such is a hasty glance at the results which have attended the labours of the first student sent forth from the Pastors' College. The same results, with the necessary variations of personal character, have attended the three hundred and eighty-eight students who have been Mr. Medhurst's successors.

Can any stronger or clearer evidence be desired to prove that the work of the College is of God, that his blessing richly rests upon it, and that it is deserving of the utmost support and encouragement?

As a young man Pastor Spurgeon, then under age, felt the importance of the step he was undertaking, in making arrangements for the education of that first student. None of the colleges seemed to be adapted for the work which was required by young converts who had preaching gifts but not qualifications. To find a suitable tutor was the chief difficulty. Prayer, earnest and persevering, was made that such a tutor might be found, when, after mature deliberation, the Rev. Jonathan George, of Walworth, suggested to Mr. Spurgeon the name of the Rev. George Rogers, Independent Minister of Albany Road Chapel, Camberwell.

Acting on the suggestion, Mr. George, Mr. Spurgeon, and Mr. Medhurst waited on Mr. Rogers to consult together, no one anticipating what would come of the interview. That was a happy meeting, and a happy day, for it gave to Mr. Spurgeon precisely the man he required; one who, to all the ability required, added that intense love of his work which has made him pursue it now for twenty years with ardour and success. Under the roof of Mr. Rogers, on that day, in the presence of the four persons named, the Pastors' College was ushered into life.

The progress made by the first student was so very encouraging that other young men presented themselves, who were also received, and placed under the care of Mr. Rogers. Once every week, from the commencement, all the students met at the house of the pastor, and were by him instructed in theology, pastoral duty, preaching, and other practical matters. Here was the nucleus of those permanent weekly lectures given by Mr. Spurgeon himself, in which his wide, varied, and valued experience in church matters is presented to the young men, which furnished them with the most essential instruction for their future work.



From the very first certain young men were admitted to join the students in the evening, to whom was imparted the elements of a sound but substantial education. From that small beginning has sprung the present evening College, which for so many years occupied and filled the numerous rooms in the basement of the Tabernacle, but which is now transferred to the new College buildings.

The College started on that life of faith from which up to the present hour it has never swerved. With no endowments, nor lists of subscribers to depend upon, the pastor himself found the funds necessary for carrying on the work; and when it had extended so as to be beyond his means, the expenses were met by funds which are sent by God himself, through his people, in answer to the prayer of faith. Neither in men nor money has the Lord once failed the College. In the darkest hour the faith of the president has been strengthened by most gracious deliverances from the hand of God, and at all times he has rejoiced in the independence and confidence which faith in God has bestowed.

When the church guaranteed to their pastor such an income as would set his mind at ease, he generously resolved to devote more than half of the amount towards the College. Using the utmost economy in all things, so as not to hinder the work, its progress was so continuous, and its success so remarkable, and year by year the students sent forth to the care of churches had so much of the divine blessing resting upon them, that funds were never wanting when it was made plain to the church at the Tabernacle that they were required. To secure this object permanently, and at the same time to perpetuate the interest of the congregation in the College, it was resolved that a weekly offering be made every Lord's-day at the Tabernacle, for the support of the College. This has averaged from £20 to £25 weekly, yielding from £1,500 to £1,800 annually. Mr. Spurgeon also threw into the College treasury all the profits from the sale of his sermons in America. Still the College grew in numbers and usefulness, and fresh agencies had to be employed in its extension.

To meet the additional outlay of the enlarged operations increased funds were required, and the prayer of faith was again answered. One of the deacons of the church, Mr. T. R. Phillips, generously resolved to give a supper in the school-room under the Tabernacle in the month of March, the first of which was held in 1865. After the supper, the report of the work of the College was given for the year, and the friends present were asked to contribute as they felt disposed towards its support,—the whole expense of the repast being borne, from year to year, by Mr. Phillips. The following figures will show the depth and permanency of the sympathy which is felt in that branch of the work of the Tabernacle.

## COLLEGE SUPPER CONTRIBUTIONS.

|             |     |       |             |     |               |
|-------------|-----|-------|-------------|-----|---------------|
| 1865, March | ... | £350  | 1872, March | ... | £1,700        |
| 1866        | "   | 900   | 1873        | "   | 1,900         |
| 1867        | "   | 1,100 | 1874        | "   | 1,800         |
| 1868        | "   | 1,400 | 1875        | "   | 2,000 nearly. |
| 1869        | "   | 1,200 | 1876        | "   | 2,900         |
| 1870        | "   | 1,300 | 1877        | "   | 2,200         |
| 1871        | "   | 1,500 |             |     |               |

From the year 1856 to 1861, the students continued to assemble in the house of Mr. Rogers, which served for a college. Increasing in number, early in 1861, by which time seven or eight of the young men had become pastors of churches, the students were wont to raise up the cry of the sons of the prophets of old, "Behold the place where we dwell with thee is too strait for us." In March, 1861, the congregation of New Park-street made its exodus to the new Tabernacle, and not the least interesting band among the moving host was the company of sixteen students who then formed the Pastors' College. By July they had commenced work in the well-appointed class-rooms under the Tabernacle. In their new location their numbers increased, and fresh plans of usefulness were devised and carried out. Two years later the cry was again heard—"Let us go forth, the place is too strait for us;" in 1863 there were under daily instruction for the work of the Christian ministry sixty-six young men. With a few exceptions, the College funds, obtained from the pastor and from the contributions of the church, supplied all those young men with board, lodging, education, books, and in some cases with clothes, free of expense.

Whilst this work was going on day by day, other plans of usefulness were being carried on at the same place each evening. The same fund was the means of supplying a sound elementary, commercial, and classical education, at the hands of properly qualified tutors, to one hundred and eighty young men, who were employed in business during the day. This was the state of things in 1863. The education is free, and books are supplied to the young men at the wholesale price. The expenditure of the College in that year was about £3,000, and the whole sum was met without having one shilling of debt. Truly we may ask, what hath God wrought, and what will faith in God not accomplish?

During that year, Mr. A. Fergusson, one of the tutors of the College, prepared and published a brief history of the College, entitled "Faith's Witness," from which source some of the previous facts are obtained.

For its success or its failure, for the efficiency of its working agents, and for all the financial liabilities of the College, the pastor alone is responsible. It is managed without the cumbrous machinery of committees. From the very first Mr. Spurgeon felt the work to be peculiarly his own, having been laid upon him in a marked manner by the Lord. Knowing the work to be of God, he has never doubted but that divine providence would supply both men and means when either were wanted. In like manner also we may remark how God has opened the way for the young men to go out into the ministry. So blessed have been the labours of those who have left the College and are now settled pastors, that neighbouring churches and surrounding districts are continually applying to the president for supplies of young men, either as evangelists, or as successors to pastors who have died. A large number of the students have gone forth as evangelists, breaking up new ground, gathering small companies in a schoolroom or a public hall till the cause had become strong enough to undertake the erection of a chapel. In this way a large number of new churches has been raised all over the land, which have become a great blessing to the nation. The following table will show how steady and permanent has been the application for students to take pastoral duty :

| Students<br>appointed Pastors. |     |    | Students<br>appointed Pastors. |          |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|----|--------------------------------|----------|-----|
| 1857                           | ... | 1  | 1869                           | ...      | 30  |
| 1858                           | ... | 1  | 1870                           | ...      | 21  |
| 1859                           | ... | 2  | 1871                           | ...      | 29  |
| 1860                           | ... | 2  | 1872                           | ...      | 11  |
| 1861                           | ... | 4  | 1873                           | ...      | 30  |
| 1862                           | ... | 11 | 1874                           | ...      | 37  |
| 1863                           | ... | 12 | 1875                           | ...      | 29  |
| 1864                           | ... | 18 | 1876                           | ...      | 33  |
| 1865                           | ... | 27 | 1877                           | 3 months | 12  |
| 1866                           | ... | 26 |                                |          |     |
| 1867                           | ... | 30 |                                |          |     |
| 1868                           | ... | 28 | Total                          | ...      | 388 |

Three or four per cent. of this number have died since they left the College, or have retired for want of health. Still the fact remains that nearly four hundred students have gone forth and are now labouring zealously and successfully as pastors of churches, many of which have been raised out of the world, and established in districts where before no Christian church has existed. Four hundred trained men in the ministry of the church, not one of whom would in all human probability have occupied such a position but for the Pastors' College. Which of the English universities, established for that purpose, and most of them richly endowed, can show such a result? The College at Newington can do its work efficiently without parliamentary endowments or privileges, and it is more than probable that its work is more successfully and extensively done than it would be were it to be endowed with the cumbersome machinery of state patronage. Which of the colleges of Oxford or Cambridge can show such a result as is indicated by the above figures,—four hundred ministers of the gospel sent out from one establishment in twenty years, and all doing so much work for Christ? In addition to all this must be stated the important fact that no less than thirty-seven new Baptist churches have been erected in the Metropolitan district alone, in all of which active church work is carried on, and each is proving a blessing to the locality in which it has been erected. These facts are surely worthy of record, and are deserving of serious consideration, for the moral and social benefits they each confer on the population in the midst of which they are planted.

In issuing his new magazine in 1865, Mr. Spurgeon announced his purpose that it should be the foster-parent of the College and Orphanage. The editor took an early opportunity of presenting to his readers the claims of the College. So soon as the College had secured one friend in the press another promptly arose, and the editor of the *Christian World* took the matter up, and obtained through his paper £100 for the College. Mr. Spurgeon presented the editor with a handsomely bound set of his sermons for his kindness.

When the one thousandth number of the pastor's sermons was published, in July, 1871, a friend sent £1,000 to add to the College funds. As a new year's gift, a few friends at the Tabernacle sent the President

£100 for the College as a token of their goodwill. When the necessity for new College buildings was plainly indicated, a friend, in May, 1873, sent £1,000 towards that object. On October 14th, 1873, the foundation stone of those buildings was laid, when the people contributed £1,000, the students gave £300, and undertook to raise the amount to £1,000. In 1874, Messrs. Cory and Sons, of Cardiff, sent for the benefit of the fund £1,000 worth of paid-up shares in their colliery company. In July, 1875, the president received £5,000 for the same object as a legacy from the late Mr. Matthews. These are named as examples of the various ways in which God has answered prayer, and rewarded the faith of his servant in that important work.

Shortly before the new College buildings were commenced, Mr. Spurgeon, by an article in *The Sword and the Trowel*, directed public attention to the institution. From that article a few extracts will appropriately come in here to close the account of the College.

"Providence has greatly favoured the College in sparing to it throughout its whole history its invaluable tutor, Mr. George Rogers. Although my beloved friend has passed his three score years and ten, he retains his vigour, and commands the love and respect of all. The good hand of the Lord has sent to me other valuable fellow-workers in our important engagement, and, best of all, the invaluable addition of my beloved brother, James Archer Spurgeon, to the staff, who has thus strengthened the directing and supervising power, and made the instructive department as complete as human affairs can be. We were never more efficiently at work, nor ever enjoyed more of the divine blessing.

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

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

"There is a Loan Fund in connection with the College to assist in the erection of places of worship, amounts being lent out, to be returned in annual payments without interest. The fund is only £5,000." Who will help to make it £10,000?

In August, 1873, when Mr. Rogers celebrated his golden wedding, the students testified their love for their tutor by presenting him with a valuable gold watch, and Mrs. Rogers with a silver tea urn. It was love, not duty, made the gifts, and as such they were received. The College suffered no loss by thus enriching its venerable tutor. On August 28th, 1874, the New College Buildings were opened, when much loving zeal was manifested.

Some years ago the students formed themselves into an Association, by which means they can the better maintain the brotherhood, and by



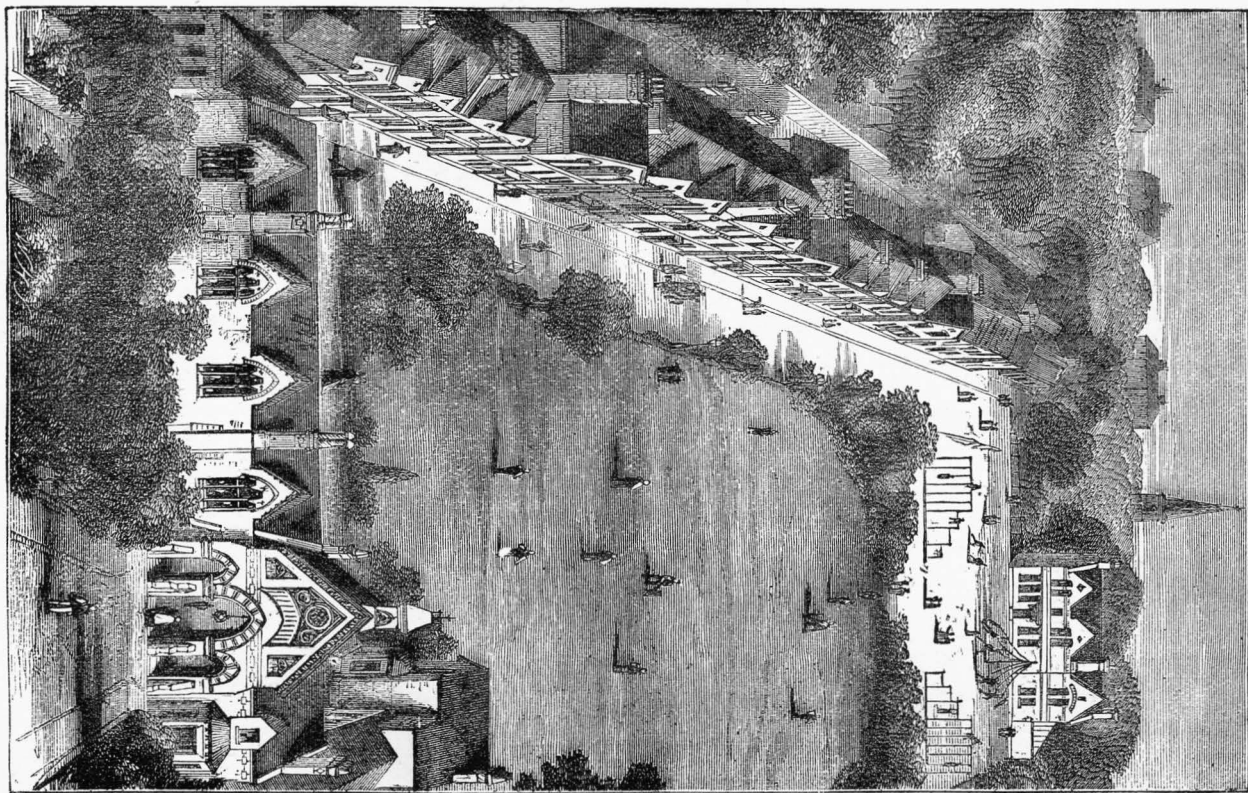
GEORGE ROGERS.

combined action can in many ways be more helpful to each other in time of need. The annual meeting of the College Students, held in

the spring, and the conferences which form part of the proceedings, are times of much social enjoyment, as well as of mental and spiritual improvement.

Any persons desiring to help the Lord's work by their contributions should first call at the College, look over the buildings, ascertain the kind and amount of real work which is there carried on, and they will require no other prompting to bestow their bounty there with a liberal hand, being assured that it will secure a large amount of blessing on both giver and receiver.





THE STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE



## STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE.

**T**is the Lord's own work to care for the fatherless. Those who have faith in God never need be without success in undertaking the care of the orphan. God helps the helpless; but he uses man as his agent in arranging details. Soon after *The Sword and the Trowel* was commenced Mr. Spurgeon indicated in one of his articles published in its pages several forms of Christian usefulness, and amongst them the care of the orphan.

Shortly afterwards, in September, 1866, Mr. Spurgeon received a letter from a lady, offering to place at his command the sum of £20,000 with which to commence an orphanage for fatherless boys. At first he felt disposed to avoid the onerous responsibilities of such a work; and, calling at the address given by the lady, tried to prevail upon her to give the money to Mr. Müller, of Bristol. The claims of London for such an institution were urged; and, unable to refuse the request of the generous donor, the money was accepted on trust for the purpose named. Mrs. Hillyard, the widow of a clergyman of the Church of England, was the lady whose benevolence thus originated the orphanage. She had left the Church of England and joined the Baptists, which led to her bestowing the larger portion of her fortune. The money was in railway debentures, which were not at that time available for use otherwise than as an investment.

After consulting with the leading friends at the Tabernacle, a body of twelve trustees was chosen, in whose names the money was invested, and a resolution was agreed upon to purchase a suitable plot of land at Stockwell, on which to erect an orphanage. The noble gift of Mrs. Hillyard being invested as an endowment, £3,000 was borrowed for the purchase of the land, and the claims of the orphans whom it was sought to benefit were laid before the church and congregation, and appeals were made through the pastor's magazine for the funds required to carry on the work. In March, 1867, the deed of incorporation was signed by the trustees, and in the May number of *The Sword and the Trowel* the claims of the projected buildings were urged with so much force and urgency that the people belonging to the Tabernacle took up the case with loving zeal and energy. Mr. George Moore, late of Bow Church-yard, Cheapside, gave an impulse to the work by offering £250 on condition that it was made up to £1,000. By the month of August £1,072 were in hand, and the whole church at the Tabernacle was engaged in collecting on its behalf. Prayer, faith, and prompt energetic



action were all combined in the efforts made, and pastors, trustees, and congregation were of one mind in their purpose to make the work a success.

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

Mrs. Tyson, a lady who had often aided Mr. Spurgeon in the work of the College, and in other enterprises, had been spared to see the twenty-fifth anniversary of her marriage day, on which occasion her beloved husband, a wealthy merchant, presented her with £500 as a token of his affection. This money the lady at once took to Mr. Spurgeon, to be dedicated to God for the erection of one of the orphan houses, to be called, SILVER WEDDING HOUSE. About the same time, a merchant in the City called upon the pastor at the Tabernacle, and, after transacting some business with him, left with Mr. Blackshaw, Mr. Spurgeon's secretary, a sealed envelope, in which was £600, to be used in building another house, which, it was afterwards determined, should be called MERCHANT'S HOUSE, as the donor refused to have his name given. The way in which God was answering the prayers of his people was further shown by an offer made by the workmen employed by Mr. Higgs, who had built the Tabernacle, to give the labour necessary for erecting a third house, whilst their employer volunteered to give the necessary material : this to be called the WORKMEN'S HOUSE.

Such manifest tokens of the divine favour attending the work greatly encouraged the pastor and the trustees, and on Monday afternoon, 9th of August, 1867, the foundation stones of the three houses named were laid, one by Mrs. Hillyard, one by Mr. Spurgeon, and one by Mr. Higgs. The scene presented at Stockwell on that day was exceedingly picturesque and intensely interesting. At the monster tea-meeting which followed the tables extended 330 feet in length, and the bright sunshine made the scene one of joy and delight, which will long be remembered, though the rain, which came down so bountifully just as tea was over, caused much discomfort. The speakers at the after meeting were Mr. Spurgeon, Mr. Archibald Brown, of Stepney, Mr. Wilkinson, curate of St. Michael's Stockwell, Mr. J. A. Spurgeon, Mr. John Spurgeon, senr. (father of the Tabernacle pastors), Rev. Dr. Hugh Allen, Mr. William Olney, Mr. Murphy, and others. Mr. Olney announced that the subscriptions brought in that day reached £2,200 ; that £5,500 had been received which would pay for the land for the erection of the three houses and have £200 in hand to commence keeping house with. In *The Sword and the Trowel* for October the names of 1,120 collectors are printed, with the amounts on their cards, stated to be £2,802. Amongst the collectors were members of the Church of England, Congregationalists, Methodists, Baptists, and others, so general had been the sympathy which was felt in the work. So thorough and hearty was the spirit manifested towards the Orphanage,

that Mr. Rogers, fearing the College would be forgotten, made an earnest appeal in the November number of *The Sword and the Trowel* on behalf of his department; but whilst the new plans of benevolence were so warmly supported, the College was not forgotten, seeing that £397 were sent in to aid its funds the same month that the Orphanage received its £2,802.

The faith of the pastor and trustees of the Orphanage was greatly strengthened by the wonderful manner in which God had answered their prayers and rewarded their efforts. It was announced that eight houses were contemplated, to provide for not less than 150 orphans, requiring an outlay of £3,000 per annum. On that festive occasion it was reported that £500 had been given by Messrs. Olney and Sons to erect a fourth house, to be called after the sainted and venerable Mrs. Olney, UNITY HOUSE.

By the end of the year 1867, the trustees had no less than two hundred names of orphans from whom to select fifty in the following April. The pressing need of providing for these children made the way more easy for extending the work. Accordingly, at the meeting of the Baptist Union, early in 1868, it was resolved that an effort should be made to raise the funds necessary for erecting two houses, at a cost of £600 each. Whilst these efforts were being made amongst the Baptists, Mr. Thomas Olney, as the superintendent of the Tabernacle Sunday School, aided by the teachers and scholars, was collecting the funds necessary for erecting a house to represent the young children. Simultaneously with that effort was another amongst the students at the College, who had resolved to show their affection for their pastor by raising money sufficient to erect a house on their behalf, and to perpetuate their institution by having it named the COLLEGE HOUSE.

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

On the same day the Rev. John Aldis, of Reading, and Alexander B. Goodall, Esq., each laid one of the foundation stones of the two Testimonial Houses, subscribed for by the Baptist churches as a token of regard to Mr. Spurgeon. A monster tea-meeting followed the proceedings, after which addresses were delivered by the Revs. Thomas Binney, Dr. Raleigh, J. T. Wigner, W. Brock, D.D., W. Howieson, A. Mursell, Henry Varley, W. Stott, S. H. Booth, G. Gould, J. Raven, J. H. Millard, John Spurgeon, senr., C. H. Spurgeon and James A. Spurgeon. Mr. Wigner presented to the Pastor an address of affectionate sympathy from the Baptist churches, which was signed by Mr. Goodall and himself on behalf of the subscribers to the fund, and with the address was the sum of £1,200. That sum was afterwards increased to £1764 14s. 4d., so as to include the furniture and fittings for the two houses, that the offering might be in every respect complete in all its parts.

The meeting held on June 19th, the thirty-fourth birthday of Mr. Spurgeon, was, if possible, a more joyous and enthusiastic one than any of the preceding. On that day Mr. Thomas Olney, junr., surrounded by a huge mass of children forming the Tabernacle Sunday Schools, laid the foundation stone of the SUNDAY SCHOOL HOUSE, amidst the enthusiastic applause of the delighted children. It was a time of joy they will all long remember. Dear Mrs. Spurgeon, so long a suffering invalid, was there to witness the happiness of the assembly, and by request from the students at the College, and the ministers who had gone from it, she was enabled to lay the foundation stone of the COLLEGE HOUSE. She was graciously upheld on the occasion, although the surpassing kindness displayed was enough to overcome one of a stronger frame. After the stone-laying was over, twenty-six sweet little girls in white advanced, one by one, and presented Mrs. Spurgeon with purses which their parents had subscribed as a token of their affectionate rejoicing at her temporary restoration. It was a touching, beautiful, and unexpected sight, which deserves to be recorded. A large sum of money was presented to Mr. Spurgeon as a birthday offering, which he put into the Orphanage treasury.

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

The manner in which the funds have been contributed, first to erect the Orphanage buildings, and since then to maintain the children and officers, and keep the whole establishment in continuous operation, most clearly indicates that from the commencement of the work, up to the present time, the hand of God has been directing the whole. *The Sword and the Trowel* has been a most material agent in making the progress of the work known to the Lord's people. In recognition of its services, on the entrance gateway there is carved in stone a figure of the sword and the trowel.

Each house was occupied as soon as it was finished ; but unable to wait until the first was ready, so soon as the plan of the Orphanage was matured, and trustees appointed, four orphans were selected and placed under the charge of a sister in her own house. As money came in others were added to them. To manifest still further the interest which Mrs. Hillyard took in the work, when she found several orphans already in charge of a matron, she sold some other household plate to give the money for their support. Thus encouraged, by the month of July, 1867, before the foundation stones were actually laid, seven boys were chosen by the trustees as a commencement. It was wonderful how the money was sent in. One day, just as Mr. Spurgeon finished his sermon in the open air, a lady put into his hand an envelope containing £20 for the Orphanage and £20 for the College. In January, 1868, Mr. Spurgeon announced in his magazine that an unknown gentleman had given him £1,000 towards two of the houses. In March another sum of £1,000 was announced, and in June the Baptist churches sent in

£1,200. In September, a year after the work began, a great bazaar was held which brought in a net profit of £1,400. How many loving hearts and willing hands were employed to bring about such a result it would be impossible to tell, though there were but few of the eleven hundred collectors, who so nobly came forward at the first meeting a year before, who did not lend a helping hand to the bazaar. By the end of the year the president announced in his magazine that only £1,000 more was required to complete the eight houses, "and this," says he, "will surely be sent in; for the Lord will provide." And so it came to pass.

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

Up to the spring of the year 1870 one hundred and fifty-four orphans had been admitted, six of whom had been removed, leaving one hundred and forty-eight in residence. The following figures will show the progress of the institution, so far as mere numerals can set it forth, from its origin to the present time:—

|                          | Admitted. | Total. | Removed. | In Residence. |
|--------------------------|-----------|--------|----------|---------------|
| 1867, to March, 1870 ... | 154       | 154    | 6        | 148           |
| March, 1871 ...          | 42        | 196    | 7        | 183           |
| March, 1872 ...          | 38        | 234    | 9        | 212           |
| March, 1873 ...          | 21        | 255    | 15       | 218           |
| March, 1874 ...          | 36        | 291    | 38       | 216           |
| March, 1875 ...          | 63        | 354    | 42       | 237           |
| March, 1876 ...          | 28        | 382    | 29       | 236           |
| March, 1877 ...          | 46        | 428    | 52       | 230           |

\* Each of the eight houses forms a separate family, that plan having after mature consideration been resolved upon as the best. Each family is complete in its own arrangements; each dwelling having a large sitting and four lofty bed rooms for the boys, with lockers, which when closed form handy seats in the middle of the room; and a sitting room, bedroom, and kitchen for the matron in charge. A large covered play-room adjoins the houses on the east, and separate from that is the Infirmary, forming the east end of the quadrangle. At the west end is the school-room and dining-hall, the master's house and entrance gateway; and in the rear of the dining-hall is the suite of offices for cooking, and other domestic purposes.

In selecting the most needy boys for the benefits of the institution, the trustees are in no way influenced by the religious opinions of their parents, those showing the most pressing want have the first preference; and they are elected without any polling, or any expense to their parents or friends. Illegitimate boys are not eligible; the marriage certificates of their parents must satisfy the trustees on this point previous to the boy being nominated.

A judicious writer has said of the Stockwell Orphanage:—"How superior any real approach to the family ideal is to the barrack system was apparent to us on a mere glance at these fatherless lads. The families are large, about thirty boys in each house, but they are under the care of affectionate and diligent matrons, and everything is done to compensate for the loss of parental rule and training. There is more of the 'Home' than of the 'Institution' in the atmosphere. To encourage home ideas, and for the sake of industrial training, the boys in turn assist in the domestic work during the morning of the day; each boy's period of service being restricted to one week in six, servants being entirely dispensed with. A working cook superintends the kitchen aided by the boys. No regimental uniform is suffered. The boys differ in the clothes they wear, in the cut of the hair, and show all the variety of a large family. The boys do not look like loosely connected members of a huge and miscellaneous crowd, but sons and brothers. No traces of ill-disguised dissatisfaction, as though in perpetual restraint, always under orders, were apparent; but a free, healthy, and vigorous homeliness, as if under the genial and robust influence of love, made itself everywhere manifest. With all the care of a Christian father, situations are chosen for the lads, where their spiritual interests will not be in danger; and when they have been passed into them the master corresponds with them, and gives them counsel and assistance as they need. Like a true home, its benediction follows every inmate throughout his life. We were specially pleased with our visit to the school. The boys are well drilled in elementary knowledge, reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, history, geography, vocal music, Latin, shorthand, science of common things, and Scripture. A French class is held for the elder boys. Military drill is given daily. Drawing is successfully taught, and many boys excel in it. The singing class did very great credit to its instructor,—singing at sight, with great accuracy and sweetness, music of some difficulty." Two of H. M. Inspectors were deputed from the Local Government Board to visit the Institution, and they gave the following report, which reflects the highest credit upon Mr. Spurgeon for his wisdom and prudence: "An admirable Institution, good in design, and, if possible, better in execution."

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

In the management of the Orphanage will be found one of its chief attractions, and one which ought to commend its plans to other similar

institutions. The author of a book called "Contrasts" cites the Stockwell School as a specimen of admirable administration, proving that large expenditure in some public institutions does not guarantee thorough satisfaction. In some orphan schools and pauper schools the rate of expense per head is from £23 to £29, whilst in the Stockwell Orphanage, with complete organization and highly satisfactory results in each department, the cost is only £14 10s. per head, inclusive of everything. This is the highest testimonial which could be given of its efficiency. Such a result ought to lead to practical efforts being promptly made for the erection of a similar home for girls.

The cost of the Orphanage at Stockwell, including the land, was some £10,200, all of which is paid, and the premises are free from debt. Mrs. Hillyard's original gift of £20,000 is invested as an endowment; and to that was added in July, 1875, a legacy of £5,000 left by Mr. Matthews. With the wealth of a city like London, can there not be found men or women, or both, who out of their abundance could easily spare as much as would erect and endow to the same extent such a home for girls? The work must be undertaken; it is sure to be done effectually when commenced in earnest.

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

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

proprietors and pupils of a young ladies' school have endeavoured to keep the boys supplied with shirts.

The Orphanage has now existed long enough to form a correct opinion of its merits in every department. About two hundred boys have left the school and entered on the duties of life. The reports which have been received annually from those business men who have taken them have been most gratifying. With few exceptions, those who have left keep up communication with the Home. Summing up these results, a recent report says, "Almost every boy who has gone into a situation has given satisfaction. Where failure has occurred, it has arisen from a craving for the sea, or from the interference of an unwise mother. Some of the lads are in good positions, and command the esteem of their employers."

Nearly all the boys have sent a portion of their first earnings as a donation to the Orphanage, in sums varying from five shillings to twenty, thus manifesting a spirit of gratitude. Some of the letters received from them are read to the boys, and produce on their minds beneficial results. Many of the boys have, before they have left, become decided Christians, and some have made public confession of their faith by baptism. The head master himself was publicly baptized in 1874, and five of the boys joined him in the same act of dedication. Others have become members of Christian churches in the towns and villages where they have gone to reside. One of the first boys converted is now devoting his evenings and Sundays to missionary work in South London, and he is showing so much talent for preaching that he was received into the College in January, 1876. From the mothers Mr. Spurgeon has met with much gratitude, and they have manifested it practically by collecting for the Institution. The widows have brought in a considerable sum to the funds, and thus shown their interest in the work.

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

At Christmas, 1874, the president was presented with a handsomely bound album, containing the portraits of the boys.

Shortly afterwards, early in the year 1875, the Baptist church at Wokingham celebrated its centenary: the pastor joined by his church passed a resolution commending the Stockwell Orphanage to the Baptist denomination for generous help.

The 1875 anniversary of the schools was held at the Orphanage on the pastor's birthday, June 19th, which was preceded by a bazaar. The attendance was so numerous that it was necessary to hold two public meetings to accommodate the large number of persons present. The Earl of Shaftesbury was present, and spoke at both the meetings. The Rev. Archibald G. Brown presided at one meeting, the proceedings being enlivened by the performances of a drum and fife band of boys which the chairman had kindly provided. The contributions at the meetings added £500 to the funds.



## PASTOR SPURGEON IN MIDDLE LIFE.

**T**HE year 1874 presented but few varieties in the life and work of the pastor at the Tabernacle. Of blessings he had many, and of trials not a few; but the work prospered. In May the funds of the Orphanage ran dry, and, as there was urgent need of £100 for each week, earnest efforts were required. On May the 8th all the debts were paid; but the bank was empty. There was urgent pleading with God, and on that very day £400 was sent in, so that the orphans were thereby provided for during another month. In October the funds were exhausted again; and again in answer to prayer and effort, the needed relief came, though the faith of all was tried. At that time the pastor was suffering greatly, both in his person and family; his body was weary with rheumatic pains, the care of a church of 4,800 members rested upon him, the cry of the orphans was heard for bread; in the midst of all his faith failed not; he wrote his assurance that the Lord will provide; and, amongst other kind of help, Messrs. Cory, of Cardiff, sent for the good of the Orphanage £1,000 in paid up shares in their new colliery company.

The annual meetings for prayer in February, the yearly church meeting for reporting the progress of the several agencies at work, and the annual supper in March for the benefit of the College, were each times of refreshing and blessing, in both spiritual and material things. In May the congregation at the Tabernacle had the delightful satisfaction of hearing the Rev. George Müller, of Bristol, preach to them. After carrying on his wonderful Orphan Houses near that city for forty years, he felt constrained to go forth on a preaching pilgrimage, to declare the goodness of God, and to try and stimulate the faith of the Lord's people, and Mr. Spurgeon's church shared in his ministrations. It was a fitting cordial welcome to a man who was the very embodiment of that faith by which Mr. Spurgeon's Orphanage had been erected and maintained hitherto; and Mr. Müller's discourse embodied much of his own personal experience of what God had done by and through him, in erecting Orphan Houses on Ashley Downs, free from debt, in which two thousand children are daily fed, clothed, and educated. To the long record of God's faithful ones, written by the Apostle Paul, must be added what was done by the faith of George Müller and his helpers at Bristol, and by Pastor C. H. Spurgeon and his helpers at Stockwell.

Having had repeated invitations to preach in Bedford, in what is known as the New Bunyan Meeting, Mr. Spurgeon visited that place in the summer of 1874, but the crowds which assembled to hear him made



it impossible for any building for public worship to hold them. Mr. Howard kindly met the people's wants, and had one of his large implement sheds fitted up for worship, and there the voice of praise and prayer ascended to heaven from thousands of voices. It was a memorable day for Bedford, which the people will not let pass from their recollection. At Bedford he was introduced to the Rev. Mark Guy Pearse, Wesleyan minister, who has since occupied Mr. Spurgeon's pulpit at the Tabernacle on the Sabbath morning, when the Pastor was unwell.

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

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

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

When Mr. Spurgeon had completed his pastorate of twenty-one years, some of his friends resolved to mark their sense of the value of his services by a present of £2,000 and a written memorial. On hearing of what was contemplated, the pastor declined the financial part of the proposal, suggesting that their gifts find their way to the collection at the college supper.

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

Photographs of the testimonial were taken by Mr. Marshall, of Crown-buildings, Queen Victoria-street, and many friends were glad to secure

an exact facsimile of what was at once a work of art and an enduring and deserved testimony of affection.

The voice of praise and thanksgiving was the foremost theme in *The Sword and the Trowel* for January, 1875. The subject was "Twenty Years of Published Sermons." In an article extending to several pages the editor gives a brief history of the way his sermons first began to appear in print, followed by a glance at their continuance during a period of twenty years. He informs us that as a youth he took great delight in reading the sermons of Joseph Irons as they appeared, and he even then conceived in his heart that one day he might have a penny pulpit of his own. The dream of his boyhood has been realised, and he gratefully acknowledges the hand of God in permitting him to issue one sermon at the least every week, without a single omission, for the last twenty years. This is a privilege and an honour no other man in England has attained to; and the plain, homely, earnest manner in which the gospel has been set forth in those sermons is set down by the author as the chief cause of their continuance. Commencing with a sale of from one to two thousand weekly, they rapidly increased till the sale was ten thousand each issue. For many years past the sermons have maintained a steady and permanent sale of twenty-five thousand copies. There is a two-fold marvel connected with these sermons: the first is that the work should have been continued so many years without interruption; the second, that the sale should have steadily progressed till they had reached so large a weekly demand, and that it has been so many years maintained at that large number. Many interesting circumstances connected with the sermons are worthy of a permanent record, but the design of the present work will exclude such details. The sermons are to be found in every country in the world, and at a moderate computation they have been read during the past twenty years by millions of people. Many hundreds of persons have been converted by their perusal, and thousands of preachers have at various times either used them in their published form, or adapted them to the congregations to which they have been preached by others than their author. One Scotch minister translates the sermons into Gaelic, and from his Gaelic translates them back into English, by which process he preserves the thoughts, but totally loses the phraseology used by Mr. Spurgeon; and in that form preaches or reads them to his people as his own.

One gentleman had copies handsomely bound and presented to every crowned head in Europe. A smaller volume was sent, post free, to every student in all the English Universities, and all the members of both houses of parliament. That gentleman alone gave away 250,000 copies of the sermons, and himself superintended their distribution.

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

However jubilant was the tone of the first article in the January magazine, it was not long before the pastor realised how uncertain were earthly joys, and how soon they are mixed with sorrows. Naturally buoyant in spirit, he was preparing to escape from the severe cold of January by a visit to Mentone, where a genial sun shines all the year

round. Gout and rheumatic pains came on with such rapidity and severity that removal from home was impossible. His condition will be best described in his own words:—

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Just at that period Messrs. Moody and Sankey were in the midst of their evangelistic labours in London, and Mr. Spurgeon cheerfully and heartily encouraged those earnest men of God. Early in May he preached for Mr. Moody one Friday evening to ten thousand people in Bow-road Hall, on the healing of the deaf and dumb man, as recorded in Mark vii. 24—27. The sermon occupied nearly an hour in delivery, and was simple, natural, practical, and was listened to with the attention of persons who seemed to be listening for life. Few of those who were present, and who admired the power of his voice, and the vigour of his thoughts, knew that he had spoken for two hours that afternoon to the students of his College.

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

The work of Mrs. Bartlett at the Tabernacle has been one of the greatest blessings of the place. That lady, born in the country in 1807, was converted to God at the age of twelve, and immediately she began to persuade others around her to give their hearts to God. She became an earnest and devoted praying teacher in the Sunday-school, and soon saw some of the children turning to God. She then began to visit the villages around her house, and was the means of doing much good in that way. After her marriage, and with a family claiming her attention, she came to London, and, attending New Park-street Chapel, good

deacon Olney invited her, in 1859, to take charge of the senior class connected with the Sunday-school, which had then only three in attendance. Suffering from heart disease, she consented to take the class for only one month, during which time it had increased to fourteen. Supported in her work, her strong faith in God led her to say, "God has given me strength for one month, he will surely give me strength for another." In 1861, when the new Tabernacle was opened, the class had increased to fifty. Such was the influence of her earnest, loving words on the young women, that soon they numbered a hundred, then two and three, and in a short time five hundred attended her services every Sabbath day, and many of them came also on Tuesday and Friday; whilst at her own house, which Mr. Spurgeon called the "House of Mercy," she was constantly receiving anxious enquirers after salvation. The blessing of God so abundantly rested upon her labours that fully one hundred of her members joined the church annually. They generously collected and gave hundreds of pounds to the funds of the Pastors' College, besides contributing to relieve the wants of the poor in the locality. *The Sword and the Trowel* for March, 1866, contains an interesting outline of Mrs. Bartlett's labours.

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

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

On another occasion Dr. Brock and Mr. Spurgeon were dining together at the mansion of a beloved friend in Regent's Park, when the Orphanage building was in progress, and money was wanted which was not in hand. Mr. Spurgeon, suffering from feeble health, still expressed his strong faith of God that the money would come to hand in due time. Just as the dinner was ended the servant entered the room with a telegram from Mr. Blackshaw, announcing that A. B., an unknown donor, had sent £1,000 for the Orphanage. Dr. Brock immediately rose and poured forth his utterances of gratitude in the most joyful manner, and they all united in prayer on their knees to magnify the Lord. Dr. Brock was spokesman to God, and he seemed as pleased as if the money had been left to himself.

About the same time certain newspaper reports published that some

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

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

The annual meeting of the Colportage Association reported that forty-seven men were employed in forty-three districts, and that £4,415 had been received for books supplied by that agency.

The weekly offerings at the Tabernacle for 1875, on behalf of the Pastors' College, were reported to be £1,875.

On March 1st a very lively, loving, and enthusiastic meeting of the collectors was held at the Orphanage, when £200 were paid in, and the orphans sang like cherubs, and looked as bright and cheerful as the morning. The meeting was interesting in other respects, as will be seen by the following extract from *The Sword and the Trowel* :—"The Rev. John Spurgeon, Charles H. Spurgeon, and Thomas Spurgeon—grandfather, father, and son—addressed the meeting. The grandsire spoke of twenty years ago, when C. H. Spurgeon preached at his grandfather's—James Spurgeon—jubilee, and three generations of their family were present on that occasion. He blessed God that as the older generations had gone new ones had arisen.—We all joined in his gratitude, and the more so when the grandson proved by his cool, clear delivery, and lively, warm-hearted manner, that he would worthily sustain the family name."

There was a still more interesting gathering at the Orphanage, on June 20th, when a fête was held to commemorate the anniversary of the pastor's birth-day. The crowds who attended were beyond all precedent, and at the evening meeting, presided over by Sir Henry Havelock, five Spurgeons delivered addresses, namely, the Rev. John Spurgeon, the grandfather ; his two sons, Charles and James Spurgeon ; and Thomas and Charles, the twin sons of Pastor C. H. Spurgeon. Seldom does a man find himself followed in his ministry by two sons and two grandsons, all living to speak at the same meeting. About £500 was contributed that day to the funds of the Orphanage, one friend having sent £42, so as to give a golden token of his esteem for every year of the pastor's life. The pastor recorded afterwards that his right arm and hand would long remember the thousands of hearty salutations he received that day.

It will be recollected that, some twenty-five years ago, an appointment was made with Dr. Angus, of London, to meet a young man at Cambridge, with the intention of arranging for the young man to

become a student of the Baptist College in London. By a very remarkable omission of duty, the college tutor and the young man did not meet on that day, and the young man did not enter a college. Now that young man has a college of his own, in which some of the most able and useful ministers in England have been trained, and about forty new Baptist churches have been raised in London and its suburbs solely by the students sent forth from the Pastors' College. On March, 17th, 1876, Dr. Angus, who still presides over the Regent's Park Baptist College, went over with his students to pay a fraternal visit to the Pastors' College, and a very pleasant half-day was thus spent together. Both students and tutors were hearty in their greetings. The Tabernacle men escorted their guests over the college and rooms at the Tabernacle, and many new acquaintances were made which will likely ripen into enduring friendship when they meet each other on the field of service. The addresses delivered on the occasion were hearty, solid, and well received, and the social and Christian intercourse thus opened will be a blessing to both colleges. Since then, on Friday, December 15th, the Tabernacle tutors and students visited their brethren in the Regent's Park, on which occasion Mr. Spurgeon delivered an address on "Culture," and Dr. Angus on "Go." Mr. Rogers also spoke wisely. The best interests of the Baptist denomination will be served by such unions.

Another form of helpful service at the Tabernacle is an annual gathering of the parents of the children in the Sunday-schools. These schools are conducted with so much energy, wisdom, and efficiency, that they have no need to resort to treats and prizes to induce the children to come. They attend in multitudes; and the money usually spent in treats and prizes is devoted to give the parents of the children a free tea, which brings them into personal contact with Mr. Spurgeon and the teachers, and so a mutual sympathy and affection is awakened and sustained, and the parents help the teachers in their work.

The Twelfth Annual Conference of the Pastors' College was held during the week commencing on Monday, April 3rd. It was a time of blessing and encouragement to all who took part in the proceedings. The inaugural address of Mr. Spurgeon, based upon the clause in the creed, "I believe in the Holy Ghost," was able, lucid, and instructive. During the Conference Mr. Phillips gave his annual supper, at which the spontaneous gifts to the College reached £2,000. In writing brief notes of that conference Mr. Spurgeon adds, "Our brain refuses to dictate more. If our friends would earnestly ask for us more health and more grace we should be deeply grateful."

Deeply did Mr. Spurgeon feel the need of prayer at that time; for the illness which he felt coming on lasted for three months, and was to him and to his church a heavy loss and severe trial. The patient pastor poured forth his complaint in the first article in his magazine for May, under the title—"Laid Aside. Why?" In this touching fragment from his pen he remarks: "When the Lord is using a man for his glory it is singular that he should all of a sudden smite him down, and suspend his usefulness. It must be right, but the reason for it does not lie near the surface. How is it that a heart eager for the welfare of men and the glory of God should find itself hampered by a sickly frame,

and checked in its utmost usefulness by attacks of painful disease? We may ask the question, if we do so without murmuring; but who shall answer it for us? We are content to leave a thousand mysteries unsolved rather than tolerate a single doubt as to the wisdom and goodness of our heavenly Father."

Throughout the months of April and May Mr. Spurgeon was confined by sickness to his chamber; but by the end of June he was able to preach on the Lord's-day. He had then to make the announcement that for months to come the Sunday service, in addition to his pressing home duties, was all that he could attempt, and all engagements to preach abroad must stand postponed or cancelled, and no new work of any sort undertaken.

On Lord's-day evening, July 16th, the great Tabernacle was deserted by its regular attendants, by the special desire of Mr. Spurgeon, who wished to throw open the place for a free service to strangers. None of the seat-holders were present, or not more than half-a-dozen, which Mr. Spurgeon considered "splendid discipline, worthy of the best trained army—the discipline of love": and he very sincerely thanked the seat-holders for vacating their places so unanimously that the poor might hear the gospel preached to them in comfort, without even a collection. "The Tabernacle was as full as a barrel packed with herrings," and the heat was intense. Much prayer was offered at various meetings; and the officers had a baptism of fire from heaven in offering prayer before the doors were opened. They also held three prayer-meetings and an out-door service to the crowds who could not get within the building. Much good was done, many sinners were awakened, and additions to the church followed. The experiment was repeated on Sunday, October 22nd, three months afterwards; and again on Sunday, May 13th in the present year, 1877, during the May meetings. The object of these evangelistic services was to lay hold of those who inhabit a world outside the church, ignoring the existence of church or chapel, or even of religion itself. Of these there are multitudes amongst both rich and poor. After each service a number of enquirers came forward, desiring further instruction in matters concerning salvation.

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

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

Seeking by all possible means to rescue the perishing, a series of



special revival services were commenced in the Tabernacle on Monday, October 30th, conducted by the College students, hoping thereby to benefit the church, which so greatly promotes the usefulness of the College by its weekly offerings. The services were only intended for one week, but the meetings were all seasons of so much blessing that they were continued to November 10th. Various means were used for gathering in the people to hear the word, and occasionally a band of students resorted to the "highways," and by singing and preaching compelled them to come in. Deep earnestness characterized both speakers and hearers, and on every evening the young brethren had to rejoice over some sinners brought to repentance. On Thursday afternoon, Nov. 2nd, the students held a fellowship meeting to seek a blessing on themselves and their work. In the evening Mr. Spurgeon preached to them from John v. 40. The Master was manifestly present, and all were blessed by the service. There were one hundred and ten students in the College when they reassembled in the autumn.

On Tuesday, December 12th, Mr. Spurgeon was at Nottingham, and preached two of the opening sermons in Mr. Silverton's new chapel, which he has appropriately named Exeter Hall. It is a building of great capacity, substantial, and elegant. It seats 2,000 people, yet cost only £4,700, apart from the site. Mr. Spurgeon said of the services of that day, "The giving and the hearing were of the most enthusiastic order, the amount contributed being £500." Conversions and baptisms have taken place since then as evidence that God is blessing the work carried on there.

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

The annual meeting of the College evening classes was held at the Tabernacle on December 22nd. By means of these classes two hundred men who are working all day receive such educational advantages as they require, and they do not forget the Lord's work. Mr. Spurgeon was too ill to be present, but his two sons did their best to make up for his absence.

During the year no less than thirty-three students have been appointed to churches, four of whom have gone into the work abroad; namely, one to Australia, one to New Zealand, one to the Cape of Good Hope, and one to Basle, Switzerland. Very gratifying reports have already been received from many of those new curates of church work. It is deserving of record, that no less than sixty Baptist churches in and around London have been, or now are, under the pastoral care of students from the Pastors' College. More than half the number are

entirely new churches raised out of the world, and amongst them are some of the largest and most prosperous churches in the denomination. About twenty students were sent out during the first half of the year 1877.

Before closing the record of the year 1876, it is proper to make mention of what is now known as Mrs. Spurgeon's "Book Fund." Illness confines this lady to her home, but there she has set herself the voluntary but generous task of helping poor ministers in all parts of the land with free gifts of valuable books such as will help them in their ministerial work. By Mrs. Spurgeon's gifts, and aided by the spontaneous contributions of kind friends, over £2,000 have been spent by these free gifts to needy ministers, chiefly of the Baptist denomination, but the list includes also Independents, Wesleyans, Primitive Methodists, some clergymen, and one or two "Brethren." Up to Midsummer, 1877, there had been distributed :—

|                             | Vols. |                               | Vols. |
|-----------------------------|-------|-------------------------------|-------|
| Treasury of David ... ..    | 2,232 | Haldane's Inspiration of      |       |
| Pastor Spurgeon's Sermons   | 1,738 | Scripture ... ..              | 70    |
| Lectures to my Students ... | 1,950 | Bardsley's Illustrative Texts | 50    |
| Various Works ... ..        | 1,259 | Hodge on the Romans... ..     | 50    |
| Jukes on the Offerings ...  | 312   | Origin and History of the New |       |
| Dr. Carson's Works... ..    | 227   | Testament ... ..              | 50    |
| Beeton's Bible Dictionary   | 100   | Thomas Houston's Doctrine     |       |
| Haldane on the Atonement    | 50    | and Practical Works ... ..    | 30    |

The hundreds of recipients of this bounty have manifested so much gratitude that the fund is sustained, and the letters have at the same time revealed a state of need amongst ministers which would scarcely be credited. The origin of the work was an inspiration from heaven, and the divine blessing has very bountifully rested upon it throughout. It is rapidly extending, and if the work is encouraged it will be a permanent blessing to the Church.

The first service of more than ordinary importance held in the Tabernacle in 1877 was the Annual Meeting of the College, on January 2nd. The ladies gave a tea on the occasion, and the pastor gave them "such a lecture as his weary brain could concoct." It was reported that there were three hundred and eighty ministers at work in the harvest field who were trained in the College. It is indeed a cause of rejoicing that God has so abundantly prospered that work.

On January 10th the Annual Church Meeting was held. The statistics reported showed that during the previous year 474 new members had been added, 328 had removed, and the net increase was 146, the total membership being 4,938. Is there a larger church membership anywhere in Christendom? On the evening of January 5th three friends gave a meat tea at the Tabernacle to 450 hard working men, such as coalheavers. The evening was made a very pleasant one by music and addresses. Mr. Spurgeon expressed his pleasure at meeting so many men in their working dresses, that he might talk to them in workmen's language.

A series of Evangelical Alliance prayer-meetings were held at the Wesleyan Centenary Hall in the City early in January, and on the 9th

Mr. Spurgeon delivered the address on the occasion, which service he thus reported: "There was quite a convocation of Wesleyan ministers, and we are bound to thank them for their hearty reception of their Calvinistic friend."

The incessant duties implied by the outlines of meetings just given overtaxed the pastor's strength, and he was glad on January 22nd to flee away to Mentone, in company with three endeared friends. He wrote a graphic account of his journey for *The Sword and the Trowel*, and in February he wrote to say—"My health is restored, my heart is no longer heavy, my spirits are revived, and I hope to return greatly refreshed." On reaching Marseilles, on his return home, the extreme cold of the *mistral* in February brought on a renewed attack of illness which kept him longer from home. The pen of an M.D. took a prejudiced view of those repeated attacks of illness, which Mr. Spurgeon judiciously replied to in the "Notes" in his magazine for April.

The thirteenth annual meeting and conference of the College was held on April 12th, and was continued for several days. The president delivered a long and able inaugural address, in which he took a review of the forms of religious thought prevailing at the present time, and warned his hearers against those which were so manifestly perilous. The address, with some interesting extracts from letters, occupies some thirty pages of his magazine.

On May-day Mr. Spurgeon preached a sermon in the Regent's Park chapel for his friend Dr. Landels, and in the evening attended a meeting there, at which Sir R. Lush presented to Dr. Landels the sum of £1,000 as an acknowledgment of his untiring and successful labours in trying to raise a fund of £52,000 to be distributed in annuities to poor and aged Baptist ministers. Mr. Spurgeon, in reporting the proceedings in his magazine, said such an act of generosity towards Dr. Landels "served him right."

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

For more than eighty years the annual sermon before the London Missionary Society was preached in Rowland Hill's chapel. The last of the series in the old sanctuary was preached in May, 1876. Henceforward the official sermon is expected to be preached in Christ Church, Westminster-road, and Mr. Spurgeon was selected as the preacher of the first sermon of the new series. In the course of the sermon he said some plain things about preachers who discoursed on subjects which were not the gospel of salvation, and sometimes were even opposed to it. A spirit of controversy followed, as is usual, but Mr. Spurgeon wisely left his critics to entertain their own opinions, unquestioned by himself.

No minister knows better than Mr. Spurgeon the advantages to a

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

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

Our social festivals are always occasions of joy, but how generally do they partake largely of selfishness! Mr. Spurgeon has discovered the way to combine the highest amount of personal happiness with the most extensive benevolence and philanthropy. Who but a man with a large heart and unbounded sympathy could have conceived the plan, and so successfully carried it out, of celebrating the anniversary of his birth by devoting all the gifts which loving friends bestowed to feed the orphan and relieve distress?

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

An open-air meeting was held in the evening on the grass, presided over by Thomas Blake, Esq., M.P., who was ably supported by the Rev. M'Connell Hussey, a neighbouring clergyman, and other friends. In the

calm air Mr. Spurgeon sat on the platform without his hat, when his son Charles was called on to speak. He referred to his father's sufferings from the gout, and added, "there he sits without his hat, but he has a will of his own." Immediately the hat went on; so his own will at once became the will of the multitude, all of whom were his well-wishers. The Pastor himself announced that he had that morning received seventy-one letters of congratulation, all containing help for the orphans, besides which one friend had sent him £43 to tally with the number of his years, and one of the trustees of the institution had sent a similar amount. Mr. Spurgeon commended very highly the management of his brother and Mr. Charlesworth in superintending the Orphanage, and of the working staff he said he could not wish them to be better, as they would then be too good for work on earth, and he assured the meeting that the business of the Orphanage was so well conducted that it gave the President only the minimum of care; and he sincerely thanked the numerous donors who during the day brought in to the treasurer nearly £400. The desirability for the establishment of a similar institution for girls was spoken to by the chairman and others; and it is to be hoped the way will soon be opened for such a work to be commenced.

A very handsome drinking fountain, presented by Mr. B. Vickery to the Orphanage in memory of his wife, was opened on the fête day, and forms an attractive and highly valued ornament in the playground. The generous donor was thanked by the President for the trustees, and abundantly was he thanked by the thirsty boys, who most of all appreciate the gift.

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It may be proper to state that the writer of these pages is alone responsible for their contents, and that Mr. Spurgeon was not acquainted with the details till after they were printed.

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**"THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE: ITS HISTORY AND WORK,"** is the title of a companion volume, recently published by Messrs. PASSMORE & ALABASTER, which should be in the possession of every reader of this life of Mr. Spurgeon. The first portion of the work contains a brief history of the origin of the church worshipping at the Tabernacle, and a biographical sketch of all the Pastors, as well as of two of the former Deacons, and the Co-Pastor. The latter portion of the work sketches the organization and discipline of the church, with notices of the several institutions and agencies which belong to the Tabernacle. It is a valuable and interesting work, and to Pastors and Deacons of country churches will be found very suggestive and useful in extending their own church work. It is illustrated with more than thirty capital portraits and engravings, and may be had for

ONE SHILLING.

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