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THE LIFE AND WORK OF  
**CHARLES H. SPURGEON**

BY REV. WILLIAM H. YARROW

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY JOHN STANFORD HOLME, D. D.

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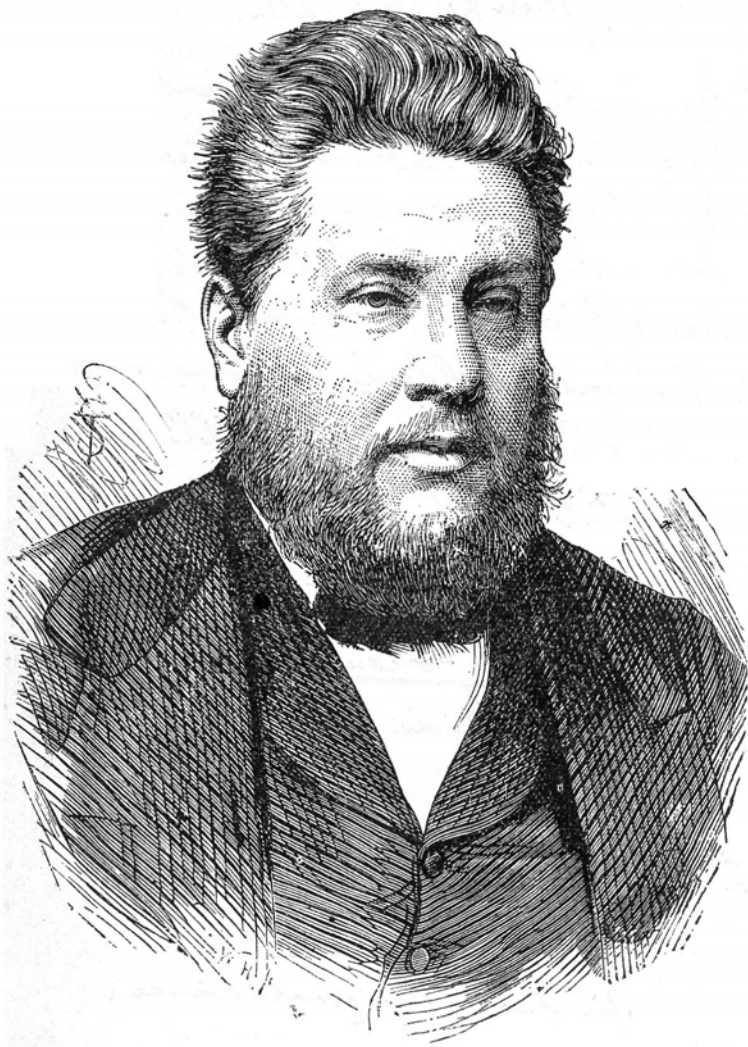
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# THE LIFE AND WORK OF CHARLES H. SPURGEON.\*

BY REV. WILLIAM H. YARROW,  
*Author of "Theology Made Easy," etc.*

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY JOHN STANFORD HOLME, D. D.

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## P R E F A C E .

KNOWING that the lives of the good and useful of all nations cannot fail to benefit the world, I present to the reader a "plain, unvarnished tale" of one who has made himself almost universally known and felt, and of a great religious movement for which all Christians should be grateful.

In doing so I have confined myself to such circumstances and facts as are based on the most reliable authority ; carefully avoiding everything of doubtful character ; so that the reader may rely on all the facts and figures herein stated as being substantially correct.

The numerous extracts from the communications of Mr. Spurgeon are introduced for the purpose of bringing the man himself before the reader in a more vivid manner than could otherwise have been done ; as well as of giving, what I trust will be appreciated, a pleasing variety to the work.

That the perusal of these pages may tend to stir up the latent energies of the Christian public to fresh activities in the cause of truth, and the welfare of our common humanity, is the sincere prayer of

THE AUTHOR.

HAZLETON, PENNSYLVANIA.

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I N T R O D U C T I O N .

MANY of the causes of the wonderful popularity of Mr. Spurgeon are not difficult to discover. In freshness and vigor of thought, in simplicity and purity of language, in grasp of Gospel truth, and in tact and force in its presentation, he is perhaps without a peer in the pulpit.

When, in early life, Mr. Spurgeon commenced his ministry in the New Park Street Church, in London, he quickly filled the old house to overflowing. Soon he attracted the attention of all England. Yet he was regarded by many merely as a brilliant meteor that would soon fade away. But Mr. Spurgeon to-day is a vastly more effective, and even a more brilliant, preacher than he was twenty years ago. He continues to grow in brilliancy, as well as in efficiency, year by year. No one can yet point to the slightest indication of exhaustion in either his faculties or his resources. This, doubtless, is attributable, in a measure, to his industry and well-directed application, as well as to natural ability and great personal piety. But that which seems to distinguish Mr. Spurgeon from all the preachers of his time, and, it may be said, of all time, is the *inexhaustible variety* which characterizes his sermons.

A very striking illustration of this was furnished us in the preparation of

the last volume of the American edition of his works. It was thought desirable to make a very complete index of the whole series. In making up this index of subjects it was necessary to go carefully through the entire fourteen volumes, page by page, and to note the different topics discussed, and the illustrations, and then to arrange them in alphabetic order. It was supposed that much condensation would then be necessary—and possibly elimination of references to like thoughts; but when the work of alphabetical arrangement was done, such was the wonderful variety of subject, of thought, and of illustration, that, in many thousand references, scarcely two subjects, or thoughts, or illustrations, were found exactly to correspond: The preacher is discussing essentially the same familiar truths over and over again. He is presenting the same great Saviour to lost sinners, with what might seem slavish fidelity to the spirit and even to the letter of the written Word; and yet his setting forth of truth, his shades of thought, and his modes of illustration always arrange themselves in new forms and colors, with well nigh the endless variety of the combination and tints of the clouds at setting sun.

Now this inexhaustible variety, this freshness of thought, in Mr. Spurgeon's preaching is, if we mistake not, traceable to the peculiar views which he holds of the Word of God, and to his manner of preparation for the pulpit. It is not his manner to spin his web out of himself. The resources from which he draws are not measured by the strength and the store of his own faculties, but rather by the infinite fullness of the Divine Word. He never preaches from a topic, he always has a text. His text is not a mere motto, but *in it* he finds his sermon. He handles his text with as much apparent reverence and appreciation as if those few words were the only words that God had ever spoken. The text is everything, the topic nothing. The text is the *germ* which furnishes the life, the spirit, and the substance of the discourse. Every sermon has the peculiar flavor and fragrance and color of the divine seed-truth of which it is the growth. The sermon, to his view, lies in the text, like the flower in the heart of the seed: all he has to do is to develop it. Thus, as the Bible is a storehouse of seed-truths inexhaustible and of infinite variety, so Mr. Spurgeon's sermons are never alike. "Every seed yields its fruit after its kind." If he brings you up again and again to the same old truths, it is always on a different side, or in a new light, or with new surroundings.

It must be admitted by every one that Mr. Spurgeon's success as a preacher is without a parallel in the history of the pulpit.

He has now preached to a regular congregation of over six thousand, twice every Sunday, for near twenty years. Over fifteen hundred of these sermons have been regularly published week by week, together with many other of his works, and read by myriads of people in England and the world over. In this country, of some of the volumes of the republica-

tion of the sermons by this foreign preacher there have been sold over a hundred thousand copies, and the aggregate sales of the American edition of his works have reached not less than 500,000 volumes; and yet the people are just as hungry as ever for them. His sermons are yet regularly published in very many of our religious newspapers; they are read everywhere, and everywhere they are found to be adapted to the wants of the people.

Now why is Mr. Spurgeon thus before and above all others *the man for the times in the pulpit*? He stoops to no claptrap, no tomfoolery. He makes no midnight excursions for pulpit topics. He threatens no personal exposures. He wanders off into no new regions in search of new themes for the pulpit. He is the closest Gospel preacher the modern world has ever seen—he “glories only in the cross.”

Now what is the secret of this success other than that he plants the seed-truth of the divine Word, and that only. He waters this seed-truth, and God gives it the increase. He does not take seed from the products of his own last planting, nor of any other man's planting, and plant it over again, but every seed-time he goes to the old store-house for his seed, and planting it in his own age and his own clime, in his own heart and in the hearts of his people, it produces not only fruit after its kind, but adjusts itself to the intelligence and wants of the people of his time: thus he secures endless variety and universal adaptation. While it is the old Gospel, it is PRESENT TRUTH: while it is the “*old, old story*,” it is the newest story to which the men of our time ever listened. It is the BREAD, not the fancy dishes, but “the *bread* of life;” all relish it, all grow upon it. This, as we apprehend it, is the secret of Mr. Spurgeon's variety and freshness and success as a preacher.

JOHN STANFORD HOLME.

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## CHAPTER I.—ANCESTRY.

INTRODUCTORY—JOB SPURGEON—JAMES SPURGEON—SALVATION OAK—  
LONG PASTORATE—PARENTS.

THERE are few names more familiar to the present generation than that of CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON, and there are few men who are more worthy of such world-wide popularity.

We are desirous in these pages of making the reader better acquainted with this remarkable man, believing that such better acquaintance will tend to spiritual as well as mental profit.

In doing so we promise not to weary the patience of our readers with extraneous matter, but to endeavor to present, in a concise form, a sketch of the ancestry, early life, conversion, ministry, and benevolent works of



Pastor Spurgeon, asking them in return to follow us in sympathetic interest, through the varied scenes and facts we may present to their notice.

The name of Spurgeon seems to have been identified with that movement of religious liberty in the seventeenth century under which some of the best men in England suffered imprisonment or banishment, and which led to the voyage of the "Mayflower." In 1677, about the time that the illustrious John Bunyan was lying in prison at Bedford, and the sainted Richard Baxter was suffering under the cruel injustice of the infamous Judge Jeffries, we read of a Job Spurgeon being incarcerated in the Essex County Jail at Chelmsford, enduring for several weeks the scanty fare and hard bed of a felon's prison, esteeming it an honor to suffer persecution for the cause of Christ. From that time to the present the Spurgeons have, through a succession of generations, been identified with the cause of religious freedom.

James Spurgeon, the grandfather of our subject, was a remarkable man. Born at Halstead, Essex, in 1776, he was converted to God in early life and joined the Independent Church while yet a youth. He first devoted his attention to commerce, but the great head of the church had other work for him, and after a short course of training at Hoxton Academy, London, he accepted a call from the Independent Church at Stambourne. Among what are termed the "dissenting denominations" of England pastorates have been sometimes continued over a number of years that are astonishing to our notions and usages. Thus the Independent Church at Stambourne had had three pastors in succession whose united occupancy extended over one hundred and fifty years. James Spurgeon was destined in the providence of God to remain with the same church over fifty years, making but four pastors in two centuries. The strangest fact in connection with this long pastorate is that a little before his decease we find him making this remarkable assertion: "I have not had one hour's unhappiness with my church since I have been over it." Happy pastor! Happy people! Would to God many others could say the same.

One touching incident in this good man's life deserves recording. When a youth he was under deep conviction of sin and anxiously desirous of experiencing a sound conversion. Under these emotions he retired to a wood, and kneeling under a sapling, poured out his soul to God, offering himself on the altar a living sacrifice for Christ. He who has promised comfort to the mourner, and invited the heavy laden to rest, heard and accepted him. Light and peace entered his young heart, and he left the spot rejoicing in the unutterable joy of a new-born soul. The place was marked, and every year, on the anniversary of that spiritual birthday, James would be found at the identical spot, pouring out his soul in thanksgiving and prayer. This practice was kept up for many years, till

the "Salvation Oak" was removed to make way for improvements. The old man used to tell an amusing anecdote in connection with this. The first year after the clearing of the ground, on his annual visit, he saw that the tree was gone, and a field of wheat growing all around. He found the spot as near as he could guess, and kneeling among the waving wheat, prayed as he had been wont for many years past. A farm servant, hearing the voice, went to the place, but as soon as he saw the old man on his knees he ran off in fright to his master, exclaiming, "a crazy man is saying his prayers among the corn."

After a ministry of fifty-three years, all of which were spent with the one church at Stambourne, he entered his eternal rest February 12, 1864, aged 87 years.

John Spurgeon, the father of our subject, was born at the Stambourne parsonage in 1811. He also spent several years of his earlier life in business; but the Spurgeons are a preaching family, and the "dispensation of the gospel" led him at last to devote himself to the work of the ministry. He has held two or three pastorates, one of which was the Congregational Church, Essex Road, London.

Like most other successful ministers, Pastor Spurgeon has had a good mother. One little incident speaks more than volumes of the influence of this holy woman's life. In conversation with an American gentleman her husband related the following: "I had been from home a great deal, trying to build up weak congregations, and felt that I was neglecting the religious training of my own children while I was toiling for the good of others. I returned home with these feelings. I opened the door, and was surprised to find none of the children about the hall. Going quietly upstairs, I heard my wife's voice. She was engaged in prayer with the children, I heard her pray for them one by one by name. She came to Charles, and specially prayed for him, for he was of high spirit and daring temper. I listened till she had ended her prayer, and I felt and said, "Lord I will go on with Thy work. The children will be cared for."

This is the sort of training which makes good and great men. Let Christian mothers generally try to follow this holy example. Pray *with* the little ones, as well as for them. A mother's prayers are never forgotten.

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## CHAPTER II.—CHILDHOOD.

BIRTH PLACE—PRECOCIOUS THEOLOGY—KNILL'S PROPHECY—FIRST BOOKS  
—EARLY EDUCATION.

IN one of the dullest little towns in one of the quietest counties of England, Kelvedon in Essex, the subject of our sketches first saw the light; this memorable event took place June 19, 1834. Spurgeon's birthplace, which

is still standing, is a very humble, antique looking cottage, such as are to be met with in most old-fashioned places. Neither the cottage or the town possess any architectural attractions, and yet many a traveler on the Great Eastern Railroad, which runs by it, may be seen getting off at the Kelvedon depot, with evidently no other business on hand than that of taking a quiet saunter into the little town, to have a look at the house where the great preacher was born, and then pursuing his journey by next train.

When still a very little child Charles was taken to the residence of his grandfather at Stambourne, under whose holy example and precepts his young heart received impressions that have never worn away. It was here that the first signs of that precocity which afterward astonished the world presented themselves. A little incident related by himself many years after in *The Sword and The Trowel* affords an apt illustration of this —

“When I was a very small boy, 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 inquiry. At length the venerable patriarch capitulated at discretion by saying, ‘Well, dear, what is it that puzzles you?’ Now, the child had often seen baskets with very frail bottoms, which in course of wear became bottomless, and allowed the fruit placed therein to fall upon the ground. Here, then, was the puzzle: If the pit aforesaid had no bottom, where would all the people fall 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 the family Bible reading, and had there not been a world of love and license allowed to the inquisitive reader, he would soon have *been deposed from his office*. As it was, the Scriptures were not very badly rendered, and were probably quite as interesting as if they had not been interspersed with original and curious inquiries.”

We commend to heads of families the excellent practice here mentioned, of allowing children to take some part in family worship. In many cases where the whole of this important duty is performed by one person, it resolves itself into a dull, monotonous exercise. Let the children read the Bible lesson in turn, or in alternate verses, and it will interest and fix itself upon the memory and heart.

A somewhat remarkable circumstance occurred during this stay at his grandfather's, which deserves record. Richard Knill, of Chester, a holy man of God, who passed to his reward some time since, was staying at the

parsonage for the purpose of preaching missionary sermons. There was something in the little boy, Charles, that deeply impressed this good man's mind. He, somehow, felt a strong conviction that the germs of future greatness were contained in that young soul. He took him aside; talked kindly with him about Jesus; led him into the shade of the great yew-tree in his grandfather's garden; and there knelt down with him and earnestly prayed for the boy's conversion. It was a sight worthy of the gaze of angels! The experienced minister and the little child, kneeling together, pouring out petitions at the mercy seat!

Such incidents make history. Our ministerial brethren would do well, in their pastoral visits, to notice the little ones; not merely by calling them "smart," "beautiful," etc., by way of making capital with their parents, but by seeking to make impressions of Jesus on their young and tender minds. Such efforts, when performed in a sincere and earnest spirit, are seldom thrown away; and may result in a harvest far richer than we can conceive.

Before leaving, Mr. Knill uttered what has seemed since a remarkable prophecy. We will let Mr. Spurgeon relate it in his own words, which also contain the best explanation we could give: "In after years," he writes, "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 one day, I should like to have him 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 I would learn the hymn in question, and think of what he 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. Fall's first pulpit, in Wootten-under-Edge, the hymn was sung in both places. Did the words of Mr. Knill help to bring about their own fulfillment? I think so. I believed them, and looked forward to the time when I should preach the Word. I felt very powerfully that no unconverted person might dare to enter the ministry. This made me 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."

At this early period of his life the axiom, "the boy is father of the man," was fully verified. He is described as large headed and broad chested, open hearted and truthful ; always taking delight in the services of God's house ; asking questions about the sermons and lessons, which evinced a prematurely developed mind. Sometimes he would mount a hay-stack, or some other prominent position, and there read aloud and preach in his childish way to the juvenile congregation around him, to their amusement or astonishment, if not to their edification.

Most of us will admit that the first books we read as children make the most lasting impressions on our minds, and tend much to shape our thought and character in after life. No pernicious, light sentimental literature was to be found in the Stambourne parsonage. The first books young Spurgeon met with were such works as "Fox's Book of Martyrs," the puritanical writings of Baxter and Howe, and the grand allegories of Bunyan. Such healthy food made good tissue, and gave a decided complexion to his after character and work.

How many great men will be made by the trashy, poisonous novels, or the sickly romances that are now swarming from the press, and which desecrate so many of even our Christian homes at the present day ? Christian fathers and mothers, ponder the matter over well. Do not allow the germs of goodness and greatness in your child's mind to perish in the bud. *Carefully watch the books that enter your house.*

Of his education little need be said here. Four years were spent at a school at Colchester, where he acquired a knowledge of Latin, Greek and French. He learned fast and carried the first prize in all competitions. After being a few months at another school in Maidstone, he was in 1849 placed under the care of Mr. Swindell at Newmarket. Here he pursued the further study of Greek and French and made considerable advance in other branches of knowledge. How he escaped a regular university course we shall narrate after a while.



## CHAPTER III.—CONVERSION.

THE GREAT CHANGE—HEART-YEARNINGS—"LOOK!"—REMINISCENCE—  
CHANGE OF CHURCH RELATIONS—EARLY FRUIT.

CONVERSION! What amazing issues are contained in that single word! The turning point of the soul's destiny. The transition from death to life. Controversy may run high respecting its nature and manifestations, but far above the strife of sects, or the dissertations of theologians, or the quibblings of sophists, we hear the language of the Son of God, "Except a man be born again he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." It is enough. Christ's express declarations are not open questions to the believer.

"Where reason fails with all her powers,  
There faith prevails, and love adores."

Although Charles had indulged in no open wickedness, and was in most respects an exemplary lad, he was nevertheless convinced that a mere human morality was insufficient for his soul's salvation. His young heart yearned for that spiritual communion with God which is the heritage of all who believe in the Son, for that great change by which believers become heirs of God and joint heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ.

We will allow Mr. Spurgeon to tell the story of his conversion in his own words.

"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 preacher here alluded to was Rev. Robert Eaglen, who is still living; and has been for many years a minister of the Primitive Methodist connection; a denomination noted for its zeal in church work, and its success in winning souls to Christ, from the lowest and most neglected ranks of society, by its simple, earnest mode of preaching the gospel.

Fourteen years after this event, Mr. Spurgeon preached in this very chapel, to a crowded audience, taking for his text the same words under which he had received the blessing, Isa., ch. 45, v. 22. In the course of his sermon he said, "These words I heard preached from in this chapel when the Lord converted me." Pointing to a seat on the left hand, under the gallery, he said, "I was sitting in that pew when I was converted." This candid avowal produced, as may be supposed, a thrilling effect upon the congregation.

The Spurgeon family had for generations, indeed for centuries, belonged to the Independent or Congregationalist Church, which as is well known teaches and practices infant baptism. Shortly after Charles's conversion we find him going over to the Baptist Church, and on May 3, 1851, receiving baptism by immersion at the hands of Rev. Mr. Cantlow, at Isleham, near Cambridge.

Of the human agencies which led to this important change in his church relations we know nothing. It appears to have been his own spontaneous act, uninfluenced by any outward pressure ; induced simply by reading and studying the Bible. Mr. Spurgeon has an original, independent mind ; and convictions, if believed to be right, would he carry out at all cost. Conceiving this step to be in accordance with the will and work of God, he broke from the long-standing traditions of his family, and has never since swerved from the principles adopted in his youth.

Years after his mother, on one occasion, remarked, " I always prayed that you might become a Christian, but never that you might be a Baptist." He replied with his usual pleasantry, " God has answered your prayer, mother, with his usual bounty, and given you more than you asked." On the Baptist denomination throughout the world, but especially in England, the accession of Mr. Spurgeon has had an important bearing ; but we wish to look upon him in these pages more in the light of a Christian pastor, the property of the universal church, than as simply a Baptist minister.

Having become himself a partaker of divine grace, he soon evinced the sincerity of his conversion by engaging in such church work as presented itself. His first efforts at public speaking were Sabbath-school addresses, which, however, soon began to attract attention. In connection with the Baptist church at Cambridge, of which he had now become a member, there was an excellent institution called the Lay Preacher's Association, the object of which was to sustain by lay or local preacher's agency, small mission stations in outlying parts of the city and country. Charles, though then only 16 years of age, was accepted as a member of this society and was soon after intrusted with an appointment.

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#### CHAPTER IV.—EARLY LABORS.

##### FIRST SERMON—WATERBEACH—AMUSING INCIDENT, WITH GREAT RESULTS.

THE first sermon ! How few preachers ever forget their maiden attempt to stand before a congregation and preach from a text ! What elaborate preparation, what heart palpitation ! What nervous excitement ! The swimming appearance of the room ; the distorted visages of the audience ; the flying away of prearranged outlines and ideas ; the getting through it

somehow ; the hangdog feeling when it is all over ; all these are life memories with some who are now among the best and most successful ministers of the gospel.

The circumstances connected with Spurgeon's first sermon are remarkable and amusing.

We must ask the reader to imagine a quiet country lane, just outside the University City of Cambridge. Two youths are seen coming along with serious countenances and engaged evidently in important conversation. They are bound for the village of Taversham, about three miles distant, and are going to hold a cottage service there. By some curious misunderstanding each of these youths thought his companion was going to preach, and strange to say neither of them had ever preached before. When the distance was about half completed the younger expressed to his companion a hope that the Lord would bless his labors. "Oh dear," cried the elder, "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 the Lord will bless *you* in *your* preaching." "Nay," said the other, "but I never preached, and I don't know that I could do anything of the sort." Before they arrived at their destination it was settled that the younger was to be the chaplain of the evening. The text he selected was 1 Peter, ii. 7 : "Unto you which believe He is precious." His youthful appearance, with his round jacket and turn-down collar of the period, elicited the sympathy of his rustic congregation ; he succeeded beyond all expectation ; *Charles Haddon Spurgeon was a preacher.*

It was not long before the rural audiences supplied by the Lay Preachers' Association began to perceive that a more than ordinary genius was among them. The boy preacher attracted large crowds at all his appointments, and his natural enthusiasm was aroused as his popularity increased. Among the other places supplied was the old thatch-roofed Baptist Chapel at Waterbeach, a respectable agricultural village five miles north of Cambridge. They being without a pastor, young Spurgeon was invited, at the age of eighteen, to take charge. The engagement was a success. Crowds flocked to the little sanctuary. Quiet-going Waterbeach was waked up. His preaching not only astonished, but it was blessed in the conversion of souls to God. In a few months the membership had risen from forty to one hundred.

It was during the time he was stationed at Waterbeach that one of those singular events occurred, which, while they provoke a smile, yet bear the unmistakable evidence of a providence that shapes our course. We will hear the story in his own words :

"Soon after I had begun, in 1852, to preach the Word in Waterbeach, I was strongly advised, by my father and others, to enter Stepney, now

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

"At last, patience having had her perfect work, the bell was set in motion, and on the arrival of the servant, the waiting young man of eighteen was informed that the doctor had tarried in another room, and could stay no longer, so had gone off by train to London. The stupid girl had given no information to the family that any one called, and he 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.'"

It must not be supposed that we wish for a moment to depreciate the value of a proper educational course for our ministry. On the contrary, we shall see presently that Mr. Spurgeon has himself done more for the training of candidates than most living men. But there are exceptions to every rule; and taking into account the peculiarities of his mental develop-

ment, with all the surroundings, we doubt whether a college training would have benefited either himself or the world. We think we are bound to consider the circumstances above as leadings of divine wisdom, and subsequent events seem to justify this conclusion. In a letter to his mother a short time after, he writes :

"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."

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## CHAPTER V.—SOUTH LONDON.

THE MODERN BABYLON—HORSELEYDOWN—BENJAMIN KEACH—THE PILLORY  
—DR. JOHN GILL—"PUT OUT YOUR TONGUE"—DR. RIPPON—DEACONS  
OUTWITTED—NEW PARK STREET.

LEAVING our youthful pastor in his country charge for a time we will now ask the reader to follow us through other scenes and to accompany us to the British Metropolis.

Perhaps there is no place on this earth where a stranger is made so to feel his own unspeakable littleness as in London, especially during his first visit. With its four millions of inhabitants ; its bewildering labyrinth of crooked streets ; its unceasing roll of every description of vehicles ; its ever-moving crowd of hasty, earnest pedestrians, who all seem to have the business of the world upon their hands, and very little time to do it in ; the stranger feels the steam fairly taken out of him. In no part of the great city is this bewilderment realized to better advantage than in the midst of that noble triumph of masonry that spans the River Thames, known as London Bridge. It is on a broken pier of this structure that Macaulay locates his prophetic New Zealander in the act of sketching therefrom the ruins of St. Paul's. But London Bridge is not broken down yet, and seems competent to stand all the wear and tear of at least the present generation ; while the magnificent dome of Wren's great masterpiece still stands unruined, unimpaired, in full view from the western sidewalk.

But it is of South London we have more particularly to do just now. The "Borough" of Southwark is by no means the most savory, and certainly not the most aristocratic part of the modern Babylon. On emerging from the bridge, on the right is seen a very ancient church, considered as a beautiful specimen of the Early English style of architecture; and on the left the immense depots of the railroads leading to the south and the continent. Behind these are scenes totally unrealizable by the American, whose only ideas of a large city are the squares formed by the rectangular intersection of its strait streets, such as are met with in most of the cities of this country. Narrow streets describing all sorts of curves. By-lanes leading to nowhere. Little alleys ten feet wide, with tall houses on each side, a rickety old pump at the far end, and no throughfare. Big, ugly, bastille looking buildings where all sorts of manufactures are carried on. Here an irregular clump of non-descript structures, covering several acres of ground, with immense piles of casks, and a decided beery odor in the atmosphere, announces the vicinity of Whitbread's Brewery. Escaping from the hop fumes, the pedestrian strikes in an opposite direction to find himself in a worse plight, for soon his olfactory nerve will become forcibly aware that he is approaching the world-famed Bermondsey tan yards. In the southeast of this region is a district known as Horseleydown, formerly spelt Horse-lie-down. Here, in the year 1652, a congregation of Baptists was formed in troublous times. For a season their worship was conducted in houses or large rooms, till about the year 1670, when a commodious meeting house was erected in Goat's Yard Passage.

The pastor at this time was the celebrated Benjamin Keach, who appears to have been one of those rough and ready, earnest, original characters, so well adapted to lead the public mind in times of peril and difficulty. In the year 1664 he had published a simple little book, entitled *The Child's Instructor; or a New and Easy Primer*. Its chief object was to teach the doctrines that infant baptism was unnecessary and unscriptural, and that Christ would personally reign on the earth in the millennium. For this serious crime, as in those days it was considered, he was summoned to the County Assizes at Aylesbury, as a "seditious and schismatic person, evilly and maliciously disposed, and disaffected to his Majesty's government, and to the government of the church."

In these glorious days of religious freedom, and in a country which can boast of its grand Christian institutions, scattered broadcast over every State of the Union, unfettered by the control of the civil government, it is interesting to read of the persecution of past ages; and it should help us to appreciate those privileges for which our fathers suffered. We here subjoin the sentence pronounced by the judge in this case for the edification of the reader:



*Judge.* "Benjamin Keach, you are here convicted for writing, printing, and publishing a seditious and schismatical book, for which the court's judgment is this, and the court doth award : That you shall go to gaol for a fortnight without bail or mainprize ; and the next Saturday to stand upon the pillory at Aylesbury, in the open market, from eleven o'clock till one, with a paper upon your head with this inscription : *For writing, printing, and publishing a schismatical book, entitled The Child's Instructor ; or a New and Easy Primer.* And the next Thursday to stand, in the same manner and for the same time, in the market at Winslow ; and then your book shall be openly burnt before your face by the common hangman, in disgrace of you and your doctrine. And you shall forfeit to the King's majesty the sum of twenty pounds, and shall remain in gaol until you find sureties for your good behaviour, and for your appearance at the next assizes ; then *to renounce your doctrines*, and make such public submission as shall be enjoined you. Take him away, keeper !"

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

And in the pillory he was put. With the true martyr spirit, however, he courageously stood it all. Some friends commiserating him while on the way to the stand, he exclaimed : "The cross is the way to the crown." When his head and hands were made fast in that barbarous old 'machine, which, happily, has long since disappeared from civilized society, he addressed the crowd in language as follows :

"Good people, I am not ashamed to stand here this day, with this paper on my head ! My Lord Jesus was not ashamed ; to suffer on the cross for me ; and it is for his cause that I am made a gazing-stock. Take notice, it is not for any wickedness that I stand here ; but for writing and publishing those truths which the Spirit of the Lord hath revealed in the Holy Scriptures."

Mr. Keach was an author of some celebrity in his day. His "*Key to open Scripture Metaphors*" had a long run of well-merited popularity. But most of his writings, though valuable, are little read now. These quaint old books, which are now looked upon by the mass of readers as grotesque curiosities, served their purpose well in their day, and led up the public mind to a nobler and freer development. Keach's "Key" is still highly valued by scholars.

After worthily discharging the duties of the Horseleydown pastorate for thirty-six years, Benjamin Keach passed to his rest in the year 1704.

The next pastor was the renowned Dr. John Gill, author of a popular commentary on the Old and New Testaments, then a young man of 23 years of age. His pastorate extended over a period of fifty-one years. He was a man of profound learning and a deep thinker. In rabbinical lore he remains without a peer. His works, especially those of a contro-

versial character, brought him into prominent notice, and for many years he was a leading spirit in his denomination, and with the religious world in general. He was a hard worker in his study, though he appears to have spent but little time in pastoral visitation; but most men have their peculiar sphere of usefulness. Dr. Gill's greatness was in authorship, and his pen was mightier than his tongue.

Some interesting anecdotes of this good man are told by his successor, Mr. Spurgeon. We will present the reader with a specimen or two.

An old lady of his flock once called upon him with a grievance. The doctor's neck-bands were too long for her ideas of ministerial humility, and after a long harangue on the sin of pride, she intimated that she had brought her scissors with her, and would be pleased if her dear pastor would allow her to clip them down to her notions of propriety. The doctor not only listened patiently to her lecture, but handed her over the offending white bands for her to operate upon. When she had cut them to her satisfaction, and returned the bibs, it was the doctor's turn. "Now," said he, "my good sister, you must do me a good turn also." "Yes, that I will, doctor; what can it be?" "Well, you have something about you which is a deal too long, and causes me no end of trouble, and I should like to see it shorter." "Indeed, dear sir, I will not hesitate; what is it? here are the scissors, use them as you please." "Come, then," said the sturdy divine, "good sister, *put out your tongue.*"

If all officious meddlers in church work could be so effectually silenced, it would be an excellent thing, and save, in many cases, both pastor and people a great deal of headache and heartache. But then all are not Dr. John Gills.

On another occasion, an old man belonging to his church had got dissatisfied with his preaching, and carried this feeling to such an extent that he met him one Sunday at the foot of the pulpit stairs, exclaiming, in the hearing of all around, "Is this preaching? Is this the great Dr. Gill?" The doctor stretched himself up at full length, and pointing to the pulpit, exclaimed, "Go up and do better—go up and do better." Bystanders were amused, and the disturber silenced.

In 1757 the church removed from the old meeting-house in Goat Alley, to a more commodious building in Carter Lane. The dedicatory sermons were preached by the pastor from Exodus xx. 24.

Years rolled on, and the once youthful minister became in turn an infirm old man, but he stood to his post till the last, and on October 14, 1771, at the age of 74, he died, exclaiming, "O, my Father, my Father?"

John Rippon, D. D., stands next on the noble list of pastors of this church. He began his duties at the age of 20, and continued therein till his death, at the age of 83, making an uninterrupted term of sixty-three years' ministrations to one charge; which added to the fifty-one years of

his predecessor, makes a united period of one hundred and fourteen years for the two pastorates. Dr. Rippon was a writer of some repute, but his name is most prominently associated with a collection of hymns known as "*Rippon's Selection*." It became very extensively used among the dissenting congregations, and was considered the best hymn book that had then been published. In some respects he seems to have been a model pastor, and knew how to rule with firmness and sound judgment. A brother minister, who appears to have had a less tractable flock, asked him this question: "How is it, doctor, that your church is always so peaceful?" "Well," said he, "you see we don't call a church meeting to consult about buying a new broom every time we want one, and we don't entreat every noisy member to make a speech about the price of soap we scrub the floors with." Our readers can ponder this over and draw their own inference therefrom.

We find him, on one occasion, outwitting his deacons in a rather amusing manner. He had proposed the erection and founding of some almshouses and schools, but failed to arouse the enthusiasm or gain the consent of the deacons. They staggered at the expense and feared financial embarrassment. The doctor's patience was at last exhausted, and he declared that the money could be raised, and should be. He gave them the challenge that he would go out on the next Monday and collect \$2,500, or give up the project. It was agreed. On the Monday evening the deacons were on time at their meeting. "Well, brethren," said Rippon, "I have succeeded in collecting \$1,200; that is most encouraging, is it not?" "But," said they, "you said you would get \$2,500 or drop the project." "By all means," said he, "and I mean to keep my word, too, for there is \$4,000 which the friends gave me almost without asking, and the rest is nearly all promised." The officials expressed their joy and readiness to meet their pastor to arrange for the expenditure of the funds. "No, no, my brethren," said the doctor, "I shall not need your services. I have done the work without you; you want to have your say in it to hinder me still; but neither you nor any other deacons shall plague a minister about this business. So, brethren, you can attend to something else." He stuck to his decision most unflinchingly, and had a clause inserted in the trust-deed giving the minister the right of electing pensioners, "*no deacon interfering*."

In the year 1830, the Carter Lane Sanctuary had to come down to make way for city improvements. It had served the purpose of its erection seventy-three years, but was now doomed to succumb to the advancement of the times. A site was fixed upon in New Park Street, one of the most unlikely that could be imagined. The great brewery, several foundries, vinegar works, etc., were all around; the population in the near vicinity of a low, squalid character; while in the rear the River Thames would

sometimes complete the dreariness of the scene by overflowing its banks, rendering the pathway almost impassable with "London mud." Here, however, the new temple was erected, and dedicated to the service of God in 1833. Three years after this good Dr. Rippon passed away to the heavenly temple. His long ministry of sixty-three years had been a signal success throughout, and many, through his faithful ministrations, were led to the Saviour.

Three comparatively short pastorates followed in succession, which brings us to the autumn of 1853, when the church was without a pastor and looking around for a suitable candidate.

The prospects of the New Park Street Baptist Church at this time were anything but cheering. The want of a suitable pastor had begun to make sad havoc in the number of the congregation and membership. The Church that had been a fountain of light and power for two centuries, that had at times been the leading Church of its denomination in London; seemed now expiring. Empty pews and an empty treasury had begun to dispirit the few adherents who were left. Little, however, did these faithful few dream of the bright and golden days in store for them in the near future; days of prosperity and revival glory that would make their church renowned all over the world, and give it a prominent place in history for all time. "The darkest part of night is just before the dawn of day." "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." We write this for the encouragement of any who may be struggling in behalf of a Church in difficulties; holding up against discouragements; deserted by those who should help. Never give up. While there is a plank left hold on. The world cannot afford to lose one of its religious institutions, however weak. Have faith in God and light and victory will come out at last.

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## CHAPTER VI.

COMING TO LONDON—THE NEW PASTOR—TURNING OF THE TIDE—IMMENSE POPULARITY—ENLARGED BORDERS—EXETER HALL.

"WHAT great events from trifling causes spring." So says the moralist. To the enlightened Christian, however, who believes in that Divine Providence that watches the sparrow on the wing, and that numbers the very hairs of our heads, nothing that God does is trifling. It is astonishing, however, to note what apparently unimportant events are sometimes overruled to bring about the most astounding events. An Isaac Newton sitting under a tree, and seeing an apple drop at his feet, was one of the most ordinary circumstances that could happen; and yet it started that mighty

chain of thought that culminated in the discovery of the law of gravitation. Little James Watt watching his mother's tea-kettle, and noticing the steam lifting up the lid, was a childish affair, yet it led to that wonderful series of scientific discoveries and mechanical contrivances by which to-day oceans are traversed by our floating palaces, and continents belted by our iron highways.

It was customary in the city of Cambridge to hold an anniversary celebration of its Sunday-schools, in a united form. At this anniversary in 1853, the young pastor of Waterbeach was asked to deliver an address. A gentleman was present from the neighborhood of London, on whose mind the speech of the speaker made a deep and lasting impression. A short time after, this gentleman met one of the deacons of New Park Street. A conversation took place on the condition of affairs, the deacon giving his friend a gloomy picture of the situation. The gentleman then gave his friend the deacon an account of the meeting he had attended at Cambridge, and suggested the idea of his inviting the young man to preach for them. The interview closed, nothing seemed to come of it. Shortly after, however, they happened to meet again, when the deplorable condition of the church was once more the subject of conversation. Again the young man at Cambridge was alluded to, and this time to some effect. The good deacon consulted with his good brother deacons, and ultimately it was resolved to send an invitation to C. H. Spurgeon to come to London, and supply their pulpit for *one Sunday*.

Mr. Spurgeon's first appearance in a London pulpit was not a very encouraging affair. The building had seats for twelve hundred; the congregation did not number two hundred. His slender audience were surprised at his youthful appearance, for he had but just completed his nineteenth year. The text was James i. 17. The sermon was with power, and delivered in a free, unfettered manner that surprised all who heard it. The congregation were taken aback, but divided in sentiment. Some thought he would just suit them; others thought it an absurdity to talk of placing such a stripling in the pulpit once occupied by the great Dr. Rippon; all went away talking about him. The result was a large increase in the evening congregation, when he preached again from "They are without fault before the throne of God." A profound impression was made, and an engagement entered into to supply for three Sundays in January, 1854. Before the third of these Sundays arrived he received an invitation to enter on a six months' probation for the pastorate, dated January 25. The reply accepting this offer is a model worthy of perusal, and we have pleasure in presenting it to the reader.

"NO. 60 PARK STREET, CAMBRIDGE, }  
January 27, 1854. }

"TO JAMES LOW, Esq.,  
"MY DEAR SIR.—I cannot help feeling intense gratification at the unanimity of the church at New Park Street, in relation to their invitation

to me. Had I been uncomfortable in my present situation, I should have felt unmixed pleasure at the prospect Providence seems to open up before me ; but having a devoted and loving people, I feel I know not how.

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

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

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

"Perhaps this is not business-like—I do not know ; but this is the course I should prefer, if it would be agreeable to the church. Enthusiasm and popularity are often the 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,

C. H. SPURGEON.

The six months' probation was never completed in the strict sense. Before the time had half expired the church had become unanimous in its desire for a permanent engagement, and a formal invitation was tendered him to accept the pastorate. This he replied to in the following letter, which reflects equal credit with the first :—

"75 DOVER ROAD, BOROUGH, }  
April 28, 1854. }

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

"DEARLY BELOVED IN CHRIST JESUS,—

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

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

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

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

I ask your co-operation in every good work ; in visiting the sick, in bringing in inquirers, and in mutual edification.

"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,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

It was not long before a new state of affairs, altogether unprecedented in the history of New Park Street, was the order of the day. The empty seats rapidly filled ; then every inch of standing room was occupied, and crowds



*BRIMSTONE AND TREACLE.*  
A POPULAR CARICATURE OF SPURGEON.

failed to gain admittance. London was moved. The name of Spurgeon became the popular theme of conversation, and thousands ascertained the whereabouts of New Park Street who had previously been in total oblivion of its existence.

Nor was this an empty excitement, the evanescent, nine-days' wonder of a curiosity-hunting crowd. The religious fervor was deep and genuine ; conversions, some of them of a very remarkable character, were of common occurrence, and while crowds flocked from all parts to the sanctuary, the church itself grew and multiplied daily.

The secular press soon had to notice the new popular preacher ; the



dailies of London devoted leading articles to him ; *Punch* and other comic papers favored him with ridiculous caricatures. Some of these newspaper notices were scurrilous and defamatory, some laudatory, but all helped to increase the popularity of the boy preacher, and intensify public curiosity.

It now became a question of serious importance how to provide room for the ever increasing number who were anxious to hear. One Sunday evening when the crowd was unusually dense, and the temperature almost unbearable, the preacher exclaimed, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, and by faith this wall at the back shall come down too." When the



"CATCH HIM ALIVE O."

A POPULAR CARICATURE OF SPURGEON.

service was over an ancient deacon accosted him with the remark, "Let us never hear of that again." "What do you mean?" said the preacher, "you will hear no more about it *when it is done*, and therefore the sooner you set about it the better."

The summer of 1854 will long be remembered for the frightful scourge of Asiatic cholera with which the great city was visited. The black flag could be seen stretched across streets to warn strangers of the close proximity of plague-stricken dwellings. On all sides there was anxious foreboding,

sorrow; or bereavement. The young pastor's services were eagerly sought for, his time and strength taxed to their utmost, but he discharged the duties of the emergency with a true and manly courage. A paragraph from his *Treasury of David*, Psalm xci., most graphically describes this trying period.

"In the year 1854, when I had scarcely been in London twelve months, the neighborhood in which I labored was visited by Asiatic cholera, and my congregation suffered from its inroads. Family after family summoned me to the bedsides of the smitten, and almost every day I was called to visit the grave. I gave myself up with youthful ardor to the visitation of the sick, and was sent for from all corners of the district by persons of all ranks and religions. I became weary in body and sick at heart. My friends seemed falling one by one, and I felt or fancied that I was sickening like those around me. A little more work and weeping would have laid me low among the rest. I felt that my burden was heavier than I could bear, and I was ready to sink under it. As God would have it, I was returning mournfully home from a funeral, when my curiosity led me to read a paper which was wafered up in a shoemaker's window in the Dover road. It did not look like a trade announcement, nor was it; for it bore in a good bold handwriting these words:—'*Because thou hast made the Lord, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation, there shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.*' The effect upon my heart was immediate. Faith appropriated the passage as her own. I felt secure, refreshed, girt with immortality. I went on with my visitation of the dying in a calm and peaceful spirit; I felt no fear of evil, and I suffered no harm. The Providence which moved the tradesman to place those verses in his window I gratefully acknowledge, and in the remembrance of its marvelous power I adore the Lord my God."

It was now fully decided not only to take the end wall out, but the side also, and during the period these alterations were being effected, the services were conducted in Exeter Hall, February 11 to May 27, 1855.

Exeter Hall is well known to most visitors to London. It is a capacious room capable of seating about 3,000 persons, and is chiefly used for the anniversaries of missionary and other religious societies. The month of May is the great Exeter Hall season. The "May meetings" are an institution peculiar to London; most of the large religious and benevolent societies having their annual gatherings there. Visitors from all parts of the world are gathered together for "the feast of reason and the flow of soul."

During the few weeks of Mr. Spurgeon's occupancy, the spacious hall was crowded. The sermons preached there were printed and scattered far and wide, so that when the congregation assembled once more in New Park Street, enlarged though it was, they found themselves worse off than ever. The building at every service was crowded to excess, and hundreds failed to gain admission.

On June 19, 1855, he attained his majority. For a young man on his twenty-first birthday to find himself the most popular preacher in the

country, would have been a severe test to the humility and stability of some. But his heart and soul were dedicated to Christ, and giving the glory of his popularity and usefulness to the Bestower of all good, he was sustained in return by Him who has said, "Them that honor me, I will honor." The event was celebrated by a sermon which was printed, with a portrait of the preacher, under the title of "Pictures of Life and Birthday Reflections."

An American quarterly, three years subsequently to this, thus describes him as he appeared at the commencement of his work in London :—

"He was unpracticed in either the art of oratory or of preaching, his public efforts having consisted of addresses before Sunday-schools, and a very brief but successful pastorate over an obscure Baptist church at Waterbeach. In personal appearance he was not prepossessing ; in style he was plain, practical, simple ; in manner, rude, bold, egotistical, approaching to the bigoted ; in theology, a deep-dyed Calvinist ; in church relations, an uncompromising Baptist. We could scarcely imagine a more unpromising list of qualifications, or rather disqualifications, for public favor."

Such an impartial delineation only makes the uninterrupted success and achievements of the last quarter of a century the more remarkable.

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## CHAPTER VII.

APOSTOLIC WORK—MARRIAGE—SURREY MUSIC HALL—"ROOM, STILL ROOM!"

In July, 1855, Mr. Spurgeon spent a short vacation of hard work in Scotland, where, his fame having preceded him, large crowds gathered to hear him. In one or two places huge wooden structures were specially erected to accommodate the multitudes.

On the 4th of September of the same year, he held a remarkable open air service on a common at Hackney, in the northeast of London. Fully 12,000 were computed to be present in a compact mass. The effect of this sermon appears to have been marvelous. Over one hundred souls acknowledged it as the means of their conversion. The following pathetic account of his own conversion, with which he closed his discourse, had an effect upon the audience almost indescribable.

"I can remember," said he, "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 transgression 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 appear to hear me, and I know 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 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 for myself ; but I found that if I looked, Christ would 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."

There is something truly apostolical in these recitals of spiritual experience. We are reminded of the zealous persecutor on his way to Damascus ; of the bright light and the voice from heaven arresting him in his career ; of the blindness succeeded by spiritual as well as corporeal light. In all his subsequent changing scenes and travels up and down, Paul never forgot that memorable journey, and never tired of telling the story of his conversion. Would not our pulpits in general be more powerful if a little more of this style of oratory were introduced ? We want something that will not only instruct the head, but set in motion the hidden springs of our emotional nature, and touch the hearts and souls of men. Preachers who have such an experience and never tell it miss a golden opportunity. Preachers who have no Christian experience are cumberers of the ground.

On the 8th of January, 1856, Mr. Spurgeon entered into the bonds of matrimony with Miss Susannah Thompson, daughter of Mr. R. Thompson, of London. The ceremony was performed by the late venerable Alexander Fletcher. The union has been a happy one, though marred by the painful affliction of Mrs. Spurgeon for many years past. Twin boys are the only offspring of this union. The fact of their birth was announced by Mr. Spurgeon to his congregation on the following Sunday ; he facetiously concluding his remarks by quoting a well-known couplet of Dr. Watts :—

"Not more than others I deserve,  
But God has given me more."

"Room, room !" was still the cry. Some had prophesied for the youthful orator a short-lived popularity. Profound philosophical remarks were made about precocity ; about sky-rockets coming down as fast as they go up, &c. But these prophets of evil were doomed to disappointment, and

it became evident that something must be done to meet the increasing demand for accommodation.

In the emergency a step was taken which at the time startled the English religious world. An immense concert hall had been erected in the Royal Surrey Gardens for the accommodation chiefly of Julidus' monster band. This was engaged in October, 1856, for preaching on Sunday evenings. It was a bold step. Some admired the enterprise of the promoters, many condemned it as a religious desecration. To preach Christ in a theater! To sing the songs of Zion on the Sabbath, in a place where secular songs had been sung all the week!

How strange these people had never pondered over our Lord's severe castigation of the ruler of the Capernaum synagogue, who objected to the woman bowed together for eighteen years being straightened out on the Sabbath. It is lawful to heal on the Sabbath Day. The preaching of the cross to perishing sinners is in order anywhere, wherever people can be got together to hear it, and many such extraordinary movements must take place before the fullness of the Gentiles shall be gathered in.

It was an initial movement, but the effect was soon felt throughout the land, in fact in many parts of Christendom. Attempts were made in all directions to bring the masses under the influence of the gospel. Many of the theaters of London, even those in the lowest localities, were engaged for Sunday services, and thousands heard for the first time of a Saviour who could save to the uttermost. The Day of Judgment alone will reveal the good that has been accomplished by these special services to the neglected and the forgotten, but enough is actually known to justify the movement.

The commencement of the services in the Surrey Gardens was destined to be marked by a fearful catastrophe. We will give the account as recorded in the church book (which may be relied on as faithful) of this sad event, which caused such a sensation and variety of comment at the time :—

"Lord's-day, October 19, 1856. On the evening of this day, in accordance with the resolution passed at the church meeting, October 6, the church and congregation assembled to hear our pastor in the Music Hall of the Royal Surrey Gardens. A very large number of persons (about 7,000) were assembled on that occasion, and the service was commenced in the usual way, by singing, reading the Scriptures, and prayer. Just, however, after our pastor had commenced his prayer, a disturbance was caused (as it is supposed, by some evil-disposed persons acting in concert), and the whole congregation were seized with a sudden panic. This caused a fearful rush to the doors, particularly from the galleries. Several persons, either in consequence of their heedless haste, or from the extreme pressure of the crowd behind, were thrown down on the stone steps of the north-west staircase, and were trampled on by the crowd pressing upon them.

The lamentable result was that seven persons lost their lives, and twenty-eight were removed to the hospitals seriously bruised and injured. Our pastor not being aware that any loss of life had occurred, continued in the pulpit, endeavoring by every means in his power to alleviate the fear of the people, and was successful to a very considerable extent. In attempting to renew the service, it was found that the people were too excited to listen to him, and the service was closed, and the people who remained dispersed quietly. This lamentable circumstance produced very serious effects on the nervous system of our pastor. He was entirely prostrated for some days, and compelled to relinquish his preaching engagements. Through the great mercy of our heavenly Father, he was, however, restored so as to be able to occupy the pulpit in our own chapel on Sunday, October 31, and gradually recovered his wonted health and vigor. 'The Lord's name be praised!'

"The church desire to note this event in their minutes, and to record their devout thankfulness to God that in this sad calamity the lives of their beloved pastor, the deacons, and members were all preserved; and also with the hope that our heavenly Father from this seeming evil may produce the greatest amount of real lasting good."

It was the first dark day of his hitherto unclouded prosperity. It produced a shock to his nervous system from which he never seems to have entirely recovered. The wicked calumnies of the press in commenting on this sad event added severely to the shock and for a time almost prostrated him. But good ultimately came out of the calamity.

The services were changed to the Sunday mornings in order to avoid the crush; but still the crowds came; and the Surrey Gardens Music Hall for three years resounded with the preaching of the cross, and became the birthplace of many souls. These morning services were continued till the opening of the Great Metropolitan Tabernacle, the history of which we shall detail in a subsequent chapter.

On the 7th of October, 1857, Mr. Spurgeon preached in the Crystal Palace at Sydenham. It was a day of national humiliation on account of the Indian mutiny. The audience was one calculated to try the vocal powers of an orator to their utmost limits, but he was equal to the emergency; and it was estimated that more than twenty-three thousand persons heard him distinctly. About \$3,400 were collected from this immense audience, and paid over to the Relief Fund.

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## CHAPTER VIII.—SPURGEON'S SERMONS.

PRESS AND PULPIT—SECOND-HAND SERMONS—BAPTISMAL REGENERATION—  
NUMBER 1500—APPLICATIONS—VOICE—MOTHER TONGUE—LECTURES.

BEFORE beginning the account of the erection of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, we will give the reader a few facts concerning Mr. Spurgeon's sermons, printed and otherwise.

The press is doing in the present day a mighty work in disseminating religious truth. It is also doing much to promote the catholicity of the universal church. "Spurgeon's sermons" are read by thousands in every State of our Union who never will have an opportunity of seeing and hearing for themselves; while the discourses of Talmage and Beecher are read by hundreds of thousands in Europe weekly, a few days after their delivery in Brooklyn. This reciprocity of thought and religious sentiment is working silently but surely among us, and is destined to be a vast power in bringing about the world's grand jubilee, when the universal brotherhood of man shall be proclaimed at the foot of a Saviour's Cross.

Shortly after the commencement of his pastorate at New Park Street, the publisher of the *Penny Pulpit* printed one of his sermons, entitled "Harvest Time," which took with the public and led to the appearance of another in a short time after entitled "God's Providence."

On the first Sunday Mr. Spurgeon preached at New Park Street, he became acquainted with a young man named Joseph Passmore, a member of the church, and a printer by trade. The friendship thus commenced has never been broken. Mr. Passmore has done much to increase the popularity and usefulness of Mr. Spurgeon, as also Mr. Spurgeon's popularity has no doubt in return benefited Mr. Passmore. An engagement was made for printing one of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons every week, commencing with the year 1855. This has been continued uninterruptedly for a quarter of a century, and their average sale has for some time been 25,000 weekly. This of course is in addition to the numerous sermons of his that are constantly being printed in religious newspapers throughout the world.

The good accomplished by the diffusion of these sermons is strikingly manifest by the letters Mr. Spurgeon has been receiving from their first publication until the present time; many having been received in a single week from persons at a distance acknowledging the spiritual benefit derived from their perusal.

This is another mode by which Spurgeon's sermons have been also brought before the public, though perhaps not so honorable. Many ministers have not scrupled to treat their hearers with a *hash* in the shape of a sermon of the great preachers delivered as their own composition. The practice is not a commendable one by any means. Men who adopt this course are as easily detected as David would be in Saul's armor. If we have only a sling and "five smooth stones out of the brook," they may do more execution than a borrowed harness however highly polished. A man must be himself if he wishes to accomplish anything.

Many of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons have created great excitement, and some have quite a little history of their own. Notably among these is the famous sermon on "Baptismal Regeneration" published in the summer of 1864. The sale reached the enormous number of two hundred thousand,

and so great was the excitement created in England, that within two years of its publication a gentleman collected over one hundred pamphlets and books which had been called into existence by the controversy raised thereon.

Spurgeon's sermons have also been translated largely. Many volumes have been published in Dutch, German, French, Swedish and Italian ; besides occasional sermons in Spanish, Danish, Russ, &c.

We are informed of one gentleman who went to the expense of having Spurgeon's sermons handsomely bound, and presented a copy to every crowned head in Europe. We hope their majesties appreciated the gift, and were much edified and enlightened by the contents.

On October 19, 1879, Mr. Spurgeon preached what was printed as Sermon No. 1500. The words selected were, "And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it on a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived."—Numbers xxi : 9.

In introducing his subject he remarks :

"This discourse when it shall be printed will make fifteen hundred of my sermons which have been published regularly week by week. This is certainly a remarkable fact. I do not know of any instance in modern times in which fifteen hundred sermons have thus followed each other from the press from one person, and have continued to command a large circle of readers. I desire to utter most hearty thanksgivings to God for divine help in thinking out and uttering these sermons—sermons which have not merely been printed, but have been *read* with eagerness, and have also been translated into foreign tongues ; sermons which are publicly read on this very Sabbath day in hundreds of places where a minister cannot be found ; sermons which God has blessed to the conversion of multitudes of souls. I may and I must joy and rejoice in this great blessing, which I most heartily ascribe to the undeserved favor of the Lord.

"I thought the best way in which I could express my thankfulness would be to preach Jesus Christ again, and set him forth in a sermon in which the simple gospel should be made as clear as a child's alphabet. I hope that in closing the list of fifteen hundred discourses the Lord will give me a word which will be blessed more than any which have preceded it, to the conversion of those who hear it or read it. May those who sit in darkness because they do not understand the freeness of salvation and the easy method by which it may be obtained, be brought into the light by discovering the way of peace through believing in Christ Jesus. Forgive this prelude ; my thankfulness would not permit me to withhold it."

An outline of this discourse may interest the reader and give a fair specimen of Mr. Spurgeon's general mode of treating his subjects, the only specimen that our space will allow.

"I. The persons in mortal peril for whom the brazen serpent was made and lifted up.



"They had despised God's way and God's bread.

"They had been actually bitten by the serpents.

"The bite of the serpent was painful.

"The bite of these serpents was mortal.

"There is no set limit to the stage of poisoning.

"II. The remedy provided for them.

"It was purely of divine origin.

"There was but one remedy.

"The healing serpent was bright and lustrous.

"This remedy was an enduring one.

"III. The application of the remedy.

"It was very personal ; they must look to the serpent of brass.

"It was very instructive. It meant that self-help must be abandoned and God be trusted.

"This way of curing was intended that they might magnify the love of God, and attribute their healing entirely to divine grace. The brazen serpent was not merely a picture, as I have shown you, of God's putting away sin by spending his wrath upon his Son, but it was a display of divine love. And this I know because Jesus himself said, 'As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up.' For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son': plainly saying that the death of Christ upon the cross was an exhibition of God's love to man ; and whosoever looks to that grandest display of God's love to man, namely, his giving his only-begotten Son to become a curse for us, shall surely live. Now, when a man was healed by looking at the serpent he could not say that he healed himself ; for he only looked, and there is no virtue in a look. A believer never claims merit or honor on account of his faith. Faith is a self-denying grace, and never dares to boast. Where is the great credit of simply believing the truth, and humbly trusting Christ to save you ? Faith glorifies God, and so our Lord has chosen it as the means of our salvation. If a priest had come and touched the bitten man he might have ascribed some honor to the priest ; but when there was no priest in the case, when there was nothing except looking to that brazen serpent, the man was driven to the conclusion that God's love and power had healed him. I am not saved by anything that I have done, but by what the Lord has done. To that conclusion God will have us all come ; we must all confess that if saved it is by his free, rich, sovereign, undeserved grace displayed in the person of his dear Son.

"IV. The cure effected.

"They were healed at once.

"This remedy healed again and again.

"The cure was of universal efficacy to all who used it. It is a pleasant thought that if they looked at that brazen serpent by any kind of light they lived.

"Many beheld it in the glare of noon, and saw its shining coils, and lived ; but I should not wonder that some were bitten at night, and by the moonlight they drew near and looked up and lived. Perhaps it was a dark

and stormy night, and not a star was visible. The tempest crashed overhead, and from the murky cloud out flashed the lightning, cleaving the rocks asunder. By the glare of that sudden flame the dying man made out the brazen serpent, and though he saw but for a moment, yet he lived. So, sinner, if your soul is wrapped in tempest, and if from out the cloud there comes but one single flash of light, look to Jesus Christ by it and you shall live.

"V. A lesson for all who love their Lord.

"What ought we to do? We should imitate Moses, whose business it was to set the brazen serpent upon a pole. It is your business and mine to lift up the gospel to Christ Jesus, so that all may see it. All Moses had to do was to hang up the brazen serpent in the sight of all. He did not say, 'Aaron, bring your censer, and bring with you a score of priests, and make a perfumed cloud.' Nor did he say, 'I myself will go forth in my robes as lawgiver, and stand there.' No, he had nothing to do that was pompous or ceremonial, he had but to exhibit the brass serpent and leave it naked and open to the gaze of all. He did not say, 'Aaron, bring hither a cloth of gold, wrap up the serpent in blue and scarlet and fine linen.' Such an act would have been clean contrary to his orders. He was to keep the serpent unveiled. Its power lay in itself, and not in its surroundings. The Lord did not tell him to paint the pole, or to deck it with the colors of the rainbow. Oh no. Any pole would do. The dying ones did not want to see the pole, they only needed to behold the serpent. I dare say he would make a neat pole, for God's work should be done decently, but still the serpent was the sole thing to look at. This is what we have to do with our Lord. We must preach *him*, teach *him*, and make *him* visible to all. We must not conceal him by our attempts at eloquence and learning. We must have done with the polished lancewood-pole of fine speech, and those bits of scarlet and blue, in the form of grand sentences and poetic periods. Everything must be done that Christ may be seen, and nothing must be allowed which hides him. Moses may go home and go to bed when the serpent is once uplifted. All that is wanted is that the brazen serpent should be within view both by day and night. The preacher may hide himself, so that nobody may know who he is, for if he has set forth Christ he is best out of the way.

"Some of you have looked to the brazen serpent, I know, and you have been healed, but what have you done with the brazen serpent since? You have not come forward to confess the faith and join the church. You have not spoken to any one about his soul. You put the brazen serpent into a chest and hide it away. Is this right? Bring it out and set it on a pole. Publish Christ and his salvation. He was never meant to be treated as a curiosity in a museum; he is intended to be exhibited in the highways, that those who are sin-bitten may look at him. 'But I have no proper pole,' says one. The best sort of pole to exhibit Christ upon is a high one, so that he may be seen the further. Exalt Jesus! Speak well of his name. I do not know any other virtue that there can be in the pole but its height. The more you can speak in your Lord's praise, the higher you can lift him up, the better, but for all other styles of speech there is nothing to be said. Do lift Christ up. 'Oh,' says one, 'but I have not a

long standard.' Then lift him up on such as you have, for there are short people about who will be able to see by your means. I think I told you once of a picture which I saw of the brazen serpent. I want the Sunday-school teachers to listen to this. The artist represented all sorts of people clustering round the pole, and as they looked the horrible snakes dropped off their arms, and they lived. There was such a crowd around the pole that a mother could not get near it. She carried a little babe which the serpent had bitten. You could see the blue marks of the venom. As she could get no nearer, the mother held her child aloft, and turned its head that it might gaze with its infant eyes upon the brazen serpent and live. Do this with your little children, you Sunday-school teachers. Even while they are yet little, pray that they may look to Jesus Christ and live; for there is no bound to set to their age. Old men snake-bitten came hobbling on their crutches. 'Eighty years old,' saith one, 'but I have looked on the brazen serpent, and I am healed.' Little boys were brought out by their mothers, though as yet they could hardly speak plainly, and they cried in child language, 'I look at the great snake and it bless me.' All ranks, and sexes, and characters, and dispositions looked and lived. Who will look to Jesus at this good hour? O dear souls, will you have life or no? Will you despise Christ and perish? If so, your blood be on your own skirts. I have told you God's way of salvation, lay hold on it, look to Jesus at once. May his spirit gently lead you so to do. Amen."

We give this as a fair specimen of Mr. Spurgeon's usual style of sermonizing. The reader will perceive the personal application which runs throughout the whole. It sometimes happens that preachers leave their congregations for the major part of their discourses and take excursions to the heavens above, the earth beneath, or the waters under the earth; and then for a few moments at the conclusion address a formal application to the audience; but Mr. Spurgeon is always one with his congregation. He gains their sympathy from the very announcement of his text. A magnetic power seems to unite speaker and listener, under the influence of which the heart's best emotions are stirred to their utmost depths.

What has doubtless contributed, under the blessing of God, to Mr. Spurgeon's immense success as a preacher, to a large extent, is the powerful voice which the great Creator has given him. An English writer thus descants on this subject: "As soon as he begins to speak, 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 marvelous power.

Another cause of success is his use of the plainest and most forcible Anglo-Saxon language. Any one reading his sermons—as, for instance, the extracts given above—will be struck with the vast preponderance of monosyllables which he uses; hence, while he interests the learned, there are none of his hearers who understand the commonest English but must comprehend his meaning. The sublimest truths are skillfully and admirably brought down to the meanest capacity. Hence, like his Divine Example, the common people hear him gladly. He has himself remarked, when hearing certain preachers of a high order addressing their flocks, that they must have understood the Lord to say, “Feed my camelopards,” instead of “Feed my lambs;” for nothing but a giraffe could reach and spiritual food from the lofty rack on which they place it.

Mr. Spurgeon has a way of describing imaginary incidents while pressing home the truths of the Gospel which sometimes find most extraordinary counterparts in his congregation. One Sunday, while descanting on the sin and folly of Sabbath desecration, he asked if there was not some one there who had kept his store open on the Sunday, and sold only one pair of old boots for one shilling and eight pence. During the ensuing week he received a letter from a poor shoemaker, saying that he was the man, and that on the previous Sunday he had kept open store, and transacted precisely that amount of business mentioned by the preacher. The shoemaker was converted, and became a member of the church. Mr. Spurgeon had had no previous knowledge of him or his affairs. Such seeming accidental coincidences have been of frequent occurrence in some men's ministries. May we not attribute them to the influence of that Holy Spirit who guides and directs his servants in all ages, and as a fulfillment in part of that promise, “Lo I am with you always.”

Besides preaching at his own church, Mr. Spurgeon's services have been much in demand for special occasions; and, when his health allowed, the amount of extra work he undertook in this department was enormous. He has always filled these engagements in a most liberal spirit—sometimes, in cases of poor churches, even returning his traveling expenses.

Mr. Spurgeon has done some good service as a lecturer. His lecture on “Candles” has been very popular, and his lectures to his students on preaching are much prized by them. It is a line of work, however, in which he is not so much at home as in preaching the Gospel truth. The pulpit and not the platform is his forte.

He is a great believer in open air preaching, and has carried it out when practicable. At the anniversary meeting of the London Open Air Mission, held January, 1876, he made some characteristic remarks, which will be an appropriate conclusion to this chapter, and well repay the reader's attention. "The open air preacher had a noble pedigree, including in the roll Abel, Enoch, and Elijah; but the noblest thing that could be said of him was, that in the work he was following the literal example of the Lord Jesus Christ. Whenever there was a revival of religion, this was one of the indications which accompanied it. It was when Wesley stood on his father's grave, and George Whitfield went to the field, that the shaking among the dry bones took place in the last century. A man's success as a preacher of course depended on the spirit of God, but there must be adaptability to the end, as in the case of the sling and stone in the hand of David, when he went against the giant; human ingenuity could not have devised a better mode. What was done in the Master's service should be done well. The Holy Spirit did not give people the gift of language, but whatever had been lost by the withdrawal of miracles had been gained by printing and other advantages. The Holy Spirit would not teach any one the English language, for each could buy an English grammar and learn it for himself; and some of the open air preachers would be all the better if they read the grammar as often as they did their Bibles. Every out-door preacher ought to be an in-door student. Attention should be paid to the manner of preaching; he had known preachers whose manner was simply execrable. Some men shut their fists when preaching, and their attitude suggested that they were going to give some one a black eye; others sawed and chopped the air, and one he knew always reminded him of a little soldier on a post at the back of the Tabernacle, telling people which way the wind blew. They should not be imitators of the manners of others, but be themselves; they wanted not preaching monkeys but preaching men. There were some who seemed to think that 'the power of the everlasting Gospel' had something to do with the power of their lungs. It might be necessary to speak loud in the street, but they need not bawl themselves to death. The language which they used should be such as the people would understand. At the West-end they might use classical language, but 'slang' would not be out of place in Billingsgate, where it was the common language of the people. Short, sharp sentences would generally be found most telling. They should preach in places where they were most needed, and where there was somebody to listen. He once saw a preacher preaching with all his might in the street; a little dog was sitting down, but there was not a soul near him. Amid surrounding wickedness, the best time to get a shot at the devil was whenever they saw him; but of about 500 persons who were yearly added to the church at the Tabernacle, he always found some who testified to the good which had been effected by open air

preaching. He strongly urged them to go on with their work with more earnestness, and he prayed with more success than ever ; and according to their faith, might it be done unto them."

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## CHAPTER IX.—THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE.

A GREAT PROPOSAL—CHURCH DEBTS—THE SITE—LAYING THE CORNER-STONE—DEDICATION—SUCCESSSES—DESCRIPTION OF THE TABERNACLE—MISCELLANEOUS CROWD,

WE have now to sketch the history of one of the greatest triumphs of religious enterprise the world has ever witnessed. Taking all the obstacles and discouragements into account, the erection of the Metropolitan Tabernacle stands, as far as we know, without a parallel.

For three years the church and congregation had held alternate services in the Surrey Music Hall and New Park Street, but it had all the time been palpably evident, and universally admitted, that such a state of things could only be considered as provisional. But what to do for the best, and how to do it, were problems that for a time caused anxious thought to all concerned. The price of land in a city like London, and in fact the difficulty of obtaining a good freehold at any price, presented what would have seemed to some an insurmountable barrier to the attainment of the desired object. But the cause was the Lord's. Faith in God had enabled them to take out the back wall of New Park Street, when the project seemed impracticable. Faith in God had led them to make the Surrey Gardens engagement, and carry it out successfully. Faith in God would bring them through their present difficulties.

It was proposed to erect an enormous tabernacle in a central position capable of seating at least five thousand persons, and to dedicate the same entirely free of debt !

We are perfectly in sympathy with this latter condition. Church debts are frequently a great curse to the cause of religion. There can be no objection to large and even ornamental places of worship, provided they can be paid for ; but when such are left with a heavy debt, bringing all its concomitant difficulties and vexations, and often disgraces, in its train, it sadly interferes with the spiritual work and success of a church, besides lowering its influence with the community at large. If the cost of erection is not obtained at the dedicatory services, it is a very difficult, dead-horse affair to raise it when the enthusiasm has subsided. Many pastors who have succeeded church builders know this to their sorrow.

The first meeting at which this scheme was propounded was held in October, 1856. It was favorably received by many ; looked upon as utopian

by some ; condemned as impracticable and presumptive by others. The pastor, however, set about the raising of funds with a will, traveling far and near, and preaching many times in a week. Friends came forward with a liberal hand. By January, 1859, about \$50,000, or nearly one-third of the amount required, was in the treasurer's hands.

The way was now clear to proceed with the undertaking. After due deliberation a site was selected at Newington Butts, near the well-known Elephant and Castle Inn.

The River Thames flows east and west through London, dividing it into almost equal parts. It is spanned by six magnificent bridges (exclusive of railroads), all of which are interesting and expensive works of art. From each of these bridges there run broad, handsome avenues, almost parallel, but gradually trending nearer each other, like the feathers of a fan, till they meet at a central point about a mile and a quarter from the river. At this important position, conveniently reached by street car or rail from all parts of London, as well as from the various terminal depots, a site was fixed upon at a cost of \$25,000. After much trouble and negotiation, this was finally secured and paid for, and on August 16, 1859, the first stone was laid by Sir Morton Peto, and the project was fairly under way.

In December of that year the services at the Surrey Gardens Hall were relinquished. The cause of this step was the decision which the directors made to open the gardens for public amusement on Sunday evenings. Mr. Spurgeon and his friends considered they could no longer consistently occupy the hall in the morning, in a place where the subsequent part of the day was spent in a flagrant Sabbath desecration. The large amount they were paying for rent would be tending to support an immoral institution. The directors refused to reconsider their decision. They lost the Spurgeon engagement and gained—bankruptcy. Sabbath breaking pays nobody, not even public corporations.

On the 18th of December, 1859, services were again commenced in Exeter Hall and continued till the opening of the Tabernacle.

The building progressed in the meantime slowly but safely. It might have been furnished sooner, but the pastor was determined not to open till every cent of the entire outlay was raised ; but one hundred and fifty thousand dollars was a large amount. The enterprise, however, was kept alive by constant agitation, and the money continued to flow into the treasury.

In February, 1860, Mr. Spurgeon paid a visit to Paris, and preached in the American Chapel there to crowded audiences, and in the following June we find him paying a flying visit to Geneva. There he occupied John Calvin's pulpit, and also preached in the church of the illustrious historian of the Reformation, Dr. D'Aubigné.

In the records of the church the following entry was made January 6,

1861: "This church needs rather more than £4000 (\$20,000) to enable it to open the New Tabernacle free of debt. It humbly asks this temporal mercy of God, and believes that for Jesus' sake the prayer will be heard and soon bestowed."

A touching but very characteristic incident has been related by Mr. Spurgeon. During the progress of the work he met one of the deacons, Mr. Cook, for consultation, after the workmen had left. There, amid scaffold poles, bricks, mortar, and all the miscellaneous *debris* of a large erection, the two men knelt down and poured out their souls in fervent prayer to God for the successful issue of the undertaking, for the safety of the workmen engaged, and for the prosperity of the church. The scene would be one worthy the pencil of a Gustave Doré. But no other human eye saw it; yet the Father who seeth in secret heard, and He who watched the soul conflict of Nathaniel under the fig-tree saw.

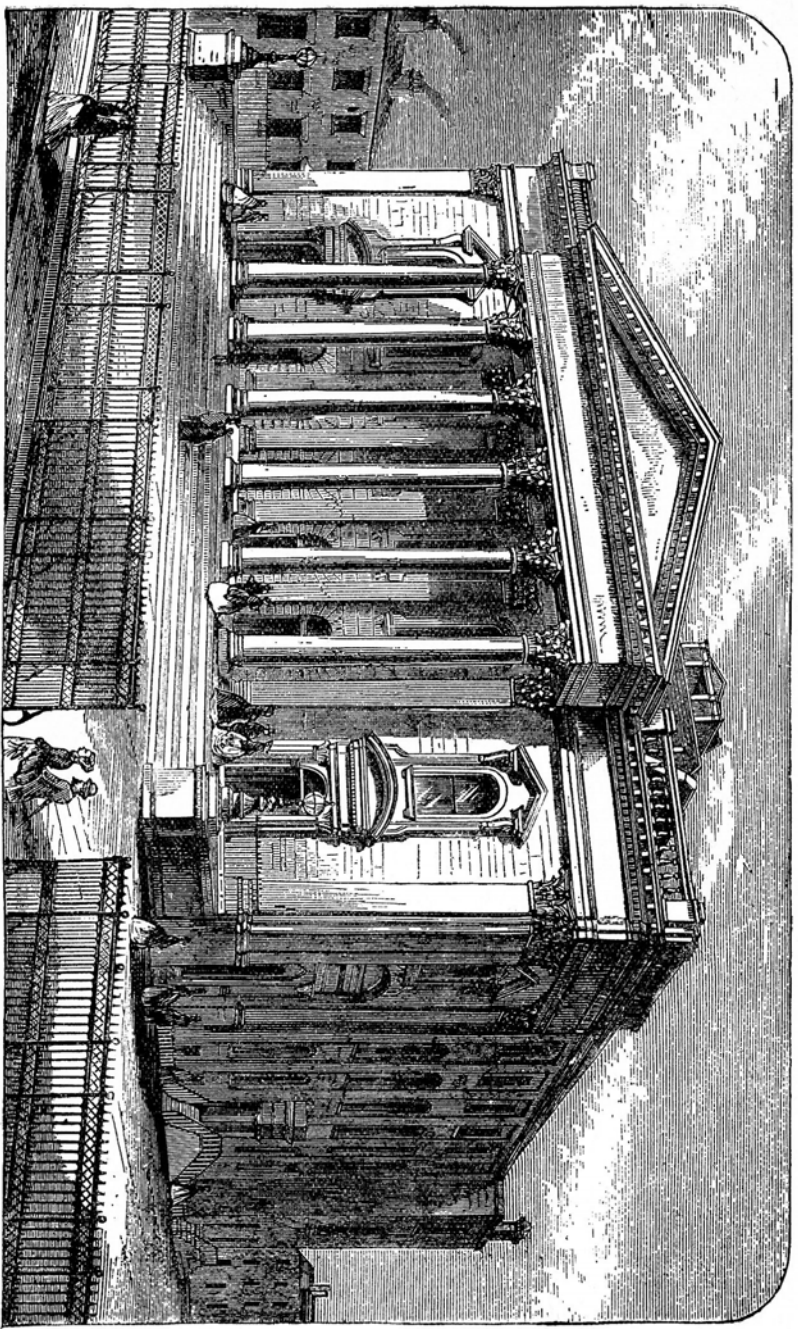
The completion at last came. On March 1, 1861, Exeter Hall was occupied for the last time. Mr. Spurgeon's remarks on that occasion deserve record:—

"In the providence of God we, as a church and people, have had to wander often. This is our third sojourn within these walls. It is now about to close. We have had at all times and seasons a compulsion for moving: sometimes a compulsion of conscience, at other times a compulsion of pleasure, as on this occasion. I am sure that when we first went to the Surrey Music Hall, God went with us. Satan went too, but he fled before us. That frightful calamity, the impression of which can never be erased from my mind, turned out in the providence of God to be one of the most wonderful means of turning public attention to special services, and I do not doubt that—fearful catastrophe though it was—it has been the mother of multitudes of blessings. The Christian world noted the example, and saw its after-success; they followed it; and to this day, in the theater and in the cathedral, the word of Christ is preached where it was never preached before. In each of our movings we have had reason to see the hand of God, and here particularly; for many residents in the West End have in this place come to listen to the word, who probably might not have taken a journey beyond the river. Here God's grace has broken hard hearts; here have souls been renewed, and wanderers reclaimed. 'Give unto the Lord, O ye mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength; give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name.' And now we journey to the house which God has in so special a manner given to us, and this day would I pray as Moses did, 'Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered, and let them that hate thee flee before thee.'"

After five weeks of dedicatory services, the building was declared free of debt, nearly one hundred and sixty thousand dollars having been raised and expended.

The building thus erected is remarkable for its neatness and utility. It is 146 feet long, 81 feet broad, and 62 feet high. It has seats for 5,500, and





THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE.

standing room for 1,000 more. So perfect is its construction that there is no part of the vast audience room from which a person possessed of ordinary faculties cannot both see and hear the speaker. There is also a lecture hall with accomodation for 900 persons, and school room for 1,000 children ; six class rooms, kitchen, lavatory, etc.; besides rooms for ladies' working meetings, young mens' class rooms, secretaries' room, three vestries and three store rooms.

Such a grand workshop for God had perhaps never been turned out before. There were not wanting many prophets of evil who yet considered the whole project too extensive, and predicted a speedy failure. What has been the result? There has never been a Sunday service held since its opening when the edifice has not been filled ; and as a rule it is crowded to excess ; sometimes many fail even to gain admission ; while the rooms attached have long since been wholly inadequate for the work carried on.

The excessive crowds who constantly attend the Metropolitan Tabernacle render stringent regulations as to admission absolutely necessary. The regular attendant needs some protection against the chance of his place being occupied by a stranger, while he himself has the pleasure of standing. Seat holders therefore have the privilege of admission by side gates as soon as they arrive. Others who have sufficient interest procure cards to admit them to stand in the aisles, ready to occupy an absent member's vacant seat as soon as the time arrives for doing so. In addition to these are the general public, casual hearers, and visitors. These have the privilege of crowding under the spacious stone portico at the front doors, waiting for the time to open them. No sooner are the bolts withdrawn than this crowd rush in pell-mell, and it is then considered that all vacancies are to be appropriated to the first that can secure them. Indeed, it would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to make better arrangements, such is sometimes the overpowering throng that seeks to gain admission.

We well remember on a warm Sunday in the summer of 1862, attending a morning service. We thought we were in good time for a good place, and got close up against the door long before it was opened. For nearly one hour we endured the jostling and jamming of the surging crowd, and consoled ourselves with the thought that we should be among the first in. At last the bolts creaked, the doors flew open, we rushed in ; but judge of our surprise at finding the church full before us. We were, up till then, in happy ignorance of any other mode of ingress, but were speedily enlightened on that subject. There was no help for it, and we thought ourselves fortunate in gaining a standing place about midway between the entrance and platform. With all the disadvantages of a "standing seat," however, the influence of that service will never wear away. The massive psalmody of that immense concourse was truly sublime. In the midst of

the service Mr. Spurgeon requested the congregation to rise and sing the doxology :—

“ Praise God from whom all blessings flow.”

It seemed an unusual course ; but as the grand Old Hundred pealed forth from nearly seven thousand human voices, the effect was overwhelming, and we felt like Jacob at Bethel, “ Surely the Lord is in this place ; this is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.”

The sermon was founded on Amos ii : 13, “ Behold I am pressed under you, as a cart is pressed that is full of sheaves.” The two ideas of the enormity of sin, and the sufficiency of Christ’s salvation seemed never absent during the whole of that impressive discourse. As we retired we tried to measure the influence of that simple earnest preaching upon the vast multitudes week by week, and devoutly thanked the giver of every gift for raising up such a powerful agency for the propagation of the gospel.

At this point we may as well inform the reader that there never has been any instrumental music at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. Mr. Spurgeon from the first has had an objection thereto. He considers the human voice to be the grandest music in the house of God. There is also no organized choir. One treble leader stands before the congregation, just below the preacher, and leads off the singing. The huge crowd seem to fall in as if all had been in practice during the week. The singing is in every sense of the word *congregational*.

The view of the Tabernacle when filled and lit up, as seen from the preacher’s platform, is a sight none who have seen will ever forget. The well-packed ground floor, with its seats so arranged that everybody seems to face the speaker without placing the neck in an unnatural angle ; the first gallery running all round the building, with its tiers of seats one above the other ; the immense oval of gas jets ranged in line along the front of the gallery ; the upper gallery above the first, ranging also all round the building ; while every face is devoutly turned toward one central point of attraction ; all go to make up a picture seldom equaled, never excelled. Immediately behind the preacher’s chair are seats for twelve ; velvet lined, soft cushioned, easy going sort of seats. On them may be seen a corresponding number of good-natured looking middle-aged gentlemen. They are Spurgeon’s deacons, and occupy that post of honor, *ex officio*. A deaconship at the Tabernacle under the high pressure influence of Mr. Spurgeon, we should judge to be no sinecure. There has always been, however, the greatest harmony between Mr. Spurgeon and his deacons. Would to God the same might be said of all pastors and officials. And why not ? A little more of the meekness of Christ on both sides would sometimes save much trouble and heart ache in many churches.

A student of human nature, with a tolerably good eye sight, would from this point of view have a splendid field for observation. An English clergyman gives the following vivid description of the scene :

"It is very common for preachers who stand up before large assemblies to fix their eyes on a particular individual; a spectator who views the scene from the deacons' seats at the Metropolitan Tabernacle is extremely liable to find himself doing the same odd kind of thing. There are 'characters' enough in the spacious area, if one can only single them out and read their faces. There sits a man in one of the middle aisles of the area; he is middle-aged, full-faced, and altogether in his *tout ensemble* resembles one who makes some pretensions to self-culture. Though he uses no pencil and note-book, his brains are probably busily at work taking down what he sees. Let us suppose him to be the representative of some slumberless daily newspaper, which will be sure to place the public in possession of ample information should anything special in the morning's proceedings attract his attention. Single out another, and perhaps you will not be far wide of the mark if you set him down to be a 'cute Yankee editor on the look-out for something piquant about the Britishers wherewith to regale his readers in some corner of the American continent. Do you think it possible you may be mistaken? Look again, and ask yourself if the worthy fellow's features and wearing apparel, when put together, do not spell JONATHAN as completely as can ever be done by eight letters? A fair sprinkling of country pastors are sure to be present. Fix your eye on a Baptist, and he will be found in a genial humor; for when so vast an assembly gathers in a Baptist chapel he thinks, with some show of reason, that his principles are in the ascendant. Select an Independent, and you will judge from his looks that he has not much to complain about; for, after all, this same preacher has wonderfully stimulated the cause of nonconformity. As I view the spacious area from my velvet-lined deacons' pew, I know that the Tabernacle is a common meeting ground for all the characters mentioned, as well as for many others who might be included in the category."

One specialty about the Metropolitan Tabernacle is the great facility with which the congregation can make its exit. The number of doors, and their arrangement, are such, that the vast assemblage could be safely dispersed in a very few minutes. No doubt the Surrey Hall catastrophe did a good deal toward suggesting these arrangements, and that and similar sad events which have happened elsewhere should induce the architects of all buildings where large numbers of people are expected to congregate to make an easy and speedy egress a matter of vital importance in drafting out their plans. For the want of this foresight many a precious life has been sacrificed, and many a home has been made desolate.

Having given the reader a description of the building itself, we will now present some details of the work in connection therewith. There are two institutions connected with the Metropolitan Tabernacle, namely, the Pastor's College and the Stockwell Orphanage, the founding of either of which would have been a great work for any one man's life. Mr. Spurgeon has established them both, and carried them on successfully for several years, in addition to his other onerous duties. We will now proceed to give some particulars concerning each.

## CHAPTER X.—THE PASTOR'S COLLEGE.

COLLEGE TRAINING—THE RAW MATERIAL—THE FIRST STUDENT—DEVELOPMENTS—EVENING CLASSES—COLLEGE BUILDING—SELECTION OF STUDENTS—"LECTURES TO MY STUDENTS"—RESULTS.

THERE are few things that to-day are having a more important bearing on the future of the human race than the training of our young men for the ministry.

"Just as the twig is bent the tree's inclined."

Not only is it the mere technical knowledge that the student takes away from college with him into his ministerial work, but in most cases the animus, the ideas, and even the mannerisms of his principal tutors give a coloring to his whole after-life. Is there not a danger of our academies treating candidates for the ministry as if they were human *cauliflowers*—all head and no heart? Cram, cram, cram. First prize in mathematics. Head of the class in Greek. The glorification of the learned professors, and the blowing advertisement of the institution. *All head.* Should not the primary work of a clerical seminary be to train men as *soul-savers*, men-winners. It must be admitted, however, that one very important requisite for a successful training is having the proper material to commence with. We remember the question being asked some time ago of the president of a Methodist college, "How is it, doctor, that you do not send out better men from your institution?" "Let the churches send us better stuff to work upon," was the trite reply. This reminds us of a very sensible and witty remark made by a professor in a Presbyterian college to a friend of ours when entering under his tuition. "Young man," said he, "if you want learning, we are here to give it you; if you want grace, we can tell you where to get it; but if you lack common sense, we know of no source of supply either in the heavens above, or the earth beneath, or the waters under the earth." If young men mistake their vocation, or their friends are over-eager in pushing them into the ministry without positive proof of their adaptability and the requisite natural talents for the work, all the skill of professors and the learning of doctors will never make them successful God-sent ambassadors of the cross. Better, far better, break stones on the highway than to be a mere "hireling," and not a true shepherd.

Now, there is a material that can be found more or less in most churches, which while it contains the most essential elements of ministerial usefulness is unfortunately shut out by the force of circumstances. Young men of true piety, unquestionable ability, and suitability to the work, but whose circumstances will not admit of their paying the expense of a university course, in addition to losing the time required. Besides, in many cases,

their elementary education has been so slender that the very idea of a classical education is out of the question. And yet among this very class there are men who with a little help and a fair start would do a mighty work for the cause of religion, and reach classes of the population which the more refined cannot touch. It was in this class that Mr. Spurgeon in the first year of his pastorate began to take a lively and practical interest. He says: "There were springing up around me, as my own spiritual children, many earnest young men who felt an irresistible impulse to preach the gospel, and yet with half an eye it could be seen that their want of education would be a sad hindrance to them. It was not in my heart to bid them cease their preaching, and, had I done so, they would, in all probability, have ignored my recommendation. As it seemed that preach they would, though their attainments were very slender, no other course was open but to give them an opportunity to educate themselves for the work."

During the first few weeks of his pastorate, a young man about his own age was brought under conviction of sin by the instrumentality of his preaching; and in this state of mind wrote to him for counsel; a proceeding which cannot be too highly recommended. The first letter of Mr. Spurgeon's is a model of spiritual advice, and coming, as it does, from a youth under twenty, is the more remarkable and interesting. We give it to our readers in hopes it may do good to some inquirer for religion.

"75 DOVER ROAD, BOROUGH, }  
July 14, 1854. }

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

"You ask me a very important question. 'Are you one of 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.

"Harbor 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.

In a few days after, this young man, rejoicing in the new birth, was received into the membership of the church. At their first interview the young pastor was convinced of his genuineness, and seeing in him the elements of usefulness, set him to work in the church. He first commenced out-door preaching, and gave good signs of his commission. He lacked information and culture, however, and Mr. Spurgeon determined to remedy this defect somehow. At his own expense he sent him first to an academy at Bexley Heath, in Kent, and then placed him under the tuition of Rev. G. Rogers, of Camberwell. The following interesting letter will show that the germs of the "Pastor's College" were even then in his mind.

"LONDON, September 22, 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."

This young man was Thomas W. Medhurst. It will interest the reader to know that the kindness thus bestowed upon him was rewarded, and the expectations of usefulness more than realized. Mr. Medhurst has been

for many years pastor of a Baptist church at Portsmouth, in the south of England, and about one thousand converts have been baptized by him during his ministry.

Encouraged by his first effort and its success, and animated by the real pleasure which the work gave him, a few more of the same sort of young men were brought together. "It seemed to me," he wrote subsequently, "that preachers of the grand old truths of the gospel, ministers suitable for the masses, were more likely to be found in an institution where preaching and divinity would be the main object, and not degrees and other insignia of human learning. I felt that, without interfering with the laudable objects of other colleges, I could do good in my own way. These and other considerations led me to take a few tried young men, and to put them under some able minister, that he might train them in the scriptures, and in the other knowledge helpful to the knowledge and proclamation of the truth. This step appeared plain, but how the work was to be conducted and supported was the question; a question, be it added, almost solved before it occurred."

Mr. Spurgeon does not inform us that in order to solve this problem. he himself gave half his own salary, yet such was the case.

The next question was to find a suitable tutor for the young men. Rev. G. Rogers was presented to his mind as the most suitable man to meet the peculiarities of the case. Mr. Spurgeon, Mr. Medhurst, and another gentleman waited upon him at his residence at Camberwell; the arrangement was made; the Pastor's College was an accomplished fact.

It was now settled that the students were to receive education, board and lodging free. They were billeted around among the members of the church, and met together at stated times for tuition. Once a week the students all met at the house of the pastor for instruction in divinity, pastoral work, preaching, etc. This practice has been continued since by a weekly lecture, whenever Mr. Spurgeon's health has permitted it.

The evening classes were open to all who wished to attend from the first; thus many a young man has received a useful addition to his store of knowledge while still earning his living at commercial pursuits.

It will be seen that the whole undertaking was a matter of faith; and in faith it has been continued ever since. There were no endowments or permanent subscription list. Trusting in God, and believing in the righteousness of the cause, the good work was commenced which has resulted in untold benefit to the human race. The way in which the means have been supplied during the quarter of a century of its existence is truly marvelous. The expenses for several years past have amounted to fifteen thousand dollars per annum, yet the institution has never been in debt. The weekly offering at the Metropolitan Tabernacle has for some years past been exclusively devoted to this fund, and the annual average is about six thou-



sand dollars. Donations from unknown sources have from time to time most opportunely arrived. One friend sent five thousand dollars (one thousand pounds) on the occasion of the publication of Sermon No. 1,000. One of the deacons of the Tabernacle, Mr. T. R. Phillips, gave a supper in the school room in March, 1865, on behalf of this laudable institution, which has been a great success, having been repeated each subsequent year; the proceeds have risen from \$1,750 to over \$10,000.

For years this college was conducted in the class rooms under the Tabernacle; but it had at last increased its working dimensions so much that it was decided in 1872 to erect a suitable building for its special use. Liberal donations were sent in, and the edifice, costing \$75,000, was completed, and all paid for.

Mr. Spurgeon has from the first assumed the entire control of this college, without directors, committee or trustees, and all has proceeded with the utmost harmony.

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

As a specimen of some of the material that has presented itself for acceptance, Mr. Spurgeon mentions the case of one who applied, who had a sort of rotary motion of the lower jaw ; of whom he declares that he could not see him while speaking without feeling a strong inclination to laugh.

Mr. Spurgeon's weekly lectures to his students have become a popular institution. Not only are the members of the Pastor's College present, but it sometimes happens that principals and students from other colleges will come in in a body, and avail themselves of the highly practical advice and information they are certain to receive.

There are now two volumes of these "Lectures to my Students" published, and they should be carefully studied by all who are thinking of devoting themselves to the work of the Christian ministry. Those on "Posture, Action, and Gesture," are quaintly illustrated by woodcuts. One brother, with fists clenched, and in pugilistic attitude, invites people to come, and he will give them rest. Another swings his arm like a sledge hammer and thumps his Bible as if he would smash it to pieces. These, and others who indulge in extravagant and grotesque attitudes, are hit off to the life in those illustrations. The lectures are full of humor, and abound in pertinent and effective illustrations. Under such tuition men of might and worth are made.

Since its commencement to April, 1880, the Pastor's College has sent out over 500 into the work of the ministry ; 419 of these at that date were still laboring for Christ : 339 in the United Kingdom, 21 in Australasia, 16 in the United States, 12 in Canada, 1 in Brazil, 3 in Spain and Italy, 5 in the West Indies, 5 in Africa, 5 in India, 2 in China, and 1 in Japan. Some of these have accepted calls from churches already established ; but a large proportion have made their own position by founding entirely new churches in needy localities ; where they worship in commodious, and in some instances very capacious tabernacles.

The known results of the labors of these ministers who have been graduated from the Pastor's College are astounding. In ten years, from 1865 to 1874, it was known that at least 20,676 had been baptized by these brethren, and the net increase of their several churches was 19,498. It may safely be concluded, that, had it not been for the Pastor's College, most of these useful men would never have found their way into the ministry. Surely the results of this institution have more than justified its existence.

Of the character of the work thus achieved the Earl of Shaftesbury gives the following testimony :—

"It was an utter fallacy to suppose that the people would ever be brought to a sense of order and discipline by the repetition of miserable services, by bits of wax candles, by rags of Popery, and by gymnastics in the chancel ; nothing was adapted to meet the wants of the people but the

gospel message brought home to their hearts, and he knew of none who had done better service in this evangelistic work than the pupils trained in Mr. Spurgeon's college. They had a singular faculty for addressing the population and going to the very heart of the people."

Besides those engaged in the work of the ministry there are about 200 men in constant attendance at the evening classes. These also receive all the education they can pick up there, free of cost, and many of them are now engaged as city missionaries, local preachers, writers and colporteurs. These classes have an extensive loan library for their use which is also a source of much usefulness.

Once a year, on the first Tuesday in August, a meeting or *reunion* is held of the old students, all of whom who are within reach avail themselves of this opportunity to perpetuate the friendship and memories of their college days. These anniversaries are a source of both pleasure and profit, and to none more so than the worthy founder, who, unless prevented by sickness, never fails to take part in the festivities of the day.

Here then is an agency for good which should cause every believer in the gospel throughout the world to offer the tribute of gratitude to God for its inception and continued existence. Long may it continue to bless the world as a center from which radiates the light of the Gospel! Long may the life of its illustrious founder be spared to help to bring about the millennial glory!

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## CHAPTER XI.—STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE.

THE WIDOW AND THE ORPHAN—MUNIFICENT LIBERALITY—MODEL ARRANGEMENTS—THE SITE AT STOCKWELL—EIGHT HOUSES—FAITH, MIGHTY FAITH—DESCRIPTION OF ORPHANAGE—GRATIFYING RESULTS.

THERE is perhaps no department of Christian work that can more pre-eminently be designated *the Lord's work* than that to which we are now about to call the reader's attention. God has expressly declared that he will be a father to the fatherless. Any provision for or help extended to the orphan is therefore carrying out by human agency the eternal decree of Jehovah, and cannot fail to bring a blessing in return.

Women and children have both been inestimable gainers by our common Christianity. Since the world's Redeemer took the little child from its mother's hands, placed it before apostles and disciples, and said, "Except ye be converted and become as a little child, ye cannot enter the kingdom of heaven;"—since when mothers brought their offspring to the Son of Mary, he answered the remonstrances of the by-standers with those blessed and well-known words, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and

forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven ;"—the attention of his followers in all ages has been turned toward the little ones ; the child has been nurtured in the gospel of the Lord ; and the greatest of men have thought it the highest honor to obey the command of Christ to Peter, "Feed my lambs."

There are few sights more calculated to excite the pity of the true Christian than that of a poor fatherless family: a weak woman left to struggle with helpless little ones ; to fight the battle of life alone, all alone ; earning a morsel of bread by laboring beyond her strength in some ill-paid occupation. If angels ever weep over human sorrow, it is at the sight of the fatherless poor. In the course of our pastoral duties we have sometimes been called to perform the last rites of religion over the dead husband, and as we have seen the widow and the fatherless bend in unutterable anguish over the remains of him who was the "bread-winner" for all, we have tried to figure out in our mind the mode of operation by which they were going to be supported ; but the whole process has seemed a mystery, bordering on the impossible. And yet these cases abound by hundreds and thousands all around us, and in too many cases unheeded by those who should lend a helping hand.

But verily there is a God in the earth. The life of the widow and the orphan is full of merciful interpositions and delivering providences ; and the history of many a lone one would make an interesting and instructive book. At the same time it must never be forgotten by God's people that He works his purposes by human agency, and that they who love Christ are to return that love in works of mercy and charity to the poor and needy. Such works are never lost. Bread cast upon the waters has often been found after many days ; for there is that scattereth, and it maketh rich, there is that withholdeth, and it tendeth to poverty. In any case the time will come, when all these acts of love shall have their due recompense of reward ; for in the great day, the final consummation of the present moral dispensation, the great test will be "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my little ones, ye have done it unto me."

The idea of establishing an Orphanage in connection with the Metropolitan Tabernacle had not entered into the calculation of Mr. Spurgeon. The immense duties connected with his large membership, the large numbers of special engagements, together with the extra work of the Pastor's College, all seemed to render an additional task of this magnitude almost an impossibility. But "God moves in a mysterious way." A lady, a Mrs. Hillyard, the widow of an Episcopal clergyman, wrote in September, 1866, to Mr. Spurgeon, offering the sum of one hundred thousand dollars, to be placed at his disposal for the purpose of commencing an orphan establishment for fatherless boys. Such a princely or rather princessly offer from a person with whom he had had no previous acquaintance was

exceedingly gratifying ; but he recoiled at the duties and responsibilities of the undertaking, and calling on her, endeavored to persuade her to transfer the amount to Mr. Müller of Bristol. The generous donor urged the claims of London to such an institution, and finally Mr. Spurgeon was prevailed upon to accept the amount on trust.

A meeting of leading spirits of the Tabernacle was now called, at which it was decided to proceed with the laudable project. Twelve trustees were appointed, who signed the deed of incorporation March, 1867. It was proposed to let Mrs. Hillyard's money remain invested as a permanent endowment, and a subscription list was at once opened. Mr. G. Moore, a city merchant, offered \$1,250 on condition that it was made up to \$5,000 ; the challenge was at once accepted and carried out.

Two important arrangements were from the first adopted for the working of the scheme. In the selection of candidates there was to be no *voting or canvassing* ; thus dispensing with what is sometimes a painful and unnecessary expense to the poor ; and frequently gives the least deserving a better chance than the more needy. The orphans were also to be separated into *families*, instead of all living together in barrack fashion, as is frequently the case in similar institutions ; distinct houses were to be erected where small numbers could live together

A few extracts from Mr. Spurgeon's journal on the subject may not be without interest here, as showing the devoted spirit and undeviating faith that prompted his heart :

"June, 1867.—The Lord is beginning to appear for us in the matter of the orphanage ; but as yet he has not opened the windows of heaven as we desire and expect. We wait in prayer and faith. We need no less than £10,000 to erect the buildings, *and it will come* ; for the Lord will answer the prayer of faith.

"July, 1867.—We have been waiting upon the Lord in faith and prayer concerning our Orphanage ; but he is pleased at present to try us. As we have no object in view but the glory of God, by the instruction of fatherless boys in the ways of the Lord, having a special view to their souls' salvation, we had hoped that many of the Lord's people would at once have seen the usefulness and practical character of the enterprise, and have sent us substantial aid immediately. The Lord's way, however, is the best, and we rejoice in it, let it be what it may : if the work is to be one of time and long effort, so let it be, if thereby God's name is magnified.

"We have engaged a sister to receive the first four orphans into her own hired house until the Orphanages are ready. One beloved friend, the original donor, has given her plate to be sold for this object, and in so doing has set an example to all believers who have surplus silver, which ought to be put to better use than by lying wrapped up in a box.

"August, 1867.—Let the facts, which with deep gratitude we record this month, strengthen the faith of believers. In answer to many fervent prayers, the Lord has moved his people to send in during the last month, in different amounts, toward the general funds of the Orphanage, the sum of £1,075,"

for which we give thanks unto the name of the Lord. More especially do we see the gracious hand of God in the following incidents. A lady who has often aided us in the work of the College, having been spared to see the twenty-fifth anniversary of her marriage-day, her beloved husband presented her with £500 as a token of his ever-growing love to her. Our sister has called upon us, and dedicated the £500 to the building of one of the houses, to be called *The Silver Wedding House*. The Lord had, however, another substantial gift in store, to encourage us in our work; for a day or two ago a brother beloved in the Lord called upon us on certain business, and when he had retired, he left in a sealed envelope the sum of £600, which is to be expended in erecting another house. This donation was as little expected as the first, except that our faith expects that all our needs will be supplied in the Lord's own way. The next day, when preaching in the open air, an unknown sister put an envelope into my hand, enclosing £20 for the College and another £20 for the Orphanage. "What hath God wrought!"

"January, 1868.—About three weeks ago, the noble sum of £1,000 was brought us by an unknown gentleman, toward the erection of two other houses.

"March, 1868.—Just at the last moment, as we were going to press, we received £2,000 from A. B., an unknown friend. We call upon all our friends to magnify the Lord for this amazing instance of his care. How base a thing is unbelief, and how largely does the Lord honor his servants' faith! The note which attended this munificent gift proves it to be from the same donor who gave £1,000 a few weeks ago. We have feared that the Orphanage might impoverish the College; see, dear readers, how graciously the Lord rebukes this unbelieving fear!

"MY DEAR SIR,—You will remember my intention to send a donation to your College; I have this day dropped into a letter-box an envelope containing two bank notes (£2,000), one of which is for the College and the remaining £1,000 to help complete the Orphanage. The latter led me to contribute to the former. I am a stranger to you, but not to your sermons (printed). May the Lord give you health and strength many years to preach his word, and carry on his work. A. B."

"April, 1868.—We are proceeding at the Stockwell Orphanage with the school room, dining hall, master's house, four dwelling houses, and the shell of three other houses, which for the present will be used as a hall, in lieu of the erection which was blown down. For all this we look up for means, and means will come."

In the meantime a plot of ground at Stockwell, containing two and a half acres, was purchased and paid for. Stockwell is a healthy and charming district in the extreme south of London, about two miles distant from the Metropolitan Tabernacle, and easily accessible from all parts of London. It was announced that eight houses would be required for the carrying out of the undertaking; they were all promised under the following circumstances:

1. Mrs. Tyson, a lady who had already rendered considerable help in the Tabernacle work, had been spared to see the twenty-fifth anniversary

of her marriage ; on which interesting occasion her husband made her the liberal present alluded to in the journal above. This she generously devoted to the erection of one of the orphan houses to be called the *Silver Wedding House*. May she live to see her golden wedding !

2. A city merchant (name unknown) called upon Mr. Spurgeon, and left a sum sufficient with him to erect another house to be called *The Merchant's House*.

3. The workmen who had taken part in the erection of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, out of gratitude to God for that building having been carried out so successfully, without an accident to any one concerned, offered to give their labor free to build an orphan house ; and Mr. Higgs, the contractor, engaged to find all the material free. This to be called *The Workmen's House*.

4. The venerable Deacon Olney and his sons gave another sum for a house to be called, after the sainted Mrs. Unity Olney, *Unity House*.

5. The Sunday-schools belonging to the Tabernacle must not be behind. They, with their good Superintendent, Mr. Thomas Olney, at their lead, engaged to raise the fund for another house, to be called *The Sunday-school House*.

6. The sum required for another orphan house was subscribed by the students and ex-students of the Pastor's College to be called *The College House*.

7 and 8. The last two were subscribed for by Baptist churches as a token of respect for Mr. Spurgeon, and were called *The Testimonial Houses*.

All things being now ready for commencing the undertaking, the ceremony of laying the foundation stones of the first three houses came off on the ninth of August, 1867. One was laid by Mrs. Hillyard, one by Mr. Spurgeon, and one by Mr. Higgs. It was an interesting sight, and a soul-stirring occasion ; the beginning of a great work for the welfare of humanity.

After the ceremony the company adjourned for tea, which was served on monster tables, over 300 feet long. The donations brought in that day amounted to over ten thousand dollars.

Subsequently all the eight houses above named were completed, with all the buildings necessary for their proper management and working, including infirmary, at a total cost of little over fifty thousand dollars, all paid for ; the entire concern being out of debt.

The finding of inmates for these houses was a matter of little difficulty ; every one was occupied as soon as finished ; but the following table will show the results :

|                                | Admitted. | Total. | Removed. | In Residence. |
|--------------------------------|-----------|--------|----------|---------------|
| 1867, to March, 1870 . . . . . | 154       | 154    | 6        | 148           |
| March, 1871 . . . . .          | 42        | 196    | 7        | 183           |

|                                | Admitted. | Total. | Removed. | In Resi-<br>dence. |
|--------------------------------|-----------|--------|----------|--------------------|
| 1867, to 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 is a separate establishment, containing about thirty boys, who form a sort of family party. On this system a writer has made the following observations, after a visit to the 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 were 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 day ; each boy's period of service being restricted to one day in six, servants being entirely dispensed with. A working cook, however, 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 collected members of a huge and miscellaneous crowd, but like 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 passed into them, the master corresponds with them, and gives them such counsel or 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. Military drill is given daily. Drawing is successfully taught, and many boys excel in it. The singing class gives very great credit to its instructor—singing at sight, with great accuracy and sweetness, music of some difficulty."

To build the houses was one thing ; but to find food and raiment for an average of over 200 growing boys was another matter. Faith, however, is a mighty principle. The orphanage has never lacked for the want of funds, and it has never been in debt. We give some significant scraps from Mr. Spurgeon's journal, which will show the reader some of his anxieties and triumphs :



"December, 1869.—As our friends are aware, we have been suddenly laid aside by an attack of small-pox. When we thus found ourselves put out of the way just when we were wanted in a thousand places, we cried to the Lord to let none of our work suffer, and especially we begged him to care for the Orphanage and College. Within a few hours a beloved friend, knowing nothing of our affliction, called and left £500 for the Orphanage. How condescendingly did the Lord thus ease his poor servant's mind! We felt a sweet peace and holy joy in leaving all the rest of our work in the same hands. A day or two after, Wednesday, November 17, a letter was received, enclosing £1,000. Here again we bless the name of the Lord, and set to our seal that God is true.

"October, 1870.—Our best thanks are due to Mr. Hugh Stowell Brown and his friends, for a second time inviting us to Liverpool and giving such noble help to the Orphanage. This makes £450 raised for the Orphans in Myrtle Street.

"February, 1871.—Some little time ago, our friend, Mr. Bath, who often aids the Orphanage, gave us six dozen bunches of turnips, and merrily added, 'I hope some one will send you the mutton.' About an hour after, a farmer sent a whole sheep; so the mutton and turnips were both on the spot.

"One esteemed lady friend, and the ladies of her school, have now made us, in all we think, 700 shirts for the boys. May their labor of love be richly rewarded. (Since then they have sent us in all 2,590 shirts.)

"July, 1872.—We have again to sing of mercy. No sooner was the empty state of our Orphanage exchequer made known to our faithful friends, than the Lord inclined their hearts to send the necessary aid. This is a distinct answer to prayer, for other charities have been in the same condition and have made many urgent appeals without evoking the reply which they desired. So prompt and generous have been the responses of our loving helpers, that, after paying £300 for the demands of the month, we have still £1,200 in hand—a marvelous change, indeed, from an actual deficit of £90, and all within a few days.

"December, 1873.—We were not well enough to be at the meeting of Trustees, but quite able to understand the report of the monthly settlement. During the week, a friend gave us £50. Mr. Chown, of Bradford, kindly sent £125, the result of a collection, and, with other sums, we had more than £700 in hand. The time had, however, come for new suits for the orphans and certain expenses incident to the season, and to our surprise the report of the secretary was '*all bills paid, but only £3 left.*' Prayer went to work at once, and results followed. Will the reader, however, picture himself with more than 220 boys to feed and £3 in hand? He may say, 'The Lord will provide,' but would he feel the force of this truth if he were in our straits? From the date above mentioned, we have lived on, but it has been very much from hand to mouth—and it is very sweet to see how the Lord provides. A friend in Sweden sent us help, and another from Belgium. A young man sends 6s. 6d., being threepence per week of his first wages, adding, 'May it please the Lord to put it into the hearts of many to support you in your great undertaking.' A brother, with a large family, offers some potatoes and turnips, and remarks that

since he has given to the Orphanage, he has been much the gainer by improved crops. A donor, who is accustomed to store weekly for the Lord, speaks of the plan as greatly beneficial. One who sends a considerable donation says, 'I never write a check for you without feeling very sorry that I cannot make it ten times as much.' Our expenses, exclusive of our income from property, amount to £10 a day, and two or three gentlemen have each sent us a day's supply; and while the ink is yet in our pen, we are pleasantly interrupted by the postman with two checks of £10 each from Cardiff. Having soon to start for the south of France, we should be grateful to our Heavenly Father if he would enable us to go away with some little store left on hand for the trustees to pay their way with in our absence.

"June, 1874.—The funds of the Orphanage ran completely dry on May 8th, and drove us to plead with God for replenishment. The answer was immediate and sufficient. On the very day in which supplication was made nearly £400 was sent into the treasury, and our heart was gladdened.

"March, 1875.—The funds of the Orphanage are very low. When the tide has quite ebbed out the flood will return. Our 230 boys persist in eating and wearing out their clothes, or we would not even mention the matter of failing funds, but appetites are stubborn things, and our boys have double-barreled ones. By some such process as the above the sum of \$25,000 has to be brought in annually to meet the necessary expenses. *And it comes.* It is computed that the average cost a year for each inmate is about seventy-four dollars."

There is one painful but suggestive fact in connection with this work—the number of applications for admission are so large that only about two out of every twelve can be entertained. For every orphan, therefore, obtaining admittance, and every widow obtaining relief, five others have to go away empty, and fight life's hard battle as best they can. Mr. Spurgeon remarks on this point: "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. No widow ever goes away lamenting over time, labor, and money spent in vain. The worst that can happen is to be refused because there is no room, or her case is not so bad as that of others. Not a shilling will have been spent in purchasing votes, no time lost in canvassing, no cringing to obtain patronage. Her case is judged on its merits, and the most necessitous wins the day. We have now so many applicants and so few vacancies that women with two or three children are advised not to apply, for while there are others with five, six, or seven children depending upon them, they cannot hope to succeed."

The above should stir up our deepest emotions; not only of gratitude that such an institution exists for the alleviation of suffering, but also of sympathy for sorrowing humanity, and a prayer that such orphanages may be multiplied. Widows and orphans abound not only in London, but in

every city in the United States ; and to whom are they first to look but to the professed followers of the Saviour ? Let them not look in vain.

The Orphanage buildings are quite works of art in their way, and are well deserving a visit. A broad avenue, overshadowed by plane-trees on each side, leads from the Clapham Road to the entrance arch, having the master's house on the right, and the dining-hall and kitchen on the left. On the right-hand pillar is the insignia of Sword and Trowel ; on the left the text, *THE LORD WILL PROVIDE*. On the inner side of the piers is inscribed the strikingly appropriate passage of holy writ : "*My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.*" Under the archway these words strike the eye and heart of the visitor : "*A Father to the fatherless and a judge of the widow is God in his holy habitation.*" On the piers facing the Orphanage grounds are these two inscriptions : "*Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these,*" and "*Your heavenly Father feedeth them.*"

The whole of the Orphanage is laid out with a view to health and happiness. There is nowhere anything like closeness. Everywhere plenty of room and good air. There are a large play-hall for sports in cold and wet weather ; a capacious swimming-bath, which is used with so much advantage that nearly every boy in the establishment can swim ; lofty, airy school-rooms, and an infirmary distinct from all the other buildings, where the best of nurses attend the sick boys.

It is gratifying to find that the results of this institution are of a highly encouraging order. About three hundred boys have left the school and entered on the duties of life. These mostly keep up a correspondence with the Orphanage, and their record is very gratifying. A recent report says : "Almost every boy who has gone into a situation has given satisfaction. Some of the lads are in good positions, and command the esteem of their employers."

Best of all, many of the boys before leaving have become decided Christians, and some of them are actively engaged in church work.

At Christmas, 1874, Mr. Spurgeon received a valuable present in the shape of an album containing the portraits of all the lads in the Orphanage. This to him would, doubtless, be a gift beyond rubies.

The personal superintendence of the Stockwell Orphanage has been, from its commencement, under the able management of Rev. Vernon J. Charlesworth, formerly a co-pastor with Rev. Newman Hall. Mr. Spurgeon is generally fortunate in the selection of his co-adjutors, and Mr. Charlesworth has been no exception of the rule. Under him the whole institution has succeeded admirably, and he has the confidence and esteem of all parties concerned.

To the above account of the Stockwell Orphanage we have now the welcome news that a similar institution has been fairly started for girls. In

August, 1879, Mr. Spurgeon announced to his congregation that twenty thousand dollars required to purchase land for this object was raised, for which the whole audience rose to their feet and sang the doxology. In April, 1880, the first stones were laid of the first blocks of the Girls' Orphanage, to cost two hundred thousand dollars, and provide for 250 orphan girls.

We have no fear of such institutions suffering or declining. While there are human hearts touched by a Saviour's love, and blessed with something of this world's goods to spare, funds will be forthcoming. He that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord; and every cent given to such an object will meet with its just recompense of reward.

## CHAPTER XII.—MISCELLANEOUS INSTITUTIONS.

ALMSHOUSES—COLPORTAGE—SUNDAY-SCHOOLS—SUNDRY DEPARTMENTS OF USEFULNESS—CHURCH DISCIPLINE.

IN this chapter we purpose noticing a few other useful departments of Christian work that are carried on in connection with the work of the Metropolitan Tabernacle. Regarding these, we will give the reader such information as may be deemed of general interest.

### THE ALMSHOUSES.

It was noticed in a former chapter how these had been founded by good Dr. Rippon many years ago. The almshouses were contiguous to the New Park Street Chapel; not a very salubrious neighborhood at its best, and now rendered desolate to their occupants by the removal of the church to a distance. As the new Park Street property was now rendered useless to the church, it was decided to sell out, and with the proceeds erect more suitable dwellings nearer the Tabernacle. It was announced that five thousand dollars more than in hand was required to complete the plan, and this was at once subscribed. A site was purchased in close proximity to the Tabernacle, and thereon were erected seventeen almshouses, two school rooms, a class room, and a home for the school-master. There is a day-school of about 300 children on week days, which is self-sustaining.

Female members of the church over the age of 60 are eligible to become inmates of the almshouses. Many worthy Christian women who might otherwise have to end their days in a poorhouse are thus cared for and their declining years made happy.

### COLPORTAGE.

In several kingdoms on the continent of Europe the system of employ-

ing colporteurs, book-hawkers, to distribute Bibles and religious literature, has been in vogue for some years, and has been attended with most happy results. It has not as yet been carried out either in America or England as fully as could have been wished.

The plan adopted at the Metropolitan Tabernacle is this:—A colporteur is employed in the vicinity of some church, or in some dark irreligious neighborhood. He must be a man with a good Christian record, and of some enterprise and intelligence. He is supplied with a stock of suitable books, with which he makes calls from house to house, with the ostensible purpose of making sales. While doing so, he engages in religious conversation; and if an opportunity is given, prays with the family. He holds prayer meetings, open air services, etc., wherever he can arrange for such. If he can get a room he preaches, establishes temperance "Bands of Hope," and thus endeavors by all means in his power to further the cause of religion among the masses.

It will be seen at once that such a system, among dense masses of the people, must prove of incalculable good. These colporteurs reach classes that are otherwise outside the influences of the churches; and rescue many who have wandered far away from the paths of righteousness. The Metropolitan Tabernacle employs in this work about forty men, who make many thousands of visits to the poor and otherwise neglected, and whose work is a source of untold good.

#### SUNDAY-SCHOOLS.

As may be supposed, the lambs of the flock have not been overlooked in the multiplicity of other departments of work. The Tabernacle Sunday school has about 1,000 children in regular attendance; with extensive libraries for teachers and children. Many are annually received into the church from this institution. There are also Sunday-schools at the orphanage, almshouses, and several other points around, all in good working order.

In addition to the above there are missions for the blind, Loan Tract Societies, Mothers' Missions, Maternity Societies, and other agencies for good too numerous to mention here.

Such a powerful organization for the welfare of the world and the advancement of the Redeemer's kingdom should excite gratitude to the giver of every good and perfect gift, from every lover of the human race.

As many of our readers may be interested in the question of *church discipline*, we will give the substance of an article from the pen of Rev. J. A. Spurgeon, which will fully describe the system adopted at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. There are several points about it which we commend to the serious attention of pastors, deacons, stewards, and others engaged in church work:

"We are anxious to disclaim at the outset any pretensions to perfection in our methods of action—we have found them work best for ourselves hitherto, but we are always anxious to find out a more excellent way. Our plans have been the outgrowth of necessity, not of theory; they were not sketched on paper and then carried out as an experiment, but the circumstances of the church drove us to our present methods, and we hope we have seen a line of scriptural precedent justifying our obedience to providential indications. We should regret exceedingly if for a moment it were supposed that we would recommend absolute uniformity in the methods of discipline adopted by churches; but to our minds thus much is clear, that the congregational churches, both Baptist and Pædobaptist, have gone as far in the direction of diversity as possible, and weakness rather than strength has been the result. That no room should be left for the different peculiarities of pastor and people, but all be bound to one undeviating standard of action, would be to cramp, and not to benefit; but, on the other hand, that so few points of agreement should be accepted as a common basis of action, sustaining a sense of confidence in each other's discipline, is little short of a calamity. Mutual confidence arising from known adequate, though it may be at times dissimilar, courses of action, leading up to one result, must be a source of blessing to any denomination; and at present we frankly admit, as the result of a somewhat wide observation of the methods of receiving, and the all but uniform want of method in removing, names from our church rolls, we have but small faith in ecclesiastical statistics, and what is worse, a limited confidence in letters of commendation from our churches. That we may all find room for improvement is undoubted, and that we may at once make the discovery and act upon it, is the object and prayer of the writer of this paper.

"We remark at once that at the Tabernacle *we have no written code of laws but the Book of Inspiration*, and we unhesitatingly assert that all such printed rules as some have desired, and others adopted, are only fetters at the best of times, and snares and traps in periods of dispute and difficulty. We have faith in sanctified common sense, resulting from an application to the source of all wisdom by prayer and reading the Scriptures. If churches would only act with the prudence of assemblies of mercantile men, much evil would be averted, and more good secured. Acting in things temporal after a truly business principle, and in things spiritual as God's word and Spirit dictate, no formal system of rules, in our opinion, will ever be required. Certain recognized courses of procedure from which, without cause assigned, no deviation shall be made, are certainly necessary for mutual co-operation and peace in any church; but for emergencies, special action should be adopted to suit the exigencies of the case, and no rules or traditions must forbid the course which wisdom suggests, even though it should be contrary to all the precedents of the previous history of the church. A general understanding of leading principles, and an elastic interpretation of them as cases may require, will be all the rule outside of the Scripture required in churches where confidence abounds between pastors, officers, and members; if this be wanting, no rules, human or divine, can make them work harmoniously together. We must have faith in each other's intentions and integrity, or we shall loosen the pins of church action, and all will lapse into confusion and conflict.

## "I. CHURCH OFFICERS.

"Principles of action however clear, and methods of procedure however established by custom, will be of little avail if they be not sustained by a vigorous executive. Among the officers of the church, foremost stands *the Pastor*, who, though its servant, is so to rule, guide, and discipline it as God shall help and direct by his Holy Spirit. In connection with the church at the Tabernacle, two such officers are now laboring. It is a trite remark that if two men ride a horse one must sit behind, and he who is in the front must hold the reins and drive. Co-pastorships have been sources of discomfort or blessing as this principle has been understood. Wherever it may have been disregarded, it is not (by the grace of God) likely to be so in the case in hand. Where one of the two brothers has been so instrumental in creating the necessity for additional help, from the very fullness of blessing resulting from his labors; and is, moreover, so superior in talent, influence, and power, it is a privilege to follow in the order of nature and birth which God, from the first, had evidently designed. The discipline of the church thus emanates from a common center, acting through recognized divisions of labor. All meetings and institutions are subject to the influence, and when required, to the action of the Pastorate. It would be, at least, unseemly to have a hydra-headed band of Christians. Sunday-school, college, orphanage, almshouses, psalmody, are all under the supervision of a common headship, so as to prevent almost inevitable confusion, if not conflict, as the result of divided action. The leader of the church should surely lead the church's work. Strife without measure has arisen from rival authorities about the boundaries of their little empires. In the long run the measure of any man's powers and influence is the measure in which he deserves to possess them; and no man is entitled to expect any more. We have known some whose claims for deference and respect were in the inverse ratio to their deserts; and the only outgrowth of their priestlyism was to ruin and break up every church they attempted to guide and control. How much we need the wisdom of the serpent with the harmlessness of the dove! How gently, as a nurse among her children, should the pastor behave himself! With what unassuming brotherly love and paternal wisdom should he hold intercourse with his people! True pastors must be both born and made; and day by day they must be sustained, or their office will be a shame to themselves and a burden to their flocks.

"*Deacons and Elders.*—After the Pastor, and laboring by his side, we need brethren qualified of God to be helpers of our joy. In this church, two offices distinct in main points, though often coincident in others, are recognized, and, as we think, with both scripture and common sense on our side.

"Our Deacons, nine in number, are elected by the church at the suggestion of the Pastor, after consultation with the previously elected Deacons. It is open to any member to nominate whom he pleases at such an election, but in no case has the recommendation of the Pastor and Deacons been dissented from, for the brethren nominated were in every way called and qualified of the Lord. They are chosen for life; this having been the usual custom in such cases; and there being no strong reason

for a change in the rule. Their duties are to care for the ministry, and help the poor of the church, to regulate the finances and take charge of the church's property, seeing to the order and comfort of all worshipping in the place. The work is divided so as to secure the services of all, and prevent the neglect of anything through uncertainty as to the person responsible for its performance. One honored brother is generally treasurer, and has been so for many years—long may he be spared to us; another takes all out-door work, repairs, keeping the gates, appointing door-keepers, etc.; a third attends to the relief of the poor, and a fourth as a good steward sees to the arrangement and provision of the Lord's table; thus with a common council we have separate duties. At every remembrance of these brethren we thank God. Some ministers have found their trials in their Deacons; it is but right to say that we find in them our greatest comfort, and we earnestly desire that every church should share in an equal blessing.

"*Elders.*—Our eldership, now sustained by twenty-six brethren, is a source of much blessing to our church. Without the efficient and self-denying labors of the Elders we should never be able to supervise our huge church, containing at the close of the year 1868, 3,860 members, and from which, under the present pastor, about an equal number have gone to the church triumphant, or to other parts of the church militant.

"The Elders are re-elected annually, but usually continue for life in their office; fresh Elders are proposed by the Pastor to the already elected Elders, and after some time has been given for thought, the subject of the propriety of their election is discussed at an Elders' meeting, and if recommended with general unanimity, the names are then laid before the church by the Pastor, and, after opportunity given for the expression of opinion, the vote of the church is taken. We offer no opinion here as to other methods of electing church officers, but we will add that no other plan commends itself so much to our judgment; no other plan is so safe for *our* church, or so likely to procure good officers; no other plan is so helpful to the Pastor, who is most concerned in the choice, having to work with those selected; and no other plan as we can see will enable him so faithfully to discharge his office of guide and shepherd, in one of the most critical periods of the church's history. Timidity here is a crime, and the affectation of modesty in not wishing to influence the church is to our mind dereliction of duty. A church possessed of unlimited liberty of action needs, for the sake of its junior and less instructed members, to be directed in its choice of officers—the best men to do it are the pastor and officers already tried and proved, and the fear of giving offense seems to us but the fear of man which bringeth a snare.

"To the Elders is committed the spiritual oversight of the church, and such of its concerns as are not assigned to the Deacons nor belong to the preacher. The seeing of inquirers, the visiting of candidates for church membership, the seeking out of absentees, the caring for the sick and troubled, the conducting of prayer-meetings, catechumen and Bible classes for the young men. These and other needed offices our brethren the Elders discharge for the church. One Elder is maintained by the church for the especial purpose of visiting our sick poor, and looking after the church-roll, that this may be done regularly and efficiently.



## "II. CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

"All persons anxious to join our church are requested to apply personally upon any Wednesday evening, between six and nine o'clock, to the elders, two or more of whom stand in rotation every week for the purpose of seeing inquirers. When satisfied, the case is entered by the elder in one of a set of books provided for the purpose, and a card is given bearing a corresponding number to the page of the book in which particulars of the candidate's experience are recorded. Once a month, or oftener when required, the junior pastor appoints a day to see the persons thus approved of by the elders. If the pastor is satisfied, he nominates an elder or church member as visitor, and at the next church-meeting asks the church to send him to inquire as to the moral character and repute of the candidate. If the visitor is satisfied he requests the candidate to attend with him at the following or next convenient church-meeting, and come before the church to reply to such questions as may be put from the chair, mainly with a view to elicit expressions of his trust in the Lord Jesus, and hope of salvation through his blood. We have found this a means of grace and a rich blessing. We have never yet found it tend to keep members out of our midst, while we have known it of service in detecting a mistake. We deny that it keeps away any worth having. After the statement before the church, the candidate withdraws, the visitor gives in his report, and the vote of the church is taken; when the candidate has professed his faith by immersion, he is received by the pastor at the first monthly communion, when the right hand of fellowship is given to him in the name of the church, and his name is entered on the roll of members. A communion card is furnished, divided by perforation into twelve numbered parts, one of which is to be delivered every month at the communion, which is held every Lord's-day; the tickets are checked upon the register, and thus show the attendance of each member at the communion. If a member is absent more than three months without any known cause, the elder in whose district he resides is requested to visit him, and send in a report on a printed form which is given him; or if the residence be distant, a letter is written, a record of such visit or letter being retained. When a case for discipline presents itself, it is brought before the elders, who appoint one of their number to visit and report; if the matter demands action beyond caution and advice, we lay it before the church, and recommend the course of procedure to be adopted, whether censure or excommunication.

"In dealing with such as are members of other churches, we have been by sad experience compelled to exercise more caution than at first seemed needful. The plan we adopt is to have the person seen by an elder, who enters particulars in the transfer book. If there appears to be any difficulty, an interview is arranged with one of the pastors, who investigates the case on its own merits, as, alas! he has discovered that membership with some churches is not always a guarantee even of morality. Some churches retain a name upon their books for years after the person has ceased to commune and frequently when he has passed away from all knowledge of or connection with the church, it will nevertheless grant a transfer as if all were satisfactory. We record this with mingled shame

and sorrow. When the individual has thus given evidence of fitness, so far as we can judge, a dismissal is applied for in the usual way, and the reply is laid before the church, any information necessary is added, and the vote of the church taken.

"When, in the order of God's providence, any of our number are removed from us, and are not able to attend, a certificate is given for three, six, or twelve months, which must then be renewed, and a report of the reason for renewal given, or the membership will lapse, unless in special cases. We much prefer commending our brethren to the fellowship of other churches, where they may be of service, than to have them linger out a merely nominal connection with us. We have thus sent from us 166 in the course of last year, we hope to the strengthening of the churches and the spread of the truth.

"On receipt of application from any church for the transfer of a member, a letter is read to the church, with the detailed account from our books, giving a brief but complete history of the case, when and how received, the attendance of the person while a member with us, and reasons for seeking removal. The church is then advised to authorize the usual letter of dismission to be sent.

"In all our business the aim is to have everything done openly and above-board, so that no one may complain of the existence of a clique, or the suppression of the true state of affairs. We occasionally ask the unquestioning confidence of the church in its officers in cases delicate and undesirable to be published, but otherwise we consult the church in everything, and report progress as often as possible in all matters still pending and unsettled. Nothing, we are persuaded, is so sure to create suspicion and destroy confidence as attempts at secret diplomacy, or mere official action."

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## CHAPTER XIII.—LITERATURE.

SPURGEON AS A POET—JOHN PLOUGHMAN'S TALK—TREASURY OF DAVID  
—COMMENTARIES—SWORD AND TROWEL—EXTRACTS.

It is not often that one man excels both as a preacher and author. While, however, Mr. Spurgeon's great work is preaching, his literary productions alone give him a prominence in the religious world. How, amid all his multitudinous duties, he has found time to write the many books he has published is a mystery. We suspect the proverbial "midnight oil" must have been in frequent demand.

As a poet Mr. Spurgeon might have made some show, had his mind been a little more ethereal and less practical, as the following verses written at the age of eighteen will testify :

\*  
"IMMANUEL.

"When once I mourned a load of sin ;  
When conscience felt a wound within ;

When all my works were thrown away !  
 When on my knees I knelt to pray,  
     Then, blissful hour, remembered well—  
     I learned thy love, Immanuel.

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

“When for the truth I suffer shame ;  
 When foes pour scandal on my name ;  
 When cruel taunts and jeers abound ;  
 When ‘Bull of Bashan’ gird me round,  
     Secure within thy tower I’ll dwell—  
     That tower, thy grace, 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.”

Who can fail to see in these lines the germs of noble courage and true manliness which have since made their author so famous?

As we have already devoted a chapter to “Spurgeon’s Sermons,” we will not make any further mention of them than to say that they have been carefully revised by the author and form in themselves a library of divinity.

By far the most popular of Mr. Spurgeon’s works is *John Ploughman’s Talk*. This was originally published in a series of papers in *The Sword and the Trowel*. They were reprinted in a small volume, which took immensely with the public. Over a quarter of a million of copies have been sold by the London publishers alone. As this book is now published at a nominal price in the STANDARD SERIES, it would be superfluous here to say anything further in its praise, or occupy our space with any quotations. The writer earnestly recommends any of his readers who have not yet obtained a copy, to invest the necessary amount, and obtain this world-renowned manual of common sense and piety ; which cannot fail to improve both the head and the heart of all who read it.

The greatest literary work that Mr. Spurgeon has as yet attempted is a

commentary on the Book of Psalms, under the title of "The Treasury of David." It is the result of years of reading and observation, and one of the most attractive and instructive expositions of Holy Writ extant. Commentaries are for the most part mere professional productions ; they may interest the divinity student, but afford a dreary task for the common reader. "The Treasury of David" is a work that may be read with profit and pleasure by all true Christians, whether preachers, church officers, or members. Its illustrations are familiar and forcible ; its reflections pious, soul-stirring, yet comprehensible. We will give one quotation as a specimen. It is the commentary on the opening verse of Psalm xcvi., "O sing unto the Lord a new song ; for he hath done marvelous things : his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory."

"A clergyman in the county of Tyrone (Ireland) had for some weeks observed a little ragged boy come every Sunday and place himself in the center of the aisle, directly opposite the pulpit, where he seemed exceedingly attentive to the services. He was desirous of knowing who the child was, and for this purpose hastened out after the sermon several times, but never could see him, as he vanished the moment service was over, and no one knew whence he came or anything about him. At length the boy was missed from his usual situation in the church for some weeks. At this time a man called on the minister, and told him a person very ill was desirous of seeing him ; but added, 'I am really ashamed to ask you to go so far ; but it is a child of mine, and he refuses to see any one but you. He is altogether an extraordinary boy, and talks a good deal about things that I do not understand.' The clergyman promised to go, and went, though the rain poured down in torrents, and he had six miles of rugged mountain country to pass. On arriving where he was directed, he saw the most wretched cabin indeed, and the man he had seen in the morning was waiting at the door. He was shown in, and found the inside of the house as miserable as the outside. In a corner, on a little straw, he beheld a person stretched out, whom he recognized as the little boy who had so regularly attended his church. As he approached the wretched bed, the child raised himself up, and stretching forth his arms said, '*His right hand and His holy arm hath gotten Him the victory,*' and he expired."

We have already noticed his two volumes of "Lectures to my Students." These will take their place as standard books of instruction for candidates for the ministry, and should be well studied by all engaged in the work, old as well as young.

Mr. Spurgeon has also published a valuable and racy work on "Commenting and Commentators." This is a sort of enlarged directory to most of the works which have been written on the Scriptures. He says :

"If I can save a poor man from spending his money for that which is not bread, or, by directing a brother to a good book, may enable him to dig deeper into the mines of truth, I shall be well repaid. For this purpose I have toiled, and read much, and passed under review some three or four thousand volumes. From these I have compiled my catalogue, re-

jecting many, yet making a very varied selection. Though I have carefully used such judgment as I possess, I have, doubtless, made many errors ; I shall certainly find very few who will agree with me in all my criticisms, and some persons may be angry with my remarks. . . . He who finds fault will do well to execute the work in a better style ; only let him remember that he will have my heifer to plough with, and therefore ought, in all reason, to excel me.

"Of course you are not such wiseacres as to think you can expound Scripture without assistance from the works of divines and learned men, who have labored before you in the field of exposition. If you are of that opinion, pray remain so, for you are not worth the trouble of conversion, and, like a little coterie who think with you, would resent the attempt."

Of the most popular commentaries of the day he remarks :—"First among the mighty for general usefulness, we are bound to mention the man whose name is a household word, 'Matthew Henry.' He is most pious and pithy, sound and sensible, suggestive and sober, terse and trustworthy. You will find him to be glittering with metaphors, rich in analogies, overflowing with illustrations, superabundant in reflections. It is the poor man's commentary, the old Christian's companion, suitable to everybody, instructive to all. Every minister ought to read Matthew Henry entirely and carefully through once at least. I should recommend you to get through it in the next twelve months after you leave college. Begin at the beginning, and resolve that you will traverse the goodly land from Dan to Beersheba. You will acquire a vast store of sermons if you read with your note-book close at hand ; and as for thoughts, they will swarm around you like twittering swallows around an old gable toward the close of autumn." Gill is a "master cinder-sifter among the Targums, the Talmuds, the Mishna, and the Gemara. . . . I have placed next to Gill in my library Adam Clarke ; but as I have no desire to have my rest broken by wars among the authors, I have placed Doddridge between them. If the spirits of the two worthies could descend to the earth in the same mood in which they departed, no house would be able to hold them."

Ten years ago Mr. Spurgeon compiled a useful little work entitled, "Feathers for Arrows." It consists of live thoughts, apt illustrations, and useful information ; intended for the use of preachers, lecturers, etc., and as such has done good service. Ten thousand were disposed of within a year of its first appearance.

In periodical literature, Mr. Spurgeon has done the world good service. In the year 1855, a Mr. C. W. Banks made the first attempt to establish a penny weekly religious newspaper in England, called the *Christian Cabinet*. It was a great success, which was chiefly owing to the interest taken in it by Mr. Spurgeon, and the spirited articles he wrote for it from its first number onward.

As the Tabernacle work developed and correspondence increased, a recognized organ of communication with those interested therein and the public at large became a felt necessity. This want was supplied. On January 1, 1865, appeared the first number of a new magazine under the quaint, but very appropriate title of *The Sword and the Trowel*. It has had for some years a circulation of fifteen thousand monthly, and has done good service for the cause of truth. In its pages are found sparkling gems from the pen of its renowned editor, some of which have attracted a large amount of attention.

A few extracts, showing Mr. Spurgeon's usual racy mode of dealing with his subjects, may be appreciated. On the subject of "Funerals," we have these remarks, which may possibly be of some service even on this side the Atlantic :—

"I would sooner be eaten by crows than have pride and pomp feeding on my little savings, which are meant for my bereaved wife and children, and not for unsuitable, untimely, and unholy show. I have heard that more than four millions of money are squandered every year in funeral fopperies. The money buys or hires silk scarfs, brass nails, feathers for horses, kid gloves and gin for the attendants, and white satin and black cloth for the worms. It seems to me to be mighty fine nonsense, more for the pride of the living than the honor of the dead, more for the profit of the undertaker than any one else."

An article in the March number, 1866, entitled "Spurgeonism," contains the following characteristic lines :

"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 perpetuate an unfounded libel. We preach no new gospel, we desire no new objects, and follow them in no novel spirit. We love Christ better than a sect, and truth better than a party, and so far are not denominational ; but we are in open union with the Baptists for the very reason that we cannot endure isolation. He who searches all hearts knows that our aim and object is not to gather a band around self, but to unite a company around the Saviour. 'Let my name perish, but let Christ's name last for ever,' said George Whitfield, and so has said Charles Spurgeon a hundred times. 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 existing agencies, and when we commence new ones our friends must believe that it is with no idea of organizing a fresh community."

Mr. Spurgeon has compiled a very superior hymnal for the use of his congregation and others, entitled "Our Own Hymn Book."

Two works more remain to be noticed, "Morning by Morning" and "Evening by Evening." They are manuals of devotion for every day in the year. They were written during sickness, and by their means the author indulged the hope of holding communion with thousands of Christian homes all over the world.

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## CHAPTER XIV.—NARRATIVE RESUMED.

EVANGELICAL ALLIANCE—REVIVAL SERVICES—A PENTECOST—THE COS-TERMONGERS—REPAIRS—J. A. SPURGEON AS CO-PASTOR—SILLY TALES—INVITATIONS TO AMERICA.

WE will now proceed with the thread of our narrative from the point where we broke off, the completion of the Tabernacle.

During the month of January, 1863, Mr. Spurgeon paid a visit to Holland and preached in most of its large towns. While in that country, he had a lengthened interview with the Queen of the Netherlands and other members of the Dutch Court. The sermons preached during that visit were printed, and widely circulated.

It was in January, 1864, that the celebrated sermon on Baptismal Regeneration, mentioned in a former chapter, was preached. Amid the intense excitement raised thereby, a strong letter was addressed to him by the secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, asking him to retract certain remarks contained therein or to withdraw from the Alliance. Retraction has never been much in Mr. Spurgeon's way, and the result was, he at once resigned his connection with that useful organization. It afterward transpired that the letter in question was written by the secretary entirely on his own responsibility, without the knowledge or consent of the committee. The Alliance was the greatest loser by this separation, and Mr. Spurgeon has never since identified himself with it.

Early in the year 1865, prayer-meetings were held in the Tabernacle for one whole week, which were attended by over six thousand people, and were so much blessed by God, that a month later another week's prayer-meetings were held, followed by similar results.

In May of that year Mr. Spurgeon took a month's tour to the south of Europe, including Italy.

The year 1866 was commenced with an entire month's revival services, and in September of that year the whole church had a day's fasting and prayer. During this year "Our Own Hymn Book" was published, and the colportage work was commenced. In December of this year we find him paying a short but profitable visit to Paris. There had been for some time a Baptist church in the French capital, but it was situated in an

obscure and disreputable neighborhood, and was in poor circumstances. Mr. Spurgeon had been the principal mover in bringing them out of their hiding place into a prominent position, and now had the satisfaction of helping them to complete their undertaking. He spent his Christmas in Paris and returned strengthened and encouraged by his continental trip.

The year 1867 opened auspiciously at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. Everything began full of life and work for God. During a week's prayer in February, a day was set apart for fasting and special prayer. It was a Pentecostal time never to be forgotten. From seven o'clock in the morning till nine o'clock at night, the service was continued without intermission even for meals. It was one of those seasons that occur but few times in one's life; when the power of the Holy Ghost is marvelously poured out; when saints shout aloud for joy, and sinners, yielding to the influence around and within them, seek that salvation which is denied to none who repent of their sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

The next month we find Mr. Spurgeon doing one of those missionary acts among the poor for which his name will be long revered. St. Lukes is a remarkable district of London, about one mile north of the river Thames, It is noted for a large lunatic asylum; formerly also for a noted debtors' prison, now abolished; but chiefly for the number of costermongers living there. By the term costermonger the reader is to understand a person who obtains a livelihood by vending eatables, such as fish or vegetables, in the streets. The London costermonger, like the London cabby, is an institution peculiar to himself. To attempt a description which would convey to the mind of the stranger anything like an adequate idea of the business would be impossible. The costermonger disposes of his wares in two methods: either by a stall or bench placed across trestles, where he stands calling out the articles he has to dispose of, or he has a donkey and cart, and perambulates his regular round every day. The latter is the most usual method, and the "costermonger's donkey" is as much a peculiarity as the costermonger himself. Among these people, noted for their irreligion and profanity, a mission had been established under the care of Mr. Orsman, and Mr. Spurgeon held a service for their special benefit in the Evangelists' Hall, Golden Lane, on March 12. Tickets had been distributed around, to secure the attendance and accommodation of the class of persons for whom the service was designed. Of this class a large number assembled. The text selected was John iv: 15. "The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." With a tact that few could equal, and none excel, the preacher entered into their peculiar habits and mode of life in a manner that won the hearts of his congregation. At the close of the service comments like these were heard from his auditors. "Stunnin'," "Did you ever!" "Wat a voice!" "'Ouldn't he make a good coster," etc. After the service about two hundred remained to



be prayed with; and who can estimate the good accomplished by such services?

It was now found necessary to do some repairing, as the immense congregations assembling continuously for the last six years had made considerable wear and tear. It was decided to close the Tabernacle for a month. During this interval the Agricultural Hall at Islington was occupied, where twelve hundred persons congregated at each service, to hear the popular preacher.

The large amount of work and anxiety that had now fallen on the pastor began at last to tell seriously upon him, and resulted in a sickness which laid him aside for two months. It was palpable to all that something must now be done to relieve him of his heavy duties and responsibilities. After due deliberation, it was decided to engage as co-pastor Rev. James Archer Spurgeon, the pastor's younger brother, who commenced his duties January 9, 1868. This arrangement has worked very happily. J. A. Spurgeon has shown good administrative abilities in grappling with the various kinds of work demanded at the Tabernacle, especially during his brother's frequent indispositions. He has recently visited America and delivered a good lecture entitled: "My Brother and his Work." The style of the two brothers, however, as well as their personal appearance, is so different, that those who have only heard James can form no idea of what Charles is like.

In November, 1867, Rev. E. P. Hammond, an American evangelist, whom Mr. Spurgeon described as an earnest worker for God, and prince of preachers to children, conducted special services to young people at the Tabernacle with very blessed results.

Like all other public characters, Mr. Spurgeon has had to suffer from ridiculous tales and false statements. Some of these have appeared from time to time in the public press, and he has occasionally been inundated with letters from all parts to know if certain things were true. An article in *The Sword and the Trowel*, under the caption of Silly Tales, gives the following general reply to all such fabrications: "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 same libels which were repeated concerning Rowland Hill and others long gone to their rest."

If Mr. Spurgeon has never visited America, it has not been from the want of invitations. In the year 1857, Dr. Armitage, a Baptist minister of New York, while in London, tried to persuade him to visit this continent. A little incident is related on the occasion of this visit. The celebrated African explorer, Dr. Livingstone, was present at the morning service, and at

its conclusion was introduced to the young preacher. At the same moment Dr. Armitage came forward to shake hands with Mr. Spurgeon, to whom he had been previously introduced. Mr. S. pleasantly withdrew his hand and exclaimed, "No, shake hands first with Dr. Livingstone, he is the worthier man." The invitation brought by Dr. Armitage to deliver a course of lectures in this country, for which a liberal offer was made, was declined with many thanks. Another request was made during the building of the Tabernacle, which was again renewed in 1869, both of which were also declined. In 1873, in *The Sword and the Trowel*, we find the following:

"An American firm offers for Mr. Spurgeon to deliver twenty-five lectures in that country, at one thousand dollars each, and further arrangements can be made for one hundred lectures. Although the remuneration offered is very far beyond anything our beloved people are likely to give us, we prefer to have the gospel according to our Lord's words, rather than to use the Lord's time in earning money for our own purse."

Four years since a false report obtained insertion in the Boston papers that Mr. Spurgeon was about to visit the United States, which led to the following correspondence:—

"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 will give you a thousand dollars 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?"

Mr. Spurgeon replied:—

"CLAPHAM, LONDON, ENGLAND, 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."

It is a matter of regret that Mr. Spurgeon has never seen his way clear to comply with one of the numerous invitations he has received to visit the Western World; but his frequent afflictions of late years, combined with the heavy duties and responsibilities of his charge, would render a protracted absence from London very undesirable. Should he in the providence of God be led to visit us, he may expect a hearty welcome from all classes in this great country.

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## CHAPTER XV.—MRS. SPURGEON AND THE TWINS.

MRS. SPURGEON'S SICKNESS—BOOK FUND—THE PORTRAITS—FIRST EFFORTS  
OF THE TWINS—SUCCESSES.

"THERE was a garden ; and in that garden a sepulchre." How forcibly do these words picture the life of most Christians. Amid the joys of a religious life there is often found a great sorrow. Paul, amid his holy spiritual triumphs, had a thorn in the flesh, which Satan made a source of annoyance and temptation. These things are permitted by the Wise Father to teach us that true humility and dependence on Him which otherwise our successes might lead us to forget. The believing heart must bow in submission to Him who has promised that these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

Mr. Spurgeon's life has been no exception to this rule. While his work has been an uninterrupted and glorious success, his beloved partner has been for years an almost helpless invalid. Enough is known of her to insure the conviction that, had her health been vouchsafed by an all-wise Providence, she would have afforded her husband more active aid in his arduous duties ; but "He who ruleth" has ordained it otherwise. She is, however, beloved by all who have had the honor and privilege of her acquaintance.

On the 19th of June, 1868, being the anniversary of her husband's birthday, she was induced, though in bad health, to take part in the ceremony of laying the first stone of the College House, at the Stockwell Orphanage. After the ceremony, twenty-six little girls, dressed in white, advanced one by one, and presented Mrs. Spurgeon with purses, the thank offerings from their parents for her partial restoration.

A painful operation, however, had to be performed. The direction of the case was placed in the hands of the most celebrated surgeon of the day, Sir James Simpson, of Edinburgh ; assisted by a staff of eminently qualified medical practitioners. Special prayer was made by the church. The operation was so far successful that her life has been spared. But it has been a life of pain and weakness.

In the midst of it all, however, she had done, in a quiet way, a useful work, in the establishment of what is known as *Mrs. Spurgeon's Book Fund*. This is a fund for supplying needy ministers with books. From her friends she has solicited over ten thousand dollars, which have been expended on this laudable object. Many thousand volumes have thus been donated to poor ministers of almost every denomination.

How much good has been thus accomplished by this unique method, it

is impossible to calculate ; but who can help honoring and sympathizing with a Christian lady, thus, in the midst of her sufferings, engaged in such praiseworthy work for the Master? The following lines, written by her husband in 1865, while away from home, touchingly show that appreciation she so well deserves :

“MARRIED LOVE.—TO MY WIFE.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Mr. Spurgeon's twin boys, Charles and Thomas, have been and are still a source of joy to their parents. It would seem strange indeed to see any member of this remarkable family going any other than the right way.

The portraits of these two boys have been taken on their birthday anniversaries from the first year onward, and Mr. Spurgeon indulges a natural pride in showing visitors the interesting series in an album. D. L. Moody has made this circumstance the ground of one of his illustrations, in the following language:—"I was at Mr. Spurgeon's house, and he showed me the photographs of his two sons, who were twins, and whose photographs had been taken every year ever since they were twelve months old until they were 17 years old. For the first two years they did not seem to have grown much, but when they compared the first year with the age of 17 they seemed to have grown amazingly. So it is with the children of God—they grow in grace. A great many people talk about others being unsound in the faith. I believe that one of the graces which require cultivation is more love to the Master, more love to one another, more love for a perishing world, and more love for the lost. There are two lives that every Christian should live. One life he should live alone with God—a life that nobody but God and himself knows; and then he can live the outer life before the world, adorning the doctrines of Jesus Christ."

It would be well if all Christians grew with time, like the bodily development of youth, but do we not often see sad examples of old professors, who so far from *progressing* seem to exhibit a religious life more weak and stunted than in their earlier days? The illustration of the twin pictures is well worth pondering and praying over.

Charles and Thomas were sent to a school at Brighton, which after receiving a liberal education they left in 1874. Having both given evidence of true conversion, they were received into the church by public baptism at the hands of their father, September 21, 1874. It was an animating sight to behold another generation of Spurgeons thus walking in the footsteps of their illustrious ancestors.

Mr. Spurgeon had been heard to remark that he never intended to make preachers of his boys; that if the Lord wanted them, He had to call them himself and qualify them. Accordingly the lads, on leaving school, were allowed to follow the bent of their own inclinations—the one entering a business house in the city, and the other becoming articled to an engineer. Their thoughts, however, appear soon to have turned toward active work for Christ. The call was given and obeyed. Within a year of their conversion they made their first efforts at public speaking in a small chapel at Clapham. Here they continued to labor with success, and on June 26, 1876, among others baptized at the Tabernacle were three persons, who were the first fruits of the ministry of these lads. Thomas has since gone to Australia to labor in the good cause there. Charles has accepted a charge at Greenwich, about five miles from London, where he preaches to a congregation of over a thousand, and is having his youthful ministry crowned with success.

May the blessing of heaven follow these devoted youths, and their success exceed that of their sires.

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## CHAPTER XVI.—NARRATIVE RESUMED.

SMALL POX—HEAVY PROGRAMME—ETERNAL PUNISHMENT—BIBLE EDUCATION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS—FAMILY LEGACY—GOOD DEACON OLNEY—ROME—GEORGE MÜLLER—TOBACCO.

IN October, 1869, shortly after a brief trip to the continent of Europe, Mr. Spurgeon was laid aside by an attack of small pox. While passing through this ordeal he wrote, "A Sermon from a Sick Pastor," and "Directions how to bear Affliction;" thus turning to good account for others an indisposition that usually prostrates most whom it attacks both physically and mentally. During his convalescence he addressed a New Year's letter to his ministerial brethren, in which he urges them by all means, ordinary as well as extraordinary, to aim at the conversion of the souls of their congregations. Writing as a sick man, he tells them, he feels the urgency and importance of soul-saving.

The protracted sickness of the pastor, occasioning a cessation from public duties for nearly three months, induced the following appeal in his magazine for March, 1870:—"The pastorate of a church of four thousand members, the direction of all its agencies, the care of many churches arising from the college work; the selection, education, and guidance in their settlements of the students; the oversight of the orphanage, the editing of a magazine, the production of numerous volumes, the publication of a weekly sermon, an immense correspondence, a fair share in public and denominational action, and many other labors, besides the incessant preaching of the Word, give us a right to ask of our friends that we be not allowed to have an anxious thought about the funds needed for our enterprises." Such a programme as this would require the strength of a Hercules to carry out; and there are not many living men who could attempt it without breaking down. But the work has grown with him, and he has grown with the work; and God has blessed and helped both.

About this time the religious world began to be interested in a theory which has been taught by a few in most ages of the Christian era, but which has never been widely received; a theory which allows a limited term of punishment for the wicked in the next world, ending in eternal unconsciousness or annihilation. A religious newspaper called *The Christian World*, having an extensive circulation, has taken up this question; but while it admitted many letters advocating this theory, it refused all on the opposite side, intimating, however, that any remarks from Mr. Spurgeon would be

published. He wisely abstained from adding to his already too numerous and more profitable engagements, that of a religious controversialist, and in a few incisive words informed the editor that the Saviour's words, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment," had, in his opinion, settled the question beyond controversy.

A summer's vacation in 1870 was spent in a trip to Scotland, which was employed in hard work, preaching in several towns and cities in that northern kingdom to immense crowds, who eagerly availed themselves of the unusual opportunity of hearing the great London preacher.

A question of some importance was at this time agitating the public mind in England. Hitherto the education of the young had been conducted either by self-supporting schools whose fees placed them beyond the reach of the masses, or by schools partly supported by voluntary contributions, supplemented by a small weekly charge to each pupil. The consequent ignorance of vast numbers of the population, even of the rudiments of an ordinary English education, was a standing reproach, which many leading minds felt anxious to remove as speedily as possible. At length a comprehensive measure was proposed to remedy the defect. There was one important question at issue, however, which was long and fiercely fought on both sides. "Should the Bible be admitted into the public schools?" The nation was moved. The religious world came to the rescue. Into this controversy Mr. Spurgeon threw his large heart and mind. The campaign was short but decisive. The Word of God, the best book in the English or any other language, was retained, and is to-day one of the school books of British youth.

In the first number of his magazine for 1871, he pleasantly refers to the number of letters on all subjects constantly coming to hand, and the multiplicity of business thrown upon him. "Half the world," he writes, "nearly, comes to the Tabernacle for help, and three-fourths of this half do so to shift their own burden on to another shoulder."

A painful family malady, the rheumatic gout, now began to develop itself, and has since laid him prostrate for a considerable portion of his time. His sainted grandfather had been a great sufferer from this complaint, which, however, does not appear to have touched his vitality; for although he was heard to complain at the age of 82 that he believed it would shorten his days, yet he lived to be 88. For three months the pastor was confined to his house with this severe affliction, during which he could only write of the loving kindness and bounty of his Lord. At the close of this protracted sickness he preached his Sermon No. 1,000, the text selected being Luke xv : 17. In honor of this event, as stated before, a benevolent friend sent £1000 as a donation for the Pastor's College.

We have not space to notice all the worthy men and women who have stood by the pastor in his noble work, and if we had we would not run the

risk of wearying the reader's patience by doing so ; but it would be an injustice, and also render our narrative incomplete, were we to omit an honorable mention of good Deacon Olney, who about this time was taken to his eternal rest.

Thomas Olney, subsequently known as "Father Olney," was born in 1790. When a youth he was sent to London, and under the ministry of good Dr. Rippon he was converted and received into the church. From that time till the day of his death he remained a true and faithful member of the church of his youth. He attended Dr. Rippon in his last moments, and stood by the church in its subsequent prostration. In 1838 he was appointed deacon, in which office he faithfully served for over thirty years. He was mainly instrumental in bringing about the first invitation of young Spurgeon to London, and the first meeting to promote the great Tabernacle scheme was held in his house. He was treasurer of the church fourteen years.

Mr. Spurgeon gives him the following eulogium : " During all the time of erecting the New Park Street Chapel, Mr. Olney may be said to have ' favored the very dust of Zion.' From foundation to top-stone he watched its progress with interest and prayer. Prosperity was given under the ministry of Mr. James Smith, and it was Mr. Olney's happiness to see all his four sons baptized and united to the church. He was ever remarkable for his early and constant attendance at the prayer-meeting and other week-day services. He loved the habitation of God's house."

The year 1872 opened brightly, and with every promise of a continuance of heavenly blessing. The month's revival services were held in February, which resulted in a rich spiritual harvest, 118 being added to the membership. Faith was occasionally tried, as the funds for orphanage or college ran low ; and yet faith was honored, and supplies came from unexpected quarters, but always as soon as or sooner than required.

Toward the close of the year he was urged to take a tour to the south of Europe, as the "family inheritance" was again making itself felt. He accordingly repaired to the sunny clime of Italy, to escape a chilly English December.

It was during this excursion that an incident occurred which he related a few years later at the annual gathering of the British and Foreign Bible Society. While viewing with some friends the Colosseum of Rome, 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 desolation 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.'



"While singing this, two strangers were attracted by the sound, and came up and said, 'Let us join you.' One was an American and the other an English clergyman, and we sang the next verse together,

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

"And so we shall mark our track by the ruins of our adversaries."

On his return to his work in January, 1873, he found one hundred and thirty-five candidates for church membership. This gratifying fact shows the efficient state of organization which prevailed at the Tabernacle in its varied departments; so that the work had gone on prosperously even in the absence of its pastor.

A singular service was held early in the year for the benefit of the butchers of London. About twelve hundred of them partook of a good supper in the school room, after which they were addressed by the pastor and others. The Fisk University jubilee singers, being then on a visit to England, received a hearty invitation to the Tabernacle. A mutually agreeable entertainment was held, at which every available space was occupied, and about eleven hundred dollars collected. Mr. Spurgeon thus describes the event:—"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."

In May, 1874, the congregation at the Metropolitan Tabernacle had the opportunity of hearing the renowned George Müller of Bristol. Mr. Müller's peculiar and stupendous work of faith, by which two thousand children are daily fed, clothed and educated, will be among the most astounding annals of the nineteenth century. Such a man would find a sympathetic audience in a congregation which has established, and for some time past upheld, an orphanage of their own. Soon after coming to London, Mr. Spurgeon had paid a visit to the orphan houses in Ashley Downs, and had written a glowing description of what he saw in an article which appeared in the *Christian Cabinet*, and it is possible the impressions then formed may have been the chief promptings that ultimately led to the Stockwell Orphanage. For nearly half a century Mr. Müller has carried on his Christ-like work. May his life be spared not a few years to continue it!

As it is well known that Mr. Spurgeon has made certain remarks on the tobacco question, which have elicited much comment, and as exaggerated and erroneous statements are currently reported thereon, we think it as well to give the reader his exact words of explanation; not that we in-

dorse all the statements therein contained, but because we are anxious to present a faithful picture of our subject. In the London *Daily Telegraph*, September 23, 1874, he writes :—

"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 sneakily 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."

## CHAPTER XVII.

DISINTERESTEDNESS — SICKNESS — MOODY AND SANKEY — AN UNUSUAL CENTENNIAL—APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION.

MR. SPURGEON has had every facility for making money, but it may be safely concluded that he will not die worth much. Really great benefactors of the human race are seldom, if ever, great money-hoarders. Good old John Wesley used to say that if he died worth ten pounds the world might call him a rogue. Mr. Spurgeon is well known to give away annually a large amount of his salary, and has frequently refused splendid personal gifts. On the occasion of his completing the twenty-first year of his pastorate, in 1875, it was resolved to present him with a written memorial accompanied with ten thousand dollars in cash. The latter gift he declined accepting, recommending the friends to turn it over to the funds of the Pastor's College. The memorial was accordingly presented at the annual church meeting without the money; such unselfish acts more than pay in the esteem and devoted attachment of God's people. If they did not pay in any way Mr. Spurgeon would do such deeds all the same. Other instances of this kind might be adduced, but this sample will suffice.

Clouds again covered his sky. He was just about contemplating a visit to the south of France, to escape the chilly January, when he was seized with such a severe attack of gout that removal was impossible. He is self-possessed enough, however, to philosophize over the situation. He writes:—"Just preparing for a journey to Mentone when gout came on with such rapidity and severity that removal was out of the question. 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 that were opening. The doctor attended, and intimated that the disease springs from mental causes, and can be as fairly reckoned upon when an extra pressure of care or labor occurs, as the tides may be calculated by the moon. We have received many prescriptions for the gout, and should have been dead long ago if we had tried half of them. We are grateful, but cannot utilize them. The best remedy is to prevent our having any anxiety about the college, orphanage, or the Colportage. If the funds keep up, and the works are carried on, and the Lord's blessing rests upon the enterprises, they will be better to us than all our lotions, liniments, specifics, and elixirs put together, with twenty sorts of magnetisms thrown in."

In May, 1875, those eminently successful American revivalists, Messrs. Moody and Sankey, commenced their work in London. For months these devoted servants of God preached to congregations numbering from five to fifteen thousand persons twice every day, Sundays and week days, taking rest only on Saturdays. The popularity and the interest never

waned, but increased to the end of their engagement, which extended over four months. The Agricultural Hall at Islington and the Opera House at the West End were specially retained, while the east and south of London were accommodated by specious wooden buildings, with seats for several thousand in each, erected for the occasion at Bow and Camberwell. Under this movement many thousands became the subjects of religious awakening. Mr. Spurgeon cordially welcomed the distinguished Americans, and occasionally preached at their services, thus helping them by his influence and presence.

At a public meeting this year, Mr. Spurgeon related an anecdote which beautifully illustrates the amount of good that may be done through little quiet means, by any one whose heart is set on benefiting mankind :—"I have very seldom found it 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,' said he, '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." Blessed are they who sow beside all waters!

In September, 1875, Mr. Spurgeon was called to take a leading part in a very unusual ceremony. In the town of Kettering, about eighty miles to the north of London, in the year 1775, a young man named Toller was inducted into the pastorate of the "Great Meeting House," in that town. For half a century he held this pastorate, till called to his reward. He was succeeded by his son, who had now held it the same number of years. Thus the one pastorate had been held by father and son for one hundred years. It was determined to celebrate this auspicious event by a Baptist Centennial Convention. Pastor Spurgeon was invited to take the leading part in this service. About ten thousand persons assembled in a meadow to hear the great London orator; and the proceedings were of a very high order. The Scripture lesson selected was Psalm lxxi.; which was described as the old man's psalm. After prayer and singing Mr. Spurgeon announced the text, "O God, thou hast taught me from my youth; and hitherto have I declared thy wondrous works. Now also when I am old and gray headed, O God, forsake me not; until I have showed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come." Psalm lxxi.: 17, 18. The leading thoughts of this sermon were as follows:

"I. *The Psalmist's Scholarship*.—Converted people should be learners. David went to school, and was mighty in the Scriptures. Let us then read

our Bibles. David began early. The same was told of Mr. Toller, and he (Mr. S.) was baptized at sixteen, and wished it was seventeen years earlier ! We grow like early planted trees, and have none of those horrid remembrances which are a cross to many who are reclaimed late in life. The preacher when a child was greatly puzzled by seeing an apple in a vial on his grandfather's mantelpiece ; how the apple got there was as profound a secret as the source of the Nile, but all became clear when it was shown that the vial was taken to the tree to have the tiny apple placed within it when it grew. Hence the young promote their own happiness by entering the church early to grow up in it.

"II. *The Believer's Occupation.*—David's occupation was to declare God's works. This was the kernel, all else was but the shell. Some appear scarcely to think of this—the duty of acquainting others with the blessings they themselves have found. Is there such a thing as a secret Christian ? Who knows of one ? 'I do !' you say. Well, the fact that you *know* him is a proof that he is not a secret Christian. Are such deserters, or are they merely persons of retiring habits ? That soldier was of retiring habits who ran away from the field on the day of battle. David, however, proclaimed God's works, and Mr. Toller had done the same for fifty-five years. Let us have a theology full of God and not of man. This is the grandest theme one can take up, and it was the Psalmist's theme. Let them keep to the atonement and all the blessed doctrines of grace. Bring out the old, well-tried guns now that such enemies as Ritualism and Popery confronted them. The preacher had a grandfather who preached the same doctrines from early life to old age, and Mr. Toller could say that the things he loved in youth he loved still. They would note, further, that David's style was commendable. He spoke positively, and his object was to win sinners. What are we doing ? All should do something : no man should keep his gift to himself ; we must not play at being Christians. It is a poor, miserable thing to be half-and-half. Some can sit in a pew-corner, and when they have heard a good sermon they say, ' Bless the Lord ! ' or they are passengers in the Gospel coach who can do no more than find fault with the horses, coachman, guard, and all about them.

"III. *David's Prayer, 'Forsake me not.'*—Is it not remarkable that so many of the people mentioned in the Bible as having fallen into sin are old people ? Experienced coachmen tell us that the horses are more likely to fall at the bottom of a hill than elsewhere. Old age may be over-confident, or it may be harrassed by too many fears. They have need of sustaining grace to the last ; and on the other hand, God never forsakes old servants.

"IV. *David's Wish.*—He desired to bear one more testimony to his God. The aged and the weak show forth God's strength, and they were often the best evidences of the truth of religion. Such, indeed, was the elder Toller, who, after serving in the ministry nearly fifty years, liked his Master so well, that he brought up his son to the same blessed work."

The sermon occupied about one hour and a quarter in its delivery, and was listened to with profound attention throughout.

Before the winter set in the pastor had again to seek a more genial clime, and departed to seek rest and alleviation from pain at Mentone, in the south of France.

At the annual church meeting in January, 1876, the report for the past year showed an encouraging state of progress in all departments. The church membership exhibited a net increase of 136. The weekly offerings at the Tabernacle had amounted to near ten thousand dollars. The Colportage Association had employed forty-seven men. Other branches of work were equally prosperous.

A remarkable event took place on March 1, at the orphanage. A meeting was held to provide funds for that institution, at which were present Revs. John Spurgeon, Charles H. Spurgeon, and Thomas Spurgeon. Thus three generations addressed the same meeting. Such scenes are very touching and afford matter of gratitude. The grandfather called attention to the circumstance of twenty years before, when C. H. Spurgeon preached at his grandfather's jubilee. Three generations were also present then; and now one had passed away to higher scenes of action, but a new generation had taken his place. This is true apostolic succession!

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## CHAPTER XVIII.

SERVICE TO OUTSIDERS—STATISTICS OF MEMBERSHIP—FLOWER MISSION—  
PASTORAL SILVER WEDDING.

ONE great element of the continued success of Mr. Spurgeon's work is its aggressive character, ever seeking to carry out the parting injunction of the risen Saviour, "Go ye out into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." He is constantly trying to reach the masses of the people who are outside the pale of church influence.

On Sunday evening, July 16, 1876, an unusual service was held. The pastor specially requested that all the regular attendants and members would absent themselves, in order that the outsiders might be accommodated for once. The request was faithfully complied with, and the Tabernacle crammed with a dense mass of non-church goers; crowds, in fact, failed to gain admittance, and an open air service was held with these in front of the building. Many conversions and additions to the church resulted. Encouraged by this success, the experiment was repeated October 22, and again in the following May. By such means as these are the outside masses in our large cities to be reached. When Zion can arise and shake herself from the dust of indifference, she will put on her beautiful garments, and help the world to the Cross of Christ.

A successful series of revival services was held in the Tabernacle from October 30 to November 10, conducted chiefly by the college students.

At the annual church meeting in January, 1877, another cheering report was given, the total membership being now 4,938. In order that the

reader may perceive at a glance the steady growth and uninterrupted prosperity of the church organization, we offer the following statistics. When Mr. Spurgeon first commenced his labors the membership was about one hundred.

| Close of Year. | Member-ship. | Gross increase. | Clear increase. | Close of Year. | Member-ship. | Gross increase. | Clear increase. |
|----------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1854           | 313          |                 |                 | 1866           | 3458         | 447             | 165             |
| 1855           | 595          | 282             | 282             | 1867           | 3682         | 413             | 224             |
| 1856           | 860          | 279             | 265             | 1868           | 3888         | 452             | 206             |
| 1857           | 1046         | 216             | 186             | 1869           | 4047         | 451             | 159             |
| 1858           | 1183         | 231             | 137             | 1870           | 4165         | 409             | 118             |
| 1859           | 1332         | 217             | 149             | 1871           | 4165         | 312             | —               |
| 1860           | 1494         | 217             | 162             | 1872           | 4473         | 571             | 308             |
| 1861           | 1875         | 439             | 381             | 1873           | 4503         | 359             | 30              |
| 1862           | 2227         | 463             | 352             | 1874           | 4681         | 509             | 178             |
| 1863           | 2555         | 427             | 328             | 1875           | 4813         | 510             | 132             |
| 1864           | 2937         | 486             | 382             | 1876           | 4938         | —               | 125             |
| 1865           | 3293         | 497             | 356             |                |              |                 |                 |

A living membership of about five thousand Christians, in a church where the strictest discipline is carried out, is in itself a stupendous charge, such as has never perhaps been surpassed. The ordinary mind falls back in amazement at the contemplation of the duties and responsibilities of such a pastoral charge. When to this is added the other important institutions in connection with this church, its college, orphanage, almshouses, missions, schools, etc., etc., and then think that all this has been the production instrumentally of one man, in less than a quarter of a century, we feel the sublimity of human greatness, and pray that, for the world's sake, such men may be multiplied in all nations.

One important element of success in all churches consists in that tact which finds employment for all that will work in the cause, in that sphere which is best adapted to their position and capabilities. In churches where all work is left with the pastor, who is looked upon as a sort of paid agent to do his own work, and that of everybody else, there will generally be found dissatisfaction, grumbling, spiritual death. Keep the members employed, and in most cases the church will be healthy and aggressive.

This idea is pretty well understood at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, and probably accounts for the united, harmonious spirit that has always characterized this huge body.

In the year 1877, a Flower Mission was commenced by that class of young ladies who have considerable leisure on their hands. Every Wednesday boxes of flowers are cut by those having gardens, and sent to the Tabernacle. Here they are taken in charge by young ladies, and arranged in elegant bouquets, and distributed free to the various infirmaries and hospitals in London. How much happiness this work will give to the sick poor, while away from home, can never be told. It is something to feel

in the depth of sorrow and weakness, that, though poor and lowly, somebody cares for us ; and such attention to the helpless is its own reward.

On June 19, the pastor celebrated his forty-third birthday. Some thousands gathered at the Orphanage at Stockwell, to offer their congratulations ; prominent among these were the mothers of many of the inmates. He preached to the assembled friends a short sermon from these words :—"I have learned by experience that the Lord hath blessed me for thy sake." Gen. xxx : 27. The subject was chosen with his usual tact, and he freely acknowledged the blessings he had himself received through his own people.

"The quality of mercy is not strained ;  
It droppeth, as the gentle rain from heaven,  
Upon the place beneath ; it is twice blessed ;  
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes."

The winter of 1877-8, had mostly to be spent at Mentone. From this place he writes under date February 7, to his congregation :

"MY BELOVED FRIENDS,—After enjoying a few restful nights and active days, I feel myself coming round again, and my heart is full of praise and thanksgiving to our glorious God. Your prayers have been incessant, and have prevailed, and I am very grateful to you all. So long as I am able to do so, it will be my pleasure to be of service to you, and my only grief has been that my sickness weakened my powers and rendered me less able to discharge my happy duties among you. The post I occupy needs a man at his best, and I have of late been very much the reverse. However, we know who it is that giveth strength to the faint, and so we trust that feeble efforts have not been ineffectual. I shall be deeply indebted to the goodness of our Lord if the remainder of my rest shall confirm the beneficial work which has commenced. I have feared that my mind would fail me. That fear is now gone ; but I cannot tell how I should feel if I were in the thick of the work at once. The further repose will, I hope, make me stronger for the future. I have not yet heard tidings of the special services, but I hope every member is at work to make them a success. Pray about them ; speak about them ; attend them ; assist in them ; bring others to them. Our two Evangelists are the right instruments ; but the hand is needed to work by them. Call upon him whose hand it is, and he will work according to his own good pleasure. The times are such that churches holding the old truths had need be active and energetic, that the power of the Gospel may be manifest to all. We need to uplift a banner because of the truth. So numerous a church as ours may accomplish great things by the power of the Holy Ghost if only we are downright in earnest. Playing at religion is wretched ; it is everything or it is nothing. Peace with you all and abiding love. Your hearty friend,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

By March 17, he had so far recovered as to be able to resume his duties at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. The building was crowded to its utmost capacity and hundreds had to go away. Pastor Spurgeon preached with



his old vigor, in the morning from Job xxxvi : 2, "I have yet to speak on God's behalf." The lesson he drew from these words was, that it was the duty and the privilege of all Christians to be ever inculcating the truths of the gospel, by their words and by their lives ; and applying the words to himself, he said his tongue was once more loosed, and it was with unfeigned joy that he could yet speak on God's behalf. Thousands present rejoiced with him on the prospect of his restoration.

The malady, however, appears to be increasing each year. In the following August he was suffering from another attack, which prevented his appearance in public. The following letter written from his sick chamber was read to his congregation :—

"NIGHTINGALE LANE, CLAPHAM.

"DEAR FRIENDS,—Up to the last moment of yesterday evening I cherished the resolution of preaching to you, and prepared a sermon accordingly, although I was in great pain. This morning I found myself quite unable to rise, for I am afflicted in head, shoulders, and neck with fierce rheumatism ; and therefore I must lie still, and endeavor patiently to bear the great Father's will. I am grieved to my heart to be so often laid aside, but I am in hope that in this instance the evil will not last many days. I will be with you on Thursday if able to move. I cannot tell why these afflictions are sent, but I entreat your prayers that they may be sanctified to my own growth in grace and your edification. With warmest love, your afflicted pastor,

C. H. SPURGEON."

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

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

Amid the rejoicings of this happy occasion, it was a matter of profound regret that the beloved pastor could not be present. He had had again to seek entire rest during the winter months at Mentone. His heart, however, was in the movement that was going on, and from his sick chamber he sent the following eloquent appeal :—"Money spent in superfluities can never yield a thousandth part of the pleasure which flows into a Christian heart from acts of benevolence. Too often do we forget the need which is in the

world because it does not come under our own eye, and so we miss the joy of aiding to alleviate it. There is crushing distress in a thousand homes; the bread-winner lies cold in the grave, the bread is scant on the table and hardly earned, the widow is sickening under toil beyond her strength, and the children are pining for lack of bare necessities, though before their father's death they never knew a want. Bitter is her woe, and the world's heart is cold. To whom shall the widow turn? Where shall the fatherless find a helper? Where, but with God and those who love him? Jesus would clasp the little ones in his arms if he were here, and bid the widow weep no more; his disciples should do in his behalf what he would personally do if he were among us in person. We plead now for nothing that can strengthen a party, or promote our own personal comfort; no sectarian aspiration or political ambition mingles with this purely philanthropic work, and therefore our earnestness is unchecked by the suspicion that a sinister motive can be imputed to us. Pure religion and undefiled deals with the widows and the fatherless, and for Christ's sake we should abound therein."

It must have gladdened the soul of the sick pastor to hear of such munificent liberality and to know that one of the benevolent institutions that lay so near his heart had now been placed in a secure position.

In the summer of 1879, Dr. Hurst, of Drew Seminary, Madison, N. J., while on a European tour wrote home his impressions of Mr. Spurgeon as he appeared to him last year in contrast with when he heard him twenty-two years ago, and says: "He is still the prince of London preachers. He has Anglo-Saxon grit and pluck, and you might as well tell the thunder blast to stop, as to attempt to control Spurgeon. He has not the incisive force of former years. He is as deep-sighted, has that same grand metallic ring of voice, and knows how to play on the audience with the old masterful skill; but lacks the cleaving and lifting power of the older days of adventure and initiative. He seems to be more conscious of a critical atmosphere about him." But the judgment of any one who hears Mr. Spurgeon only once or twice is not likely to be either correct or final.

On the great question of total abstinence Mr. Spurgeon is very pronounced. He does not hesitate to declare himself an abstainer, and his sons have been scrupulously training in the same principle. Young Charles when only nine years of age made a little temperance speech, and declared that he had been a total abstainer all his life.

When Mr. Gough paid his recent visit to England, he met with a cordial support from Mr. Spurgeon, and the great Tabernacle was open to him, where he addressed the vast multitudes that crowded to hear the renowned American orator. As an acknowledgment of favors conferred, and a memento of his successful trans-Atlantic trip, Mr. Gough has recently sent Mr. Spurgeon a handsome gold-headed ebony walking-cane and one hundred and twenty-five dollars for Mrs. Spurgeon's Book Fund.

After several weeks spent in the south of France Mr. Spurgeon resumed his duties at the Tabernacle last spring, and is still ministering to his beloved people Sunday after Sunday. Crowds as large as ever flock to the services, and all the various machinery of Gospel work is being carried on with its accustomed vigor and efficiency. The Pastor's College is preparing earnest, hard-working ministers for the future. The Orphanages are doing their Christ-like mission. May the blessing of God continue to rest on Pastor Spurgeon and his work.

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### CONCLUSION.

HAVING thus endeavored to trace the history of the life of one whose name has become a household word throughout christendom, and also the rise and progress of one of the largest individual church organizations, if not the largest England has ever seen, we finish our task with the pleasing reflection that we are not presenting to the reader in the *Life of Spurgeon* and the history of the great Tabernacle a record of *things of the past*.

At the present time, 1880, Mr. Spurgeon lives, and wields a greater power than ever; and with the exception of the painful "family legacy," his constitution seems unimpaired and his mental force unabated. He is still some years under fifty; and as his grandfather lived, in spite of rheumatic gout to be eighty eight, and his father is still living, let us hope and pray that his valuable life may be spared many years to come.

The world needs such men, and will need many of them, before the millennial glory shall dawn on our sin-smitten humanity. Mr. Spurgeon's influence is cosmopolitan. Although his immediate work is in the British metropolis, he speaks to the whole world, and all nations are benefited by his teachings.

The Metropolitan Tabernacle is also a thing of the present. Its vast organization was never in a more healthy, prosperous condition than today. It never had so many church members or more crowded congregations. The converting glory is upon it in richer effusion than ever; and the holy enthusiasm for propagating the glad tidings of salvation to perishing sinners is still all aglow. Long may it continue to send forth a stream of heavenly blessing to the ends of the earth!

The perusal of the simplest account of such a life and such a work should stir up within us all that is brave, manly, and virtuous, and fire us with a holy zeal for usefulness. We dare not say to all our readers, "Go and do thou likewise," knowing that there is only one Charles Haddon Spurgeon in the world, and few men are possessed of such force of character and brain power; but each of us has some talents intrusted to his custody for usefulness in the Master's vineyard. Let us determine before God, that whatever power he has given us shall be, like Spurgeon's, CONSECRATED TO THE LORD, and fully employed; so that though we may not be able to achieve as much as he has, we may all do what we can, and generations to come may bless God that we ever lived.

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