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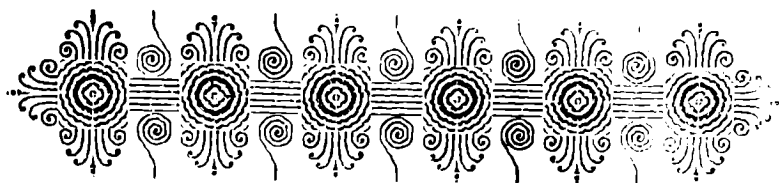
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THE
Sword and the Trowel.

OCTOBER, 1896.

The Great Invitation.

A SERMON, BY C. H. SPURGEON, PREACHED IN 1866.

FORWARDED BY PASTOR T. W. MEDHURST, CARDIFF.

"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."—John vii. 37, 38.



HERE is, doubtless, something suggestive in the occasion upon which our Lord Jesus Christ uttered these words, as well as in the posture He assumed when He spoke them. *The occasion upon which He made this declaration was, "the last day, that great day of the feast."* Some commentators try to make a great point of a certain, probably absurd, ceremonial, which they say was practised by the Jews on this particular day,—that of drawing water out of the Pool of Siloam, and pouring it out in the presence of the crowd. We have no clear evidence that such a ceremony was ever practised; but if it was observed, as it was not Scriptural, nor ordained of God, it must have been only a matter of superstition (even as infant sprinkling is down to the present time), and Christ would not have in any way accorded to it His sanction. There may be something convincing in the fact that, on this particular day, according to the Jewish law, the people were commanded to do no servile work, and that among such works were to be numbered the hewing of wood and drawing of water. Inasmuch as upon that day, therefore, they could not lawfully draw water, we believe they did not take any out of the Pool of Siloam, as by some it is alleged. Seeing they were thus prohibited from drawing water on

The "Spurgeon Memorial" Sermon Society.

TWO NEW DEVELOPMENTS OF THE WORK.

FOR a long time, the workers in connection with the "Spurgeon Memorial" Sermon Society have felt the need of a number of the Sermons for *free distribution*, in addition to the regular circulation of them from house to house as loan tracts. This lack has now been supplied, for a large special edition of the latest twelve-page Sermons has been purchased from the publishers at a great reduction, and they are now offered, neatly covered with tinted wrappers, at the exceedingly low price of 2s. 6d. per 100, carriage 6d. extra on any quantity. All applications for them must be sent, with remittance, to Mr. W. Taverner, 72, The Drive, Brighton. Any friends desiring to avail themselves of this opportunity should apply soon, as the offer cannot be repeated after the clearance of the quantity now in stock.

The Secretary has received so many requests for the extension of the Society's operations by means of *Mr. Spurgeon's Sermons in the Welsh language* that the time appears to have come when definite steps should be taken for the translation and publication of a sufficient number of discourses to furnish workers in the Principality with complete sets (50) for loan-distribution. The cost of such an effort must necessarily be considerable, and Mrs. Spurgeon has such a number of foreign translations depending upon her special fund for this purpose, that she can only aid the new effort to a comparatively small extent. The Secretary believes, from the information furnished to him, that the love of Welsh Christians of all denominations for Mr. Spurgeon and his Sermons is so intense, that they will gladly furnish the funds that will be needed; *will all who are able and willing to help kindly communicate direct with Mr. Taverner at the address given above?* He will also be glad to hear from any ministers or churches where he can have, during November, the use of the chapels for the lantern lecture on "*The Life and Work of C. H. Spurgeon*," in aid of the Welsh Sermon Fund.

The regular work of the Society continues to progress with unabated rapidity, and instances of the Lord's blessing upon the Sermons are constantly being reported. One of the most recent cases is that of a man who, for a long while, refused to receive either the messenger or the message. One friend, however, made a special effort to reach him, and took him the discourse entitled, *The Turning Point*,—the one with the coloured cover representing the prodigal leaving the swine. This brought him to the Saviour's feet; he is now a distributor of the Sermons, and since he started in the service he has sold nearly the whole of his set (50) among his readers.

Including the special edition mentioned in the first paragraph, and the Sermons already in circulation, nearly a million and three-quarters have been received or ordered by the Memorial Society; add these to the many millions distributed through other agencies, and it is easy to believe that the beloved preacher is addressing even larger audiences than during his lifetime on earth. To God be all the glory for ever and ever!

Dr. Churcher's Medical Mission Work.

AUGUST and September are reckoned the most trying months of the year in Tunisia, and I am glad that the first is now past. We had three days of hot wind, which wrought much mischief; it scorched thousands of vines, and even caused the death of several persons.

During the month, 264 visits have been paid me, and I have received from the Arabs for medicines, &c., £9 4s.; this sum goes far towards pay-

ing for the medicines, but as, *in addition*, it is the only money available to meet the rent of mission premises, wages of door-keepers, &c., &c., I find it difficult to keep a balance in hand. I long to be able, not only to give medicine free to the very poor (as we do), but also, for a time, to feed poor sick folk, to whom medicine alone is of little value. If any friends are moved to send me help for this special purpose, I shall be very grateful. This matter is pressed upon me just now because our new *baraka*, containing five rooms, is at last in our possession, and we are thus able to shelter indigent patients for Christ's sake. To give such help is quite in accord with Mohammedan ideas, as to feed people for God's sake is a form of virtue much practised among pious Moslems, the person helped being called "dief Allah"—God's guest.

I am quite touched, sometimes, by the sad cases which come to me. A few days ago, on opening the door, a poor Bedouin woman came sliding in, in a sitting posture, her ulcerated foot being so bad that this was the only way she could get about. Another woman, from a distance, had received a cruel blow from a stick, which had torn away half the cornea of her eye, and she was suffering terribly. I should like to be able to give any person coming to me three days' entertainment as "God's guest." The cost would be about sixpence per day, and during that time one might hope that they would get a fairly clear idea of the gospel message. It seems almost absurd to *expect* that a perfectly ignorant Arab,—especially a woman,—can learn much by a single visit paid to us amid all the bustle of a medical mission. It is most encouraging, however, to see how they do respond to God's truth, and *apparently* receive the good news, so that one is quite sure that this is *the* key to unlock their hearts.

One day, this month, we visited the village of KALA SERRERE, the first station on our new railway; and we had a good time there. A former patient found us out, and took us to the welcome shade of his garden, while some ladies of our party visited and preached in the village. I remained, and after a time had quiet talks and consultations with those who came,—about twenty in all. My wife, speaking to one woman about Jesus Christ, asked her if she knew about Him. "No," said the poor soul, and then, quite seriously, she asked, "Does He live in Soussa?"

I hope to visit other villages on my free days, but the expense of hiring, often amounting to 10s. or 12s., is a serious difficulty. I am always grateful to the dear friends who contribute to the PASTORS' COLLEGE MISSIONARY ASSOCIATION, and so relieve me from care as to my daily bread, and free me to witness for Christ in this dark land. I would ask their continued prayers, that we may not fail of the Lord's good will concerning us.

Soussa, Tunisia.

T. GILLARD CHURCHER.

Notices of Books.

Any Book reviewed or advertised in this Magazine will be forwarded by Messrs. Passmore and Alabaster on receipt of Postal Order for the published price.

Barbed Arrows from the Quiver of C. H. Spurgeon. Passmore and Alabaster. Price 2s. 6d.

THIS little volume is a fitting companion to Mr. Spurgeon's popular work, *Feathers and Arrows*, which has reached its thirty-second thousand. Pastor Charles Spurgeon has here collected from his dear father's Sermons a varied and useful assort-

ment of the illustrations, anecdotes, similes, &c., used by the beloved preacher. The book ought to be of great service to preachers and teachers and all Christian workers. The extracts are arranged alphabetically, according to subjects, and at the end of each letter are little heaps of arrow-points, such as John Ploughman often used with most happy effect.