

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL
VOLUME 2

by C.H. Spurgeon

BATTLING AND BUILDING

BY ERIC W. HAYDEN

DONNINGTON WOOD, SHROPSHIRE, ENGLAND

On the first day of January, 1865, there appeared in England a new religious monthly magazine. It was soon to become well known on the other side of the Atlantic and in many other countries of the world. *The Sword and the Trowel* was the title given by Charles Haddon Spurgeon to his new venture (soon to be nicknamed “The Soap and Towel” by his college students!). The subtitle was: “A Record of Combat with Sin and labor for the Lord.” Referring to Nehemiah 4:17,18, Spurgeon aimed at a magazine that would provide material for working and ammunition for warring (battling and building with sword and trowel).

Spurgeon saw the magazine as “an extension of his pulpit ministry” and an opportunity of “urging the claims of Christ’s cause, of advocating the revival of godliness, of denouncing error, of bearing witness for truth, and of encouraging the laborers in the Lord’s vineyard.”

The magazine was used to inform interested friends of the work and witness of The Metropolitan Tabernacle, London, and also other Spurgeonic institutions: college, orphanage, almshouse, colportage association, and the many mission stations connected with the Tabernacle. But primarily it was “to supplement our weekly sermon.”

The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit sermons have been reprinted on several occasions, although not in their entirety as a set as at present by Pilgrim Publications. *The Sword and the Trowel* contents, however, have never been reprinted, yet they contain a wealth of biographical material about Spurgeon, sermons not included in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit* volumes, interesting book reviews, and many rare and choice contributions about many subjects by Spurgeon himself. Many of his published works first saw the light of day in his magazine: *The Treasury of David*, *Lectures to My Students*, *John Ploughman’s Talks*, *The Bible and the Newspaper*, *Eccentric Preachers*. to name but a few.

The extracts from these volumes will show the reader the kind of comments on then current events, fashions, theological trends, the state of the Baptist denomination and the Christian church at large. Some of the book reviews are examples for reviewers today, they are so honest. No wonder Spurgeon's son, Thomas, said that it would be "better for the Sword to rust in its scabbard, and the Trowel to be buried beneath a mountain of rubbish, than. for the magazine established by C. H. Spurgeon ever to be disloyal to him."

The author of this capsule history had the privilege of occupying the editorial chair of the magazine for several years while Pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle. Some years later a notice appeared by his successor to the Pastorate, declaring: "It is with much sorrow that we announce that we are having to cease publication of *The Sword and the Trowel*." The last issue was December 1968.

The magazine has been restarted by the present Pastor of the Tabernacle but is only a shadow of its former self. It is now described as "a tract for the times" and contains a sermon by the Tabernacle minister. Domestic news of the Tabernacle is issued separately. Gone are the book reviews, news of other Spurgeonic institutions and other articles of interest to admirers of C. H. Spurgeon.

It is splendid that Pilgrim Publications is re-issuing the works of Spurgeon from the original volumes of *The Sword and the Trowel*, allowing the Christian public a view of Spurgeon as an editor for thirty-six years.

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THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL

A RECORD

OF

COMBAT WITH SIN & LABOR FOR THE LORD.

EDITED BY C. H. SPURGEON.

1868.

“They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one With one of his hands wrought in the work,’ and with the other hand held a weapon. For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me.” — Nehemiah 4:17, 18.

PREFACE.

ESTEEMED READER,

Take thought of mortality from the gliding away of the years. It seems but yesterday that the bells rang in the young 1868, and now in the sere, and yellow leaf, shivering with old age, we must lay it in its tomb. What a rapid wing has life!

Time's an band's breadth; 'tis a talc;
'Tis a vessel under sail;
'Tis an eagle in its way,
Darting down upon its prey;
'Tis an arrow in its flight,
Mocking the pursuing sight;
'Tis a short-lived fading flower;
'Tis a rainbow on a shower;
'Tis a momentary ray,
Smiling in a winter's day;
'Tis a shadow; 'tis a dream;
'Tis the closing watch of night,
Dying at the rising light;
'Tis a bubble; 'tis a sigh;
Be prepared, O man, to die!

The gentleness of the Lord has brought us to another halting-place in the pilgrimage of life, and as we conclude another volume of our Magazine, it is well to sit down on the milestone to consider many things of the past, and debate with one's self on matters which dimly shadow themselves in the future. It is of little use idly to regret what might have been done in that period which is now numbered "with the years beyond the flood;" but to shame ourselves into increased activity by the painful remembrance of neglects and lethargies may be of lasting benefit. To weep over the sepulchers of dead days will bless no one, unless the tears are salted with holy repentance, and help the eyes which shed them to see the duties which are crowding all around. That we have not done what we ought to have done is certain: to sin again after the same fashion is easy; to gird up our loins for the future is a pressing necessity. It is a sweet mercy from the God of grace when we can honestly feel that our days have not been absolutely barren. If some glory has redounded from us to our Redeemer, and some

benefit to his church, let the Spirit of God have all the praise. From the sovereign grace of God we derive our spiritual life itself, that which comes of it is therefore not ours to glory in; by the everflowing bounty of heaven we are daily renewed in strength, all therefore which is wrought by that strength, must be ascribed unto the Lord our helper.

What more can be attempted for our Lord in the remaining portion of our lives? If there be a possibility of more, let us search it out. Wise husbandry and greater diligence may yet increase the harvest of the Great Owner of the vineyard. Cannot each of us pray more, give more, work more, love more? — that last word will be the insurance of all that went before it. This being settled, what matters it what strange apparitions rise amid the mists of craning years! New trials await us, doubtless, but if our Beloved is ours and we are his, and are daily proving the double fact, by our consecrated lives, what cause is there for anxiety? All must be well if the heart be right with heaven. It is true we know not the future, and it has been well observed that “we can become familiar with a landscape; we know where to find the waterfall, and the shady ledge where the violets grow in spring, and the sassafras gives forth its odors; but we can never become familiar with our life-scape; we can never tell where we shall come upon the shady dell, or where the fountains will gush and the birds sing.” Yet one thing we know, yonder stand the everlasting hills of divine faithfulness, and if heaven and earth shall pass away, these are among the things which cannot be shaken. There they stand in solemn majesty: and we will lift up our eyes to the hills whence cometh our help.

SUBSCRIBERS AND FRIENDS,

We are glad that we have won your lenient judgments during another year. It certainly has not been by any reticence of our peculiar views. We have waged determined war with Popery, for ours is pro-eminently

A PROTESTANT MAGAZINE,

But we fight against doctrinal Popery, not in Rome alone, but at Oxford too. To us the sacramentarianism of the English Church is not a thing to be winked at. We hold that he who hates Popery because of its antichristian teaching, will never stay his hand because it assumes a Protestant dress. The English Church is so Popish in its catechism, its baptismal service, and much of its ritualism, that it must not so much be reformed as transformed.

These are not times to keep this matter in the background, and we have not done so.

In all ways we have sought to aid honest Christian work wherever we have seen it. Our desire is to stimulate the zeal of believers and lead them on in the aggressive policy which is bound up with true religious life. The Magazine has fostered the young movement of English Colportage, destined in some more earnest day to be one of our mightiest agencies. Thanks to unflagging friends, the College remains in unabated vigor, and derives no little aid from the *Sword and Trowel*, which brings it before so many minds and hearts. Last but not least, the Stockwell Orphanage, the child of the Magazine, bearing the Sword and Trowel over its entrance, owes a large amount of its contributions to our generous readers. That work as to the building's, will be completed in a few weeks, but the dear children must be supported, and we cannot do better than close our preface by reminding our readers that it will make Christmas all the merrier if in every household a portion is set apart for our orphans.

The Lord bless and keep all his people. Brethren, pray for

Your willing servant,
C. H. Spurgeon

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL

JANUARY, 1868.

A HAPPY NEW YEAR

BY C. H. SPURGEON.

SOUTHEY, in his “Solemn Thoughts for New Year’s-day,” bids the melancholy moralizer gather a dark and wintry wreath to engarland the sepulcher of time, “for” saith he,

*“I pour the dirge of the departed days —
For well the funeral song
Befits this solemn hour.”*

His muse is, however, interrupted in its somber meditations by the delightful peals which hail “the consecrated, day,” and the poet exclaims —

*“But hark! even now the merry bells ring round
With clamorous joy to welcome in this day.”*

The interruption was most opportune: “the dark-stoical maid of melancholy, with stern and frowning front,” may very fitly be dismissed until a more convenient season, for there is much that is cheery and exhilarating in the advent of “that blithe morn which ushers in the year.” Hope, earth’s one abiding angel, whispers of happiness now arriving, and makes our sluggish blood leap in our veins at the thought of the good new year. We feel like sailors who have finished one voyage and are commencing another amidst-hurras and joyous shoutings: we are full of anticipation of the future, and are relieved by the departure of the past. The kindly salutation, “I wish you a happy new year,” rings sweetly with lingering chimes of Christmas, and harmonizes well with the merry peals which bid adieu to the departed, and welcome the coming Son of Time. The vision of thought in which we see “the skirts of the departing, year,” ‘is viewed with sober cheerfulness, and the foresight of .better days to come fills the house with social glee. Human nature is so fascinated with the bare idea of novelty, that although time runs on like a river in whose

current there is an unbroken monotony, yet the arbitrary landmarks which man has erected upon the shore, exercise a bewitching power over the imagination, and make us dream that on a New Year's morning the waves of time roll onward with a froster force, and flash with a brighter sheen. There is no real difference between the first of January and any other day in the calendar — the first of May is lovelier far — and yet because of its association with a new period, it is a day of days, the day of the year, first among three hundred and more of comrades. Evermore let it be so. If it be a foible to observe the season, then long live the *weakness*. We prize the pensive song in its season, but we are not among those “to whom all sounds of mirth are dissonant.” The steaming flagon which our ancestors loved so well to drain, the lambs' wool, and the wassail bowl are as well forgotten, and other of their ancient New Year's customs are more honored in the breach than in the observance; but not so the cheerful greetings and warm good wishes so suitable to the hour. We feel jubilant at the prospect of the coming day, and are half inclined to sing a verso or two of the old wassail ballad, and pass our hat round for our Orphan House.

*“God bless the master of this house,
Likewise the mistress too,
And all the little children
That round the table go.*

*Good master and mistress, .
While you're sitting by the fire,
Pray think of those poor children
Who are wandering in the mire.”*

English life has too little of cheerful observance and festive anniversary to relieve its dullness; there are but two real breaks in the form of holidays in the whole twelve months of toil; birth-days and new-year's-days are at least semi-festivals, let them be kept up by all means, and celebrated by every family. Strew the path of labor with at least a few roses, for thorns are plentiful enough. Never may we cease to hail with pleasure the first day of the first month, which is the beginning of months unto us. Let not old Time turn over another page of eternity and truth, and find his children indifferent to the solemnity, or ungrateful for the long-suffering which permits them to enjoy their little span of life. If others decline to unite with us, we are, nevertheless, not ashamed to confess that we adhere to the cheerful custom, and find it not inconsistent with the spirit of the church of God. We meet together at the last hour of the year, and prayerfully await

the stroke of midnight, that we may consecrate the first moment of the new year with notes of holy song; then, having dropped each one of us his offering into the treasury of the Lord, we return to our homes in the clear frosty air, blessing the Preserver of men that we have shared in the devotions of one more watchnight, and have witnessed the birth of another year of grace. If we do not hasten to the houses of our friends with presents and congratulations, as our lively French neighbors are wont to do, yet, with many an honest grip of the hand and cordial greeting, we utter our good wishes and renew our friendships; and then in our private devotions we “breathe low the secret prayer, that God would shed his blessing on the head of all.” Nor does the influence of our midnight worship end with the motion of our minds towards friendly well-wishing, for the devout are quickened in the way of godly meditation, and led to prepare for that day of days for which all other days were made. Returning from the solemn meeting we have felt as he did who wrote —

*“The middle watch is past! Another year
Dawns on the human race with hope and fear:
The last has gone with mingled sigh and song’,
To join for ever its ancestral throng;
And time reveals
As past it steals,
The potent hand of God, the Everlasting,
Guiding the sun, with all his blazing peers,
And filling up the measure of our years,
Until Messiah, Prince, to judgment hasting,
Shall roll the darkness from this world of sin,
And bid a bright eternity begin.”*

Wisdom is not content with sentiment and compliment, but would fain gather solid instruction: she admires the flowers but she garners the wheat, and therefore she proposes the inquiry, “What is the message of the New Year to the watchers who listen so silently for the bell which strikes the twelfth hour of the night?” O thou newly-sent prophet, hearken to the question of the wise, and tell us what is the burden of thy prophecy! We are all waiting; teach us, and we will learn! We discern not thy form as thou passest before our faces, but there is silence, and we hear thy voice, suing, “Mortals, before ye grow weary of me, and call me old and long, as ye did the year which has passed, I will deliver to you my tidings. As a new year, I bring with me the promise of *new mercies*, like a golden casket stored with jewels. God will not forget you. The rock of your salvation changes

not; your Father who is in heaven will still be gracious to you. Think not because the present is wintry, that the sun will never shine, for I have in store for you both the lovely flowers of spring and the ripe fruits of summer, while autumn's golden sheaves shall follow in their season. The black wing of the raven shall vanish, and the voice of the turtle shall be heard in your land. Providence has prepared surprises of gladness for the sorrowful; unexpected boons will it cast into the lap of the needy; therefore let hope, like a dove, bear to the mourner the olive branch of peace, for the waters of grief shall be assuaged. Fresh springs shall bubble up amid the wastes, and new-lit stars shall cheer the gloom; the angel of Jehovah's presence goes before you, and makes the desert blossom as the rose. He who makes all things new will send his mercies new every morning, and fresh every evening, for great is his faithfulness. Yet boast not yourselves of to-morrow, nor even make sure of to-day, for I forewarn you of *new trials* and novel difficulties. In the unknown future, the days of darkness shall be many; rains will descend, floods will arise, and winds will blow, and blessed shall he be whose house is built upon a rock. Crosses will be laid upon you for every hour, and cares will molest every day. Pilgrims of earth, ye must hold yourselves ready to traverse thorny ways, which your feet have not trodden heretofore; have your loins well girt about you, lest the trials of the wilderness should come upon you unawares. Your road leads o'er the barren mountain's storm-vex'd height, and anon it dives into the swampy sunless valleys, and along it all you must bear more or less of affliction's heavy load; arm yourselves with patience and faith, for you will need them every step of the march to "Jerusalem the Golden." So surely as "the wintry wind moans deep and hollow o'er the leafless grove," tribulation will await you frequently, for man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward. Adversity is an estate entailed upon the sons of Adam. Learn this before it come to pass, that when it is come to *pass*, ye may not be surprised with any amazement. Be not, O children of God, dismayed at my message, neither let your harps be hung upon the willows, for I bring you tidings of *new grace*, proportionate to all your needs. Great is the strength which your covenant God will give you in the hour of your weakness, so great indeed that if all the afflictions of all mankind should meet upon the head of any one of you, he should yet be more than a conqueror through the mighty Lord who hath loved him. Onward, soldiers of the cross, where Jesus has led the way. The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath you are the everlasting arms. You are not called upon to go a warfare at your own charges, neither are you left alone in the battle:

the banner which waves over you bears the soul-assuring motto, 'Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord will provide.' Laborer in the vineyard of the Lord Jesus, I bring to thee *new opportunities* for usefulness; I introduce thee to fresh fields of service. Many great and effectual doors shall be opened during the twelve months of my sojourn, and they who are wise to win souls shall have grace to enter. The moments as they fly, if taken upon the wing, shall yield a wealth, of sacred opportunity: the frivolous shall ruin himself by suffering them to pass unheeded, while the watchful shall earn unto himself a good degree, by regarding the *signs* of the times and improving every occasion for promoting his Master's glory. Therefore, with earnest tones, I warn you that I bring *new responsibilities*, from which none of you can escape. For every golden moment you will be held responsible. O stewards of the manifold gifts of God, waste not your strength upon trifles, cast not away your priceless opportunities, fritter not away your precious hours: by the remembrance of eternity, I charge you live with an ardor of industry which will be worthy of remembrance in another world. O child of time, lay not up for thyself misery in the remembrance of misspent years, but live as in the presence of the all-seeing God. Believer in Jesus, gather jewels for his crown, and irradiate his name with glowing honors, so, as I pass away, thy record shall be on high, and thy reward in heaven. FAREWELL."

HEARD BUT NOT SEEN

THERE is a spot on the Lago Lugano, where the song of the nightingale swells sweetly from the thickets on the shore in matchless rush of music, so that the our Has motionless and the listener is hushed into silent entrancement; yet I did not see a single bird, the orchestra was as hidden as the notes were clear. Such is a virtuous life, and such the influence of modest holiness; the voice of excellence is heard when the excellent themselves are not *seen*. — *From my Note Book. C. H. S.*

THE ATTRACTIVE STATUE

YES, the people gathered in crowds around the statue, and looked at it again and again. It was not the finest work of art in the city, nor the most intrinsically attractive. *Why*, then, did the citizens of Verona stand in such clusters around the effigy of Dante on that summer's evening? Do you

guess the reason? It was a fete in honor of the poet? No, you are mistaken: it was but an ordinary evening, and there was nothing peculiar in the date or the events of the day. You shall not be kept in suspense, the reason was very simple, *the statue was new*, it had, in fact, only been unveiled the day before. Every one passes Dante now, having other things to think of; the citizens are well used to his solemn visage, and scarcely care that he stands among them. Is not this the way of men? I am sure it is their way with us ministers. New brooms sweep clean. What crowds follow a new man! how they tread upon one another to hear *him*, not because he is so very wise or eloquent, much less because he is eminently holy, but he is a new man, and curiosity must gratify itself! In a few short months, the idol of the hour is stale, flat, and unprofitable; he is a mediocrity; there are scores as good as he; indeed, another new man, at the end of the town, is far better. Away go the wonder-hunters! Folly brought them, folly removes them: babies must have new toys. — From *the Note Book of my Travels*. C. H. S.

EXTREME UNCTION AND THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

CARLYLE, the male Cassandra of the age, assures us that the straps which our ancestors invented to bind THE DEVIL, have one by one been cut, and that now hardly any limb of the great enemy has a tatter of rope or leather left upon it; in fact, he has become an emancipated gentleman, lithe of limb as in Adam and Eve's time, and scarcely a toe or finger of him tied any more. We are very much of Carlyle's opinion, at least, so far as ecclesiastical affairs are concerned, for it appears to us that the fiend has taken up his lodging in the Anglican establishment, with hoofs, horns, and tail complete, as of old; and yet, if we or others speak of things as they really are, all the sham charity and inert blockheadism, and pious cant of the nation are by-and-by offended, and cry, "Shocking, how fearfully uncharitable!" The dire fact that priestcraft grows bolder every hour, and gathers adherents daily, is undeniable; and a still more melancholy fact is quite as evident, namely, that the professors of evangelism within the establishment, evince more and more clearly their boundless capacity for dirt-eating, and their utter want of all capacity of every other sort. The Tractarian hunters have fairly chased the Evangelic hares out of their wits; they are bewildered, divided, powerless; and yet, if they would but dis sever themselves from ecclesiastical connection with those whom they so much

detest, their march to victory would be plain before them. If they would but come out of Babylon, they would not be partakers of her plagues: they ought to do so; they sin against God and the souls of men every hour they delay. It may help to nerve the timorous and arouse the indolent, if in a few pages, we give a specimen of Ritualism as it now is; we will present it with as little note and comment of our own as may be consistent, and it shall speak for itself. Two series of essays on questions of the day have been issued under the editorship of Rev. Orby Shipley, M.A.; most of them written by eminent Ritualists, and commanding the highest commendations of the “Union Review,” and other high-church organs; a third series is now in course of issue, and may be had of Messrs. Longmans. We have read No. 7, upon “Unction of the Sick,” and it is of this tract that we are about to give a *resume*. The titles are our own: —

Unction of the Sick, its spiritual position. — “The personal union which we, the children of Jesus, contract with our Father, who is in heaven, by means of the ‘sacramental system’ of the church, may be broken. The sacrament of penance has been ordained to meet the contingency of our falling into mortal sin during the course of our lives on earth. Hence, our blessed Lord seats himself, in the person of his priests, on the tribunal of mercy.

“But, at the approach of our last moments, our union with Jesus Christ is exposed to danger more than ever. On the one side the tenors of death, the remembrance of past sins, and the fearful anticipation of the judgment of God, unite to shroud the soul in trouble, impatience, and discouragement — it may be, to drive it to despair. On the other side, the demons profit by these wretched dispositions, and aggravate the soul’s peril. Knowing that he has but a few moments more during which he may fight, and lead captive and slay, the great enemy of mankind redoubles his efforts, and multiplies his artifices to attract or to frighten the parting soul into mortal sin, and so to separate it for ever from its Maker. Hence, another extension of the incarnation, in the sacraments of the church, is needful for the soul to meet this contingency also...

“There has existed in the church of God, from apostolic days, an usage of applying to the baptized, when grievously sick, and in danger of death, an anointing with oil, accompanied by prayers, in order to efface their sins past, and to strengthen them to endure the pains of sickness and the anguish of death. That this usage has so existed, and that it produces this effect, are

the two main propositions which it is the end of our essay to establish and make plain.”

The matter of the rite. — “As to its *matter*. Following the apostolic precept to which we have already so often referred, the church has always regarded *sanctified oil* as the matter of the sacrament. And by oil, oil of olives is meant, other liquors being called oil simply from their resemblance to it, from which they derive their name. But the matter of this sacrament is *sanctified oil* — sanctification being essential in order to its effect. St. Thomas observe, ‘As in other anointings, the matter is consecrated by a bishop, so ought it to be also in this: in this, as in them, to make manifest that the sacerdotal power is derived from the episcopal. The efficacy of the sacraments descends from Christ, in whom it primarily resides, to his people in a due order. It descends to them by means, that is, through the mediation of his ministers who dispense his sacraments, and to his inferior ministers through the mediation of their rulers whom he has set over them, and who *sanctify the matter*. In all sacraments, therefore, which require sanctified matter, its first sanctification is effected by the bishop, although its use be in some of them committed to the priest, and this to show that the sacerdotal power is derived from the episcopal, according to the psalm: — It is like the precious ointment upon the Head, that is, Christ, that (first) ran down unto the beard, even unto Aaron’s beard, that is, the episcopate, and went down to the skirts of his clothing, that is, the priesthood.’

“One of the most solemn, most magnificent, and most instructive of the ceremonies of the Latin church is the benediction of the holy oils, which takes place during the mass on Maundy Thursday, and may be traced up to the seventh century. The bishop officiating is seated before a table placed in the middle of the sanctuary. The deacons and subdeacons bring and place upon it vessels filled with the oils which are to be sanctified and blessed. There are the oils which are destined for the newborn infants, and there are those which are intended for the sick and dying; oils for anointing priests when they are vowed to God; and oils for anointing kings when they are consecrated and crowned. The bishop blesses them, praying that there may descend on them the Holy Spirit of God. He ought to be assisted by twelve priests, if possible all pastors, that is, having cure of souls, in order the better to represent the twelve apostles, and seven deacons, in order to recall the time when the college of sacred ministers was composed of twelve priests and seven deacons. After their consecration, the bishop and priests, in order, salute the holy oils, adoring thereby the Holy Ghost,

the great Sanctifier of all God's creatures. Venerable in itself, this function is yet more venerable by reason of its high antiquity. It is mentioned in the sacramentary of S. Gregory the Great."

The effect of the rite. — "Its principal effect, and that for which it was primarily instituted, was to relieve the soul from the remains of sin.

"Every sacrament has been instituted with one principal end in view, that is, to produce one special effect, although it may produce, as consequences, other effects besides. The principal effect of a sacrament may be learned by observing what is symbolized in its administration; for the sacraments both signify what they effect, and effect what they signify. Thus, from their signification is to be ascertained their principal effect. Now, this sacrament is administered by way of medicine, as baptism is by way of washing, and as communion is by way of food. But medicine is intended for the removal of infirmity. And so, this spiritual medicine has been ordained and *prescribed principally* in order to heal the infirmity of sin. Hence, as baptism is a spiritual regeneration, and confirmation a spiritual strengthening, and communion a spiritual feeding, and penance a spiritual resuscitation from the spiritual sleep or death of sin, so is unction a spiritual curing of the wounds which sin has left in the soul. The *principal* effect, then, of unction, is the removal of the relics of sin; its *consequential* effect, the remission of the guilt of any sin it may find in the soul.

The practice of our Anglo-Saxon ancestors. — "At the first appearance of danger from sickness or accident, notice was forwarded to the parish priest. It was his duty to obey the summons. No plea but that of inability could justify refusal or hesitation. The following is the order of proceeding marked out for him in the Anglo-Saxon pontificals: — Attended by his inferior clergy in the habits of their orders, he was to repair to the home of the sick man, to offer to him the aid of his ministry, to admonish him of the necessity of 'putting his house in order' before he was summoned to the tribunal of God. He then called upon him to give proof of his belief in Christ, by repeating the Apostles' Creed, and of his charity towards man, by declaring that he forgave all his enemies, as fully as he hoped to be forgiven. After these preliminaries, he received the confession of the penitent, suggested to him sentiments of repentance and resignation, and having exacted from him a second declaration that he would die in peace with all mankind, pronounced over him the prayer of reconciliation. The sacrament of 'Extreme Unction' followed. The eyelids of the dying man,

his ears, nostrils, lips, neck, shoulders, breast, hands and feet, and the parts principally affected with pain, were successively anointed in the form of a cross; each separate unction was accompanied with an appropriate prayer and followed by a psalm; and the promise in the Epistle of S. James was read to him: — ‘ That the prayer of faith should save the sick man, that the Lord should raise him up, and that, if he were in sins, they should be forgiven.’ The whole of this religious ceremony closed with the administration of the Eucharist, under the name of the *Viaticum*, or ‘Wayness,’ the support of the soul on its *way* to another world... When all these rites had been performed, the friends and relatives ranged themselves round the bed of the dying man, received from him small presents, as memorials of his affection, gave to him the kiss of peace, and bade him a last farewell. He was not, however, left even now without spiritual aid. In parishes the priest, or some of the clergy, in monasteries some of the monks repeatedly visited him, consoled him, prayed with him, cited or chanted the canonical hours in his presence, read to him the Passion of Christ from one of the Evangelists, and made it their care that he should again receive the holy house when the moment of his departure was manifestly approaching. The moment he expired, the bell was tolled. Its solemn voice announced to the neighborhood that a Christian brother was departed, and called on those who heard it to recommend his soul to the mercy of his Creator. All were expected to join, privately at least, in this charitable office; and in monasteries, even if it were the dead of night, the inmates hastened from their beds to the church, and sang a solemn dirge.

“Such is an account of a religious death-bed in the early *days* of Christianity in this country, in the details of which the last anointing occupies an important and conspicuous place. The words that rise to one’s lips on reading it, expressing the desire of one’s heart, are those of Balaam, ‘May I die the death of the righteous, and may my last end be like his.’”^{FI}

Extreme Unction not wholly discontinued among Anglicans, — “While we admit with shame and sorrow, before our brethren of the Latin and Greek Communions, that the administration of this sacrament which is within their reach, cannot be *compelled* in our own; we yet maintain that its use has never been wholly discontinued in the church of England, and still less in another church — a church in visible and full communion with the See of Canterbury — the church of Scotland. We are informed that in that church the tradition of anointing has been continued in more than a single diocese, and that oil has been consecrated and used in unction within the last few

years. The late Bishop Jolly of Moray, remembered for his saintly asceticism, and maintenance, according to the light of his day, of the Catholic faith as well as for his adherence to what he believed to be primitive and apostolic practice, was wont to anoint the sick. And he is said to be not without successors in the present day. It has been stated, on good authority, that ‘there are two bishops, at least, in the Anglican Communion, who have consecrated oil for this purpose.’ For this we are thankful; but we are by no means satisfied.”

How to obtain the oil — “We want to know how we may obtain the holy oil, and when, and where. True, a bishop of one diocese has no right to consecrate oil for the parish priests of another: but he has every right to do so for those of his own. And there is nothing to prevent a priest who has received consecrated oil from his bishop, giving a share of it to another priest or priests of his acquaintance in any diocese whatsoever. So that the oil has been blessed by a bishop, it does not matter by what bishop. Further, the consecration of oil for the sick, as has been stated, is not essentially confined to the episcopate. In the Eastern church seven priests assemble for the purpose. Therefore, if the English bishops resist all demands, there is an easy remedy at hand in the adoption of the rule which prevails amongst seventy millions of orthodox Christians.”

How to restore the rite. — “But how is its restoration to be begun, and when, and where? When? At once. Where? Clearly in religious houses.

Distribution of the oil and spread of the rite. — “A large supply of oil consecrated by a bishop could certainly be obtained by one of the recognized houses. The Mother House and its various branches would form so many depots where it might be obtained by parish priests, who were associates of the order, or any, in fact, who desired it. ^{f2}

“Again, the confraternities, and associations, and third orders, connected with these religious houses, would cause the practice to spread with ever-increasing rapidity.

“Then a demand for its administration would arise among the members of our better instructed and more advanced congregations. The demand would, in the nature of things, produce the supply; and the supply, according to the ordinary law of action and re-action, would produce the demand.

“By-and-by, as the practice spread, and threatened to become general, it would attract the notice of the world. Through the newspapers the world would abuse it, and condemn it, and laugh at it. At the same time, this very process would advertise it, and bring the subject before men’s minds. In the language of the newspapers themselves, it would be well ‘ventilated.’ And of course, as to the issue, there is only one event possible: it would be accepted and valued by all who accept and value the sacramental system which Jesus Christ instituted and revealed.”

The Office to be used at the Unction of the Sick has been reprinted by Mr. Masters, and may be had at his publishing house. As we are not anxious that any of our readers should waste their money on such precious rubbish, it will content them to know that with sundry psalms and collects, and antiphons, the main business consists in touching the sick person with the holy oil in the sign of a cross on the different parts of his body. First he is anointed upon each eye, beginning with the right (mind that, or you spoil all!) while the priest says, “Through this anointing, and his most loving mercy, the Lord pardon thee whatever thou hast sinned by sight. Amen.” Then the priest oils the man’s ears, lips, nostrils, hands, and feet, uttering the same sentences with the alteration of the name of the member; and, finally, “then the priest rising, washes his hands with salt and water, in the vessel wherein the cottons for the oil were placed, which are to be burned, and buried in the cemetery. ^{F3} “Afterwards the priest shall say the blessing over the sick person in this wise: — . ‘In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; let this anointing of oil be to thee tot the purifying of soul and body, and for a bulwark and defense against the darts of unclean spirits. Amen.’“

What say our readers to this? Is not this fully developed popery? Have we ever been too severe against such treason to truth? *Could* any one be too severe in denouncing such wicked superstition? Will the Judge of all the earth hold those guiltless who, knowing better, yet support a church which allows its ministers to mislead the people? And the nation upon whose substance these traitors are sustained, is it to sit still and see its children deluded, and never raise a voice against the priestly miscreants? If ever there was a time for vehement protest and the casting aside of kid-gloved charities, and milk-and-water gentlenesses, it is now. Souls are being damned by thousands by the false teachers of the Anglican church, and in God’s name let every honest man speak out, and speak often.

LAMPS PITCHERS AND TRUMPETS.

OF treatises upon preachers and preaching, we have enough of the dry-as-dust order, but we still have need of a masterly work on Homiletics, interesting and yet solid. Clande's essay, with the extraordinary notes of Robinson will never be worn out, but it is fragmentary; Bridges is holy, but heavy; Sturtevant is heavier still; Porter's lectures are the best we know of, but there is not enough of them; the Wykehamist's papers are capital, but brief: a volume is wanted combining the excellencies of each, and making up for the deficiencies of all. Mr. Hood's remarkable production does not supply this desideratum, but meanwhile it helps to relieve the manifest want, and leads us to hope for great things should he fulfill his half promise to produce a more complete course of lectures. It was, indeed, a treat to listen to Mr. Hood when delivering the addresses of which this volume is mainly composed — the audience of young and ardent spirits appreciated him to the highest point, and he himself feeling at home to the fullest degree, poured out his wit and wisdom in perfect cataracts: personally, we felt after each lecture as if we had been whirled through the whole empire of literature by express train, and had in the course of a single hour enjoyed a glimpse at everything in the entire range of pulpit history. We should say Mr. Hood has read almost every book in the English language, good, bad, and indifferent, and we have caught him levying black mail upon the French authors, by poking about in the Parisian bookshops: he has a voracious appetite for rare bits of sarcasm, wit, and eloquence, and his own larder is stored with such dainties; he is an irresistible story-teller always ready with anecdotes pat to the point, and he possesses powers of mimicry seldom equaled, in addition to which, he takes such a manly, bold, unshameful view of Christian work, that he cannot fail to edify and instruct our rising ministry when he touches upon a theme like that in hand. The volume so quaintly entitled, "Lamps, Pitchers, and Trumpets," is a wealthy treasury of wisdom, a museum of curiosities, a warehouse of anecdotes, and we may add a menagerie of oddities. Some of the most outrageous things ever said or done, or said to have been done, are here recorded, and recorded in language which we fear will make kid-gloved critics go into fits. This is no can-de-Cologne or rose-water book, but a plain, homely, outspoken, dashaway talk of a bold man to men who can bear to hear, ay, and like to hear a man speak his mind without mincing his words. We do not agree with all that Mr. Hood says, but it does us good to hear him say it whether

we like it or no. We do not claim any high degree of spirituality for these utterances, the deep things were not aimed at, the book deals with the human side of preaching, not the divine. Believing that it will aid in fetching some older brethren out of the old, deep-worn rut of routine ministry, and will go far to keep our younger brethren from letting their chariot wheels slip into it, we wish for this volume a very' large circulation. Giving as it does a very complete outline of the history of preaching, it will guide the student into new fields of research. We confess that many of the facts concerning mediaeval preaching were quite new to us, and we may also acknowledge our comparative ignorance of the modern French pulpit with which Mr. Hood seems to be well acquainted; and we suppose that to the mass of ministers much in the volume will be as new as it has been to us. The price of the book is half-a-sovereign, but *any young man who is aspiring to the ministry, and cannot afford so much as that, shall be helped by means of our College to half the price if he writes for the volume to Mr. Blackshaw, at the Tabernacle, enclosing a note from his pastor, or some other officer of a Christian church.* We subjoin a few out of the countless anecdotes with which this volume teems.

“Old Kruber was greatly averse to read sermons — for even in those days there were readers of sermons in the pulpit. Once a youthful congregational minister read before him; Jacob had also to follow the young man in preaching, and it was expected he would give the young brother a thrust for the use of his notes. He finished, however, without saying a word that looked towards the manuscript; but, in his concluding prayer, he uttered these strange petitions: — ‘ Lord, bless the man who has read to us to-day; let his heart be as soft as his head, and then he will do us some good.’ ‘How do you make your preachers?’ was once said to one of these fine old preachers of the woods. ‘Why, we old ones tell the young ones all we know, and they try to tell the people all they can, and they keep on trying *till* they can — that’s our college.’ One was asked, ‘:Do you belong to the standing order?’ No,’ he said, ‘ I belong to the kneeling order.’“

“You have heard many sermons preached upon the publican and pharisee; but did you ever hear that preached in St. Giles-in-the-Fields? ‘ It was sad,’ said the able and eloquent preacher, ‘ that any of our fellow creatures should so fall, as to stand in need of such a degrading confession as the publican’s; but he besought his hearers to be upon their guard, lest by drawing too favorable a contrast between such outcasts and themselves,

they incurred the censure pronounced on that otherwise most amiable character, the pharisee.’ And James Haldane mentions, in one of his missionary tours in Scotland, that he heard a minister solemnly warn his people, and he was a minister of the Scotch Establishment, against putting any trust, while they continued sinners, in the blood of Christ. ‘Repent,’ said he, ‘become righteous, atone for your sins by probity, and virtue, and then if you please, you may look to that blood, but not before.’“

“It may be sixty, years since there frequently, came to Bristol a well-known. Calvinistic Methodist preacher of that day — in a day when flattering titles were not very lavishly distributed — called Sammy Breeze by the multitudes who delighted in his ministry. He came periodically from the mountains of Cardiganshire, and spoke with tolerable efficiency in English. Our friend was in the chapel when, as was not unusual, two ministers, Sammy Breeze and another, were to preach. The other took the first place — a young man with some tints of academical training, and some of the livid lights of a then only incipient Rationalism on his mind. He took for his text, ‘He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned;’ but he condoned the heavy condemnation, and, in an affected manner, shaded off the darkness of the doom of unbelief, very much in the style of another preacher, who told his hearers that he ‘feared lest they should be doomed to a place which good manners forbade him from mentioning. The young man also grew sentimental, *and begged pardon* of an audience, rather more polite than usual, for the sad statement made in the text. ‘But, indeed,’ said he, ‘he that believeth shall be saved, and ‘he that believeth not — indeed, I regret to say, I beg your pardon ‘for uttering the terrible truth — but indeed he shall be sentenced to a place which ‘here! dare not mention.’ Then rose Sammy Breeze. He began, ‘I shall take the same text to-night which you have just heard; our young friend has been fery foine to-night, he has told you some very polite things. I am not fery foine, and I am not polite, but I will preach a little bit of gospel to .you, which is this — ’ He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be tanned,’ *and I begs no pardons.*’ He continued, ‘I do look round on this chapel; and I do see people all fery learned and intellectual. You do read books, and you do study studies; and fery likely you do think that you can mend God’s Book, and are fery sure that you can mend me. You bare great — what you call thoughts — and poetries. But I will tell you one little word, and you must not try to mend that, but if you do it will be all the same. It is this, look you — ‘He that believeth

shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be tanned,' and *I begs no pardons*. And then I do look round your chapel, and I do see your fine people, well-dressed people, well-to-do people. You are not only pious, but you have ferry fine hymn-books and cushions, and some red curtains, for I do see you are ferry rich, and you have got your monies, and are getting very proud. But I will tell you it does not matter at all, and I do not mind it at all — not one little bit — for I must tell you the truth, and the truth is — ‘He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be tanned,’ and *I begs no pardons*.’ ‘And now,’ continued the preacher, ‘you will say to me, ‘What do you mean by talking to us in this way? who are you, Sir?’ And now I will tell you, I am Pilly Preeze. I have come from the mountains of Cardiganshire on my Master’s business, and his message I must deliver. If you will never hear me again, I shall not matter much; but while you shall hear me, you shall hear me, and this is his word to me, and in me to you — ‘He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be tanned,’ and *I begs no pardons*.” But the scene in the pulpit was a trifle to the scene in the vestry. There the deacons were in a state of great anger with the blunt teacher; and one, the relative — we believe the ancestor — of a well-known religious man in Bristol, exclaimed. ‘Mr. Breeze, you have strangely forgotten yourself to-night, Sir. We did not expect that you would have behaved in this way. We have always been very glad to see you in our pulpit; but your sermon to-night, Sir, has been most insolent, shameful.’ He wound up a pretty smart condemnation by saying, ‘In short, I don’t understand you.’ ‘He! he! What! you say you don’t understand me? Eh! look you then, [will tell you I *do* understand you. Up in our mountains, we have one man there we do call him *exciseman*. He comes along to our shops and stores, and says, ‘What have you here? anything contraband here?’ And if it is all right, the good man says, ‘Step in, Mr. Exciseman; come in, look you.’ He is all fair, and open, and above board. But if he has anything secreted there, he does draw back surprised, and he makes a fine face, and says, ‘Sir, I don’t understand you.’ Now you do tell me you don’t understand me; but I do understand you, gentlemen: I do, and I do fear you have something contraband here; and now I will say good-night to you; but I must tell you one little word, that is — ‘He that believeth shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be tanned,’ and *I begs no pardons*.”

STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE

BEING called, in the order of divine providence, to found and preside over an institution for the relief of poor fatherless children, we are anxious with all our co-trustees to be faithful and good stewards, using all means within our power to carry out the enterprise successfully. Trusting alone in the living God, we put forth all our efforts in reliance upon his name, and we have already before us conclusive evidence that our Lord accepts our service, and intends still further to bless our endeavors. In March, 1867, the deed of incorporation, transferring the original gift of £20,000 in railway debentures, bonds, etc., to trustees, was signed and executed. Soon after, by the Lord's good hand upon the hearts of his people, money began to flow in, so that when the first stones of three houses were laid in September (the three on the left of the engraving), we were able to say that the freehold ground was our own, the cost of £3,000 having been paid, and, moreover, we had the happiness to announce that the three houses had each been given by generous donors. One house commemorates the twenty-fifth year of the married life of two friends who are always bountiful to us in all our works, upon whom we pray that a rich benediction may abide; another is the offering of a brother beloved in the Lord, whose name is, at his own desire, to be left unknown; and the third is the noble gift of Mr. Higgs and his workmen. A fourth house (next in plan) was on the day of the stone-laying, given by the Messrs. Olney, to bear the beloved name of "Unity," and the four are now advancing towards completion, so that in about April next we shall hope to house about sixty boys. About three weeks ago, the noble sum of £1,000 was brought to us by an unknown gentleman towards the erection of two other houses; and we understand that by a resolution of the Baptist Union, the Baptist churches are endeavoring to raise a sum sufficient for two more. This fills our heart with grateful gladness, for thus the whole block represented in the engraving can be erected; only as two of the houses are to be larger than the others (see plan), they may require £700 each instead of £500. We will hope that the contribution of the churches will be as near £1,400 as possible, and, if it fails short, we must make it up by extra gifts. At the contemplation of all this success, we are lost in adoring wonder, and can only say, "What hath God wrought?" He has done for us exceeding abundantly above what we asked or even thought.

When the whole eight houses are completed, we shall be able to lodge about 150 children; but we cannot venture upon this unless we have at the same time provided a proper school room, dining hall, master's house, lodge gate, and other needful accommodation. All the work may therefore be brought to a standstill in a few months for want of the needful school buildings; but, no, this can never be — He who has led us onward will not leave us for a moment, but will be ever near at hand. We must, however, do all we possibly can, for to trust in providence and to use no means, in our cause would be presumption, and therefore we have prepared collecting cards for our friends, to be returned on March 25, and we also beg for assistance towards a bazaar, to be held upon the Orphanage ground in June next; not a bazaar with objectionable frivolities and gambings, but a solid sale of goods against which none but mere carpers can bring a complaint. Will not our lady friends come forward to the rescue? We ought to raise between this and next *June* stone £4,000 at least, and then building operations may be suspended until the Sunday School House and the Students' House shall have all the funds ready for their erection. Be it remembered that 150 children will require about £3,000 a year to keep them, and educate them, so that it will be well to get the building business done with, that we may put forth our strength in providing for the little ones. God will surely give a willing mind to his people, for he is the father of the fatherless; and he will assuredly help, seeing that we have no object in view but his glory, and the good of immortal souls. Some 200 children have already applied for entrance, and in April we can only take rift}', so that there is no present use in friends making further applications. Many of the cases which we must refuse are quite heartrending in their deep distress, but as it is impossible to accept all, we have selected those whose needs appeared to be even greater. We mean to invite, next month, gifts towards *furnishing* the first four houses, the expense of which will be a heavy draw upon our funds, but might be done easily by many hands, especially if some friends in trade gave the articles themselves. We do not ask any more friends to give houses for the orphans to live in, as we have enough in prospect for the present; but if any one would give £500 for the master's house, or a smaller sum for the lodge gate, it would be a great assistance. He who has raised up so many helpers, will not suffer the enterprise to flag: of this we are most sure.

Collecting cards can be had by our friends on application to our Secretary, Mr. Chas. Blackshaw, Metropolitan Tabernacle.

SEVEN SEASONABLE QUESTIONS FOR ALL BELIEVERS.

I. Cannot I do more for Jesus this year than I have done in the past? Have I no wasted time or rusting talents?

II. *What shall I do? What form shall my extra effort take? I must not be long in selecting, for time speeds; but, without neglecting my old work, what new labor shall I enter upon at once?*

III. Can I *give* more to the work of Jesus? Ought I not to practice weekly storing? Am I a faithful steward with my substance? Am I really returning to my Lord in proportion as he has given to me? How much shall I give *at orate?*

IV. Ought I not, in the power of the Holy Spirit, to become more Christlike this year? I am certainly older in years, should I not grow in grace in proportion? Shall I not seek more grace *at once?*

V. Shall not my prayers be more constant and fervent during this year? Might not my whole life be more forceful for good if I had more power in secret prayer? Shall I be content to go on as I have done in this matter?

VI. Must I not labor after nearer communion to Jesus? Why should I not walk in the light of his countenance? Why should I cleave so much to worldly things? Shall there not, by God's grace, be an improvement in this respect? Is there not grievous room for it?

VII. Can I not this very day aim personally at the conversion of at least one soul? Might I not go at *once* and talk with some unconverted relative or neighbor about his soul? O Lord, go with me! O Lord, use me in thy service!

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL.

FEBRUARY, 1868.

GLORY IN TRIBULATION.

LOOKING from the little wooden bridge which passes over the brow of the beautiful waterfall of Hahdeck, on the Grimsel, one will be surprised to see a rainbow making an entire circle surrounding the fall, like a coronet of gems, or a ring set with all the brilliants of the jeweler. Every hue is there

*“In fair proportion, running groin the red
To where the violet fades into the sky.”*

We saw two such bows, one within the other, and we fancied that we discovered traces of a third. We had only seen such a sight but once before, and were greatly delighted with “that arch of light, born of the spray, and colored by the sun.” It was a fair vision to gaze upon, and reminded us of the mystic rainbow, which the seer of Patmos beheld, which was round about the throne, for it strikes us that it was seen by John as *a complete circle*, of which we see but the half on earth; the upper arch of manifest glory we rejoice to gaze upon, but the lower and foundation arch of the eternal purpose, upon which the visible display of grace is founded, is reserved for our contemplation in another world. When we read in the first verse of the tenth chapter of Revelation, “I saw another mighty angel *come* down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow was upon his head,” it greatly assists the imagination to conceive of a many-colored circlet, rather than a *semicircle*. We lingered long watching the flashing crystal; dashed and broken upon a hundred craggy rocks, and tossed into the air in sheets of foam, to fall in wreaths of spray; we should not have tired for hours if we could have tarried to admire the harmonious hues of that wheel within a wheel,

*“Of colors changing from the splendid rose,
To the pale violet’s dejected hue;”*

but we were on a journey, and were summoned to advance. As we mounted our mule and rode silently down the pass, amid the pine forests and the over-hanging mountains, we compared the little stream to the church of God, which in peaceful times flows on like a village brook, quiet and obscure, blessed and blessing others, but yet little known or considered by the sons of men. Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, are Heater than all the waters of Israel, and the proud ones of earth despise that brook which flows "hard by the oracle of God," *because* her waters go softly and in solitary places; but when the church advances over the steep of opposition, and is dashed adown the crags of *persecution*, 'then, in her hour of sorrow, her glory is revealed. Then she lifts up her voice, like the *sea*, and roars as a boiling torrent, *quickening her pace* till that mighty river, the river Kishon, sweeps not with such vehemence of power. Her sons and daughters are led to the slaughter, and her blood is cast abroad, like the foam of the waters, but onward she dashes with irresistible energy, fearing no leap of peril, and then it is that the eternal God glorifies her with the rainbow of his everlasting grace, makes the beauty of her holiness to shine forth, and, in the patience of the saints, reveals a heavenly radiance, which all men behold with astonishment. The golden age of true religion is the martyr period; war breeds heroes, and suffering unto blood in striving against sin draws forth men of whom the world is not worthy. So far from enduring loss by opposition, it is then that the cause of God receives its coronation. The rainbow of the divine presence in the fullness of majesty: encircles the chosen people when tribulation, affliction, and distress break them, as the stream is broken by the precipitous rocks adown which it boldly casts itself that its current may advance in its predestined channel.

When, at any time, our forebodings foretell the coming of evil times for the church, let us remember that before the Sprit revealed to the beloved disciple the terrible beasts, the thundering trumpets, the falling stars, and the dreadful vials, he bade him mark with attention that the covenant rainbow was round about the throne. All is well, for God is true. — C. H. SPURGEON.

COMMON SENSE AND FAITH;

OR,

REMARKS UPON G. MULLER'S REPORT.

BY. J. A. SPURGEON.

WE have read in our youth the marvelous stories with which childhood is supposed to be amused and instructed, and mysteries and wonders not a few have come under our notice since then, but beyond them all, in point of marvel, we place the sober record of facts contained in the yearly reports of George Muller, of Bristol. No wonders of romance can rival the plain unvarnished statement of God's dealings with his servant engaged in the Orphanage at Ashley Down. "Facts are stranger than fiction." If we had been told that in one year 1,150 orphans would be maintained in comfort, and be educated and fitted for lives of usefulness in society, at an expense of £13,500, all of which should be raised without any endowment, subscription list, or personal application for money, we should have said, "If the Lord were to open windows in heaven, might such a thing be?" But there is the fact in all its sublime significance. Our hearts are moved with adoring gratitude to the Giver of all good as we say, "This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes." Let us turn aside and view this great sight, for surely it will repay a careful investigation.

As we have frequently found this beneficent work seriously misunderstood, and made to conduce to evil rather than good, our present brief paper is meant to be a practical lesson in prudence for hot-headed enthusiasts, whose rashness, unless stayed in time, may involve a noble principle in much obloquy.

Mr. Muller plies in the fore-front of his service for the Lord the clear declaration that, as it is God's work, he expects the divine help whenever he needs it and asks for it. No refer of his reports can escape the clear conviction that *faith* in God and prayer to Him are the fundamental principles upon which the gigantic work is based: These are the two main pillars of the enterprise, but to rest satisfied with them as an answer to the question, What are the elements of success in this worker the Lord? Would

be to neglect some of the vital points in the case. It is well known that many persons engage in earnest prayer for what does not succeed, and that faith of a certain kind is exercised in connection with matters which signally fail. Many cases will suggest themselves to the minds of all, illustrative of this point; indeed they are so common that Mr. Muller feels bound to say, "I add here again my solemn caution that none should act in this way for the sake of imitating me; otherwise he will learn, to his bitter cost, what it is to do such things in the way of imitation?" We distinctly remember a tradesman who endeavored to apply this to his business. He was a well-to-do butcher, but all at once conceived that a life of faith and prayer would answer better than his old-fashioned way of plodding for a living. Our readers will anticipate the result. He was soon a bankrupt, and his children in the streets. Such cases are beacons warning us to combine the exercise of other graces with the principles of "*faith and prayer*" if we wish for success. Any one can see that in the case we quote, nothing but a miracle could have prevented the ruin of that man's trade; there are certain principles at work in the world which lead inevitably to that end, and there is no promise on which to rely when pleading with God to suspend laws which he has himself ordained.

What is clear, however, in this tradesman's case, is considered doubtful when applied to the work of the Lord. We remember hearing a very excellent brother announce that he and his friends had spent all the preceding night in prayer to God that he would send them money to pay off their chapel debt of £1,500 by the end of that month. The good man came from the place of prayer to assert his full conviction that the money would come before that fixed period. We took the liberty of questioning it most decidedly, and of doubting the propriety of making the assertion. Was there any promise to that effect in the Bible? Was it necessary to God's glory? Did it not rather savor of dictation to God to fix the time and tie *him* down to the exact day *they* had selected? Who is Lord and Master if we are thus to insist on our times and seasons being rigidly adhered to by God? If the place were to be sold away from them, and no other way of worshipping God could be found, they might appeal to God to appear for them and grant relief, but to pray for the immediate extinction of a debt simply because it was a grievous burden, was, in our opinion, a pious blunder, rather than an act of faith. We believe that the midnight prayers were not lost, for a most remarkable blessing descended upon the ministry of our most esteemed friend; and, moreover, the chapel debt will be paid in

due time, by dint of persevering labor, but it was unreasonable to look for its discharge as the result of prayer alone. It is well that God does not answer our requests by doing for us what we can do for ourselves, for if we were all to live by faith without labor, all human effort would be paralyzed, since every Christian would have a right to follow the same rule; if all were to do so, it must resolve itself into a dead-lock, with everybody believing and nobody acting, or else the strange spectacle would be seen of a *lazy church living on the efforts of the ungodly world, and relying upon it for all support in the form of funds* — an absurd result, which no one could for one moment contemplate. No; we must go beyond the two first principles, and seek further light. We make one extract from Mr. Muller's annual report, which contains, to our mind, the additional essential principles to which the success of his whole work may, under the divine blessing, be attributed, namely, the exercise of sound discretion, unremitting diligence, and constant vigilance: —

“The signing of the contract for this fifth house having been, by agreement between the contractors and myself, made to stand over till Jan. 1, 1867, I might have signed the contract for No. 5, without having the whole amount of the money in hand, and said to myself, that the Lord would send me the means! before what I had in hand (£34,000) was actually expended on the buildings, which would be enough for about 18 months; but I adhered to the principle on which I had always acted in reference to this institution, namely, never to go in debt, even for the work of God. I had, on the contrary, always said this to myself, Just because it is the work of God, if indeed I am the person who has to do this work and if *His own time is come*, I may expect to be supplied with means; but if for the time being, I have not the needed means, it is plain, that I am either not the person to do the work, or the Lord's time is not yet come on this ground I did not sign the contract for No. 5, but preferred, to the honor of the Lord, to wait yet further on Him in patient, believing, and expecting prayer, until He should be pleased to give me all I required, that thus I might honor Him in this particular. And now see, dear reader, how abundantly the Lord recompensed my quiet, patient waiting!”

Now, we can see here clearly the exercise of strong common sense *in keeping clear of liabilities. No debt for the Lord even.* How many of our institutions would be all the better if arrangements were made to avoid

debt? I know that the answer is, it cannot be helped. We reply, it ought to be helped, and if we are not very much mistaken, there is a great fault some where whenever debt is incurred. To say the least, there is a great lack of financial ability and economy. Owe no man anything, means not only pay *your debts*, but *have no debts to pay*. To run into debt, and then talk of faith in God to get our liabilities removed, is to ask God to countenance our neglect of a very salutary law which he has himself enjoined upon us. Nothing is likely to hinder the progress of God's work so much as our undue haste. To go before we are sent, is as bad as going without being sent: in either case we must expect to go at our own charges. We are pained to find the work of God at Ashley Down used to countenance rash expenditure and burdensome debts in connection with our societies and churches; its weight is thrown quite into the other scale, and its example condemns debt most completely. Mr. Muller is an instance of prudent finance, not of reckless borrowing under the pretense of faith.

We would call attention to the further fact, that *common sense has been used in the gradual development of the whole enterprise*.^{2,263} orphans have been received since April 11th, 1836; £259,089 have been given for their support, and nearly £96,000 for other objects. A truly noble sum total; but amidst it all, a firm hand has held the out-goings in check, and kept income and expenditure in proper limits. While difficulties have never daunted, success has never elated our brother, and led him on to any rash launching out, trusting, as it is called, to the course of events to make it, all square at last. This has ensured for our friend public confidence, and has contributed towards his pecuniary prosperity.

Sanctified shrewdness and tact are to be seen in every item of building, internal government, and public management. The visitor, passing through the houses in which so large a number of orphans are housed, will be struck with the neatness, order, symmetry and regularity, in fact, with the almost, perfect arrangement of everything. The administrative faculty dwells so largely in the head of the institution, that he could have managed the commissariat of an army, or ruled an empire, had he been called to it. God has not chosen a fool in this case to do a work which needs profound wisdom, but he has qualified the man of his choice pro-eminently and beyond all others for the post assigned him. No other institution is carried on so cheaply; the cost of each orphan is so small that, in the Stockwell Orphanage, owing to our smaller number, we cannot hope to come anything near it. In printing forms of application, etc., for our own Orphanage, we collected specimens

from five or six orphanages, but none were equal to Mr. Muller's for cheapness, brevity, and completeness. He has more practical sagacity in his little finger than a dozen committees could muster between them. If all the bishops died we could fill their places with ease. but Mr. Muller's death would be a national calamity; we know not Who could wear his mantle. The man acts as calmly and prudently as if all depended upon human judgment, and then trusts in his God as if he had done nothing. Let all workers for the Lord learn from his history to serve the Lord with understanding as well as with faith and zeal.

We have read Mr. Muller's extracts from his diary of donations with great interest, and we are struck with *the ability shown in selecting those short pithy pieces which are best adapted to stir up the friends of this charity to afford practical help:* —

“June 7, 1866. From Scotland, £20 from a lady, ‘as a thank-offering to the Lord for his gracious preservation of her cattle during the prevalence of the plague throughout the land.’ Aug. 16. £5 from London, with the following letter: ‘My dear Sir, I herewith send you a cheque for five pounds, towards your building fund. On Thursday last, I went to the railway station, to see a friend off to Paris; and at parting I promised to meet him in Paris on Monday, to witness the great sights of that city during this week. On my road home from the railway [saw your report. I bought one, and on Sunday determined to forego my visit and send you the above sum which I had intended to have spent. It is my first donation, but I do hope and trust it will not be the last.’ Oct. 6. ‘From a farmer's wife,’ £1, being a penny for every pound of butter sold during the last year. Oct. 8. From a shipowner, £100, with £100 for missions, instead of insuring his ships Oct 23 From Kent £100 Received also, today, 3s. 0 1/2d. from a Christian grocer, being one penny in the pound of his takings during the past week. Ever since, this grocer has continued to send me, week by week, one penny in the pound on all his taking being generally from 3s. 2d. to 3s. 6d. per week. The 240th part of what there has been received in his shop, you would say, is a little item; and yet here, again, is another proof how much, by systematic giving, even on the smallest scale, may be accomplished; for I think I have received thus from this donor about ten times more than during any previous year.”

We might multiply these expressions at great length, but they would all tend to prove the sound judgment which has been brought to bear on the whole selection contained in this report. We venture to say that Mr. Muller had to wade through acres of prosy matter during the year, but he does not inflict this weariness upon the readers of his annual report; to this, it seems to us, is to be traced no little of the success which has attended the issue of these yearly narratives of facts and figures. It is quite a means of grace to read through the book now before us, and any careful and intelligent Christian reader will rise from its perusal, refreshed and strengthened for future service and faith in the Lord. It is one of the best sermons we know, on faith and works, on common sense and Christian principle combined in active operation.

We add to these suggestions the further considerations, that in the case of the Bristol Orphanage, any one can see that the work is not only *God's work*, but one which is *imperatively called for*. That Mr. Muller is the *best man to do it*, and that he is *doing it well*. With these facts before us, we see the side which appeals *to man* as well as to God; and we at once comprehend the causes of success. We believe that God blesses, but we believe in divine methods of action, and they are always on the side of sanctified prudence and common sense.

THE SILVER INHORN; OR TAKING NOTES ON SERMONS.

THOUSANDS have been greatly edited by the sermons of holy Mr. M'Cheyne, which we have had the great pleasure of inserting in this magazine; they are real gems of priceless worth. We trust the kind friend who has given us the use of them will see it right to issue them in a volume when he has increased the number. Now, it will be observed that some of these precious things are from the notes of a hearer — a diligent, appreciating, instructed hearer we may be sure. What a benefit has that hearer with his note book conferred upon hundreds! Thanks, good sir, most hearty thanks. Might not other hearers, whose privilege it is to hear good and great men do equally efficient service by taking careful and judicious notes? To attempt to take very much, spoils the present result of the ministry, and is an injury to spiritually profitable hearing, but to jot down outlines, main thought, and remarkable illustrations, is rather an

assistance than otherwise to that holy act of worship, the devout hearing of the word. If such sketches and jottings are filled up upon returning home, the exercise will assist sacred meditation, which is the true digestion of truth; and if such completed notes be preserved, they will frequently revive in the mind the savor of truth heard in years gone by. Mere writing for the sake of it is useless, but we can see many good ends which may be served if the more intelligent of our hearers made memoranda of the sermons addressed to them. Of course, in cases where everything spoken is issued from the press, the rule may not apply; but these are exceedingly few. The good custom of bidding the children take notes of the sermon, will be followed by all parents who would have their children wise unto salvation; the youngsters should be pleasantly questioned as to what they remember, and encouraged to treasure up the good things in their memories. It should be the aim of the preacher to assist the memories of both young and old, and to this end he should arrange his thoughts in a portable manner, that they may be carried away, and season them with so much suit that they will be preserved in the recollection. Philip Henry would often contrive the heads of his sermon, to begin with the same letter; or oftener two and two of a letter. This he did not out of affectation, but from condescension to the younger sort. He would say, that his chief reason for doing it was because frequently the method is followed in the Scriptures, particularly in the book of Psalms in the original. "This," said he, "is my plea. If it be not a fashionable ornament, it is a scriptural ornament, and this is sufficient to recommend it, at least to justify it against the imputation of childishness." Of some of his subjects when he had finished them, he made short memoranda in rhyme, a verse or two to record each Sabbath's work, and these he gave out to the young people, who wrote them, and leaned them, and profited by them. All preachers may not see fit to use the same methods, but all should drive towards the same end, and parents should help them by stimulating the attrition of their families.

Should it be objected, "our children cannot comprehend our minister," our reply is, the more is the pity, hear another minister as soon as you can; for a gospel preacher who does not speak plainly enough to be for the most part understood by children of ten or twelve, had better go to school to learn what gospel simplicity means. Try it, parents, and you will find John and Ellen understanding much more than you thought; and if it be not so, there is all the more reason for you to make it clear to them by an hour's conversation and explanation.

In most respects, we cannot do better than follow our grand old predecessors the Puritans, who were so much given to the habit of note-taking, that a scurrillous writer in a lampoon, entitled, "The Loyal Satirist; or, Hudibras in prose," finds matter for ridicule in it. He writes afar this fashion," Oh! what a gracious sight is a silver inkhorn. How blessed a gift is it to write short-hand! What necessary implements for a saint are cotton wool and blotting paper! These dabblers turn the church into a scrivener's shop. A country fellow, last term mistook it for the Six Courts' Office. The parson looks like an offender upon the scaffold, and they penning his confession, or a spirit conjured up by their uncouth characters." In a squib upon the expenditure of the committee of safety, during the Commonwealth, among the items wittily charged to Lord Fleetwood's use, is one "for a silver inkhorn, and ten gilt paper books, covered with green plush and Turkey leather, for his lady to write in at church — seven pounds, three shilings, and three pence." These godly people could well afford to be laughed at while they were enriching themselves with the choice jewels which the preachers of their age scattered so plenteously. Henry Smith has a good passage in his sermon on the "*Art of Hearing*," with which this word to the wise shall close.

"But before this you must use another help, that is, record every note in thy mind, as the preacher goeth; and after, before thou dost eat, or drink, or talk, or do anything else, repeat all to thyself. I do know some in the university, which did never hear a good sermon, but as soon as they were gone they rehearsed it thus, and learned more by this (as they said) than by their reading and study; for recording that which they had heard when it was fresh, they could remember all, and hereby got a better facility in preaching than they could learn in books. The like profit I remember I gained, when I was a scholar, by the like practice.

The philosophers and orators that have written such volumes, have left in their writings, that this was the keeper of their learning, like the bag which beareth the treasures. Therefore I may *say* with Christ, that the wicked are wiser than Christians; for the orators and philosophers used this help in hearing of earthly things, and we; 'ill not use it in hearing of heavenly things. The only case why you forget so fast as you hear, and of all the sermons which you have heard, have scarce the substance of one in your heart, to comfort or counsel you when you have need, is because you went from sermon to dinner, and never thought any more of the matter; as

though it were enough to hear, like sieves which hold water no longer than they are in a river.

What a shame is this, to remember every clause in your lease, and every point in your father's will; nay, to remember an old tale as long as you live, though it be long since you heard it; and the lessons which ye hear now will be gone within this hour, that you may ask, What hath stolen my sermon from me? Therefore, that you may not hear us in vain, as you have heard others, my exhortation to you is, to record when you are gone that which you have heard. If I could teach you a better way, I would; but Christ's disciples used this way when their thoughts ran upon his speech, and made them come again to him to ask the meaning; the virgin, his mother, used this way when she pondered his sayings, and laid them up in her heart; the good hearers of Berea used this way, when they carried Paul's sermon home with them, that they might examine it by the Scripture. This difference is noted between Jacob and his sons: when Joseph uttered his dream, his brethren gave no regard to it; but it is said that father Jacob noted the saying, Genesis 37:11. Therefore this must needs be an excellent way. For if Joseph and Mary, and Christ's disciples, should speak unto you as I do, and show you a way to hear, they would show you the same way that they used themselves. You cannot tell how much it will profit you until you practice it; do you try it one month, and if you love knowledge, I am sure you will use it while you live; but if you will not use it for all that can be said, truly you shall be like the old women which St. Paul speaks of, which were 'always learning and never the wiser.' 2 Timothy 2:7."

CHURCHIANITY VERSUS CHRISTIANITY

WHEN a genuine Christian happens to find himself settled down as a clergyman of the church of England in addition to the troublesome memories of the inconvenient declarations by which he reached his position, he must frequently be the victim of mental nausea at the sight of the motley squadron in which he is enrolled. There is good Mr. Ryle, an indefatigable Tractarian, who hates Romish Tractarianism, and preaches the gospel thoroughly and there are many like him the excellent of the earth, distinguished for piety who would be an honor to any denomination of Christians: a believer in Jesus feels much comfort in such company; but who are those spirits in red, white, and blue? Aliens from the

commonwealth of Israel, in their dress at any rate. Their voice is Babylonian even as their apparel; they hail from Rome, and are affectionately attached to the Mother of Harlots. Can the lover of truth go with these? Can the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ's pure gospel sit in the same congress with these priests? Bow at the same altar? Unite in church fellowship with them? Surely the more gracious a man is the more irksome must such fellowship become. That searching question, "*What concord hath Christ with Belial?*" if it ever intrudes itself into rectories, must torture any evangelical clergyman who keeps a tender conscience. Moreover, on the other side of the quadrangle of the Establishment one sees a Philistine regiment of skeptics, with a bishop to head them, and all sorts of dignitaries to make up the battalion. Can the spiritual mind find peace in an affinity with these? Can it be to the evangelical clergyman, who is truly converted, a fact to sleep quietly upon, that he is in full communion with these unbelievers? The apostolical inquiry, "What part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" must surely at times ring through the manse, and startle the quiet of the vicarage library. How our brethren manage to read the burial service over ungodly men, how they can subscribe to the catechism, and many other enormities of the Book of Common Prayer, remains to us an enigma towards the solution of which we have not advanced a hair's breadth since the day when we provoked so much indication by our sermon on "Baptismal Regeneration;" but the first bitter draught of subscription, and the subsequent doses of catchism and rubric, are not all the annoyances of conforming Purlins, for many of them are so sorely vexed with davy ecclesiastical troubles, that they might almost say with David, "All the day long have I been plied, and chastened every morning" We would pity them for being placed in so unenviable a position were they not free to get out of it whenever they please: lacking room for commiseration, we adopt another form of good wishing, and pray that their yoke may become heavier day by day, and their surroundings more and more intolerable, until they are driven forth from their self-chosen bonds. We are the best friend of the Evangelicals, because we do not delude them into the notion that their ecclesiastical union with Puseysim and Rationalism is justifiable, but honestly urge them to quit their indefensible and dishonorable position, and come out decidedly from all communion with the monster evils of the Establishment. None will welcome them more heartily or help them more industriously than he whom they adjudged to be unkind because of his outspoken rebukes. Disapproving of Episcopacy as a form of church government, many Dissenters would nevertheless rejoice to

assist a free evangelical episcopal community formed by a great secession from the state church, and freed from its glaring errors; and such a church would be vexed by no special bickerings and jealousies between itself and the other members of the great evangelical family, it would most probably enjoy a place of more than ordinary prestige, and might possibly become the largest religious community in England. A little Scotch backbone and wonders would be wrought. Alas! we fear that the Record school teaches no lessons which can educate heroes, and we are afraid the evangelicals will continue to be what the Puseyites call them, “the jellies,” to the end of the chapter.

In their work for the Lord, our Christian brethren in the Establishment of the — bolder stamp frequently find Churchianity a sad incumbrance to them. In favored regions, where the gospel has long been preached, a circle of believers has been formed, who form a church within the church, and contribute greatly to the success and comfort of the clergyman; but in other cases the Churchmen of the parish are a terrible nuisance to the Christian incumbent. Laying aside for a moment our opinion of the inconsistency of his official position, we cannot help sympathizing deeply with the minister who, hampered and bound by his ecclesiastical connections, is nevertheless struggling, as manfully as his condition allows, to preserve a gospel testimony in the land. We wish God-speed to all such, as *ministers of our Lord Jesus*, although we anxiously desire that their membership with the corrupt church of England may, at any cost, speedily come to an end. We know that hundreds of the excellent of the earth are preaching the pure word of truth every Sabbath within the bounds of Episcopalianism, with hearts breaking for heaviness because their parishioners loathe the gospel, and hate them for the gospel’s Sake. “Ah,” said a clergyman to us a few months ago, “your people love you, and if you are ill they are all praying to have you restored, but as for me, they would set the bells ringing in my parish if I were dead, for gospel truth is abominable in the esteem of most of them, and they hate me for keeping ritualism out of my church.” This was, probably, an extreme case, but there are many of a similar kind, though not so intense in degree. May such brethren be upheld by their great Master to war a good warfare, and to remain faithful to the faith once committed to the saints. Inconsistent as they are, we cannot deliberate for a single moment as to which side to take in the contest between them and Ritualists and worldlings; they are our brethren notwithstanding their shortcoming, their cause is the cause of truth and righteousness, so far as

they preach the gospel of Jesus, and may it triumph beyond their own expectation, even to the' destruction of the union between church and state. They deserve to be driven out of the Establishment, in which they are intruders, towards which they are Dissenters, for which they have defiled their reputations among their Nonconforming brethren, but, as men fighting in a wicked world against deadly errors, they deserve the prayers of all believers, and the best assistance that can be rendered by all Christians.

In the *Bucks Herald* a serious complaint is laid against the zealous Vicar of Winslow, by a *Churchman*, which we shall use as an illustration of the quarrel between Christianity and Churchianity. The allegations appear to us to be very justly brought by the writer from his Churchianity point of view; the vicar is a Christian, and has no right in the Anglican church, and when his vestry condemns him, it is simply the voice of the church with which he has unhappily allied himself protesting against the religion of Jesus, which shines in his course of action. If an honest Englishman enlists in the French army in time of war, he must not wonder if his British manners are offensive to his Gallic connections; he should not put himself in so false a position, but range himself on the side to which, by lineage and loyalty, he belongs. It is curious to note that the great sins which the Vicar of Winslow has committed against Churchianity, are precisely the very acts which, under Christianity, are accounted as virtues. His good before the Lord of hosts is evil in the judgment of perverse men. "In Winslow," says the Churchman, "there is a most decided church feeling. Many' of us, with the greatest regret, leave our parish church, who have never done so before; others, who from circumstances are unable to do so, feel the want of good services, but submit to what they get. Our vicar, I believe, thinks himself sincere and right; but he forgets that other persons may (as in this instance they' do) hold contrary views to his, to which views he will not yield in the slightest degree, although it would be for the benefit of the church of which he is a priest, and of which we are the true and loving people." Of course he is a priest, and his own prayer book calls him so, and yet we venture to guess that he disowns the title. HIS parishioners are right enough in murmuring at his want of churchmanship, but he is more right still, though very inconsistent, in putting Christ before the church.

Now for the gross transgressions of the vicar, which are chiefly threefold. *Item the first. He has been guilty of Christian love.* He has committed against Churchianity the high crime and misdemeanor of loving his brethren in the

faith, whereas he ought to have denounced them all as schismatics and heretics. The charge needs no comment from us, all sound judges will see that the case is parallel to that against Paul and Silas, at Philippi, “these men, being Christians, do exceedingly trouble our city, and teach customs which it is not lawful for us to receive, being Churchmen.” Here are the very words of the accusation — “the holding of prayer meetings, at which all denominations of Christians were invited to attend, and to offer up prayer in alphabetical order, regardless of sect, and under the presidency of the vicar.” Horrible! is it not, O bitter bigot! Lovely! is it not, disciple of Jesus?

Item second. He has vindicated, as well as he could, a weak point in his teaching, and has been anxious to win over those who differ. He ‘is accused of preaching “special sermons upon such subjects as Holy Baptism, and inviting the Baptists to attend, when that denomination of Christians had just established a new place of worship.” Churchianity does not think those vile Baptists to be worth powder and shot. To preach to them is as bad as Paul preaching among the uncircumcised Gentiles. It is useless to try to convert them, and it is dangerous to ventilate the subject of Baptism, because the church is so very fond of Infant Baptism, and the matter is so exceedingly doubtful, that it is better not to stir in it. The Baptists, mark you, reader, do not complain; they are glad that every Paedobaptist should declare his own views, and they feel so safe in their own entrenchments that they look for converts whenever the subject is brought before the public mind; but the churchman complains grievously because Baptists are even bidden to come and be rectified by the vicar; let them alone, they are heretics and arch enemies of Churchianity; let them go to their own place, both here and hereafter.

Item third. The vicar has had the impertinence to be faithful as a pastor. This is a very serious business, and, we should imagine, is at the bottom of the whole complaint. He has trodden on some people’s gouty toes, and touched their besetting sins with too rough a hand. “Thus,” saith the church-scribe, “the preaching of sermons upon such subjects as balls and concerts, when such private and public entertainments were about to be given; I say that, in my belief, these things have been calculated to send church-goers elsewhere, such sermons as I have mentioned coming under the head of personal ones, which should always be avoided.” Christianity approves of. holy boldness in reproof, and integrity in declaring the whole counsel of God, but Churchianity loves gaiety and frivolity, and would

have a dumb dog in the pulpit, who will not rebuke it. Whenever Churchianity has ruled, revelry and wantonness have been winked at, so long as saints' days, sacraments, and priests have been regarded. God's law is nothing to the high church, so long as church forms are scrupulously and ostentatiously observed. We should see maypoles erected and danced around on a Sunday afternoon within a year, if Churchianity had its way; the Book of Sports would be revived, and the evening of the Lord's day would be dedicated to the devil. Leave the church open, observe saints' days, decorate the altar, sing "Hymns Ancient and Modern," put on tagrags, and all goes smoothly with Churchianity: preach the gospel, and denounce sin, and straightway .there is no small stir.

Well, good Mr. Vicar, may you be yet more vile in these men's sight, until they cast you out of the national church as your Master was driven forth before you. May you please God more and more, and make the devil and all his allies heartily sick of you. Saving your vicarage, and professed churchmanship, about which we can see nothing desirable, we esteem you .highly, and hope that you and the like of you may evermore be sustained by the abounding mercy of the great Head of the one only true church, which is the remnant according to the election of grace: May Christianity rule and Churchianity be cast to the moles and to the bats.

OUR COLPORTEURS.

CONVINCED that the sale of religious books in the lonely cottages of our villages and hamlets, and among the crowds of the uninstructed poor of our great cities, is one of the best methods of reaching the hearts of perishing men, about a year ago we committed to some of our young brethren at the Tabernacle the care of an enterprise of the kind, hoping that it would grow into a great society. Under the superintendence of our friends, seven men have been laboring with very considerable success in different parts of England, and have by their experience proved that the field is large and the work much needed. Nearly one thousand pounds' worth of books have been sold, and large districts have thus been sown with the truth; but we regret to say that the work is in danger of coming to a termination for lack of funds, all our means being now exhausted. It grieves us to the heart to go back a single step; like the English trumpeter we have not learned to sound a retreat: we had far rather speak to the

children of Israel that they go forward; yet backward we must go, unless the Lord shall send us funds, for debt is of all things our greatest abhorrence, and even for the truth's sake we dare not incur it. It remains very much with our readers whether we shall discharge our colporteurs or not, for although we are willing to lead in holy activity, we cannot stand alone, and when deserted by our fellow soldiers, we have no alternative but to stay our action. Dear friends, do you know what the colporteur does, and how cheap an agent he is? If not, let us tell you a few things about him. He must be a strong man, for he has to carry a heavy pack; he must be a patient laborer, for he has to toil most arduously; and he must be an intelligent worker, for he has to battle with all sorts of opinions. He journeys many miles in a day over hill and dale to remote country houses, and there tries to sell a Bible, or a Pilgrim's Progress, or some other good book; he has pennyworths for the poor, elegant volumes for the rich, and picture books for the children, all full of the gospel of Jesus. When he cannot make a sale, he leaves a tract, and says a few words about the great salvation; and, if there be any sick in the house, he reads a chapter and offers prayer, and points the dying sinner to the living Savior. Wet and dry, winter and summer, he is at his work; his district is large, and he tries to go round the whole of it at least once in every month, so that he may sell the monthly periodicals; hence he has no waste time on his hands, but is at work from morning till night. Frowned upon by Popish clergy and ridiculed by ungodly men, he is sustained by zeal for his Master's glory, and looks for his reward in heaven. He finds in many places as complete an ignorance of the gospel as if he were in India; even the name of Jesus is sometimes unknown, and that in Christian England; but, on the other hand, he sees Popish prints on the walls, which have been sold by hawkers, and bought because they were cheap and showy, and he meets with profane Songs, vile newspapers, polluting novels, and obscene literature, and has to do his best to put something better in their place. Where there is no gospel minister or missionary he is hailed as the only light which the darkened villagers have within reach, and frequently he is the herald of the preacher, and the founder of a Christian church. For all his toils, the good man only gets sixty pounds a year, the half of which, at least, he is bound to earn by the sales which he effects; he is therefore no hireling lustful for gain, but a self-denying worker toiling for love of souls. To turn him adrift is cruelty to souls, and treason to truth, *shall it be done!* We thought that three hundred pounds a year would have been readily subscribed, instead of which, our friends hardly sent us fifty pounds during last year, and we have been

greatly discouraged. The Lord knows how ardently we desire his glory, and how readily we would give our last penny to spread the gospel, but all are not of this mind, and hence our college and colportage are forgotten by the bulk of our readers. Thanks, .a thousand thanks to a loving and faithful few who bring tears of rejoicing to our eyes by their thoughtful and continual liberality; when will the Lord touch the hearts of others, and make them willing to come to the help of the Lord against the mighty? Scotland has a noble society of colporteurs, numbering one hundred and fifty; *shall England be left without such a necessary body of evangelists?* If it be so, the fault is not at our door. The Lord will require the blood of souls at the hand of those who see men perish for lack of knowledge, and refuse to send them light.

Our woodcut shows the colporteur in a cold winter's day talking with the children of a lone farmhouse, and selling them some of the many excellent magazines of the present day, for he is always the children's friend, with a word and perhaps a little book to give them, or a hymn to teach them. Bands of hope spring up around him in the villages, for he is usually a temperance man, and zealous in every good word and work. He is. a very welcome visitor, for he generally goes where there are no book shops, and where apart from him no good magazines and books would ever be seen. God speed him in his labors, and God grant that so far from recalling him, we may be able to send out more. The matter is now left with the Lord and with his people: we will report progress hereafter. — C. H. Spurgeon.

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL.

MARCH, 1868.

ACCIDENTS IN THE LORD'S WORK.

“And the sons of the prophets said unto Elisha, Behold now, the pinaco where we dwell with thee is too strait for us. Let us go, we pray thee, unto, Jordan, and take thence every man a beam, and let us make us a place there,, where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye. And one said, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go. So he went with them, And when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood. But as one was lolling a beam, the ax head fell into the water: and he cried, and said, Alas, master! for it was borrowed. And the man of God said, Where fell it? And he showed him the place. And he cut down a stick, and cast it in thither; and the iron did swim. Therefore said he, Take it up to thee. And he put out his hand, and took it.” — 2 Kings 6:1 — 7.

HERE was an instance of a college for the training of men of God. The young teachers, who are called “sons of the prophets,” lived in the society of Elisha, that great master in Israel, and so far from imagining that it was wrong to instruct those who were moved of the Spirit to speak, the venerable prophet encouraged them to provide further accommodation, that others might share in his teachings. The whimsies of certain good people with regard to seminaries for ministers are founded in a misapprehension: it is both a good and a necessary work to educate those whom the Lord has called. Schools of the prophets there always have been, and always must be. Humanly speaking, the Reformation could never have spread over Europe, had it not been that both Luther and Calvin lectured to large classes of young men, who were attracted by their fame, and being filled with their spirit, went everywhere proclaiming the truth. Our Lord’s

twelve apostles were his college of preachers, and each of these committed the gospel to faithful men, who taught others also.

This passage also gives a hint to those excessively spiritual people who object to building places for God's worship, and whenever an enlargement, or a new structure is projected, cry out about hearing *so much about bricks and mortar*. Their wisest way is to give their immediate help to the enterprise, and get the building done with, that they may never hear of it again. Young prophets must have houses, and as these will not grow of themselves, like mushrooms, there must be 'some little talk about the matter, and earnest labor too. Elisha did not say, "There, there, do not trouble me about buildings; I desire to walk with God and think of heavenly things; I cannot possibly give attention to your carnal arrangements about building houses; no, he listened to their story, and when he saw them resolved upon the business, he went with them to afford them his countenance and company. Our personal experience of superfinely spiritual people who cannot endure the ordinary work of Christian churches, is just this — they are either lackadaisical, sentimental images of affectation, or mean, stingy hypocrites, who want an excuse for tightening their purse-strings'. While we are in this body, we shall want houses to meet in for public worship, almsrooms and orphanages for the relief of the poor, and schools for the instruction of the young; and it is as much a holy work to build these in our times, as it was for Bezaleel to fashion the tabernacle, or Solomon to erect the temple. Those excessively heavenly people who cannot condescend to such worldly work, ought not to eat their dinners, for that is a very fleshly operation; nor ought they to sleep as do others, or to array themselves in coats and waistcoats, for that is a very carnal fashion; they should rig themselves out with wings, and imitate the angelic in all things. Bah! One needs a great deal of patience to endure the nonsense of a certain class of very pretentious, but useless people.

Our chief reason for noticing the incident before us, was to make an observation appropriate to our late trial, that in the best work for the Lord we have no guarantee against accidents, and the losses which they occasion. The young prophet was most landably engaged, and yet the head of his ax flew off, and fell into the water. Those who conclude that every successful work has the smile of God upon it, should remember that Babylon was mistress among the nations, and none could stand against her, yet was she abhorred of the Lord. Those, on the other hand, who see in every temporary calamity a proof that an enterprise is not according to the

Lord's mind, might condemn the preaching of the gospel itself, since in its very infancy it subjected so many to persecution and to cruel death. Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and the works which he approves he often renders difficult. When the preacher at the Surrey Music Hall saw his congregation scattered by the uproar of wicked men, and mourned over precious life which was so suddenly sacrificed, there were friends who read in that shocking disaster an omen that the work was not of God, and that the preacher must desist; but the young man did not believe in omens, but in duty, and therefore, as soon as he could, he reappeared in his pulpit, and as the result of his after ministry in that place, it is not too much to say that thousands found Christ by his direct teaching, while the preaching of the word in cathedrals, abbeys, music halls, and theaters, became a tolerated agency, and even a popular method of evangelisation. During the last few days an unusually strong wind has demolished about six hundred pounds' worth of property at the Stockwell Orphanage; will the conductor of that work be at all discouraged, and dream that the Lord's hand is against him? Not for a moment. The same event happeneth alike to all. Winds and tempests blow upon the good as well as the evil. When a storm is abroad, it shows no partialities, and is as likely to overturn an orphanage as a theater, to wreck a missionary ship as a pirate's craft. Does this perplex the observer? It should not do so. God would have us serve him under trials and difficulties; to screen us from them would be to make babies of us, and not to develop the manly qualities of patience, courage, and perseverance. In this world and under its ordinary laws the Great Master would have us labor, not under a glass case of miracles and wonders, but under the cloudy skies which look down upon a fallen world: he trains us to work not as a race of amateurs protected from all the dust and sweat of ordinary life, and laid up in lavender by supernatural exemptions from hardships, but as real workmen, to whom things are as they are, who find trees hard to fell, and the heads of whose axes fly off unless they are well fastened on to their handles. Of course, if trust in providence be a guarantee against flood, wind, fire, and hail, it is clear that all who meet with such calamities are great sinners, and their works obnoxious to the Ruler of all things, but this can hardly be true, when we frequently see those called to suffer who are the very cream of the church of Christ. Paul was engaged upon no ill errand when he suffered shipwreck; his soul was fired with the noblest ambition of which sanctified humanity is capable, and yet the vessel was dashed to pieces. The fact is, that the same events may be curses to some and blessings to others, and thus a judgment which overwhelms the

ungodly may be a gracious visitation to the saint. Our business is to learn the lessons which adversities are meant to teach us, and they' are not difficult to discover. The case of the man with the lost are is to the point.

When accident impedes us in the work of the Lord, we may expect a divine interposition, for, in the name 'of his Master, the prophet caused the iron to swim. Our trials are often the shadows of coming mercies. We are made to draw back a little that we may with the more energy leap forward. We lose silver to find gold. God will appear at the ebb of the tide. He will turn the year at the shortest winter's day. When he has shown us our entire dependence t/pen himself, he will stretch out his glorious arm and work deliverance. Such gracious help we believingly look for at the Orphanage. The Lord who is the Father of the orphans, will not destroy his own property wantonly — he has some good thing in store. The are may be in the water, but the prophet's God can raise it, it shall not be lost.

We may also feel deep gratitude that it is no worse. The are might have split some one's head when it flew off, or it might have severely wounded the young workman himself. He was probably little used to felling trees, he was not a regular woodman certainly, for he had to borrow his are; he went to work eagerly but clumsily, and flourished his weapon at such a rate that it was a mercy when the dangerous implement was out of his unskillful hand. We have felt glad with regard to the building which we have lost, that it fell in good time before any children were on the premises. In all human probability they would have sought shelter during the gale under the very structure which is now a ruin, and many might have been crushed beneath the massive timbers. Thanks be to God that no worse mishap has occurred; nothing indeed but what may be replaced with a little exertion. We have not to say, "Alas, Master! it was borrowed," for it was a free gift to us, and he whose generosity prompted the present has already offered to bear a share of the loss.

No doubt the slipping of the are head taught the worker to ram it on more tightly next time. He would be more careful before he went to his chopping again, and in like manner we are now admonished to build in the most substantial manner, so that, so far as men can judge, no furious wind may damage our edifice again. The young man found it necessary to put out his hand to reach his are from the river, and thus he learned that divine help gave him no dispensation from exerting himself. Even so while we know that God

will come to the rescue, we dare not be idle, but stir up all our friends to do their best, and the Lord being with us, all will be well.

Thus learning from adversity, we set our face steadfastly to our work, forasmuch as we know that our labor is not in vain in the Lord. We have resolved to proceed at once with four more houses, the school, the master's house, the dining hall, and the skeletons of three more houses, which will answer the purpose of the building which the wind has removed. May the Lord make the iron to swim.

ZIGZAG

FIRST to the right, then to the left, the road was ever ascending but always twisting, and thus, by easy marches, we were able to reach the summit of the pass; a straight line would have been shorter for the eagle's wing, but no human foot could have followed it. Nobody called us inconsistent for thus facing about; we kept the road, and no one could complain. If we honestly desire to gain the heights of divine truth, we shall find many zigzags in the road: here our face will front divine sovereignty with all its lofty grandeur, and anon we shall turn in the opposite direction, towards the frowning peaks of human responsibility. What matters it if we appear to be inconsistent, so long as we keep to the highway of Scripture, which is our only safe road to knowledge! Angels may, perhaps, be systematic divines; for men it should be enough to follow the word of God, let its teachings wind as they may. — From *the Note Book of my Travels*.

HOLY WATER.

HOLY water, indeed! a vile mixture, neither fit for man nor beast. You see this liquid virtue at the doors of all the churches, ready for the brows of the faithful, but what is far more curious, you observe it in little pots placed for us in the cemeteries; and that the passer-by may give the dead a showery benediction, there are little sprinkling brushes in the pots with which to scatter the precious mixture. A mother's tears over her dead babe are far more in place than such foolery. Holy water! bah! See how the rain pours down from yonder black cloud Which that sort of holy water is infinitely more likely to moisten the clay of the defunct, and bring plenteous blessing

to the living, than all the hogsheads of aqueous fired that priests ever mumbled *over.*: Holy water, indeed. If there be such a thing, it trickest from the eye of penitence, bedews the cheek of gratitude, and falls upon the page of holy Scripture when the word is with power. Standing where, when the rain is over, one can see the fair Lake of Lucerne brimming with crystal, and the clouds among the Alpine peaks all charged with moisture, rendered golden by the sun's clear shining, one feels indignant at the idea that the little driblets of nastiness in yonder pots and shells should be generated, and all nature's reservoirs accounted common or unclean. It needs no small measure of prudence to restrain a man from tumbling pots and pans and holy liquids headlong to the ground. Human folly, how far wilt thou not go when priests lead thee by the nose! — From *the Note Book of my Travels*. C. H. S.

MUSINGS BY THE WAY

“For this child I prayed.” — 1 Samuel 1:27.

DEVOUT souls delight to look upon those mercies which they have obtained in answer to their supplications, for they can see God's especial love in them. When we can name our blessings Samuel, that is, “asked of God,” they will be as dear to us as her child was to Hannah. How sweet was that water to Samson which he found at “the well of him that prayed.” Quassia cups turn all waters bitter, but the cup of prayer puts a sweetness into the draughts it brings. Did we pray for the conversion of our children? How doubly sweet, when they are saved, to see in them our own petitions fulfilled! Better to rejoice over them as the fruit of our pleadings than as the fruit of our bodies. Have we sought of the Lord some choice spiritual gift? When it comes to us it will be wrapped up in the gold cloth of his faithfulness and truth, and so be doubly precious. Have we petitioned for success in the Lord's work? How joyful is the prosperity which comes flying upon the wings of prayer! It is always best to get blessings into our house in the legitimate way, by the door of prayer; then they are blessings indeed, and not temptations. Even when prayer for a time speeds not, the blessings grow all the richer for the delay: the child Jesus was all the more lovely in the eyes of Mary when she found him after having sought him sorrowing.

That which we win by prayer we should dedicate to God as Hannah dedicated Samuel. The gift came from heaven, let it go to heaven. Prayer brought it, gratitude sang over it, let devotion consecrate it. Here will be a special occasion for saying, “Of thine own have I given unto thee.”

Reader, is prayer your element or your weariness? Which?

“A living dog is better than a dead lion.” — Ecclesiastes 9:4.

Life is a precious thing, and in its humblest form it is superior to death. This truth is eminently certain in spiritual things. It is better to be the least in the kingdom of heaven than the greatest out of it. The lowest degree of grace is superior to the noblest development of unregenerate nature. Where the Holy Ghost implants divine life in the soul there is a precious deposit which all the refinements of education and the ennoblings of philosophy cannot match. The thief on the cross excels Caesar on his throne; Lazarus among the dogs is better than Cicero among the senators; and the most unlettered Christian is, in the sight of God, superior to Plato. Life is the badge of nobility in the realm of spiritual things, and men without it are only courser or finer specimens of the same lifeless material, needing to be quickened, for they are dead in trespasses and sins.

A living, loving, gospel sermon, however unlearned in matter and uncouth in style, is better than the finest discourse devoid of unction and power. A living dog keeps better watch than a dead lion, and is of more service to his master; and so the poorest spiritual preacher is infinitely to be preferred to the exquisite orator who has no wisdom but that of words, no energy but that of sound. The like holds good of our prayers and other religious exercises; if we are quickened in them by the Holy Spirit, they are acceptable to God through Jesus Christ, though we may think them to be poor and worthless things; while our grand performances in which our heart is absent, like dead lions, are mere carrion in the sight of the living God. Oh for living groans, living sighs, living despondencies, rather than lifeless songs and dead cairns! Better anything than death. The snarlings of the dog of hell will at least keep us awake, but dead faith and dead profession — what greater curses can a man have? Quicken us, quicken us, O Lord!

SPENCER'S THINGS NEW AND OLD.

TO read everything would be impossible. Some hooks it is unwise to read at all and of others a little may suffice. If somebody would boil down modern literature into the essence of knowledge, and sell it out in shilling's-worths, he would deserve the heartiest commendations; for as things now are, what with the hone of platitude, the gristle of verbosity, and the suet of fine writing, our largest masses of literary provender hardly afford a man a breakfast of really nutritious mental food. It seems that two hundred years ago from this very date, John Spencer, who was not a scholar by profession, but humbly calls himself a lover of learning and learned men, issued a goodly tome, in which he presented his readers with extracts from all the authors within his reach: extracts metaphorical and curious, and for the most part judicious and valuable, lie must have been a marvel of industry, for his quotations number 2283, and are taken from the classical, patristic, puritan, and every other school of authorship. To every paragraph he has appended "the names of those at whose torch he has lighted his taper," and thus as quaint Thomas Fuller says. "he hath revived the memories of many worthies, and of their speeches which otherwise had utterly been lost." lie took care to place an appropriate heading over every extract, and to furnish an excellent index. Having, like the her, sucked honey from ten thousand flowers, he stored it with the greatest diligence in well-arranged cells, and having lived out his hour like the rest of us poor working bees, he died. leaving his dripping honeycombs to us, his heirs. Up till the present year, "Spencer's *Things New and Old*" have been a cabinet whitebait dinner for the few, rather than a banquet for the many, but now his dainties are brought to every man's door, and all the world may purchase them. Mr. Dickinson and Mr. Tegg have each issued an edition of this valuable work, and we fear there is more fear of a glut in the market than of a scarcity. In this case, too many cooks will not spoil the broth, nor will they cause, damage to the company, but we are half afraid the worthy men may stall themselves, or lind their viands growing moldy in the cupboard. It is a thousand pities that by some mutual arrangement they had not avoided the loss, which, unless the public be very discerning, must accrue to one or both of the publishers, it is not possible for us to have a preference for either of the editions. How happy could we be with either. The portly volume of Mr. Dickinson is just the book for shelves which are enriched with Puritanic folios, for which we must ever feel a reverence and

love. Of course, such a book is heavy, but then we do not hold it up, but the table bears the weight, and then the type and the large page are delightful. Moreover, in this volume, we have Cawdray's remarkable compilation, and so have two treasures in one. As for Mr. Tegg's two volumes, they are of a convenient and usable size, and one ran turn round to the fire with a copy in one's hand. The volumes are well got up, and will be preferred by many, though we, ourselves personally, cannot see a pin to choose between the two editions, they are both so exceedingly good. As a cluster from Eshcol made men long for the vineyards of Canaan, perhaps a specimen or two will make our readers desirous to purchase the work.

1266. *Idleness the cory inlet to all temptations.*— It was the speech of Mr. Greenham (some time a painful preacher of this nation) that when the devil tempted a poor soul, she came to him for advice, how she might resist the temptation, and he gave her this answer: Never be idle, but be always well employed; for in my own experience I have found it, when the devil came to tempt me, I told him that I was not at leisure to hearken to his temptation, and by this means I resisted all his assaults. Thus must all of us do, when the devil comes to tempt any of us, say: I am not at leisure to lend an ear to thy temptations, I am otherwise employed, I am in the work of my God, busied in the work of my lawful calling, and taken up with the thoughts of God's blessings thereupon, then he will never be able to fasten upon thee; for so it is, that he never gets advantage of any man or woman, but either when they are out of God's way, or idle, or have their hands in some sinful action, then it is that they do even tempt the tempter to tempt them, and lay themselves open to a world of sin and wickedness."

"1323. *How it is that Faith challengeth the superiority over other graces.* —Take a piece of wax and a piece of gold of the same magnitude, the wax is not valuable with the gold; but as the wax hangs at the label of some will, by virtue of which some great estate is confirmed and conveyed, so it may be worth many hundred pounds. So faith considered purely in itself, doth challenge nothing more than other graces, nay, in some sense it is inferior, it being an empty hand; but as this hand receives the precious alms of Christ's merits, and is an instrument or channel through which the blessed streams of life flow to us from Him, so it doth challenge a superiority over, and is more excellent than, all other graces whatsoever."

"1349. *Conscience spoils the wicked man's mirth.* — There is a story of one who undertook in a few days to make a fast sheep lean, and yet was to allow

him a daily and large provision of meat, soft and easy lodging, with security from all danger, that nothing should hurt him. This he effected, by putting him into an iron grate, and placing a ravenous wolf hard by in another, always howling, fighting, scenting, scratching, to come at the poor sheep; which, affrighted with this sad sold and worse sight, had little joy to eat, less to sleep, whereby his flesh was suddenly abated. And thus it is that all wicked men have the terrors of an affrighted conscience constantly, not only barking at them, but biting them, which spoil all their mirth, dis-sweetens their most delicious pleasures with the sad consideration of the sins they have committed and punishment they must undergo when, in another world, they shall be called to an account for what they have done here in the flesh.”

“1367. *Complete Christian Duty*. — It was the speech of Mr. Bradford, that he could not leave a duty till he had found communion with Christ in the duty, till he had brought his heart into a duty-frame. He could not leave confession till he had found his heart touched, broken and humbled for sin; nor petition, till he had found his heart taken with the beauties of the things desired, and carried out after them; nor could he leave thanksgiving, till he had found his spirit enlarged, and his soul quickened in the return of proses: just like that of St. Bernard, who found God in every duty, and communion with him in every prayer; this was true, sincere, complete Christian duty. And thus it is that the soul taken with Christ desires converse with him in prayer, in hearing, and in meditation, on, Isaiah 58:9. And such too is the genius of a soul taken up with Christ, that duty doth not content it, if it find not Christ in the duty; so that, if the end of a duty hath not left it on this side Christ, it hath left it so far short of true comfort.”

“1417. *Riches, the danger of them being not well used*. — In anartichoke, there is a little picking meat, not so wholesome as delicious, and nothing to that it shows for; more than the tenth part is unprofitable leaves; and besides, there is a core in the midst of it which will choke a man if he take not good heed. Such a thing is wealth that men so covetously desire; it is like some kind of fish, so full of bones and unseen, that no man can eat of them without great danger. The rich man’s wealth is very troublesome to the outward man, like a long garment that is too wide, if he tread upon it, he may chance to catch a fall a fall into much discontent and envy of the world; but to the soul, riches if not well employed, prove very pernicious, making a man vainly confident; thinking that he is so walled and moated

about, that he is out of all gunshot when he is more open to danger than a poorer man, then they make him proud: and pride, saith St. Bernard, is the rich man's cozen, it blows him up like a bladder with a quill; then he grows secure, and so falls into sudden ruin.

SENTRIES.

WHILE the Austrian general was staying at the Hotel de Ville, upon the Grand Canal, at Venice, we lodged at the same house, and so often as we passed his rooms, whether by day or night, we encountered two sentries on guard at the door. Our heart said to itself, whenever the King of kings deigns to make a chamber of our spirit, let us set holiness and devotion to be sentries at the entrance. When our Beloved visits us he must not be disturbed; ill thoughts must be repulsed, and carnal desires kept at a distance. With drawn swords let watchfulness preserve the sanctity of Immanuel's rest. "I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please." — From *the Note Book of my Travels*. C. H. S.

REVIEWS.

Retrospect and Forecast in Relation to Missionary Enterprise. Two sermons preached in Fuller Chapel, Kettering. By JAMES MURSELL. London: Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

VOICES from Kettering deserve attention; Mr. Mursell does no discredit to the pulpit of Andrew Fuller; his two sermons are affectionate, bold, and seasonable. The Baptist Missionary Society must be revived and reformed, or it will pine like a fading flower: such judicious suggestions as those of Mr. Mursell deserve the gravest attention of all its friends, and we urge every missionary spirit to ponder them well. Eighteenpence or one shilling is, we suppose, the price, but publishers forget to inform us.

Moyley and Tyndall on Miracles. An Essay. By Wm. Fowler, LL.B. London: Longmans.

WHEN our merchant princes are valiant for the truth, the fact is refreshing to the Christian heart, and tends to break the gloom which a survey of the

present age is sure to cast upon the reflecting. Mr. Fowler has a clear, calm, logical mind; he readily finds out the weak place in his opponent's argument, and he handles the spiritual rapier with such dexterity, that all his thrusts cut and kill. Among philosophical doubters Mr. Fowler will do wonders.

The Desert and the Holy Land By ALEXANDER WALLACE, D.D., Author of "The Bible and Working People," "Poems and Sketches," etc. Edinburgh: William Oliphant & Co.

IT is not easy, after the many books that have been published of recent years on Palestine, to write a work on so popular a subject, with any claims to originality, either of matter or style. Yet Dr. Wallace has succeeded in both beyond his pretensions. He has told us what he saw and felt in visiting the land teeming with so many hallowed associations; his descriptions of Eastern scenes are graphic and interesting, the incidents of his travels are humorous and illustrative of Oriental life and manners; while the account of his journey through the desert is vividly presented to the reader, who, if already acquainted with current books on the subject, will find much here that will strike him with special interest and peculiar freshness. Dr. Wallace's book is one that may be profitably read and re-read, which is more than we can say of many works on the same subject, of far higher pretensions.

The Nonsuch Professor in his Meridian Splendor; or, The Singular Actions of Sanctified Christians. By Wm. Secker. London: R. Dickinson, Farringdon Street.

THIS is a nonsuch work, sparkling with wit weighty with wisdom and rich with unction. It would be superfluous to criticize a treatise upon which succeeding ages of divines have set the seal of their approval.

The Sunday Scholars' Annual: containing Stories and Ballads for Sunday Scholars. Third Series. Elliot Stock, 62, Paternoster Row.

THESE stories and ballads, so pleasantly told and so capitally illustrated, will be sure to gain great favor with our young folk. The little volume is cheap, tasteful, and elegant.

The Hero of the Desert; or, Facts more wonderful than Fiction. By the Rev. James Spong. The Book Society, 28, Paternoster Row.

A SERIES of discourses upon the life of Moses. Excellent family reading, earnest, impressive, and interesting. Not a book for suggesting new thought, or opening up deep mysteries; but good, useful, practical reflections, suitable to the many. We should not quite coincide in some of Mr. Spong's modes of putting the truths which touch upon Sovereignty and Responsibility, but still we are surprised to find that we so nearly agree, where there is so much room for difference. The hardening of Pharaoh's heart is not so easily disposed of as some may think; it would be far easier to measure the sun's surface with a two-foot rule than to fathom the depth of this great mystery.

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL.

APRIL, 1868.

CAN NOTHING MORE BE DONE FOR THE YOUNG?

ARE we to regard Sabbath-schools as the climax of all Christian effort for the young? May we settle it in our hearts that Robert Raikes reached the utmost bounds of religious enterprise, in the juvenile direction, and that now, henceforth, and for ever, we may rest and be thankful? Beyond I the pillars of Hercules, what mariner shall sail? We have Tories in religion as well as in politics, who will be greatly scandalized when we say that the landable labors of our tens of thousands of Sunday-school teachers are a mere installment of the debt which is due from the church of Christ to the little ones around us; the giving of a mere handful of grass instead of the large provender demanded by the injunction, "Feed my lambs." As some of these Sabbath seminaries are conducted, their benefit is doubtful, in others microscopic, and in very many superficial and temporary. The system is a noble one, and its beneficial results are incalculable, but the manner in which it is sometimes worked out is deplorable. Taking it at its best, and rating it at its highest supposable value, we are Radical enough to assert that it is not all that the children of this age require, nay, nor one half of what might be, and must be, done for them if England is to become a Christian country. Education of a secular sort has been too long withheld by the bickering of rival sects; the nation is now in such a humor that it will have no more of such unenlightened bigotry, but will insist upon it, that every child shall be taught to read and write. Since the sectarian system has in England most evidently failed to reach the needs of the millions, a purely secular system will be established, and will be thrust upon us whether we will or no. There will be a great outcry about the divorcing of religion from education, but we shall not join in it, partly because it is useless to cry over spilt milk — the thing must be, and there is no preventing it; and yet more,

because we think we see our way to a great real gain out of a small apparent loss. Children are to lose the religious training which they received in National and British schools: we admit that there may be cases in which the loss will be appreciable, but we think they are few and far between. The lads of the village might generally carry in a hollow tooth all the religion they receive at the charity school. Do not they learn .the church catechism? Yes, but that is not religion, it begins with an assertion of Baptismal Regeneration, maunders about behaving one's-self lowly .and reverently to-one's betters in a manner suitable for an American negro previous to the late war, and' has not a fraction of the simple gospel of Jesus in it from end to end. It will be highly beneficial to the morality of youth to dispense with this miserable farrago, in which the false of superstition and the true of law are hopelessly jumbled. The present religious teachings of our week-day schools is as we believe as nearly as possible a sham, and a most mischievous sham too, since it satisfies the Christian conscience, and lulls to sleep energies which need to be aroused to the performance of a much-neglected Christian duty. Concerning that duty we now offer a few hints preliminary we hope to other suggestions by abler hands; we invite such suggestions, and shall be only too glad to publish them.

Should the Christian church ordinarily expect the week-day schoolmaster to do her work of instructing the young in the fear of the Lord? Will her expectations be fulfilled? The duty rests primarily with;he parent, and then with the schoolmaster, so far as he stands in the parent's stead; but who will say that the general run of day-school 'teachers, with from one to two hundred children around them, can act as parents to the boys and girls? The fact is, that for the five or six hours in the day in which the children are at school, it is quite as much as 'the master can do to keep order and instil the elements of useful knowledge; he cannot, even if he thinks of such a thing, talk personally and affectionately with each child, and labor for its conversion; and yet this is, to our mind, the only true religious education. The godly schoolmaster may, and doubtless does, attempt this, but piety is not always found in schoolmasters, nor, indeed, is it the main qualification for the office. The fact is, that the church Of God had better herself see to the work which, we hold, is only occasionally, by a happy chance, within the province of the ordinary day-school teacher. Let the teacher of arithmetic keep to his figures, and if he can sow the good seed at the same time, by all means let him do it, but let not lovers of souls depend much

upon the likelihood of his doing so. It is the duty of every tradesman in his business to promote the interests of religion, so far as he has Opportunity, but if there were no especial exhorters and teachers of the gospel, it is to be feared that the stray warnings administered by our grocers and tailors, however praiseworthy, would not fulfill the lack of ministerial services; in the same way, it is the duty of the pious secular teacher to propagate the faith, but the faith will soon be in a poor way if it expects much from his exertions, and its votaries slacken their direct and special efforts. There must be means used for the religious education of the young above and apart from any good work done in the ordinary day schools, and the sooner such means are instituted and in vigorous operation the better. To the teachers of our Sunday schools of the true sort, zealous, intelligent, and hardworking, we look for the supply of a great, and growing deficiency.

We think it was an Irish man who recommended the holding of Sunday schools on week-days. The Hibernian has very accurately thrown our suggestion into shape. We have our week-evening services for adults, and these are so valuable that Whitfield said, "When week-day services are given up, farewell to the life of godliness." can we not have week-day gatherings for the little ones as well? These have long been in operation in our more flourishing and well-conducted schools; could they not become universal and systematic? Why not come to the understanding that the reading, writing, and arithmetic should be the work of the day school, and the word of God the delightful study of the evening? Might there not be *one or two evenings every wed; given by the devoted teacher to his class*? Could not all the school meet on such occasions in full force as it does on the Sabbath, names being marked in the attendance book, and the gathering being looked upon as a part of the program of the school? One hour might be long enough, and would neither be burdensome to the teachers nor wearisome to the children. If not practicable in the summer, the winter months might be found in every way suitable. Would it not be well to have *courses of lectures*, illustrated with diagrams and dissolving views — lectures full of holy truth and godly precept, open freely or at a nominal charge to all the young? This would give the charm of variety and be an admirable plan of fastening truth in the mind. Should there not be *more frequent services and meetings for the young*, specially aiming at their decision for Christ? With a warm-hearted minister in the chair, two or three lively, earnest adult speakers, and one or two gracious lads to talk a little to their companions, it is marvelous how pleasant and how intensely spiritual such a meeting

may become. Prosy talkers, who run on by the half-hour about nothing, being denied the luxury of spoiling the meeting, and the interstices between the addresses being filled up with a few lively revival tunes, the children will be delighted, and with the liberty of clapping their hands and cheering every now and then, there will be no fear of their going to sleep. *Prayer meetings for boys and girls*, judiciously conducted, will be of abundant service. There should always be an experienced lover of children at their head, and then the fewer grown-up persons tolerated in the room the better. When there are half-a-dozen praying children present, their earnest prayers and tears will be with those of their own age the most potent instrumentality imaginable, Never fear precocity, there is much more danger of indifference and levity. Let wisdom and love preside. The fact of not being able to pray will often, by the blessing of the Holy Spirit, force home conviction upon the young conscience and lead to the best results. Nor is this all; young people may get good by *being enabled to do good*. We know classes where the young believers have multiplied till they have become the majority, and then they have, of their own accord, formed a sort of religious society for bringing in others of their playmates and relatives, for looking after absentees, for writing to the unsaved, and for generally seeking the glory of God within the bounds of the class. Fine education, this, for future church members. These young people, have in addition to looking after one another, instituted weekly subscriptions to religious agencies, and formed themselves into a society for giving away tracts, governing all their operations by their own officers, who have been as diligent and vigorous in their duties as the officers of the church. Here, again, unconsciously, the young believers were tutoring themselves as recruits for the army of the Lord. To have a nucleus of godly youths is the main thing, to foster the idea that youth is the very best time to serve the Lord is the next, but to give frequent occasions for the exercise and fostering of youthful religious principle and feeling is absolutely necessary if much is to be done. We want Bands of Hope, and Life-boat Crews for other purposes besides Total Abstinence. We have never developed the capabilities of youth as we should have done. We have been afraid of encouraging too much, and have discouraged. We have been dubious of the depth and sincerity of children's graces, and consequently have seen comparatively few young converts. It is partly our pride, the pride of our superior age and knowledge, and partly our unbelief which has deprived us of a great blessing: delivering ourselves from these, we may hope yet to see our churches increased and blessed by bands of Timothies and Samuels,

who shall not only be saved from the evils of the age, but shall grow up to be the future strength and glory of our Israel. The Prophet of Nazareth confines not his grace to gray heads and maturity, but he says to-day, as in the days of his flesh,

“SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME.”

In obeying the spirit of his gracious words, we shall discover the balm for England's ills. Politicians may safely keep to their own proper sphere and educate the brain — no harm will come from the tree of knowledge if the church of God by educating the heart shall furnish the rising generation with fruit from the tree of life; but the matter presses, it is a problem for immediate solution, a work which our hand findeth to do, and which it behooves us to do a; once with all our might, seeing there is no work nor device in the grave whither we are all hastening. C.H. Spurgeon.

SATAN DROPPING THE STONE.

THERE is a huge rock upon the Swiss side of the St. Gothard road, about which an old legend is told by the natives of the neighboring village. The devil was whisking this enormous stone along very merrily at early dawn of day, when he was met by a devout old woman, who, being somewhat alarmed, uttered a prayer at the sight of the unexpected traveler. Such was the power of her prayer, that the demon dropped his burden at once and there it lies, an indisputable proof that the devil is no match for old ladies who know how to invoke the aid of heaven. Mother church has sanctioned many a worse legend than this, for a truthful moral lies upon the surface. let interceding believers make the fiend to tremble always by praying without ceasing. The weakest saint upon his knees is victorious over all the powers of *hell* — *From the Note Book of my Travels. C. It. S.*

VENICE AND THE AUSTRIANS

WHEN, years ago, we saw Venice swarming with the hated Austrians, and heard the tramp of the German iron heel in the square of St. Mark, we mourned over the misery of the people, as they pined beneath the oppressor's yoke. Venice would have been quit, of every one of her lordly

matters if she could, but her fetters were not, then to be snapped. Even thus does the believer lament the power of indwelling sin within him; he would fain be rid of every evil desire; to his new nature sin is an alien, and its yoke is heavy, but the set time for the complete deliverance of his soul is not, yet, come. Sweet liberty of holiness, when shall we enjoy thee without molestation from the body of this death? — *From the Note/Book of my Travels.*
C. H. S.

KITTO AND BIBLICAL LITERATURE.

WE have never read a more striking romance than the life of John Kitto, the pauper, shoemaker, traveler, and author. From beginning to end, his life was full of interesting incidents. Nor less striking are the lessons which that life conveys. The writer owes to the records of Kitto's perseverance the first impetus to literary study; to his biographer, Mr. J. E. Ryland, the first word of encouragement to literary pursuits; and to the teachings of both the early determinations of boyhood to conquer no small difficulties in the paths to which inclination led him. Kitto's early life was one of sorrow. He was a poor sickly infant. His first personal recollection was a headache, from which he suffered throughout life. His father was a drunkard. His amiable and tender mother was delicate. The father would not support his child, and the mother could not. He was transferred to his grandmother, who lived in a garret in Plymouth. Here he learnt marvelous tales of fairies and giants. In those old days, when slimy grandmothers considered lying tales to be the swaddling clothes of learning, men with a hundred eyes and ten thousand arms, who could pocket unruly children, and gorge by the dozen wicked men, were the heroes of whom the little world of children's hearts were found worthy. "Bogie" was a comparatively harmless creature to Kitto. He daily lived, in childhood, in a world of gigantic marvels, which would amuse him when awake, and wriggle and writhe in' his brains when asleep. From reading eight-page books that were strongly illuminated outside by red and green daubs (oh, horrid combination!) and illustrated inside by patches of blue and' yellow figures, he took to reading all the books he could borrow. He soon exhausted all the libraries of the poor neighborhood in which he lived, and worried everyone by his passionate desire to borrow more. At twelve years of age, an event occurred which undoubtedly gave a turn to his life. His father was a jobbing mason, and his employment was as precarious as was his sobriety. The young lades

assistance was deemed to be indispensable; and at that early age he learned to carry slates to the roofs of houses. In doing this, one day, he lost his presence of mind, and fell from the top of a ladder, into a paved court below. For a fortnight he remained insensible; and when he awoke one morning, he asked for a book. He heard no reply; he observed only a sad, quiet melancholy shake of the head. “Why not speak?” asked the boy in agitated tones. Still he heard nothing: their talking was, to him, a dumbshow. A bystander took a slate, and relieved the boy’s anxiety, by writing words which might have been the means of driving him mad, “You are deaf.”

At fifteen years of age, he was bundled into that hard school — Poverty’s College — the workhouse. And yet, thank God for the workhouse; it has saved many from the prison and Calcraft. While poverty pinches and the streets tempt, better the workhouse full than the prison crammed. Here he was inducted into the arts and mysteries of awl and wax, clamps and lapstones. Then he was apprenticed to a cobbler. His master was cruel, and employed — what shoemakers were once in the frequent habit of using — the strap. At last he appealed to the magistrates. His simple tale was believed, his indentures were canceled, and he was received again into the workhouse: The master of the house took an interest in the lad. Here Kitto kept a diary, which is full of interest and pathetic touches. ^{F4} His intelligent enthusiasm for knowledge burned at red heat. He knew no hindrances; he regarded mountains of difficulties as but winding passages to the valley of success. Poverty made him hardy, disadvantages made him resolute. Subsequently he became librarian at an institute in Plymouth; then a dentist’s assistant at Exeter. Here he was fully brought to a knowledge of the Savior, and determined to occupy his life and use his literary talents for the advancement of the Redeemer’s kingdom. His first publication consisted of a volume of essays. The Church Missionary Society employed him as printer, at Islington; but he had a quarrel with the head printer about asserting what is known by them as “*pie*.” The crust was too hard, and he fought against it. Then he went to Malta, to set up Maltese types. Returning to England, after the lapse of eighteen months, he was asked by his old Quaker friend, Mr. Groves, the dentist of Exeter, whether he would accompany him to the East as tutor to his boys. Without a moment’s hesitation, he replied, “Yes.” This firm, sudden, impulsive resolve shaped his future course. By his travels in Oriental lands he was fitted to occupy

the honored position for which God was training him — namely, that of an illustrator of the sacred volume.

We do not purpose to refer to his travels in Persia and other countries. The results of his observations while sojourning there are to be found scattered throughout his works. Arrived at home, he was immediately engaged by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge — a society which did great good in its day, and to which we owe that remarkable publication, “The Penny Magazine,” to which nothing in its line had, or has since, appeared comparable for interest and healthy tone. The public owe not a little to the late Mr. Charles Knight for his efforts to diffuse useful wholesome literature. To him we owe the first conception of “The Pictorial Bible,” a work which the best scholars have acknowledged, formed, in its conception and execution, a marked era in Biblical literature. Mr. Knight having suggested the preparation of, this work, Kitto at once set about the task with an alacrity and earnestness that ever characterized his literary efforts. He became a constant visitor to the British Museum. His working day consisted of sixteen hours — six too many. Yet some one in the world must work hard: for there is plenty to do, and the laborers are few. He refused all assistance, save the help which his devoted wife always gave him. He called her his “*hod-man*,” for she day by day went to the Museum, “to collect,” as she herself tells us, “from all the various authorities pointed out by him, such materials as he needed.” So diffident was Kitto, that when the first few monthly parts of his Bible were published, he was almost afraid to read the reviews that appeared in the public press. His desire was to make this work an acquisition to a poor minister with limited means, and a scanty library: and we need hardly add how inestimable a boon “The Pictorial Bible” has been to others than ministers, At first Kitto did not place his name on the title page, but when in 1847 a revised edition was called for, this was done. His next prominent work was “The Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature,” a book which met a great want, but which was not so well edited as it should have been, owing, it is said, to his too delicate conduct towards contributors, He also started and superintended, “The Journal of Sacred Literature,” a magazine which through want of sufficient support, has recently closed its career.

But Kitto’s greatest work, that which brought him most fame, and that which has perhaps done most good, was his last. His idea was originally to prepare a series of popular works, written in a conversational way, on the narrative portions of divine writ. Had he attempted writing in this style, we

feel sure he would have failed, and his final work would have become the least popular. The publishers, Messrs. Oliphant, however, very wisely amended the plan, and as the result, “. The Daily Bible Illustrations,” consisting of eight volumes, were produced. It might seem almost too late in the day to say much of a work that has met with such high approval, but the issue of a new, improved, and enlarged edition ^{f5} calls for a few observations upon a work which deserves the utmost degree of commendation. The new edition is splendidly got up; the pages are large and handsome, and the type clear and beautiful. The notes of Dr. Porter we have carefully examined, and we feel sure that they are just the additions which Kitto would have made had he been alive. So well did the author execute his work that comparatively few corrections have been required; and as all these notes have been placed in smaller type, at the end of each chapter, the reader cannot unconsciously mistake the editor for the author of the work. We are glad to have this opportunity of recommending an old favorite book — one which we have read with an enthusiasm that few works can inspire — to the attention of all who love the sacred volume. Had every intelligent church member and Sunday-school teacher a copy of this valuable work, preachers would be far happier in their work, for they would not need to impart information’ which a-little effort on the week-day might enable people to gain, and might proceed to those deeper spiritual truths which should be the principal, subjects of the Christian teacher.

Kitto was a reverent student of the Bible. He did not go to it as a literary man would to a purely literary book. He did not criticize it as do those Rationalistic writers who are wise above what is written. He had a tender, perception of the hidden beauties of Scripture, and derived great spiritual benefit from its constant perusal; loving the Savior revealed in its pages, he was qualified to give his opinion on the higher matters of revelation. He never trifled with the word of God No theme was too insignificant for him. His illustrations are seldom fanciful. There is sometimes a lack of smoothness of expression, but the earnestness of a devout mind is always apparent. We do not agree with all his interpretations, nor do we think that his view of Job 19:25-27, which Barnes has popularised, meets the plain grammatical sense of the context and argument. We observe that Dr. Porter adds a note to this chapter, in which he shows plainly enough that Job in those famous words of triumph, declares his firm belief in the “Deliverer” whom with the eye of faith the old patriarch sees standing “at

the latter day upon the earth.”^{f6} Some of Kitto’s illustrations are too ingenious. His chivalrous defense of the women of the Bible, is characteristic of a man whose appreciation of the delicate nature of the fair sex was intensely keen. He devotes one chapter of his “Daily Bible Illustrations” to a favorable view of Job’s wife’s conduct in his affliction, in which good sense and extreme special pleading are combined the latter element rendering it needful to read with independent judgment. Yet the book is generally trustworthy. “He writes,” Dr. Eadie very truthfully says, “with earnestness and living power, and the results of his travels, experience, and research, suffer no deterioration from being moulded anew in the fire of a devout soul, and set in the framework of an ingenuous and healthful piety.”

Poor Kitto’s last days were full of trouble. His want of exercise, his close application to work, the large family for which he had to labor, and the unfriendly headache which ever accompanied him through life, produced the expected evils. Good friends sent him to Germany, but he felt convinced his end was nigh. He was ready for the change, for he was assured that for him a place was prepared in the land of rest.:He died in the year 1854, at the early age of fifty, his last words which were addressed to his wife being, “Pray God take me soon.”

The great lesson of Kitto’s useful life is conveyed in the motto placed in the title-page of his biography, “Per Ardua.” There is a proverb which says, “Resolve never to be poor’.” It is easy to say it — infinitely harder to carry it out.’ Abject poverty may have advantages to graceless, stupid people, but to intelligent minds burning with noble aspirations of service for God, it is not often a blessing. Samuel Johnson, when walking about London streets, penniless, was a great arguer for the advantages of poverty: but then, he says, “I was at the same time very sorry to be poor.” Kitto was at times very poor. On one occasion, he gave his children a slice of bread, and taking them to the window, he observed, “Well, we must *look* to the butcher’s shop opposite to get the right *relish* for our bread.” Kitto’s spirit of energy and perseverance has been eulogised elsewhere on many occasions; we need not, therefore, dwell on that particular phase of his character. What pre-eminently characterized Kitto was his robust good sense, and his readiness ever to use it. It is something for a man to attain his ambition: it is a still greater accomplishment for him to be able to consecrate ‘his abilities to the cause of truth; and nothing sweetens labor more than the consciousness of working, however humbly, for the cause of

the Savior who suffered and died for us. Kitto had this gratification. Would that other literary men had it likewise!

THE SUNNY SIDE.

NO sooner do you pass the brow of the St. Gothard pass, on your way to Italy, than you perceive that beyond all question, you are on the sunny side of the Alps. The snow is nothing in comparison to the vast accumulation upon the Swiss side of the summit, the wind ceases to be sharp and cutting, and a very few minutes' ride. brings you into a balmy air which makes you forget that you are so greatly elevated above the sea level. There is a very manifest difference between the southern side and the bleak northern aspect. He who climbs above the cares of the world and turns his face to his God, has found the sunny side of life. The world's side of the hill is chill and freezing to a spiritual mind, but the Lord's presence gives a warmth of joy which turns winter into summer. Some pilgrims to heaven appear never to have passed the summit of religious difficulty; they are still toiling over the Devil's bridge, or loitering at Andermatt, or plunging into the deep snowdrifts of their own personal unworthiness, ever learning but never coming to a full knowledge of the truth; they have not attained to a comfortable perception of the glory, preciousness, and all-sufficiency of the Lord Jesus, and therefore abide amid the winter of their doubts and fears. If they had but faith to surmount their spiritual impediments, how changed would everything become. It is fair traveling with a sunny land smiling before your eyes, especially when you retain a grateful remembrance of the bleak and wintry road which you have traversed; but it is sorry work to be always stopping on the Swiss side of the mountain. How is it that so many do this? — *From the Note Book of my Travels.* C.H. Spurgeon.

THE GREAT TUN OF HEIDELBERG.

MONSTROUS vat certainly. It might hold eight hundred hogsheads of wine at the least; but what is the use of such wasted capacity, since for nearly a hundred years them has not been a drop of liquor in it? Hollow and sounding, empty and void and waste, vintages come and go, and find it perishing of dry rot. An empty cask is not so great a speckle after all, let its size be what it may, though old travelers called this monster one of the

wonders of the world. What a thousand pities it is that many men of genius and of learning are, in respect of usefulness, no better than this huge but empty tun of Heidelberg! Very captious are their minds, but very unpractical. Better be a poor household kilderkin and give forth one's little freely, than exist as a useless prodigy, capable of much and available for nothing. — *From the Note Book of my Travels. C. H. S.*

JOHN CAIRD ON THE DECLINING INFLUENCE OF THE PULPIT.

TO complain that the former days were better than now is a common diversion and a frequent infirmity, a diversion for sour spirits, and an infirmity of impatient minds. It may be harmless if confined to the complainant's own bosom, and according as it may be true or false it may be beneficial or baneful when proclaimed abroad. The spirit of the utterance wilt have much to do with its value, and the remedies which the prophet of woe prescribes for the evil which he deplors must in a great measure apportion the judgment due to his lamentation. Vain is the cry if the evil be not there; equally vain if [here be no balm in Gilead, no physician for the disease of Israel. In the March number of *Good Words*, a dirge who has, before now, taken up his parable in the presence of royalty, comes forth as a wailing prophet of the exceeding great and bitter cry, "The pulpit is fallen, the glory weep between the porch and the altar, and proclaim a fast, and gather a solemn assembly, since the excellency has departed from Zion and the majesty out of the midst of Judah. "How is the gold become dim? How is the most fine gold changed? The precious runs of Zion, comparable to fine gold, how are they esteemed as earthen pitchers, the work of the hands of the potter?" Not that our present prophet bids us humble ourselves, or seek the Lord by prayer, or invoke the energy of the Holy Ghost, or wait upon the great Head of the Church for deliverance; far from it; he has no burden from the Lord as to such "archaic" and "conventions" instructions; his message to this enlightened and thoughtful age is far better adapted to the present times and the existing phases of society. He sees no need to warn ministers to cultivate fellowship with God, but much more cause to bid them keep abreast of the culture of the age and know something of what its deepest speculators have said and its sweetest poets have sung. He is not afraid lest the cross of Christ and the doctrines of the gospel should be obscured by human

wisdom, but he is very severe upon those “who insist upon our identifying divine truth with the historic accidents and archaic forms in which it has been couched, with the literal interpretation of the language of allegory and symbol, with statements, which true and beautiful as poetry, lose their reality and beauty when construed as literal fact.” What that fine jargon means, those who are acquainted with Broad School innuendoes very well know. Sermons are not recommended to be baptized with power from on high, but it is said to be of the first importance that they should bear traces of careful thought, logical arrangement, cosecution of argument conclusiveness of result; they must contain novel and interesting interpretations of Scripture, and sparkle with imagery: lacking these the auditor goes away discontented, and reads with entire assent a sneering article in the next *Times*, or *Saturday Review*, on the decline of the pulpit in modern times.

Now we are prepared to endorse any man’s opinion who shall say that it is most desirable that our ministers should be well educated; and should command respect by their substantial attainments, but we are indignant when we find these secondary matters thrust into the first place, and the weightiest of all considerations, compared with which these are light as feathers, thrust into oblivion. Moreover we are not prepared to allow that the school of preaching which the writer of the *Good Words* article would desiderate would be any gain to the church or to the world if it could be called forth from our universities and theological schools; on the contrary, we believe that no greater calamity could befall mankind than to be preached to by such men as “the highly cultured and fastidiously critical class” would patronize. The high culture of a mortal man! Bah! How ludicrous it must seem to the Eternal mind! Vain man would be wise, though he be born like a wild ass’s colt. Refinement of intellect to be the guide of gospel ministrations! What then means the apostle when he says, “And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God, for I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling, and my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. 1 Corinthians 2.

When men who imagine themselves to have great genius, and to be qualified judges of pulpit excellence condescend to descant upon their brethren, they have generally a superabundance of sneers at hand. While they themselves may never have won for Jesus a dozen hearts in all their lives, those earnest evangelists who are instant in season and out of season, and whom their Master honors with his Spirit's approbation, are ridiculed as "showy, ready-tongued, loud-voiced, shallow declaimers," whose dogmatism is rigid in proportion to its feebleness. Saul, because he is head and shoulders taller than others, despises the shepherd, forgetting whose hand it was that slew Goliath, or perhaps hating him the more because he had wrought a service of which the monarch was incapable. Indifferent themselves to the very fundamentals of truth, craving always a liberty to depart from the standards of the faith, and yet to eat the bread of the church, the gentlemen of the superfine, cream-laid order, hang up before men's eyes a caricature of the "faithful" minister who adheres steadfastly to the once-delivered faith, and point at him the finger of scorn. To preach the gospel as it is revealed, is to these men to be servile; to mutilate it is independence of mind; to be simple and fervent is to adopt conventional verbiage and conventional solemnity. Yes, *conventional*, that is the word, which is over and over again dealt out judicially, as though it meant something criminal. Scattered all over England and Scotland are self-educated men who have been called of God to be soul-winners, who care not a jot for what Darwin or Colenso, or even the great Scotch Latitudinarians may have to say for themselves who are doing their work all the better because they have eschewed the refinements of modern skepticism, and have not come into the secret of the new liberalism. These may be pooh-poohed as much behind their times, but we are persuaded that they have contributed far more to maintain the power of the pulpit than anything which has been achieved by the "deep-thinking" and free-thinking doctors and professors with all their boasts. If the pulpit be declining in power, it is due in a great measure to the men who mistake error for freshness, self-conceit for culture, and a determination to go astray for nobility of mind. So far from despising brethren of small literary accomplishments who excel in spiritual power and life, it is our duty to have them in abundant honor, to cheer them under their difficulties, and imitate them in their industrious use of their few talents. They can arouse a conscience though they cannot elucidate a problem; they can stir the affections, though they cannot revel in poetic imagery; they can reclaim sinners, though they cannot mystify with subtleties. If the fields of literature

and science do not entice them, have they not enough of understanding if they are mighty in the Scriptures? If they are devoid of the fear of “creating an aversion in men of taste to evangelical religion,” may it not suffice them to have a holy fear of being unfaithful to the consciences of men? Suppose that they do not quote from learned authorities, does not the word of God possess a superlative authority in its authorship and truth? What if they never attempt to prove a doctrine of revelation by an appeal to so-called “natural religion,” have not the truths themselves a self-evidencing power? *They* have not denounced their more learned brethren, or laid the supposed decline of the pulpit at their door, where then is the politeness and refinement so much vaunted? Is it needful to say where is the Christian spirit which allows the “*intellectual*” and “cultured” to talk so lightly of men whom the Lord has chosen? Are supercilious arrogance and censorious uncharitableness the choice fruits of “thorough culture”? Then, thank heaven, there are a few who have escaped the privilege, and can yet believe that whether learned or unlearned, gracious men may do good service for Christ.

The fact is that the cant which dins into our ears such ungenerous phrases as “superficial culture, and narrowness of thought,” “shallow dogmatism and merest platitudes,” and smirkingly boasts its own intellectual superiority, is known to be cant by all thoughtful men, and is treated as such. When the celebrated Cobbler How, with much learning, proved the uselessness of all learning, men smiled, and went on their way, but when professors A, B, or C, with much scorn, traduce their less philosophical brethren, some men think it time to rebuke them sharply for their own sake and for others. There is no truth whatever in the cry of the fastidious school; the world will no more be saved by carnal wisdom now than in times gone by. When our Lord selected his apostles they were evidently chosen not on account of their intellectual endowments or scientific acquisitions, but on account of their religious character. John was perhaps accustomed to better society than Peter. Luke may have enjoyed a good education; Paul was skilled in the learning of the schools; but the rest were men of little scholarship. It would seem that our Lord chose as the first preachers of the gospel men of every variety of attainment and grade of intellectual culture, neither repudiating nor glorifying intellect, but using it and everything else that is human for his own glory. “But,” says Dr. Wayland, “It will be said, of course, that our circumstances at the present day are very different from those at the time of the apostles. This is more

easily said than proved. The whole world of heathenism was then arrayed against the church of Christ. Never was the cultivation of the intellect and the taste carried to higher perfection. The poets, and orators, the historians, sculptors, and architects of this heathen world, are, to the present day, our acknowledged masters. The church of Christ was sent forth to subdue this cultivated and intellectual world, and the masses associated with it. And what was the class of men of whom this church and its leaders were composed? They were stigmatized as unlearned and ignorant. The intellectual difference between them and the men whom they were called to meet, was as great in the times of the apostles as it has ever been since. Yet God chose the weak things of the world to confound the mighty. When men of more disciplined mind were wanting, they were called by the Head of the church; but even here, the greatest of them all declared that he made no use of excellency of speech, or of wisdom, in declaring the testimony of God; that he determined to know nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified. There is nothing really in the relative condition of the parties which would render a rule inapplicable now which was applicable *then*."

We greatly doubt whether the Christian pulpit was ever more generally powerful than at the present moment; certainly congregations were never larger, nor religious effort as a rule more abundant. Far enough are we from being satisfied, but still there is much to rejoice over as well as much to deplore. We could rehearse the names of a score of active, useful, attractive, spiritually-minded evangelists, all exceedingly popular and powerful, and this we the more rejoice in because this class has only of late been called into existence. In our own denomination alone we have pastors whose churches from year to year increase at a ratio altogether unprecedented, in modern times. Bad as things are they are not worse, but much better than formerly, and this is owing mainly to the growing power of the pulpit. We do not believe that our educated people care an atom for the brilliant sermons which Mr. Caird would prescribe for them. The thoughtful and intellectual men with whom we are acquainted, tell us that they do not want that kind of refreshment on the Sabbath; being eminent in their professions they find enough of the intellectual in their daily work, and are just the men above all others who delight in the simple, earnest appeal to the heart and conscience. Preach Christ to them with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and they will be content, but try. to dazzle

them with the fireworks of intellectual display, and they will tell you that the articles in a respectable review are far preferable.

If, indeed, the ministry be declining in power, let us betake ourselves to the grand resource of prayer; let us invoke the Holy Spirit's aid; let us pray the Lord of the harvest to send forth laborers into his harvest. Then as matters of detail let us purge our colleges of skeptical professors, let us make the training more homiletical and less metaphysical, let us seek after unction rather than intellect, and encourage our young men in pursuits of practical evangelism rather than speculative theorizing. In opposition to learned men, who by elaborate essays cry up the Diana or Minerva of their idolatry, let us look to the heavenly Comforter, and have respect unto that Scripture, "*Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.*" C. H. Spurgeon

OUR PERSONAL TESTIMONY TO A FAITHFUL GOD.

YEARS ago, when we first opened our College, and waited upon the Lord in prayer for the means, he suddenly sent us £200 when our funds were at the lowest ebb. Who the friend was from whom the money came we were never able to guess, but little can that bountiful heart, know how the timely gift cheered a heavy heart, and probably kept in existence an institution which otherwise, humanly speaking, must have come to an untimely end. No one but the Lord knows the searchings of heart we have had since then, for times of depression have occurred in which we have been tried with the question, "Is it the Lord's work, or is it only a whim of your own? If his work, of course he will carry it on, but if not you will run into debt and be ruined." Frequently have we looked the matter in the face and said, "Even so, .if it be not his work let it cease, and cease at once; but it is his work, and he will support it, and that without our dreaming of debt. Every penny we have in the world we will spend, and then if no assistance comes, the students must go, and the Lord's will be done." Always at these junctures we have experienced remarkable deliverances, one of which we recorded last month. Our stores were not quite exhausted, but still funds were not coming in with regularity, and therefore unbelief reminded us that our late illness, and our present inability to travel, would inevitably cripple our resources; before we could answer the evil suggestion, the large sum of

£1,000 which we mentioned last month, came to hand, and we could but see the hand of God in it. To walk by faith is the gift of God, and is a path as full of joys and trials as the sea is full of waves. Our College is our daily anxiety and delight. It sends us often to our knees in prayer, and as often to our God in praise. Our college is doing a very remarkable work which the Lord is singularly blessing; but its secret history, full of struggle and labor, hope, disappointment, and success, is intertwined with the very roots of our heart. We cannot expect others to feel the interest in it that we do; but we wish they did, for the effort is not for our profit, but for the good of the Lord's church in which every member of Christ has a share. The loving words which we have received with donations, small or great, have been a sweet reward for much labor, and have often lifted up our drooping hands. The Lord reward abundantly those of his servants who have thus cheered a willing worker, who sighs and groans daily because he cannot do more for his Lord, but who witnesses joyfully to the fact that the Lord is good, and suffers not those who wait on him to be ashamed. He is ready to help the faithful — even their little faith he does not despise; he comes to the rescue of Peter when he is beginning to sink, and enables him yet to walk the waves. Blessed are all they who put their trust in him. Tremblers, be of good courage, ye weary ones, take heart, for while Jehovah lives the faithful shall never be confounded.

THE THREE PRIESTS

THIS is no fancy sketch, but is the faithful representation of three clergymen of the church of England while performing some of their favorite devotional exercises. They are presented to the reader that he may be duly impressed with the fact that the church of England IS THE GREAT BULWARK OF PROTESTANTISM! Behold before you three of the goodly buttresses of that bulwark! Disestablish and disendow the church of England, and we are told that Popery will find nothing left to stay its onward rush. It is well for us to know our benefactors; look then, gentle reader, and look again at three of the many clerical breakwaters which prevent our being deluged by the abominations of Rome! Those birettas, and copes, and girdles, are the bonds and rivets of religious liberty, the emblems of Protestant simplicity, the safeguards of the State! Unless England keeps these gentlemen and their church in its pay and patronage, it will cease to be a Christian country, and will become the unhappy victim of

the Pope! The watchword is given, “No *Popery!*” Defend the church, whose precious priests so elegantly adorn their persons, and perfume themselves with incense, and then Protestantism will be safe! Disestablish their church, or even a branch of it, and the deluge has arrived. In truth, this fooling about Protestantism is too transparent to deceive any but the most idiotic. The church of England has done and is doing very much— to lead back this nation to that reverence of priests and sacraments from which our martyred forefathers delivered us. The evangelical clergy dare not deny this; and the Tractarians glory in it. The distinction between the Popery of Rome and the Popery of Oxford is only the difference between prussic acid and arsenic: they are both equally deadly, and are equally to be abhorred. It is undeniable that some of the most eminent divines in the Anglican church are straining their utmost to effect the union of their community with Rome, and their admiration for everything Popish is undisguised. As a rule they are bold, outspoken men, and are acting upon earnest convictions when they oppose Protestantism. Yet we are to recognize this English Popery as the great bulwark of Protestantism! We will believe it when we believe wolves to be the guardians of sheepfolds, felons to be the defenders of property, and fallen angels to be the bodyguard of heaven — and not till then. Many of the clergy avowedly reject the very name of Protestant, and yet we are to accept them as its defenders! Protestantism has been wounded and betrayed by the church of England, and has found within its walls its most skilled and energetic foes. Bulwark of Protestantism indeed! Twin sister of Rome is nearer the mark. Look on the three graces in the woodcut, and see whether the sons of the Anglican mother do not bear a strong family likeness to those of the renowned scarlet lady of the seven hills! Indeed, so far from being scandalized at this remark, the gentlemen would own the soft impeachment with a smile, and think it a deserved commendation, for whatever other parties in the church may be, the men of this school are not cowards, and do not conceal their Romanising tendencies. Yet a church abounding with undisguised Romanisers is the bulwark of Protestantism! Who believes it?

The fact is, that a strong and purely evangelical Episcopalian church never will be seen in this country again till the church is set free from the state. Then those hundreds of godly men who now remain in communion with Romanisers will form themselves into a truly Protestant church, and will in brotherly union with the other free churches form the true bulwark of Protestantism, against which, by God’s grace, the gates of hell shall not

prevail. It is a great misfortune that those who know and preach the gospel, do not come out voluntarily from the Anglican Papacy, but if they will not, every true Protestant should labor to separate the church and state so as to drive them out, that they may no longer be a shield to Romanisers, and partakers of their sins. The union of church and state is the nest for the Romish crows, down with it at once and for ever. Not one of its truths or its gospel ministers would be hurt thereby, but the truths would be separated from error, and the ministers of the word loosed from the bondage of their present connection with sacramentarianism. If Evangelical churchmen were wise they would see that the separation of the church from the state would be the birth of a pure church, the resurrection of spiritual life, the purging out of the old leaven, and by God's grace the best event that could possibly happen for Protestantism.

Reader, believe us, faith in Jesus brings salvation, not faith in priests; the church of Christ is not a state-made corporation, but a body of believers in Jesus. Take sides with Christ and his truth, and do not be duped by the clap-trap cries of the moribund state church, which will say anything to postpone its inevitable doom.

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THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND AND THE BULWARK OF OUR LIBERTIES (?)

WE have been very courteously admonished in the "Standard" Newspaper for taking any part in the agitation for disestablishing and disendowing the Irish church, and for expressing the hope that the like justice might, ere long, be measured out to the Establishment in England. We are thankful for the advice, but can assure our friend that it does not strike us as valuable. Our friend evidently thinks that if we and other Dissenters were better advised we should rally round the present Establishment, since its existence has been and is the great security for religious liberty; and if it were removed the Romanists would soon be in the ascendant, and persecution would follow. To this our reply is ready — we do not believe that the church of England is any more the protector of our liberties than are the

Beef-eaters at the Tower, or the cream-colored horses in the royal stable. There is no sort of connection between the two by way of promotion, but very much in the way of hindrance. Historically, it will hardly be contended that Episcopacy, which hanged and imprisoned our forefathers in Elizabeth's day, was then the bulwark of Dissenting liberty; nor can it be pretended that, under James I. and Charles I., it guarded sacredly the freedom of consciences. Clipped ears, slit noses, and branded cheeks were not very convincing proofs that an established church was tender and tolerant, and careful to give freedom to Dissenters. Nonconformists would hardly have dealt out such severe measures to Episcopacy in the time of Cromwell, if they had found it to be their shield and bulwark. Did the Act of Uniformity tenderly respect the liberty of Dissenters, or the Five Mile Act, and other such edicts? Were Claverhouse, and other butchers, the advocates and promoters of liberty? Does Scotland owe her liberty to Episcopacy or to the Covenanters? Was the act of Catholic emancipation the work of bishops and deans? The fact is that the existence of a sect, fondled by the state and supported by its wealth, in proportion as it dignifies the favored church, is an insult to the honor of all other, and a shackle to their freedom. It is an idle tale that the Episcopal sect guards our liberties as a body; in its midst are many noble and liberal men, who are always on the people's side, but the bulk of its adherents incline in an opposite direction, and, as a church, it is almost always obstructive and disinclined to reform. Dissenters do not owe it, in political matters, the turn of a brass farthing, and have long enough been duped by the pretension that it is their friend and guardian.

At the present moment we also fail to discover how the Establishment is the fortress under whose guns we dwell in safety. Our notion is, that, under God, our liberties are in the hands of the people of the United Kingdom, and that they know too well the value of them to let them slip. The sons of the Ironsides are not yet departed from among us, and we who could not use the carnal weapon have yet our free press, our unfettered pulpit, and our open Bibles, and feel safe enough while these are our munitions of war. While the freely chosen representatives of the people are our rulers, and a limited monarchy our form of government, we do not see how it can be said that our freedom rests with an which has no power to legislate for itself, much less for the nation. As well might the mistletoe pretend that its parasitical verdure is the true security of the oak, or the fox that its existence is the guarantee of the fertility of the land. We are at a loss to

conceive where our friends see the connection. Is it in the fact that the bishops sit in the House, of Lords, and always vote for every measure of a broad and liberal character? Or is it that the payment of tithes makes every man a lover of the constitution which enforces them? There may possibly be some recondite connection between a state-church and liberty, but we cannot see it. We are asked to go to Spain and Rome, but we prefer traveling to America, and there, without a state-church, we find a freedom certainly not less unlimited than our own. What can be done across the ocean can be done here. Americans can maintain their freedom without a state-church, and Englishmen are not less liberty-loving and not less able to take care of themselves. If, indeed, the state-church be such a bulwark of the constitution, why deprive the colonies of the blessing? Why act upon a wrong policy abroad, and save up all the good things for home? The case does not bear half a moment's investigation.

But the Catholics will be in the ascendant as soon as the church is disestablished. WHY? In the name of reason, why? Will they become the majority of the nation and of the House of Commons? Are we to believe that the Episcopal body is only pretendedly Protestant, and will go over to the Catholics as soon as their, state pay is stopped? Then the nation will be the better for being rid of such mercenary defenders of her Protestantism. But, on the other hand, if the Protestant section of the church remains firm, what difference will be made? How will the numerical power of Protestantism be affected? Does the spiritual efficiency of the church in keeping back Popery depended upon tithes? Would not the Evangelical clergy pray and preach if they were disestablished? We are puzzled to know what is the foundation upon which the assertion rests as to this supposed hindrance of Catholic dominancy. We have no doubt Popery would like to mount the throne, and we could not trust its priests for an instant with power, but all the influence which now really operates to restrain their pro- tendons would remain still, and would gain immeasurably by the change. The church of England has in it a horde of Papists, and is doing Rome's work daily, and yet it is set up before us as the bulwark against Rome: disestablish the church, and it would purify itself at once. The true church will prevail against the gates of hell without the state's patronage. The issue is with God, and he needs no injustice to be perpetrated that his cause may be maintained. If the worst came to the worst, and the people of God were called to suffer, by God's grace they could do it triumphantly, and would rather do so than be found guilty of forgetting that Christ's kingdom is not of this world. Take away a state-

church, and we are ready to bear the blame of all the consequences necessarily arising out of it; but we are not ready to aid and abet so glaring an act of oppression as compelling the many among the people of Ireland to support a religion in which scarcely one-in ten of them believes. .

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THE COLLEGE ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND FESTIVAL.

THE Annual Conference of ministers educated at the Pastors' College, was held during the week commencing March 23rd. About 140 ministers were present, making up, with students who have been with us six months, the number of 180. As we saw the noble host of worthy preachers of the word, our heart greatly rejoiced, and we were forced to cry, "What hath God wrought!"

The Prayer-meetings at the Tabernacle on Monday afternoon and evening were earnest and spiritual. The business of the session opened at Trinity Chapel, John Street, Edgware Road. After the usual devotional exercises, C. H. Spurgeon, the President, gave the opening address on "Perseverance," which was greatly blessed to all, and tended to give the key-note to the succeeding meetings. In the course of general business the following resolution was passed: — "That this conference earnestly deprecates the evil of brother going to law with brother, and bringing the business of the church of God before civil courts, as expressly contrary to the law of Chest. Resolved further, that each member of this conference pledges himself that whenever cases of dispute shall arise between himself and his church and congregation, he will, in order to avoid all legal proceedings, endeavor to his utmost to have the matter arbitrated by such brethren as the President may appoint; the election of such arbitrators being left with the President alone, in order to prevent any unnecessary publicity, since it is hoped by this brotherly arrangement petty disputes may be settled before any public scandal is caused." Most earnestly do we desire to see all cases of difference and dispute settled by an appeal to some such committee of reference, that we may thus prevent the divisions

and bitternesses which have at times sorely troubled our denomination. A discussion ensued on the best way (by the interchange of pulpit, and other methods) to-help 'each other, and to strengthen especially the weakest positions, and those churches most needing help.

In the afternoon conference, J. A. Spurgeon, the Vice-President, gave an address on "Our Lord's view of ministerial work," based on the fifteenth chapter of Luke, 'followed by a paper from Pastor Marchant, on "The joy of the Lord our strength,' which our readers will have the pleasure of perusing for themselves. In the evening, meetings were held in eight chapels in and around London, with a view to the extension of the Lord's kingdom, and the directing of the attention of Christians to the Stockwell Orphanage, and its claims upon their benevolence.

On the following day, the session was held in the school-room of the Metropolitan Tabernacle Almshouses, and papers were read, followed by discussions, of much interest. Pastor Chamberlain reading a paper on "Our Mission as a denomination." Pastor Speed, on "Temptations and trials peculiar to the minute." J.A. Spurgeon called attention to our Denominational Home and Foreign Mission, supplying information thereon in reply to several questions; after dinner Pastor Bunning read a paper on "Sunday Schools." The evening was occupied with the festival, and the whole day was one of richest blessing.

Mr. Phillips' Annual Supper for the College was this year the greatest success with which we have been favored, although we have always been remarkably encouraged by these marvelous gatherings. George Moore, Esq., of Bow Churchyard, presided in the ablest manner, and by his great liberality gave a tone to the mooring. He is one of those churchmen who love Christ and his truth wherever they find them, and who, while loving their own community, desire to see it greatly reformed. We were favored with the *elite* of all denominations. It was a goodly vision to see Thomas Binney, William Brock, and Samuel Martin, sitting side by side, and it was a thing to be remembered to hear them one after the other speak so lovingly and eloquently, with such a genial warmth towards the President of the College and his work. The rooms all which the meetings were held were most tastefully decorated, and the supper, which was most elegantly and sumptuously spread, was such a scene as seldom beheld. The sum of £1,400 was spontaneously subscribed around that hospitable board. Thanks be to God for such mercy. The students and tutors of the College

availed themselves of the opportunity of presenting to Mr. Phillips a testimonial engrossed on vellum, expressive of their high appreciation of his great kindness and generosity at these annual gatherings. The Lord bless him and his for ever.

On Thursday, the 26th, the President opened the business part of the meeting in Kingsgate Street Chapel, by calling attention to an article in which a Paedobaptist quarterly review advanced the theory that baptized children did not need conversion, and thereupon ensued some very appropriate remarks from himself and the brethren. Papers were read and discussed by Pastor Tessier, on "The maintenance of peace in churches." Pastor Jackson, on "Freshness in preaching, how to obtain and how to maintain it."

In the afternoon, the pastor of the place, Brother Burton, gave a most powerful address on the "Secret of success in winning souls," which, at the unanimous request of the brethren, he consented to allow to be printed, and we trust that all our readers will soon avail themselves of the opportunity of reading it, as it will certainly do them good.

A meeting was then held by the members of the Temperance Society, and Dr. McAll was present and gave an address.

In the evening, after a monster tea meeting, the Tabernacle was filled to hear the Pastor's lecture (illustrated by dissolving views), entitled, "Our history and work." Sheriff McArthur presided, and several of the former students gave admirable and interesting statements of the work of the Lord in their respective spheres of labor. The presidents, tutors, and students, in the course of the evening, expressed their sense of obligation to Mr. Murrell for his unwearied attention in connection with the weekly offerings and the funds of the College, and presented him with a suitable testimonial elegantly framed and engrossed on vellum.

The closing day of the session was also one of much refreshment. The brethren met early for prayer; and in the course of the meeting, which was again held at the Almshouses, Professor Rogers spoke on "Our College, its character and aim." Professor Gracey, on "Our dependency upon the power of the Holy Spirit." After the Lord's Supper, which was an hour of much enjoyment, all present joined hands and sang a hymn expressive of mutual love and united praise; and thus, in our usual spirit of thanksgiving for more than ordinary blessings, we parted refreshed and cheered for

further labor, and closed the most enjoyable and profitable of all our conferences.

At the meeting before the supper, £301 were presented by the students and ministers to Mr. Spurgeon as an installment of the whole cost of a house at the Stockwell Orphanage to be called the College House. *This* spontaneous token of affection made our President's heart very glad, and he thanked the friends in the warmest manner.

NARROW ROAD, NARROW CART.

MAKING a day's excursion from Botzen, in the Tyrol, we went along the very narrowest of roads, mere alleys, to which our country lanes would be turnpike roads. Well, you may be sure we did not engage an ordinary broad carriage, for that would have found the passage as difficult as the needleeye to the camel; but our landlord had a very narrow chaise for us, just the very things for threading those four-foot passages. Now I must make you hear the moral of it, you fretful little gentleman; when you have a small estate, you must have small wants, and by contentment suit your carriage to your road. "Not so easy," say you; "Very necessary to a Christian, I say. — From the *Note Book of my Travels*. C. H. S.

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL.

JUNE, 1868.

THE GOOD DEACON.

IF late years we have heard a great deal against deacons, and have read discussions as to their office, evidently suggested by no idolatrous reverence for their persons. Many of our ministering brethren bitterly rate them, others tremble at the mention of their very name, and a few put on their armor and prepare to do battle with them wherever they go, as if they were the dragons of ministerial life. We ourselves are charged with having said that “a deacon is worse than a devil, for if you resist the devil he will flee from *you*, but if you resist a deacon he will fly at you.” This is no saying of ours, we never had any cause to speak so severely, and although in some oases it is undoubtedly true, we have never had any experimental proof of it. Not one in a hundred of all the sayings fathered upon us are ours at all, and as to this one it was in vogue before we were born. Our observation of deacons leads us to observe that, as a rule, they are quite as good men as the pastors, and the bad and good in the ministry and the deaconate are to be found in very much the same proportions. If there are lordly deacons, are their not lordly pastors? If there be ignorant, crotchety men among deacons, are their not their rivals in our pulpits? The church owes an immeasurable debt of gratitude to those thousands of godly men who study her interests day and night, contribute largely of their substance, care for her poor, cheer her ministers, and in timers of trouble as well as prosperity, remain faithfully at their posts. Whatever there may be here and there of mistake, infirmity, and even wrong, we are assured from wide and close observation, that the greater number of our deacons are an honor to our faith, and we may style them as the apostle did his brethren, the “glory of Christ’s,” “Heaviest censure is occasionally deserved, but affectionate esteem is usually clue. Deprive the church of her deacons, and she would be bereaved of her most valiant sons; their loss would be the shaking of the pillars of our spiritual house, and would cause a desolation on every side.

Thanks be to God such a calamity is not likely to befall us, for the great, Head of the church in mercy to her, will always raise up a succession of faithful men, who will use the office well, and earn unto themselves a good degree and much boldness in the faith. Much ought to be taken into consideration in estimating the character of men sustaining office in the church, for many difficulties may be incidental to the position, and this may mitigate the severity with which we ought to judge the men. Our brethren in the deacon's work are not so migratory as our ministers; they are frequently born to Christ in the churches in which they live and die; they cannot readily remove when evil days becloud the church, but remain chained to the our to bear the odium of discontent and the sorrow of decay. No frequent removal secures for them a renewal of popularity elsewhere; their whole career for bad or good is remembered by one and the same constituency, and hence false steps are with great difficulty retrieved, and awkward disagreements are painfully remembered. With new ministers come new ways, and men in office, especially elderly men, cannot so easily learn and unlearn as young and fresh comers might desire; perhaps cherished methods are crossed, and hallowed ideas overthrown, and this is not the smallest trial of a good man's life. We almost think it needs a better man to make a good deacon than a good minister. *We* who preach the word go first, and this pleases human nature; grace is needed to make older, wealthier, and often wiser men go second and keep their place without envyings and bickering's: thousands do this, and are to be honored for it.

We did not, however, take up our pen to eulogize deacons as a class, but simply to record our own happy experience, believing that one fact is better than a thousand theories. The deacons of our first village ministry were in our esteem the excellent of the earth, in whom we took great delight. Hard-working men on the week-day, they spared no toil for their Lord on the Sabbath; we loved them sincerely, and do love them still, though another minister speaks of them with a severity never exceeded. In our idea they were as nearly the perfection of deacons of a country church as the kingdom could afford, and we wonder that the present occupant of the pulpit could have found out faults and vices of which we never saw a trace. Since our sojourn in London we have seen the burial of the fag-end of a race of deacons of whom only one survives, beloved and revered by us all. A fine gentlemanly race, rather stiff and unmanageable, not quite to our mind, but honorable, respectable, prudent grandees of dissent the last generation of deacons were; men to be spoken of with reverence in all

places where holy memories are cherished. Our *own* growth of brethren are peculiarly lovable, active, energetic, warm-hearted generous men; but as we may have to live with them for another quarter of a century, we will only say of them that we could not exaggerate in speaking of our love to them as our generous-hearted fellow soldiers and true yoke-fellows. Of the one beloved father of the older school, who shares in all its excellencies and none of its grandiose stiffness, we give the best portrait that the best wood engraver in London could produce. Converted in early youth, Thomas Olney joined the church at Carter-lane in his youth, and for fifty-eight years has remained in membership with the same people. For thirty years he has been a deacon. A dear lover of his departed pastor, Dr. Rippen, he mourned his decease very deeply, and thought that the glory was departed. He served the church under depressing *changes* of the pastorate, and then gave his heart to us without reserve, with very much of the juvenile ardor of a young man. He never acted as a drag to the wheels, or a dead weight to the chariot. His purse was ready, and his heart and energy forced him with it to the front of the battle. In our great works of building the Tabernacle, the College, Orphanage, Almshouses, he never lagged or so much as thought of holding back. Ten thousand blessings be upon him, and others of the same household, for the Lord's sake, and for the sake of the church of God. Flattery be far from us, but truth we must speak; we wish that every church had several such honorable men. The poor among us call him blessed, and all of us hold him in our highest esteem. We speak thus of men generally when they are dead; but it is a miserable policy which robs the living servant of Jesus of the little love-word which might have cheered declining years — it is more, it is an unworthy dishonest)' which withholds the well-earned need of praise. Paul was not afraid to commend the living, nor need we be; and Paul never saw a warmer lover of the church of God than we see in our friend. May his last days be bright with the dawn of heaven, and as his children and his children's children already walk in the truth, may he when gathered to his fathers amid their tears, be rejoiced over as a shock of corn fully ripe gathered into the garner. Meanwhile may he enjoy in his own heart an overflowing anticipation of the "Well done, good and faithful servant," which grace reserves for him.

HONEYWOOD PARK; OR, A STORY OF MY GRANDFATHER.

BY C. H. SPURGEON.

THE recurrence of the name of a village, a house, or a spot in one's family annals, interwoven with its most important events, is curious to observe. The superstitious imagine that a strange influence upon human destiny may be connected with peculiar places; we reject their theory, but all the more wonder at the facts upon which it is based. There is a spot in Essex, the name of which is as much associated with the life of my grandfather, now in heaven, as if providence had rooted him to it, and constrained him to live and die within its bounds. What I am about to write is as nearly as my recollection served me the story as I had it from himself. I had been preaching within twenty miles of Stambourne, where the good old man proclaimed the gospel for about sixty years; and I received a pressing letter from him, saying, that as he was now eighty-eight years of age, if I did not drive across country to see him, we might never meet again in this world. Little did the grandson need urging to so pleasant a duty. Starting early I arrived the village at eight in the morning, and found the venerable man on the look-out for his boy. He was remarkably cheerful and communicative, talking of his tutor at Hackney College, of his early life, his trials and his deliverances, the good men who had gone before him, and the occasions upon which he had met them. He then touched on what was evidently a favorite topic, and remarked that there was formerly a wood in what I think he called Honeywood Park, which was a very memorable place to him. In theft wood he had groaned and wept before the Lord while under the burden of sin, and under a tree, an oak, then only a sapling, he had received the grace of faith, and entered upon the enjoyment of peace with God. It was a lonely spot, but henceforth it was to him no other than the house of God, and the very gate of heaven. Often he resorted thither and praised the name of the Lord.

Some time after this happy event, having to go from Coggeshall to Halstead, his route was over the hallowed spot. On the night previous he dreamed very vividly that the devil appeared to him, and threatened to tear him in pieces if he dared to go along that footpath and pray under the oak as he had been wont to do. The evil one reminded him that there was

another way through the farm yard, and that if he took the farmyard path all would go well with him. When my grandfather awoke, the impression on his mind was overpowering, and he reasoned thus with himself: Whether it be a dream or really a temptation from Satan I cannot tell, but anyhow I will not yield to it, but will show the devil that I will not do his bidding in anything, but will defy him to his face. This was the good man all over. Like Luther he had a vivid impression of the reality and personality of the great enemy, and was accustomed to make short work with his suggestions. One day when in the pulpit it came into his head that the place where the sand was kept for sanding the brick floor of his manse ought to be boarded in. His next thought was what business had the devil to make me think about the sand closet on a Sunday and in the pulpit too, it shall not be hoarded in at all. I will let him see that he shall not hove his way with me. But to return to the story, my grandfather, then a young man, went on cheerily enough till he came to the stile where the two path diverged, then a horrible fear came upon him, and he felt his heart beat fast. Suppose he really should meet the archfiend, and should find him too strong for him, what then? Better take the farmyard path. No, that would be yielding to Satan, and he would not do that for ten thousand worlds. He plucked up courage and tremblingly pressed on. The stile was leaped, the narrow tract through the wood was trodden with resolution mingled with forebodings. The oak was in sight, the sweat was on his face, the pace was quickened, a dash was made, and the tree was grasped, but there was no Satan there. Taking breath a moment, the young man uttered aloud the exclamation, "Ah, cowardly devil, you threatened to tear me in pieces, and now you do not dare show your face." Then followed a fervent prayer and a song of praise, and the young man was about to go on his way, when his eye was caught by something shining on the ground. It was a ring, a very large ring, he told me nearly as large as a curtain ring, and it was solid gold; how it came there it would be hard to guess. Inquiries were made, but no claimant ever appeared, and my grandfather had it made into my grandmother's wedding ring, in memory of the spot so dear to him. Year by year he continued to visit the oak tree on the day of his conversion to pour out his soul before the Lord. The sapling had spread abroad its branches, and the man had become the parent of a numerous family, but the song of gratitude was not forgotten, nor the prayer that he and his offspring might for ever be the Lord's; the angels of God, we doubt not, watched those consecrated seasons with delightful interest.

To add to the solemnity of the secluded wood, his father, while passing by the spot, was touched by the hand of God, and suddenly fell dead. He could then feel even more deeply how awful — in this place! This made the annual visitations to the tree more deeply impressive, and we believe beneficial. They would have been continued till my grand father's last year, were it not that the hand of modern improvement ruthlessly swept away tree and wood, and every relic of the past. His last prayer upon the dear spot was most ludicrously interrupted — as the wood was almost all felled, he judged by the pathway as nearly as possible where the long-remembered oak had stood; the place was covered with growing wheat, but he kneeled down in it and began to bless the name of the Lord, when suddenly he heard a rough voice from over the hedge crying out, "Master, there be a crazy man a saying his prayers down in the wheat over thay're." This startled the suppliant and made him beat a hasty retreat. Jacob must wrestle somewhere else; the man of God looked at the spot and went his way, but in spirit he still raised an altar in that Bethel, and praised the God of his salvation. He has gone to his rest after having fought a good fight, but the prayers of Honeywood Park are blessing his children and his children's children, to the third generation at this very hour. To them and all the world his testimony is, "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you," and equally does he instruct us to "Bless the Lord and forget not all his benefits." It were well if all of us were as decided to overcome temptation, let it come as it may. To indulge in that which may even seem to be sin is evil — to strive against its very appearance is safety. Forgive, gentle reader, the egotism which made me think this odd story might have an interest beyond my own family-circle; it is no small pleasure to remember such a grandsire, and to recall an incident in his life is pardonable.

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL.

JULY, 1868.

AN AFTERNOON IN A BLIND SCHOOL.

AT the corner of one of the most important thoroughfares in a densely crowded part of South London, in what still bears the name of St. George's Fields, is a range of gray buildings erected in the most unpicturesque style of Gothic architecture. At the corner is a small shop, in the windows of which may be seen displayed a variety of door mats and rugs, of varied sizes, combinations, and prices. There are also ropes and brushes, baskets for trinkets, and bassinets for living toys. Into this shop we enter, and beg the favor of a "tour of inspection" through the establishment. This application is most cordially acceded to; and accompanied by an intelligent and courteous assistant we are introduced into the Institution at once. The building, which stretches over nearly two acres of land, which has probably doubled its value since it was purchased for the Blind School, is divided into two distinct wings. One wing is entirely used for *the* males, and the other for females. Whether out of that high chivalrous consideration that still gives the sex the preference in attentions, or from the more sordid motive of convenience, we decline to say, we first enter the wing for the gentler sex. In a long, pleasant, well lighted, admirably ventilated and beautifully clean room we meet with a number of blind girls, of various sizes and ages. Some are engaged at needle-work, others are walking to and fro with steady steps and slow, conversing confidentially and *earnestly*: while some are seated at forms writing. Writing, did we say? Well, it seemed to us a queer method. We had heard of writing with broom sticks — have some dismal recollection of some such, by no means playful effort at sarcasm by our pedagogue in years gone by. But this was to us quite a new idea. The slate is a board about fourteen inches long, by eight wide, covered on one side with a thick layer of flannel or velvet, and the other of a plain frame-work of horizontal bars about half an inch apart; the two, it appears, being connected by

hinges which join them together as a slip of leather does the two covers of a book. The writing paper is placed between the two boards, and the girl takes a peg or pin, which pressed on the paper pricks a letter, just as children prick a pattern in paper, save that each peg pricks one letter. The operation somewhat resembles setting up type, and all the "writing" is in Roman capital letters. Of course, the process is a slow one; but the document is precious to the poor heart far away that beats with affection at the sight of her child's epistle. What gratitude the sight of every printed page and written sheet should raise in our minds, for truly it is a pleasant thing to behold the sun, and no inventions can fully recompense the blind for the loss of the sweet light.

It is holiday afternoon with the girls, so we do not see them at work, but we see the tools they use, and have the *modus operandi* explained to us. Well, we shall not describe it all, for that would be difficult, and feminine accomplishments are beyond the descriptive powers of man. So we pass into the male wing. The first large lofty room is devoted to basket-making. Ranged on each side of this long apartment are a number of boys and men, all blind, save the two teachers; some are kneeling, some bending over unfinished baskets, others seated tailor-fashion, and a few are conveying osiers on their backs across the room, depositing them with the utmost precision in the very spot where they are required; while one or two are lounging and conversing pretty loudly with each other. Indeed, one noteworthy feature of the whole arrangements is that conversation is unchecked. In every room there is a hum of voices, tune-whistling, or beating the work with a bar of iron. It is a scene of noisy life. But there is not a single unhappy face; everyone, even the most silent, is cheerful. "It would be a pity," remarked our guide, "to keep them quiet: it would irritate them beyond measure." And looking at those sightless eyeballs, who could not admire the elasticity of the society's rule? Let them chat, and sing, and shout, since the gratification of seeing, one of God's greatest boons, is denied to them! Gentleness towards all sufferers is a pressing Christian duty. There is enough of sorrow without our adding to it by hard restrictions or thoughtless neglects.

Our inquiries of our guide were spoken in a whisper. We knew how sensitive the blind were with reference to their affliction. Some years ago, we were in the company of a blind person, for days together, without mentioning, or indicating by remote reference, her blindness; and what we frequently observed was the singular way in which her affliction was

ignored by herself. Like most blind persons, if they understand anything, they observe, "I see it." "I have looked at it;" and their mental vision is certainly wonderful. We were glad, therefore, to notice, on our leaving the place, a printed card, requesting visitors not to put questions to the inmates directly referring to their unfortunate deprivation. Of course we obeyed the rule. A slight reference to the matter has often made them unhappy and despondent for hours. In answer to a question, as to how far the blindness of the boys and men was partial or total, we were told that no one was admitted into the school who could distinguish objects by the sight. ' They could tell, most of them, the difference between light and darkness, and their perceptions were acute. They know a stranger's walk, although they are not always able to keep clear of his path. Sometimes in parading the room, they will come across a form somewhat disagreeably; but, then, experience, as in other cases, teaches most persons wisdom; and the same instinct that guides a burnt child to dread the fire, makes these blind boys and girls careful not to knock themselves unnecessarily against objects harder than themselves. The chaplain of the school, whose interesting book on the blind was quoted in our previous paper,* very truly observes, "The blind boy educates his senses of touch and hearing into a *state* of exceeding acuteness, till they almost begin to atone to him for that which is denied, though, after all, they cannot do for him what a single ray of vision would do by one swift glance. ' It's a long time before you learn to be blind,' said a shrewd old blind woman.'" " Some learn it more perfectly than others. A blind woman in a strange house will soon learn the whereabouts of every domestic appointment. There was a blind bell-ringer in Dumfries, who, early every motoring, visited the belfry, tripping up the stone steps as nimbly as if possessed of the keenest sight, and rarely missed the key-hole at the firs; trial. An old story is told of a blind messenger, a canny Scot, at Edinburgh, by Mr. Anderson. He says: "I had occasion to send out one of two blind men with a mattress; I gave him the bill with it, that he might receive payment; but, to my surprise, he returned with the account and the mattress too. 'I've brought back baith, ye see, sir,' said he. 'How so?' * Indeed, sir, I didna' like to leave it yonder, else I'm sure we wad ne'er see the siller; there's nae a stick of furniture within the door.' 'How do you come to know that? O sir, twa taps on the floor wi' my stick soon tell't me that.'" " It was a shrewd guess.

One of the young men, conversing by the side of another blind man, engaged at basket-work, was pointed out to us as a remarkable instance of

the powers of memory. This man, we were informed, was gifted with a most wonderfully retentive memory. Some time ago, charmed with Milton's noble poem, "Paradise Lost," he had it read over to him, a few lines at a time, and learnt the whole of the poem in fewer hours than any ordinary person like ourselves would require to commit to memory one of the twelve books into which it is divided. He has also managed to learn the whole of the hundred and fifty Prayer-book Psalms, and a large number of metrical psalms and hymns, as well as a considerable number of modern poems. Everything seems fish that comes to the net of his memory. "What, this man, whose name is Daniel Brown, has achieved," remarks the chaplain, "may, to a certain extent, be done, and is done, by his fellow sufferers elsewhere. It must be remembered, too, that the blind youth is compelled to derive nearly all his knowledge from books that are read to him (his embossed books being very few in number, very expensive, and almost entirely on religious subjects). While his friend reads, he listens most intently: he is now all ear; not a word, not a syllable, escapes him. He cuts off every channel of communication with the outer world, and opens but the one inlet to the wave of sound. Much depends, of course, on the fluency and distinctness of his teacher, but far more on his own habit of fixed and undivided attention. Here, in the mere task of learning by heart, he has to listen acutely and patiently to all — even to every word — and this by dint of practice becomes comparatively easy."

A very large number of the blind inmates know most of the Psalms. Indeed, so well do they commit the word of God to memory, that the chaplain would be readily detected in any misquotation: and while we are on this point, we may add, that to attempt to teach such shrewd intellects, which are so well trained, and are always ready to detect a blunder, a man must have no small acquaintance with the subjects on which he speaks, and a facility of expression, combined with *literal* accuracy. Such men are not to be put off with a merely superficial teacher. "They know how to reason," said my guide, "and they can reason most logically;" and so prodigious is their memory, that they never require to be told twice; figures seem to enter their heads, and find a permanent lodging there without the smallest difficulty. We heard our guide give orders as to the precise breadth and length of some various sized baskets that were to be made, and the figures were at once received into the memory. "You have to be careful what you say before them," he shrewdly observed to us; "and *especially* when you promise them anything, they will never forget it, nor forget to remind you

that they still remember it. This sometimes may place you in awkward fixes.”

We have not chosen to interrupt any description of the various industrial handicrafts in which the blind were engaged on the afternoon of our visit. One employment much interested us, and deserves a notice. Seated on a high stool, a blind weaver was working, with an ordinary loom, a colored rug. One's first question is, naturally enough, How can he discern the colors? There is a popular idea abroad, that a keen-witted and sensitive blind person has the power of detecting' colors by the touch; but this notion is against the experience of all who know anything of the blind, and is disbelieved by the blind themselves. The blind weaver at the loom informed us frankly, that he knew the difference of color only in two wax's — by a difference in substance, or because the red and maroon were each put in a certain place, which he remembered. One of the colored wools was stiffer than the other, and so he knew that was red wool. That was the only method by which he could distinguish them. Colors, too, are sometimes distinguished by their being placed to the tongue.

We also saw some brush-making, and it was interesting to observe how perfectly every brush was turned out of hand. Of course there is, in each department, a seeing man, who finishes off when necessary, and always inspects all the goods. Ascending a flight of steps, we entered the chapel. The religious services conducted here are according to the forms and usages of the Episcopal church. Some few of the inmates are Dissenters; two boys, indeed, are members of Mr. Spurgeon's church, and are always permitted to worship at the Tabernacle; but the Institution belongs, as far as a benevolent institution can be said to belong, to the “Church of England.” The chapel is a neat, simple affair, with a plain reading desk, and but for the organ, and, if we remember rightly, a useless table of commandments, etc.; it might be taken for a mission-room. At this organ, a blind man was playing a per, ion of Handel's famous undying oratorio, “the Messiah;” and never did we hear the Hallelujah Chorus rendered more perfectly. Blind people, all the world over, seem to have a distinguishing passion for music. Few attain great eminence in this art, but few who are educated to it, and have a quick ear for sounds, fail to gain ordinary success. “Music,” a blind tramper, once observed, “is our only enjoyment; we all likes it.” Music, indeed, supplies to the blind the place of light; consequently it forms no insignificant portion of the teaching at the Blind School. They frequently give public concerts, to which the friends of the

institution are invited. There is a large blind choir; and sacred music, vocal and instrumental, of the highest class, is performed by the choristers. The chaplain complains, however, that few churchwardens and trustees, in want of an organist, care about employing a blind man; “and in no[a few cases, though his love for it still continues deep and unbroken as ever, once outside the school gates, his practical acquaintance with good music is over; or, possibly, limited to such wooden strains as can be pomaded out of some excruciating instrument which Mozart himself could not make endurable.” Still, there are many blind organists scattered throughout the country, and their services are, in many cases, preferred to those who have the gift of sight, but less passion for music.

We cannot conclude our somewhat rambling sketch of some few things we saw in this commodious institution, without expressing our indebtedness to our guide, Mr. Midwinter, and the pleasure which we felt in witnessing the comfortable home in which one hundred and sixty inmates are placed. Nothing could exceed the neatness and simplicity, of the arrangements. For cleanliness, the building would have done credit to the most scrupulous Quaker, whose hatred of a spot is proverbial. The dormitories were excessively clean; and we may add, that at the head of each bed a portion of the Scriptures was placed. At an early hour of the morning, as soon as they are awake, the Word is read individually at pleasure. And he who has habituated himself to reading the Scriptures in early morn will have understood the freshness which belongs to them in a way that others can never know. No wonder that the pupils should be young Timothys. We were pleased to observe a shop, opened for out-dour workers, chiefly old pupils of good character; where they obtain decent and fairly remunerative employment. Still, how to find such labor for the blind is one of the most difficult problems which have been presented to the philanthropist’s mind. To our mind, the blind schools only meet the difficulty up to a certain point. We are inclined to believe that a vast majority of blind persons will always be comprehended within the divine Master’s legacy to his church — “The poor you have with you always.” The following paragraph from the last report of the Society, refers in very modest terms to the good done by the School for the Indigent Blind:—

“It is a cause of great satisfaction that a very large majority of those pupils who have left us during the last few years are now working steadily at their trades, and doing what they can, though it may not be much, towards their own support. It must not be forgotten that

it is far better for a blind girl or youth, to earn a shilling or even sixpence per week, than to do nothing. Idleness is a positive curse, and always bears a bitter harvest; and if the poorer class of blind can be taught to believe this, and to put their belief into practice, the gain to themselves will be a great one.

“The Committee will have done a great and lasting good if only’ they succeed in teaching a large number of blind persons, for the most part ignorant and indigent, habits of patience, care, and industry to prefer work to idleness; to be anxious to do what they can, be it ever so little, to avoid becoming a burden to their friends; to be cleanly and well-behaved, faithful and honest; to read their Bibles with some understanding of their duty to God and to man. And this much the Committee can most fully claim to be doing.

“The harvest may not be so abundant as they could wish, but it is a harvest of the right kind, and, by God’s blessing, well worth the reaping.”

RIZPAH.

“And Rizpah the daughter of Aiah took sackcloth, and spread it for her upon the rock, from the beginning of harvest until water dropped upon them out of heaven, and suffered neither the birds of the air to rest on them by day, nor the beasts of the field by night.”
— 2 Samuel 21:10.

YOU must read the whole story, or the text will be a fragment without meaning. When the tribes entered Palestine, the Gibeonites with their old shoes and clouted deceived then, and Israel made a covenant with them that they should not be destroyed with the inhabitants of the land. Although that oath had been obtained by craft, yet it held good, for the Lord would have his people men of honor. The Gibeonites were therefore spared, but justly adjudged to be hewers of wood and drawers of water all their days. No one appears to have injured the Gibeonites till Saul became king, and then the very man who spared the Amalekites, whom God had bidden him destroy, fell remorselessly upon the unoffending Gibeonites, who were under the protection of a solemn compact. To that unhappy race Saul and his family were known as “a bloody house.” In the days of David, some

years after, a great famine came upon the land, and David was divinely informed that this visitation was sent from God as a punishment on account of the wrong done to the Gibeonites. The Gibeonites were brought before the king; they were asked what atonement they would accept for their former wrongs, and they replied that they would accept neither gold nor silver, nor did they wish any one to be put, to death except the children of the guilty person, but they demanded that seven persons of the house of Saul should be given to them, that they might hang them upon as many trees, on an elevated spot near what was once Saul's palace at Gibeah. Accordingly seven persons were surrendered to their vengeance, and among them the three children of Rizpah, the heroine of the text. Those seven persons were first hanged, and then, though the Jewish law commanded that a person who was hanged should be buried at the going down of the sun, this was a case beyond and out of the law, and therefore the bodies remained upon the trees month after month, just as the criminals in the much vaunted good old times among ourselves were suspended in chains, and left to rot in the face of the sun. The seven corpses were thus uplifted as a dreadful memorial of the justice of God, and the vengeance of Gibeon for the broken covenant.

This woman Rizpah, though a word is used in connection with her which is full of shame, for she was but Saul's "concubine," was yet a woman of noble spirit, for when she found her three sons thus put to death, she took sackcloth, making a little tent of it on the brow of the hill, just underneath the seven gallows-trees, and there she watched all through the burning summer, and the fierce autumn heats, till the Lord's mercy sent the rain to cool the sun-burnt earth. The carrion birds came to feed upon the corpses, but she chased them away with her wild shrieks and cries; and when the jackals and the bears came by night, she, as if she were some fabled destroyer of dragons, and not a poor timid woman, drove them all away. Neither by night nor by day did she cease from her dreadful task of love until at last, when the scant harvest was sorrowfully housed, the Lord accepted the atonement made, and made the blessed rain to drop from heaven — the rain which had been withheld so long because sin had bound up the bottles of heaven. Until it was clear that God's wrath was removed, Rizpah stood to her post, protecting as best she could the unburied relics of those who were so dear to her. It is a ghastly picture. It is worthy of the pencil of Gustave Dore, or some artist with a grimmer pencil: the seven corpses hanging up in the pale moonbeams; the wolf howling at the

woman's feet, and the gray-haired mother all alone (for she must have been of great age), battling with the beasts and birds, out of love, unconquerable love to her dear children. We cannot paint, but we can meditate, and it maybe we shall be the better for the lessons which Rizpah shall teach us.

We are led to reflect upon THE TENDER LOVE WHICH WE SHOULD HAVE TOWARDS OUR CHILDREN, AND HOW THAT LOVE SHOULD MANIFEST ITSELF.

This woman protected her offspring even after they were dead; she would not suffer their remains to be mutilated by ravenous birds and beasts; much more should we watch with anxious tenderness over our children while yet they live. Their bodies are not exposed to any devouring monster, but their souls are. There is one who goeth about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour, and when a little of the good seed of truth is sown in those young hearts, birds of the air hasten to devour it. O parents, how should you guard your children against temptation! How should you seek to strengthen them for the battle of life into which they must so soon be thrust! By your prayers, and your teaching, and your example, should you endeavor to the utmost to preserve them from the paths of the destroyer, so that if they perish their blood may not be upon their parents' skirts, but the rather may the promise be fulfilled to you, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved *and thy house.*"

I am afraid we do not all feel the responsibility of parents as we should do. Who amongst; us can say, "I am quite clear as to the bringing up of my sons and daughters"? May you never live to see them become your curse! May you never nourish in your bosom the viper that shall sting you! If you lead them to the throne of grace, if you put their little hands upon the horns of the all. at of the atonement, if it be your earnest endeavor to train them up in the fear of God, and to dedicate them while they are yet children to the cause of Christ, you may expect with all confidence that when they are old they shall not depart frown the way in which you have trained them up; nay, they shall succeed you in the ways of truth, and instead of the fathers shall be the children.

I am very thankful that our heavenly Father has saved so many of the children of this church. We rejoice that

***"Many dear children are gathering here,
For of such is the kingdom of heaven."***

May the Lord plant in his garden many more of those sweet flowers whose buds and blossoms he loves so well. Ah, mothers! you have not to keep a mournful vigil beneath your sons hanging upon the tree: do not grow weary, then, when you are called diligently to watch against your children's follies and failings. Have patience with them! Have compassion for them! What a mercy it is that they are yours! Notwithstanding the trouble they cost you, you would not for all the world lose the prattle of their little tongues, and the music of their merry feet; and as you remember — for perhaps you have already experienced it — how briny are those tears which fall upon little coffin-lids, thank God that you are indulged with the trouble of bringing up your babes; bless God that you have so sweet a weariness as that of caring for their souls. That lesson needs but a hint, for sanctified nature teaches us this.

There are points in Rizpah's case worthy of the Christian's imitation. Her case, in certain aspects, runs parallel with our own. She sat beneath the gibbet, and we watch beneath the cross: she guarded her slain sons. we who love the Lord Jesus defend him from his foes.

NOTICE THIS WOMAN IN THE CONSTANCY OF HER WATCHING.

As, in my solitude, I read of Rizpah's watchfulness, I felt ashamed of myself — so thoroughly ashamed that I thought I heard my Master say to me, "What, could ye not watch with me one hour?" Here is a woman who watches with the dead, not one hour, nor one day, but weeks and months, while we are so unspiritual and so carnal that a little watching with our Lord soon tires us out! Even when we draw near to the Master's table our thoughts wander. When our minds should concentrate all their faculties upon the one topic of the well beloved's flowing wounds and purple sweat, his bleeding head, and hands, and feet, our imaginations wickedly ramble abroad, and we cease to keep watch with Jesus; yet here is Rizpah, with undivided heart, faithful to her charge from month to month.

This sorrowful mother's watch was *a very ghastly one*. Marvellous must have been her courage and affection. Few women could have endured the dreadful scene, especially at night. Think of it — a lone woman with those seven corpses swinging in the breeze! Brave hearts, would ye be quite so bold in such a case? Every time they creaked to and fro, or the wolf howled, or the owl hooted from the ruined palace, we should have started and been ready to take to our heels; but there she sat watching, sleeplessly watching, mournfully watching, on, on, oil, while the stars and the sun kept

guard by turns in heaven! None relieved her at cock-crowing, or took her place at sundown; her ratch was ceaseless and unbroken. Ah, grim and ghastly spectacle for a tender woman's eye! How different is our watch at the foot of the cross! for there is nothing ghastly there. If you had ever seen a sickening picture of Christ upon the cross, you have turned away with abhorrence, for the crucified Savior is never a hideous though ever a saddening sight. In riding through the Tyrol, I saw a long succession of horrible images of our Lord by the roadside, and I felt as if I could fain get out of the carriage and break them all in godly indignation. My conceptions of Christ on his cross bring before me a very painful and awe-inspiring scene, but still there is nothing of the hideous and the ghastly there. No, the sight was such that angels, amazed and astounded, might have lingered long and gazed admiringly —

*“See from his head, his hands, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down!
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown!”*

The fair lily of the valley on the cross became red as the rose of Sharon, but his loveliness was all unmarred. No awful tremor and dread seize our souls beneath the tree of Calvary, but rather

*“Sweet the moments, rich in blessing,
Which before the cross I spend.”*

Though Jesus sighs, and cries, and gasps, and dies, yet is the sight delightful to the humbled heart as it reads there the jubilee, the mercy, the love, the pity of the bleeding' Sou of God.

Poor Rizpah's watch again was *a most miserable one.*

She lodged upon the hare rock; her sackcloth was but a scant and wretched shelter, but it was all the protection she had from the heavy night dews or the burning sunbeams. But see where we sit at the foot of Jesus' cross! we are housed in a pavilion of divine love, fairer than the silken curtains of Solomon. Look up, ye lovers of Christ, and see the purple canopy of the atonement which covers you from the night dews of worldly sorrow, and from the fierce heats of almighty justice. None dwell so royally as those who abide hard by the cross. Though as to our human surroundings, we may dwell in the black tents of Kedar, when we approach the Crucified One, we are introduced to the ivory palaces, wherein our garments are

made to smell of aloes and cassia. Let me invite you, then, to come to the foot of the cross, because your vigil will be so much more blessed than that which Rizpah kept. The vision of Calvary is fair, the suffering person is divinely attractive, and even his death surpassingly lovely. Come ye, then, and watch, and wonder, and adore.

Emulate Rizpah's watching, emulate it in this, that *she was an abiding watcher*. She did not watch for some few minutes, and then depart, but she made her abode beneath the gallows. She meant to live there till those bodies should be taken down. "Abide in me," saith Christ, "and I in you," but ahs! we flit and fir from bough to bough, inconstant in our communion with our best friend, We are too much like the bird we read of in the old Saxon story. When the first missionary was preaching in the royal hall, he told of the peace which the gospel brings to sinners, and the rest which souls find in Jesus. After his sermon, an ancient chieftain spake his mind, and compared himself and his countrymen in their unrest to the bird which just then, attracted by the light, flew into the bright hall through the open window, flitted through the warmth and light, and passed out again into the darkness and the cold by a window on the other side of the banqueting hall. The simile might well apply to our transient fellowship; we have brief communings and then away we pass into worldliness and indifference. Oh, would it not be blessed if we could abide with Jesus for ever, building our nest in his palace! How heavenly our life if we could walk with him, as Enoch did, in our business, in our families, in all places and at all hours! If instead of now and then climbing the sunny peak of fellowship, and standing near to heaven, and conversing with the Son of God, we could for ever dwell in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, how much more noble a life to lead! Imitate Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, in her abiding unmovingly near her beloved ones — abide with Jesus evermore.

Emulate Rizpah again, and like her make your WATCH A LOVING ONE. If any compassionate traveler had saluted her, he might have said, "Woman with the gray hair, have pity on thyself, and go thy way! Why tarries; thou here alone, on the bleak side of Gibeah's hill? Why lingerest thou amidst these putrid corpses, which pollute the air? Go, unhappy woman, where there are friends to shelter thee! The night-dews will chill thy marrow, and the fierce sun will parch thy soul; have pity on thyself, and leave the dead, lest thou too soon be one of them. Go home to kinsfolk, who will comfort thee! there are still some left that love thee. The fame of thy deed of love, hath;win thee hearts that will yield respectful homage to thy grief's. Go

home, thou venerable woman; though like Naomi, thou shouldst say, ‘ Call me Mara! Tot the Almighty hath dealt bitterly with me; go thy way, and peace be with thee.’“ Do you not hear her firm reply, “I will not; by the love of God, I will not leave them! for they are my children, my children — the offspring of my bowels. Wherefore bid me leave them? Shall you vultures tear their flesh, which is my flesh as much as theirs. Stroll the grim wolf devour those who once lay on this bosom? Wherefore bid me go? Ye see nothing but ghastliness there, but I see myself in my children yonder. Would God I had died for them; that I had died for them, and given up this wrinkled form, that their young lives might, have been spared to them! I cannot and I will not]cave them. Till the soft bosom of their mother earth shall give them shelter, their mother’s hand shall defend them.” O love, what canst thou not do? Beloved of the Lord, love is the great force which will keep you dose to Jesus. If you love him with a deep, passionate love, you will abide with him. If the mere love of nature could keep a woman watching thus, what ought the love of grace to do? for grace should conquer nature, and gratitude, for countless blessings, should create in us a love more deep and impetuous than the love of women — a love which many waters cannot quench, and which the floods cannot drown.

Admire the great love of this afflicted woman; admire her affectionate constancy, and pray for such love to Jesus, that you may resolve and keep the resolution, “I will not leave my Savior: I will hold him and will not let him go. Neither life nor death shall divide me from him.”

*“Love and grief my heart dividing,
With my tears his feet I’ll bathe;
Constant still in faith abiding.
Life deriving from his death.”*

We will now shift, the kaleidoscope a little, and view the matter from another point. As we have commended to you this woman Rizpah in the constancy of her watching, so we now exhort you to imitate her in THE ZEAL WITH WHICH SHE GUARDED HER CHILDREN.

As we have already observed, all the day long she chased away the carrion crows, the kites, and vultures, and eagles — no small employment that! — and when the night set in, and fierce eyes glared from the thickets on the hillside, and the bark of the jackal and the howl of the wolf were heard, there still was she to be seen, valiant as a man of war, chasing-away, with lamentable cries, the beasts flint fain would have given her children a living

grave. That woman's love was grand! No classic legend ever stood out more sublimely! I do not believe a man could have loved so much. A man might have taken down the corpses, and by a desperate deed of courage have buried them, in defiance of God and man; but only a woman could have bowed to the stem decree and then have kept up that long night-and-day watch for the protection of the bones of her children. I pray that each one of us may guard our blessed Lord against the attacks, the slanders, and blasphemies, and heresies of his enemies. Jesus reigns in our hearts; let us expel from our spirits those foul thoughts which seek a lodging there. Do you tell me that you have none? Oh, if you speak the truth I envy you! What would I give if I could be rid of every foul and offensive thought! But alas! they seem to abound within my heart like midges in the evening's sunbeams. They fly as a cloud, and who can chase them away! The sins which we hate the most we are often the most tempted to, and the mischief's which we would avoid most anxiously thrust themselves upon us as though they would take our hearts by storm. Watch, then, Christian, watch, watch, watch. "What I say unto you I say unto all — Watch." Let no foul bird enter your soul to pollute the temple of the Holy Ghost, and destroy your fellowship with Jesus. What do I see? I spoke of wolves just now. Ah! wolfish passions would fain roam in our souls and rend our love to Jesus. Do you never find yourselves near the wolves in your business? I know you do, for I do in mine, and mine, methinks, is more sacred work than yours, yet temptation's wolves howl in my study, and in the Tabernacle, and in the vestries; they waylay me everywhere. Oh, watch against the attacks of sin! You who are professors of Christ, I beseech you guard carefully your lives. Give up your profession or else sustain it honorably. My brethren and sisters, I speak the truth in God, I lie not; my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I would fain go down upon my knees to you, and say to you, "If you do not mean to be holy, leave off your profession, do not bring dishonor upon my Master's name. Why should you? What harm has he done you? Oh! if you must be lost, why add to all your other sins that of hypocrisy? If you must be Satan's servant, are there no other ways of doing him a turn except by playing the Judas? Keep out of your hearts, by the Spirit's power, everything that would dishonor Christ. I pray you, by the blood of Jesus, chase away the beasts of prey. Whether they come by night or day, do not suffer them to form their lairs within your affections. Jesus deserves to be adored, no; to be dishonored, He deserves that we should live and die for

him, not that we should put him to Glen shame, and wound him in the house of his friends.”

Guard your Savior, my brethren, by your holy lives. Beloved friends, we cannot protect our Lord from the blasphemies and injuries which are done him by the world. I wish we could; but there is one thing we can do, we can weep over the dishonor done him, and there is a wonderful power in tears as a guard to our Master’s honor. I cannot stop thy wicked tongue, but I can pray for thee. I cannot prevent thy blasphemy, but my heart shall break because thou wilt blaspheme. I cannot keep thee back, O woman, from giving thyself up to sin; I cannot hold thee back, O man, from bowing before that demon-god, the drink; but I can plead with God on thy behalf, and I can vex my soul because of thy sin. Should not this be the daily occupation of a lover of Immanuel, to keep men back from grieving the Lord; and then, to weep and mourn for the unkindness shown to the Lord of love by those who will not be persuaded to better things? O ye soldiers of the cross, be brave in the day of battle to speak a word }’or Christ in the blasphemer’s teeth. Never hesitate to censure sin, even in the greatest or the proudest of the land. Speak the truth, and fear not. Publish the gospel, and be not afraid. in the midst of the adversaries of Christ lift high the banner of the cross, and defy all the hosts of hell to tear it down. But when ye can do no more, and the malignity of human depravity prevents your staying the hand of man from attacking the crucified One, then sit ye down, and wash his feet with tears, and wipe them with the hairs of your head, and in this way prove how, like Rizpah, ye would guard your Lord even to the death.

Finally, WE COMMEND TO YOU THIS REMARKABLE WOMAN AS AN INSTANCE OF PATIENCE IN SUFFERING.

Out of love to those slain children of hers, she bore the heat of the sun, and all the inconveniences of the situation, until the rain dropped from heaven. Oh! what ought we not to suffer for cur Lord! I feel as though I could blush scarlet that! should have to say a word to any of you about suffering for Christ, because what is it. what is it that we have to suffer? Pshaw! It is not to be talked of! Those were sufferings when women like Blandina were set in the red hot chair, or enveloped in a net, and tossed upon the horns of bulls. Those were sufferings when they scraped the flesh from off the martyrs’ bones. Those were sufferings when every bone was dislocated, and every sinew stretched upon the rack; or when, like the martyrs at

Smithfield, men stood upon the burning fagot till each finger blazed like a candle, and vet shouted, "None but Christ." Yes, those *were* tribulations indeed! But we are poor feather-bed soldiers. We have comparatively nothing to endure, and yet, young man, last week you were ashamed to own that you are a Christian because — yes, because they chaffed you in the shop! And you, young woman, blushed to own that you had avowed your Lord in the despised ordinance of baptism when your friends were jeering you. O men and women, how little is your faith! And vet my Master is not angry with you. You little ones, he will comfort you, and strengthen you, and give you more faith, but still do you not feel ashamed to think you should ever have been ashamed of him?

Many of you are working in the Ragged-school, others in the Sunday-school. You are trying to do good in different ways, but you are growing weary of well doing. At this hem', ye drooping ones, remember Rizpah, and continue in all the inconveniences of the work, since you do it unto the Lord, and not unto men. My brother minister, you who have been disappointed in your work, and are ready to give it up, and shun the arduous labor of ministry, hear thou the Word of the Lord. Wilt then play the Jonah? if so, thou mayst be east overboard and find no whale! Go back to thy work, hasten at once to Nineveh. Behold how Rizpah suffered for her dead children's sake. and take heed that thou learn to endure as seeing him who is invisible. Brethren, if all the world at once should point the finger of seem at us, if all the devils in hell should hiss at us from their mouths of flame, if God himself for awhile should hide success from us, yet for the wounds of Christ, and for the bloody sweat, and for the precious death of Jesus, we ought still to press on in service and in sacrifice, since Jesus' sacrifice deserves of us all we are, and more than all; deserves our whole being in its most intensely energetic condition; deserves us evermore toiling at the utmost possibility of diligence, or suffering at the highest imaginable degree of resignation. O come, ye lovers of my Master, come to his cross, and ask him to nail you there, to crucify you with himself. Ask him that he would make your hearts wholly his. Ask to be consecrated, spirit, soul, and body, and henceforth to reckon yourselves not your own, but bought, with a price.

O Holy Spirit, press these truths upon thy people's hearts, and help them to watch and worship, to watch and suffer, to watch and serve with Jesus, till the rain shall drop from heaven, and thou shalt take them up to dwell with thyself, where they shall see the despised One exalted, the crucified One

enthroned, and the buried One for ever living, King of kings, and Lord of Lords.

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL.

AUGUST, 1868.

BETWEEN TWO.

“And they came unto the brook of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a branch with Free cluster of grapes, and they bare it between two upon a staff.” — Numbers 13:23.

The cluster of Eshcol is famous among fruits of the earth. Divines have delighted to find in it a symbol of those superlative delights which afford to believers on earth a foretaste of their future bliss. Our readers do not need to traverse that well-worn path, nor did we take up our pen to write of that; “earnest of the Spirit” which is the pledge of the rest of heaven. The carrying of the notable cluster between two is the one point which has caught our eye and set our mind in motion. Why was I carried on a staff in that fashion? Surely not principally because of its weight, for the hugest bunch of grapes imaginable would be an easy burden for a man. Was it no; to preserve the beauty, freshness, and bloom of the luxuriant cluster that the spies rims bore it to the camp? One bearer alone could not have kept the luscious fruit uncrushed and unbruised, but two with a little care carried it in safety. Among all;he proofs of Canaan’s plenty, none was more overwhelming than the cluster which two must bear between them; reader, among the joys of believers, none are more sweet than those which require Christian fellowship to develop them.

*How sweet it is when friend with friend
In holy fellowship can walk!
When thoughts and sympathies may blend,
And hearts be open as their talk!
Such will the preparation prove
For lasting fellowship above.*

The joy which we gratefully tell to another is doubled to ourselves and preserved far longer in the soul. The prayer in which two agree is prevalent

beyond and above all solitary devotion, for it hath a special promise of a sure result. The praise which streams from brotherly hearts and voices, each helping to swell the strain, has the richness of the first ripe knit about it. To forsake the assembling of ourselves together would involve the loss of one of the dearest Christian privileges, for the worship of the church below is the vestibule of the adoration of heaven. If ever heaven comes down to earth it is in the communion of saints. Our Lord's table is oftentimes glory anticipated. The prayer meeting often seems to be held close to Jerusalem's city wall; it stands in a sort of border land between the celestial and the terrestrial; it is a house and yet a gate, fruition and expectation in one, the 'house of God and the very gate of heaven. Church-fellowship is meant by our Lord Jesus to be the table upon which the daintiest meats of the banquet of grace are served up; those who neglect it crush their grapes for want of a friend to help them carry the cluster.

Are there none among us whose solitude is a solemn injury to their joys? Might not many a downcast one take good heart if he would but associate with a Christian companion? Friendship might prove like a David's harp to cheer away the despondency of a soul distressed. Hearts would burn with fire of joy if disciples would commune together by the way. Holy intercourse is the soul-enriching trade which wise believers carry on to their lasting benefit. In Paradise it was not good for man to be alone, it can scarcely be better now. David was all the better and happier because of the friendship of Jonathan. Peter found his restoration all the easier because of John. Lover of retirement, eat not then, thy morsel alone, or if thou have no morsel, starve not in secret. "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice." Come forth, lonely one, follow the footsteps of the flock, and find rest.

Jesus sent out his disciples by twos, for he knew that each would cheer his fellow. Service is usually best in companionship: he who works altogether alone will be in his temper either too high or too low, censorious or desponding. Two are better far than one; they no; only accomplish twice the work, as we might have expected, but the.;' frequently multiply their power seven times by their cooperation. Happy are those wedded souls whose life of love to their Lord and one another is like the cluster on the staff, which they joyfully bear along! Happy those Christian companions who share each other's joys and sorrows, and so pass onward to the skies knit together as one man. Communication enriches, reticence impoverishes.

Communion is strength, solitude is weakness. Alone, the fine old beech yields to the blast, and lies prone upon the sward: in the forest, supporting each other, the trees laugh at the hurricane. The sheep of Jesus flock together; the social element is the genius of Christianity. To find a brother is to find a pearl of great price; to retain a friend is to treasure up the purest gold. BETWEEN TWO UPON A STAFF we find happiness. The monastic or hermit death-life is not our Master's *beau ideal*, but holy companionship is his chosen means for affording us help in service and advance in joy.

Reader, be not a carping critic, separating from everybody. There is surely something common to thee and another which thou and he may work for or rejoice in. Be the friend of men, and not the reviler of thy kind. Be a bond in the church, not a separating knife. Little children, *love* one another,

THE INQUISITION

BY C. H. SPURGEON.

THE union of the church with the state renders persecution possible; and hitherto churches have not been slow to avail themselves of the secular arm that they might confound all dissent with arguments which come home to the bone and the flesh. All churches, who-: they lose the spirit of Christ, are very prone to persecute; but a horrible pre-eminence must be awarded to the scarlet harlot of the seven hills, for no church on earth except that of Rome has had a separate institution for hunting out and destroying heretics. Whether it may be traced to want of will or want of inclination on the part of other establishments. it is certain that the Popish Antichrist alone has been able to drink of the overflowing blood-cup tilled by familiars and tormentors. Long pampered by the state, she came to be its lord and tyrant, using fire and sword, prison and rack, to work her accursed will. The Inquisition was the masterpiece of infernal craft and malice, and its deeds were far more worthy of fiends than men. If the church of Rome could at this moment change its Ethiopian skin for ever, lay aside its leopard's spots, and become a pure community, ten thousand years of immaculate holiness and self-denying philanthropy could not avail to blot out the remembrance of the enormous crimes with which the Inquisition has loaded it. There is a deep and indelible sentence of damnation written upon the apostate church by avenging justice for its

more than infernal cruelties, and the curse is registered in heaven; nor can any pretences to present, liberality reverse the condemnation which outraged humanity has pronounced against it; its infamy is engraved in the rock for ever. Centuries of the most liberal policy would not convince mankind that Popery had become tolerant at heart; she wallowed so greedily in oppression, torture, and murder in her palmy days, that the foam of human gore hangs around her wolfish hugs, and men will not believe her to be a gentle lamb, let her bleat as she may. Against her common humanity is up in arms as much as evangelical religion. Her confessional is as dangerous to the mere moralist as to the Christian; her inquisition would be as ruinous to mercantile prosperity as to spiritual activity. Men of all religions and of no religion should deprecate the growth of a system which rendered the Inquisition possible; while followers of Jesus, for their own sake as well as for their Lord's, should oppose with all their might.

Rome made the worst possible use of the weapon which the state gave her, but the radical evil was the state's entering into alliance with the church, and lending its power to fulfill her purposes, Had true church principles prevailed, the crimes which make us shudder would have been impossible. Disarm and disestablish every sect, and leave each religion to its own moral and spiritual power, and no inquisition can be dreamed of; but put forward the doctrine that a state should propagate or maintain religion, and you have uncaged the lion; no one knows how much he may rend and devour. Modern Romanists would, many of them, lament the cruelties of former ages, but *they* ought to see that these were but the ripe fruits of their system Mien plentifully irrigated with royal favor, and planted in a soil rank with ignorance and superstition; a principle which, among Protestants with far less scope, has nevertheless produced most horrible results. Anglican churchmen who persist in upholding church and state, if they will but carefully think the matter over, will see that the Inquisition is but a grosser exposition of their principles; it is-not the outgrowth of either one creed or another, but the result of a paternal government protecting its espoused faith with all its power. The argument flint a state ought to have a religion, and support it by national funds, when like a meddler fully ripe and rotten, lands us at Smithfield's stakes or the Lollard's Tower. Whether Papists or so-called Protestants hold it, its results are the same in substance though not in measure. Rome has made a diabolical use of Jr, but no priests are to be trusted, even Protestants eau persecute if they have the opportunity.

Principles do not stop short at a hard and fast line, though their practice may be compelled to do so; and it is clear to every thinking man that, although state-churchmen would shrink from setting up an inquisition, the full development of their views would logically require it: the path of prudence is to return to the true principle, and leave the kingdom of Christ to be as at the first, not of this world. The same spirit which blazed up at an *auto-da-fe* smoulders in an imprisonment for church-rates, and the same principle which in its manhood dyed the Netherlands with blood in order to thrust in the Papacy, is that which thrusts in the Irish church upon an unwilling people. We Protestants who are really so, must fight zealously against the essential Popery which would lead us to use the secular arm in spiritual matters, and would tempt us to employ compulsion where everything to be acceptable must be voluntary. We must insist upon it that no shade of coercion or degree of patronage shall be exercised towards any religion; all must be fully tolerated, nay, more, all protected in their natural liberty, and all secured an absolute equality before the law. To act as Rome has acted is to unprotestantise ourselves. To deny Roman Catholics the fullest civil and religious equality is to degrade ourselves to their level by handling their weapons. Faction suggests reprisals, and fear demands precautions, and none can wonder, for the Papistical party is cunning and bigoted to the last degree; but Christianity scorns to sin in order to avenge a wrong, or avert an evil. If we treat our antagonists as they treated our fathers, we cannot convert them, for they have already perverted *us*. A people boasting of their Protestantism as the English do, should be ashamed to support Popery in the Anglican establishment, or to bow before the dogma of union between church and state, which is the essence of Antichrist and the germ of persecution: an injustice to man, and an impertinence to God. The inmost soul of Protestantism is *the responsibility of the conscience to God alone, the spiritual nature of true religion, and the freedom of faith from the rule of earthly lords*. State-churchism is antichristian, and always ripens into oppression and tyranny wherever opportunity is given it. “No Popery” is our cry, and therefore laying the ax at the root of the system, we demand the abolition of every union between church and state, and the disallowance of every form of interference On the part of Caesar with things which belong alone to God.

We have been led to these remarks through reading a most thrilling work by Dr. W. H. Rule, a solid volume of sober history, written without the slightest tinge of sensationalism, and yet more stirring by far than any romance. Dr. Rule has, by this book, contributed to the standard library of

Christendom — every one should read it, and see what state-religion leads to when it has nothing to hinder it. Truly in the case of the Romish church it makes one loathe the very name of Romanist, and shake himself, lest the plague of intolerance should by any means linger in his own garments. To Rome it seems to be essential to rend and devour. “‘Blessed Father,’ said Baronius to Paul V., ‘the ministry of Peter is twofold — to *feed* and to *kill*.’ For the Lord said to him, ‘Feed my sheep;’ and he also heard a voice from heaven, saying, ‘Kill and eat.’ To feed sheep is to take care of obedient, faithful Christians, who in meekness, humility, and piety, show themselves to be sheep and lambs. But when he has no longer to do with sheep and lambs, but with lions, and other wild, refractory, and troublesome beasts, Peter is commanded to kill them; that is to say, to attack, fight, and slaughter them, until there be none such left.” This notion of killing (eating is another matter) — has been fully carried out by the Papacy, as our long rolls of martyrology can prove. It is the duty of all Protestants to be well read in our martyr annals, that our detestation of Popery and all that leads to intolerance may be renewed and confirmed.

Dr. Rule commences with a paragraph which shows that persecution commenced as soon as ever the church was affiliated with the state. “The first imperial patron of Christians, Constantine the Great, cannot be fairly described as a persecutor, but rather as benevolent and liberal; yet, educated in heathenism, he thought it quite right to employ repressive measures for the extinction of idolatry, measures which the Pagans complained of as unjust, but could not regard as cruel in comparison with the ancient hostilities waged against each other by the votaries of hostile gods. Constantine, as a matter of course, discouraged freedom of utterance, where such freedom seemed inexpedient, and denied liberty of worship to idolaters and heretics. His edicts, or constitutions, became part of the civil law of Christian Europe. No fewer than seventy-two such laws, made by Constantine and his successors, against controversialists and heretics, with many more against Jews, Samaritans, and Pagans, may be found in the Theodosian Code, and show how diversities of religious opinion were to be prevented, and the teachers crushed. Confiscation, banishment, death, were the penalties to be inflicted for breach of what Romanists are pleased to call ‘Catholic unity.’” Every reader of this paragraph who is not an and-state churchman should carefully note it, and meditate within himself as to what the tact here stated most surely indicates.

The powers of the Inquisition when in its palmy days were very extensive. A Romish writer says, "The tribunal claims right of jurisdiction over the following persons: — All heretics without exception. All who blaspheme God and the saints. They who utter words of blasphemy when extremely drunk are not to be condemned at once, but watched. If half drunk, they are entirely guilty. They who speak blasphemously or heretically in their sleep are to be watched; for it is likely that their lips betrayed the heresy that was lurking in their hearts. All who speak jestingly of sacred things. Wizards and fortune-tellers. Worshippers of the devil: and it seems that while the Inquisition was in its glory, when the Reformation had scarcely dawned, or where its light had scarcely penetrated, people were known to offer sacrifices to the evil one, kneel down to him, sing hymns to him, observe 'chastity' and fast in honor of him, illuminate and tense his images, insert names of devils in the litanies of saints, and ask them to intercede with God. Such was the condition of many who had known no other church but that of Rome. All who harbor, or show kindness to heretics, being themselves orthodox; very near relatives, however, having slight indulgence allowed them, in some cases, if the inquisitors please. All who look ill on an inquisitor — those ugly looks being indications of heresy, and injurious to the holy office. Persons in civil office who hinder the inquisition and its agents, or who refuse to help them, or allow an accused person to conceal himself or to escape. Any one who gives food to a heretic, unless he be actually dying of hunger: for in this case it is allowable to feed him, that he may live to take his trial, and, haply, to be converted. Experienced inquisitors could detect a heretic by a characteristic unsightliness about the eyes and nostrils."

The terrible burnings of the faithful witnesses of the Lord at the *autos-da-fe* of the Inquisition are painted to *the* life by our author, so that one shudders to read the description. "At Lisbon, the place of execution was at the water-side. For each person to be burnt, whether dead or alive, a thick stake, or spar, was erected, not less than twelve feet above ground; and within about eighteen inches of the top there was a thick cross-piece, to serve for a seat, and to receive the tops of two ladders. Between those ladders, which were for the use of two Jesuits, there was one for the condemned person, whom they compelled to mount, sit on the transverse piece, and there be chained fast. The Jesuits then went up, delivered a hasty exhortation to repentance, and, that failing, declared that they left him to the devil, who was waiting to receive his soul. On perceiving this, the mob

shouted, ‘Let the dog’s heard be trimmed;’ that is to say, let his face be scorched. This was done by tying pieces of furze to the end of a long pole, and holding the flaming bush to his face, until it was burnt black. The disfiguration of countenance, and his cries for ‘mercy for the love of God,’ furnished great part of the amusement for the crowd, who, if he had been suffering death in a less barbarous way for any criminal offense, would have manifested every appearance of compassion. When ‘the beard’ was trimmed, they lit the heap of furze at the foot of the stake, and, if there were was no wind, the flame would envelop the seat, and begin to burn their legs; but, as there generally is a breeze on the banks of the Tagus, it seldom reached so high. If there was no wind, he would be dead in an half an hour; but the victim generally retained entire consciousness for an hour and a-half, or two hours, in dire torment, which the spectators witnessed with such delight as could never be produced by any other spectacle. In short, the burning, or rather roasting to death, was so contrived that the sufferer should be exposed to every spectator, and that his cries from that elevation should be distinctly audible all round.” Occasionally a poor wretch would recant, and indeed every cunning device was used to induce such recantation. One of their own order coolly says, “And while fulfilling its office, a few upright men, zealous for the faith, may go to the criminal, and exhort him to return to the Catholic faith, and renounce his errors. And if, after the sentence is passed, and he is given over to the secular court, while they are taking him away to be burnt, or when he is tied to the stake, or when he feels the fire, he say that he is willing to turn and repent, and abjure his heresy, I should think that he might in mercy be received as a heretic penitent, and immured for life, according to some passages in the Decretals” (which are cited), “although I imagine this would not be found very justifiable, nor is great faith to be placed in conversions of this sort. Indeed, such an occurrence did take place in Barcelona, where three heretics impenitent, but not relapsed, were delivered to the secular arm, and when one of them, a priest, had the fire lit round him, and was already half burnt on one side, he begged to be taken out, and promised to abjure and repent. He was taken out, abjured. But whether we did right or not, I cannot say. One firing I know, that fourteen years afterwards he was accused, and found to have persisted in his heresy all the time, and infected many He then refused to be converted, and, as one impenitent and relapsed, was again delivered to the secular arm, and consumed in fire.”

Frequently, a refinement of cruelty was displayed which unassisted mortals could hardly have thought of, the direct suggestion of Satan is evident in many a passage in the Inquisitorial history. Incarnate fiends trod those bloodstained halls. "Gaspar de Santa Cruz escaped to Toulouse, where he died, and was buried, after his effigy had been burnt in Zaragoza. In this city lived a son of his, who, as in duty bound, had helped him to make good his retreat. This son was detained as an impeder of the holy office, arrested, brought out at an act of faith, made to read a condemnation of his deceased father, and then sent to the inquisitor at Toulouse, who took him to his father's grave, and compelled him to dig up the corpse, and burn it with his own hands. Whether the inquisitors were most barbarous, or the young man most vile, it may be difficult to say."

We trust, for the sake of our common nature, that there is some mistake in the description which Gavazzi gives of the Roman Inquisitorial edifice, when laid bare during the short-lived Roman republic. He says, "So short was the time that it remained open to the public, so great the crowd of persons that pressed to catch a sight of it, and so intense the horror inspired by that accursed place, that I could not obtain a more exact and particular impression.

"I found no instruments of torture, for they were destroyed at the first French invasion, and because such instruments were not used afterwards by the modern Inquisition. I did, however, find in one of the prisons of the second court a furnace, and the remains of a woman's dress. I shall never be able to believe that that furnace was used for the living, it not being in such a place, or of such a kind, as to be of service to them. Every thing, on the contrary, combines to persuade me that it was made use of for horrible deaths, and to consume the remains of victims of inquisitorial executions. Another object of horror I found between the great hall of judgment and the luxurious apartment of the chief jailer, the Dominican friar who presides over this diabolical establishment. This was a deep tray, a shaft opening into the vaults under the Inquisition. As soon as the so-called criminal had confessed his offense, the second keeper, who is always a Dominican friar, sent him to the father commissary to receive a relaxation of his punishment. With hope of pardon, the confessed culprit would go towards the apartment of the holy inquisitor; but in the act of setting foot at its entrance, the trap opened, and the world of the living heard no more of him. I examined some of the earth found in the pit below this trap; it was

a compost of common earth, rottenness, ashes, and human hair, fetid to the smell, and horrible to the sight and thought of the beholder.

“But where popular fury reached its highest pitch was in the vaults of St. Pius V. I am anxious that you should note well that this Pope was canonized by the Roman Church especially for his zeal against heretics. I will now describe to you the manner how, and the place where, those vicars of Jesus Christ handled the living members of Jesus Christ, and show you how they proceeded for their healing. You descend into the vaults by very narrow stairs. A narrow corridor leads you to the several cells, which, for smallness and for stench, are a hundred times more horrible than the dens of lions and tigers in the Coliseum.

“Wandering in this labyrinth of most fearful prisons, which may be called ‘ graves for the living,’ I came to a cell full of skeletons without skulls, buried in lime. The skulls, detached from the bodies, had been collected in a hamper by the first visitors. Whose were these skeletons? And why were they buried in that place and in that manner?”

“The following is a most probable opinion, if it be not rather the history of a fact: — The condemned were immersed in a bath of slaked lime, gradually filled up to their necks. The lime, by little and little, enclosed the sufferers, or walled them up all alive. The torment was extreme, but slow. As the lime rose higher and higher, the respiration of the victims became more painful, because more difficult. So that what with the suffocation of the smoke, and the anguish of a compressed breathing they died in a manner most horrible and desperate. Some time after their death, the heads would naturally separate from the bodies, and roll away into the hollows left by the shrinking of the lime. Any other explanation of the fact that may be attempted will be found improbable and unnatural.”

The modes by which confessions were extracted by the inquisitors, it would be difficult to condemn too severely. Take a specimen: — A wife of a physician was accused with her three unmarried daughters. “One of these daughters was imprisoned first, but made no disclosure. The inquisitor then tried a novel and horrible method. He had her brought into the audience-chamber, sent his subordinates out of the room, and professed that he had fallen in love with her — that he was resolved to save her life. Day after day he repeated the declaration, and at length persuaded the poor girl that he was indeed her lover. He then told her that, although she knew it not, her mother and *sisters* were accused of heresy by many witnesses, and that,

for the love he bore to her, he desired to save them; but that, in order to effect his object, he must be fully informed of their case, under secrecy, that he might so proceed as to save them all from death. She fell into the snare, and told him all. His point was gained. Their conversation ended. The very next day he called her to another audience, and made her declare, judicially, what she had revealed to him in the assumed character lover. That was enough. The mother and her daughters were sent together to the flames. And the fiend saw his victims burnt." Shall not God be avenged on such a people as this?

Our author has not condescended to defile his pages with details of the lasciviousness of the holy fathers of the sacred office, otherwise he might have told a tale of the kind which blanches raven locks, and makes men's flesh creep on their bones. Pandemonium was Paradise itself compared with the Inquisition. He does not even dwell upon the horrible cruelties enacted more than is barely sufficient for his purpose, but the whole history is nevertheless harrowing to the last degree.

Even while these wretches crushed Choir victims, they evidently feared their testimony, and found it needful to cheek their holy witnessing. The gag, in its most cruel form was *always* ready. One instance we must not omit: — "Dr. Michael Geddes, when a prisoner was brought out who had been several years shut up in a dungeon where clever daylight never penetrated, saw the poor man raise his eyes towards the sun, and heard him exclaim in rapture, as if overwhelmed with majesty of the object, ' How can people that behold that glorious body worship any other being than Him that created it?' Instantly the gag was thrust into his mouth, and the Jesuits who attended him to the *Terreiro de Paco* were not troubled with any more of his reflections."

Which shall we wonder at most, the endurance of the faithful or the cruelty of their tormentors? Is it not proven beyond all dispute that there is no limit to the enormities which men will commit when they are once persuaded that they are keepers of other men's *consciences*? To spread religion by any means, and to crush heresy by all means is the practical inference from the doctrine that one man may control another's religion. Given the duty of a state to foster some one form of faith, and by the sure inductions of our nature slowly but certainly persecution will occur. To prevent for ever the possibility of Papists roasting Protestants, Anglicaus hanging Romish priests, and Puritans flogging Quakers, let every form of state-churchism

be utterly abolished, and the remembrance of the long curse which it has cast upon the world be blotted out for ever.

ON BAZAARS

BAZAARS in connection with benevolent or religious institutions are of modern date; such things were unknown half a century ago, and would have been regarded as inconsistent and profane. Both Churchmen and Dissenters would have condemned them as sacrilegious; the one as an innovation upon consecrated usage, and the other as incompatible with unsullied devotion. We think we see the awful frown upon the brow of Andrew Fuller, the curling lip of contempt in Gill or Ripon, or hear the sarcastic reproof of Robert Hall should a proposal have been made to them to endeavor to raise funds for religious purposes by means of a bazaar. Many think that in this respect the former times were better than these. Many, and especially of the elder sort, think the world is going backward, but we are more disposed to conclude that it is going forward. They sigh for the good old times, but we should sigh to see them return. Every age has its faults, but it has its advantages too; and we should not be disposed to make an exchange with any that has preceded. We have never heard of a period since the time when men began to multiply in the earth in which we could have wished the world to stand still. Let it go on, we say, in its appointed course as fast as it can roll. Its glory is in the future, and not in the past.

We meet with numerous objections to bazaars, as that they injure trade; that they encourage vanity and finery in furniture and dress; that they bring young persons into familiar intercourse with each other; that they promote a needless and injurious admixture of secular with spiritual things; and that they appeal to a false principle of charity. These objections are plausible, and are often conscientiously maintained. They are such, in fact, as would suggest themselves at first to nearly every Christian mind. Nor can it be denied that bazaars have their temptations to evil, and that they are for the most part such as have been named. It may be questioned, however, whether those temptations are not of nearly equal force without them, and whether there be not on the whole a considerable preponderance of good. They have now been extensively tried. and what have been the actual results? Have they injured trade? It would be difficult, we think, to find

instances of this, while tomy in which they have proved beneficial to trade might be discovered. *Have* they encouraged finery in furniture and dress? That is a taste which is likely to prevail quite as much without them. How can that be increased which is already carried to its utmost extent? As to young people meeting together at bazaars, they are sure to meet somewhere, and better meet amongst the friends of the church than of the world. And as for the secularizing influence of bazaars, they are usually held at times in which those who are occupied in them would have been in other secular employments, so that they turn not religion to a secular, so ranch as secularity to a religions use. But what shall we say of the appeal to a false principle of charity? Would it not be better to give money without any equivalent? Would not that be real charity? Unquestionably it would: and it *is* done in a far larger extent. But why not supplement the direct by indirect means? Men may buy in charity as well as give in charity. It is sometimes greater charity to buy than to give. As direct charity is not always true, so indirect charity is not always false. Men like to exercise their benevolence in different ways, some in giving direct to the object, others in giving to those who can make more of it, and others by obtaining a memorial of their bounty. Our charity should allow others to exercise their charity as they please. We are disposed to think that real charity towards the object for which bazaars are held is the predominant motive both in those by whom they are provided and in those by whom they are patronized.

Let us look now at the considerations that might be positively advanced in their favor. They increase the funds of our benevolent and religious institutions. Thus far their end is good; and the means, if not positively evil, are sanctioned by the end. We are not to do evil that good may come; but when the evil is imaginary and the good is real and abiding, the case is altered. Let those who complain of this method of raising money, show us not a more excellent merely, but a more practicable way. Of two evils, having a bazaar and being in debt, we should be disposed to choose the former.

There may be some good in a bazaar, in itself considered. It evokes much latent talent, and calls forth energies that may result in useful habits. It enables many to say, "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have, give I thee." I have no money to give, but I have time, I have a tongue, I have eyes and ears, I have hands and feet, I have ingenuity and labor I will give these to the work. If to such five talents are given in direct charity, or two,

or one; and the five talents become ten in their hands; and the two, four; and the one, two; ingenuity has been exercised, industry has been encouraged, and capital has been increased, Interest too has been taken in the object by those who have been thus employed which otherwise would not have been felt. And more than this, young people by this means have learned the secret of their own strength; that they have a power for good of which they never dreamt; and that instead of playing with toys, their fingers may be turned to good account. A young engineer may be in that little contrivance, a young artist in that little decoration, a young mechanic in that little production, and a young merchant in that little transaction. Diligent habits have been formed, and preparing for a bazaar has been a school of industry to many. Knowledge too of the art of buying and selling has been acquired. Thus many, by giving their tithe and labor to others, have learned to use them profitably for themselves.

Where, it may be said, have we any Scripture authority for bazaars? The first tabernacle, we reply, with all its furniture, was erected from the produce of a bazaar. In the twenty-fifth chapter of Exodus we thus read, "Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering. And this is the offering which ye shall take of them; gold, and silver, and brass, and blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goat's hair, and ram's skins dyed red, and badgers' skins and shittim wood, oil for the light, spices for anointing oil, and for sweet incense; onyx stones and stones to be set in the ephod, and in the breastplate. And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them." This was the notice given of a bazaar to be held in the wilderness at the foot of Mount Sinai. In the thirty-fifth chapter of the same book we have an account of the bazaar being held, which is too long for insertion here. Some points of resemblance with modern bazaars may be noticed. The object there was religious; it was for the erection of a house for God. That house was more externally sacred than any now erected for divine worship. If a bazaar might be held for a house of God then, why not now? and if a house of God of any kind, why not for an orphanage or any other benevolent purpose? The offerings of old were of various kinds. There were articles of gold and silver and brass. There were jewels and precious stones. There were blue and purple and scarlet and fine linen. There were pins and cords and garments. There were curtains and trimmings and lamps and vases and spices. There was all the variety and profusion of our modern bazaars. The women, as now, took a

prominent part. "They came, both men and women. and all the women that were wise-hearted did spin with their hands, and brought that which they had spun, both of blue and of purple and of scarlet, and of fine linen." All gifts, whether of goods or of labor, were gratuitously bestowed. There were no drawbacks upon the articles presented. "They came every one whose heart stirred him up, and every one whom his spirit made willing, and they brought the Lord's offering to the work of the tabernacle of the congregation." Some were inspired by God with special ingenuity on that occasion, and why should we not acknowledge the stone hand in the talents called forth on our behalf? "Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, and in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, even of them that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work." In the original, as in all modern bazaars, there were more articles than could be disposed of. "They spake unto Moses, saying, The people bring much more than enough. And Moses gave commandment, and they caused it to be proclaimed throughout the camp, saying, Let neither man nor woman make any more work for the offering of the sanctuary. So the people were restrained from bringing. For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much."

Although we have said thus much in favor of bazaar, we see the need of much caution that lotteries and gambling and other indications of a spirit that is of the world and not of God, be not associated with them. We accept them as one of the means peculiar to the present age of advancing its social and moral and religious welfare; to give place to the superior requirements of a more enlightened age, which, in its turn, must yield to that which is more spiritual, until the church and the world part company for ever, each gathers to itself all that is its own, and goes to its own place.
G. Rogers.

A HISTORY OF THE BAPTISTS.

ALL who know much of the Baptist denomination must have regretted that so few are acquainted with its early history. We are not surprised that those who do not admit the scripturalness of our principles should be thus ignorant; nor can we be surprised that those who have superciliously looked upon our comparative feebleness should have put us down as of

latter-day growth; but it remains a matter of great surprise that our own congregations should be, for the most part, uninstructed in the past doings of our body. We certainly can boast of godly defenders of the faith, of noble men persecuted and contemned, who have sacrificed position, wealth, and life, for the truth: we can tell of able preachers and learned divines, and we can rejoice in the spirit of enterprise and heroism which has existed among Baptists of all ages. Why therefore should there be so much ignorance abroad as to the ecclesiastical history of the denomination? Why should so few know anything, and so many care nothing for the early Baptists, when their history is beyond measure instructive and interesting? We think there are several reasons to be found for this apathy to our own history. We are not sure, in the first place, that Baptists have ever been passionate lovers of ecclesiastical history. Indeed, we have a notion — how far it is true we leave our readers to judge — that religious communities which indulge too much in these investigations, are apt to trust to the past, which in view of present necessities is about the worst thing a religious body could do. Baptists, too, in past days, being peculiarly obnoxious to all state-churchmen, have had enough to do to fight for very existence, and have been too much intent upon taking their part in the controversies of the times, and, upon seeking present edification, to spend much thought upon presenting in the foreground the past history of their body. Then, too, that history has been, for the most part, obscure and scanty, and even now, as Dr. Angus confesses, the history of baptism in the early church and in the middle ages is still to be written. The few books that have been compiled have been too expensive for ordinary readers, and a condensed and graphic abstract of Baptist records has been much wanted. We are glad therefore to find that Dr. Cramp, the able president of a Baptist College in Nova Scotia, has endeavored to meet this want. Dr. Cramp has long been a laborious, painstaking student of ecclesiastical history, and his works have been distinguished by some of the higher qualities of an historian. His book on Baptist history^{f7} is not intended for students; at least, it is thrown into a popular mold, and will be more acceptable to general readers, to whom we most heartily recommend it. All Baptists should possess a copy, and even those of our readers who do not sympathize with our view of the ordinance of baptism, will probably be glad to know what the immersionists have to say about themselves. The time is past, we hope, when religious rancor forbids one body of believers to take an interest in another. The work is so pleasantly written, and so tastefully produced, that it would form an acceptable gift to our young men and maidens. It traces the history of

Baptists from the foundation of the Christian church, when he whose right it was to give the mandate commanded his disciples to baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to the close of the last century; adding a chapter — which to our minds is the least satisfactory part of the work — on the extension of the denomination and the peculiarities of the present period.

The primitive period is remarkable only — so far as the point in hand is concerned — for two things: viz., the absence during the first two hundred years of any reference in “The Fathers” to infant baptism; and the introduction, with other heresies, of baptismal regeneration and children’s baptism. Tertullian, at the in-coming of the third century openly declared that remission from sins, deliverance from death, regeneration and participation in the Holy Spirit, were spiritual blessings consequent upon baptism. The two things — the sacramental theory and the baptism of children (not infants) — probably came in at the same time; for we find Tertullian indignantly reproving those who had begun the practice of administering the ordinance to children, on the ground that they were not old enough to repent and believe. Chevalier Bunsen distinctly points out that “Tertullian’s opposition is to the baptism of young growing children: he does not say a word about newborn infants.” The same must be said of Origen. But the seeds of the evil had been sown. Children’s baptism was clearly originated by the sacramentarians, who considered that it was necessary to salvation. But *infant* baptism was instituted by a bishop of Northern Africa, in the middle of the third century, who confounded Christian baptism with circumcision — a blunder frequent enough nowadays. It must be remembered that the body of the infant was immersed, not sprinkled. Sprinkling sick persons confined to their beds was, however, a contemporaneous innovation.

We next enter upon *the transition period*, when the new system was quietly working its way. As Neander puts it, “among the Christians of the East, infant-baptism, though acknowledged in theory to be necessary, yet entered rarely and with much difficulty into the church-life during the first half of this period.” Novelty needed extraneous power to bolster it up, and infant-baptism was promulgated by men who accepted state aid, and who were backed by a royal command that all infants should be baptized. The church allied to the state, the tide of persecution inevitably set in. The state-church people were the “orthodox,” and as such were recognized; all others were heretics. A controversy sprang up with regard to those who

apostatized during the Decian persecution, but who on the return of tranquillity, sought re-admission into the churches. Novation held that apostacy was a sin which disqualified them from again entering into church fellowship, and to secure a pure community, he formed a separate church, which elected him for its pastor. These purer churches multiplied, and continued in existence for more than three centuries, the members being everywhere looked upon as Puritans and Dissenters. They were Anabaptists, baptizing again all who had been immersed by the orthodox and corrupt church. The Novations, then, were Baptists.

Then follows *the obscure period* — a period of mistiness, doubtfulness, and difficulty. What Dr. Cramp terms “*The Revival Period*,” which extended from A.D. 1073 to A.D. 1517, includes the Crusades, the martyrdom of Huss, and the invention of printing. Peter of Bruys, who suffered martyrdom in 1124, was a Baptist minister, who maintained that the church should be composed alone of believers, that all believers should be baptized, and that baptism was of no use unless connected with personal faith. Others followed him in the advocacy of the same principles, giving a great deal of trouble to the Baptists by their denunciations of ecclesiastical corruptions. “The terrible storm which fell upon Southern France in the crusade against the Albigenses, doubtless swept away many of the Baptist churches, and scattered their surviving members. Notwithstanding the vigilance of the persecutors, great numbers escaped. Italy, Germany, and the Eastern countries of Europe received them.” It is clear that “the Morning Star of the Reformation,” John Wycliffe, believed that faith was required by those who were baptized, and those who held that infants dying without baptism could not be saved, were regarded by him as “presumptuous and foolish.” It is also certain that many of the Lollards, perhaps the majority of them, strongly opposed infant baptism. They were persecuted for this by the Paedobaptists, for it was held to be a grievous departure from the truth to believe that infants could be saved if unbaptized. There has been considerable diversity of opinion among historians as to the Waldenses, and both by those who assert that they were Baptists and by those who maintain that they were not, it has been forgotten that they were not distinguished by any uniformity of belief. “If,” says Dr. Cramp, “the question relate to the Waldenses in the strict and modern sense of the term, that is, to the inhabitants of the valleys of Piedmont, there is reason to believe that, originally, the majority of them were Baptists, although there were varieties of opinion among them, as

well as among other seceders from the Romish church.” One of their earlier confessions, has this distinguishing belief, that it is proper and even necessary that *believers* should use the sacraments of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, but that believers may be saved without either. Immersion in any case was still the mode, and incontrovertible facts, which no one has ventured to dispute, go to prove that it was the universal practice.

Baptists were always equally prepared for conflict and for persecution. At the rise of the Reformation they openly declared themselves, coming out of their obscure positions, where they had long worshipped their Master in quiet, seclusion. They were prepared to enlist themselves under the banners of the Reformers. They looked upon the defiant daring men of God whom no ecclesiastical tyranny could tame, no Papal fulmination’s could awe, no threatenings could silence, as their brothers — bone of their bone, and flesh of their flesh. It is much to be regretted that they should have been so bitterly disappointed. The Reformers were not as yet sufficiently wide in their sympathies, nor sufficiently clear in their Protestantism, to extend the right hand of friendship, and loving communion to the despised Baptists. As now, so then, Baptists were a go-a-head race, always prepared to travel beyond others. They were persecuted, destroyed, forsaken, had their possessions confiscated, and were reduced to the lowest depths of poverty. In spite of the Reformers who were bemisted by Popery, they maintained that the church of Christ should be kept as pure as possible; that there must be no indiscriminate mixing of wheat and tares, as though both were so much akin that there was no difference between them; that believers only were the proper subjects of baptism; that Scripture and Scripture alone was the sole arbiter in all theological disputes; and that civil magistrates and earthly potentates had no control over God’s free girl; to man — conscience. We, as Baptists of the present day, have precisely the same principles to defend, and in demanding the disestablishment and disendowment of the Irish church, that embodiment of injustice and bulwark *against* the progress of Protestantism in the sister country, we do but propagate opinions and principles which were tenaciously held by the Anabaptists of Reformation days — principles which find their source and authority in Holy Writ.

No one disputes, that the conduct of the Baptists of this era was marked at times by folly. Yet it has been the habit too much to magnify their wrongdoings, and to stigmatize all for the acts of some. The Reformers themselves chose out of their vocabulary all the offensive epithets they

could, and flung them at their brethren — the Baptists. Latimer denounced them as “pernicious,” and their opinions as “devilish.” Hooper regarded them as “damnable;” while other and equally mild aspersions were made upon their zeal, their honesty, and even common decency. The Baptists declared their sympathy with Luther in throwing off the Pope’s authority, and carried out their principles to their legitimate conclusion, by proclaiming themselves free from Luther’s, or any other man’s, authority. Then came the Peasant’s War, in which Munzer joined, and for which he paid by the forfeiture of his life. Occasion was taken by his connection with the insurgents, to load all Baptists with obloquy and reproach. They were persecuted and hunted down, obliged to worship in woods, far removed from the hot fierce hand of their enemies. An historian of these times, Sebastian Franck, affirms that within a few years no fewer than ‘two thousand Baptists had testified their faith by imprisonment or martyrdom.’ Yet despite the odium cast upon them, and the laws of repression enforced against them, they continued to spread in Germany, in Italy, in Switzerland, Austria, and Bavaria. They were hunted like sheep and compelled to emigrate in large numbers to Moravia, and to the Netherlands, where they were not free from the oppressor’s yoke. The records of Baptist martyrology are very voluminous. Our readers should be acquainted with the doings and the sufferings of these brethren, who were singled out for unsparing manifestations of cruelty and vengeance. We recommend them carefully to read Dr. Cramp’s admirable condensation of their trials during this long and suffering period. One man, by name Jeronimus Segerson, who boldly declared that he would rather be tortured ten times every day, and then finally be roasted on a gridiron, than renounce the faith, was burned at Antwerp. His wife, Lysken, was drowned in a sack — a fitting death it was thought for a Baptist. The account given in the work entitled “*Baptist Martyrology*,” written in Dutch, is very affecting. “She very boldly,” we are told,” and undisguisedly confessed her faith at the tribunal, before the magistrates and the multitude. They first asked her concerning baptism. She said, ‘I acknowledge but one baptism, even that which was used by Christ and his disciples, and left to us.’ ‘What do you hold concerning infant baptism?’ asked the sheriff. To which Lysken answered, ‘Nothing but a mere infant’s baptism, and a human institution.’ On this the bench stood up, and consulted together, while Lysken, in the mean time, confessed, and explained clearly to the people the ground of her belief. They then pronounced sentence upon her. Lysken spoke in the following manner to the bench: ‘Ye are now judges; but the time will come when ye

will wish that ye had been keepers of sheep, for there is a Judge and Lord who is above all; he shall in his own time judge you. But we have not to wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, powers, and rulers of the darkness of this world.” “Two monks visited her in prison, but could not move her from her confidence. “On Saturday morning we rose early, some before day, some with the daylight, to see the nuptials which we thought would then be celebrated; but the crafty murderers outran us. We had slept too long, for they had finished their murderous work between .three and four o’clock. They had taken that sheep to the Scheldt, and had put her into a sack, and drowned her before the people arrived, so that few persons saw it. Some, however, saw it. She went courageously to death, and spoke bravely, ‘ Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.’ Thus she was delivered up, and it came to pass, to the honor of the Lord, that by the grace of God many were moved thereby.”

The history of English Baptists is full of interest. From the first they were peculiarly offensive to” the powers that be.” Henry the Eighth — who did so much for the Anglican Establishmentarians that he ought to be regarded by them as a pet saint, even as he was befooled and belarded by the intriguing Cranmer — when he assumed the headship of the Anglican church which never acknowledged Christ to be its only Head, proclaimed against two kinds of heretics, viz., those who disputed about baptism and the Lord’s Supper; and such as were re-baptized. These Anabaptists were commanded to withdraw from the country at once. Cranmer ordered some to be burnt, and burnt they were. Mr. Kenworthy, the present pastor of the Baptist church at Hill Cliffe, in Cheshire, has stated that if the traditions of the place are to be trusted, the church is five hundred years old. “A tombstone has been lately dug up in the burial ground belonging to that church, bearing date 1357. The origin of the church is assigned to the year 1523. It is evident that there were Baptist communities in this country in the reign of Edward VI., since Ridley, who was martyred in the following reign, had the following among his “Articles of Visitation:” “Whether any of the Anabaptists’ sect or other, use notoriously any unlawful or private conventicles, wherein they do use doctrines or administration of sacraments, separating themselves from the rest of the parish?” A fearful crime which many Anglicans of the present day would be as ready to punish were it not that other notions of religious liberty exist and powerfully influence public opinion. We can trace the same spirit, though in embryo perhaps, in the ritualistic prints of the present age, and indeed in

the two delightfully amiable Evangelical newspapers whose unbounded hatred of all outside the pale of their theology and clique is as relentless and unscrupulous as the bitterest feelings of Papal days. All history teaches that state-churchism means persecution, in one form or another, according to the sentiments of the age; and the only cure for the evil is to put all religions on an equality.

Elizabeth, like her father, found it needful for the peace and quiet of the Anglicans, to banish Baptists from her realm. This she did so effectually that Bishop Jewel congratulated his brethren, in 1560, in the following terms: — “We found at the beginning of the reign of Elizabeth a large and inauspicious corps of Arians, Anabaptists, and other pests, which I know not how, but as mushrooms spring up in the night and in darkness, so these sprang up in that darkness and unhappy night of the Marian times. These I am informed, and I hope it is the fact, have retreated before the light of purer doctrine, like owls at the sight of the sun, and are now nowhere to be found; or at least, if anywhere, they are no longer troublesome to our churches.” With all this system of repression and persecution, and notwithstanding the emigration of large numbers, many remained in the country, and soon made their appearance, as history attests, in what Dr. Cramp has denominated “the *troubulous period*,” which extended from A.D. 1567 to A.D. 1688 — from the days especially of James I. to the period when Benjamin Keach suffered in the pillory. For an interesting abstract of the history of our denomination during those times and during the quieter period which followed, with its peculiarities of controversy, and conscientious differences, we must refer our reader to the book which we have already warmly commended to their favor.

GEORGE MULLER’S REPORT FOR 1867-68.

WE bless God that his servant George Muller is led every year to publish a brief narrative of facts connected with the Lord’s providential dealings with his Orphan-houses and other enterprises. *We* feel refreshed and encouraged in our own work, and at the same time ashamed of our own little faith and slender attainments. Every believer ought to read this blessed sixpennyworth of experimental testimony to the living God. Our own modes of action are distinct from those of this revered man of God; it would be vain presumption to try to imitate him, *each* man must walk as he

feels led in the service of his Master. *For him* his plans are beyond all criticism, they are clearly of the Lord, and his Lord approves them by signs following. We too have endeavored, after our small ability, to follow the leadings of our Lord, and have had a most abundant *recompense*, and shall have in the future yet more. We cull a few extracts from the present, report to induce our readers to purchase it. Thus this good steward begins his story:—

“My soul does magnify the Lord for the help which he has so graciously been pleased to grant to me during another year! Difficulties, greater than ever I had them for the previous thirty-three years, have been overcome during the past year, by prayer and faith; work, which is increasing with every year more and more, has not been allowed to overwhelm me, and expenses greater than during any previous year, amounting altogether, from May 27, 1867, to May 26, 1868, to £41,310 16s. 8½d., have been met without my ever being unable to satisfy to the full *at once* all demands, though sometimes amounting to more than £3,000 at a time. We are now going on in the thirty-fifth year of this Institution, proving, day by day, that the living God of the Bible is still the living God. Elijah has long since been taken up into heaven, but the God of Elijah lives; and *all* who *truly* depend upon him will find him ever ready to help them.”

Among the donations acknowledged are notable cases such as these:—

“From Scotland, £22, with the following letter: ‘Dear Sir, enclosed is £20, which I send to you as a thank-offering, to the Lord, to be disposed of by you as you may deem most proper. Last year I sent you £10, this year I feel satisfied it is my duty to send)’ on £’20, being persuaded there is a withholding more than is meet, which tendeth to poverty,’ etc. July 24. From the neighborhood of Bath, £500, from a gentleman who had in May also sent me £500. I have never seen this kind donor, as is the case with perhaps 19 out of 20 of the donors; but the Lord spoke to him, thus to help me to accomplish this enlargement of the Orphan work. May 23. — All the glass, needed for the New Orphan Houses No. 4 and No. 5, was given gratuitously. The glass for No. 4 was kindly given by the senior partner of a large firm, and the glass for No. 5 by the same firm conjointly. The promise to do so had been given nearly two

years since: but now I learnt from the clerk of the works, that all the glass had been actually supplied. The greatness of the gift will be seen, by its being remembered that there are above 700 large windows in these two houses.

“June 3. Received to-day £51 5s., with the following letter: ‘My dear Sir, I enclose my cheque, value £51 5s., to be applied £20 for missions, £20 for the dear children under your care, and the balance for yourself, £11 5s. I send this in acknowledgment of God’s mercies, having had great losses in business, and feeling truly thankful that I am in a position to bear them, and still to carry on my business as usual, with the prayer that God may keep me humble at the toot of the cross of Christ,’ etc. One or the other of the readers of this report may derive benefit from this letter, Observe: **1.** The donor takes his losses out of the hand of God. So should all do, under similar circumstances. It is deeply important to his own hand in all that befalls us. **2.** He is grateful that not all is taken from him, as might have been the case. In this the donor should be imitated by all under similar circumstances. We are entirely dependent upon God, and therefore not only a part of what we have might be taken, but all. **3.** The writer of the letter brings his thank-offering to God. For what?: Not for a large increase of his means, but that the Lord has not taken all from him, and that, notwithstanding great losses, he is able to carry on his business as usual. Think of this, esteemed reader. In this many Christians in business fall When difficulties and losses come, instead of cleaving the more to God, and being the more grateful to him that they are even as well of/as they are, he is rather less remembered; and as to being the more faithful in the stewardship, while it is continued, the losses are only dwelt on, and nothing, or but exceedingly little, can now be afforded for the poor or the work of God. Well, and what is the result? The losses increase yet more and more. O that the saints would be wise, and learn! but they frequently act so as to oblige God, in very love to them, to take by thousands and tens of thousands that from them of which they were unwilling to give to him in tens or hundreds.

“March 21. To-day I received from Belgium £1 13s for Missions, with 14s. 6d. for the Orphans. ‘Of this amount, 18 francs 57 cents,’ the missionary who sends the money writes, ‘come from the

box of our brother the tinker. This box is in a dark corner of a very small shop, crowded with broken pots and pans, etc. When I broke the box this morning to take out the money (for it must be broken), this money was so covered with dust and damp that it needed to be washed; but it is not less precious on that account, for it comes from a heart which sincerely loves the Lord.”

Mr. Muller's daily dependence upon God, and the Lord's daily remembrance of his servant, are illustrated by his statement that he prays every day, and many times a day, for help in his benevolent work of feeding 1,299 children and building houses for more, making in all 2,050 orphans, and are set in dear relief by the details of the first five days of his financial year:—

We began the year on May 27, 1867, with £90 3s. 1 1/2d. in hand for these objects, which was indeed little for our requirements; but we called upon the Lord, and before this balance was expended, we received far more than the amount with which we began the year. On May 27, came in £2 5s. On May 28, altogether in ten donations, £9 8s. 5d, One of these ten donations was from a Christian shopkeeper, who sent 3s. 5d., being one penny in the pound of the sum which he had taken during the previous week. In like manner has this donor sent, week by week, about the same sum. One penny in the pound seems little, and yet, little as it appears, even this little, because it was systematically given, amounted in the end to about £8 during the year. I refer to this to show how important it is to give as the Lord prospers us, even though we are only able to give according to a very low rate. On May 29th we received from London £50, and £2 0s. 4d. besides. On May 30th, £11 14s. 6d. Of this amount £10 was sent by a Christian mercantile gentleman, who, month after month, during the whole *year*, sent £10, or £15, or £20, I suppose just as God was pleased to prosper him. On May 31st, from Kent, £100, and £5 14s. 10d. besides. And as it pleased God to supply our need during the first five days of the year, so did he also during the whole period, for the sake of our Lord Jesus, listen to our supplications, and give unto us continually the needed help.”

The new houses required £58,000 to build and furnish; and we rejoice to notice the following paragraph: —

“When the last year commenced on May 27, 1867, I needed yet about 326,000, to meet, as far as I could see, all the expenses connected with fitting up and furnishing the two new houses; but the Lord was pleased to give me, altogether for this object, £6,633 17s. 5 1/4d. during the year. I have, therefore, reason to believe, as far as at present the expenses can be calculated, that the amount required is in hand.

What hath God wrought? And this God is our God also. Therefore by faith we commit to him our far smaller work at the Stockwell Orphanage, at our College, and -in the Colportage, saying with *Abraham*, JEHOVAH-JIREH. Our work was not of our seeking, but was laid on our shoulder even as the cross was placed upon Simon: will not the Lord give us strength to carry it? Hitherto we have received great and memorable help, and usually in large sums; surely he who has done so much will not leave us. now! “Because thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice.”

ADVICE TO YOUNG PREACHERS.

TAKE *care not to fall into the habitual and common affectation of the present day.* Scarcely one man in a dozen in the pulpit talks like a man. This affectation is not confined to Protestants for the Abbe Mullois remarks, “Everywhere else, men speak: they speak at the bar and the tribune; but they no longer speak in the pulpit, for there we only meet with a factitious and artificial language, and a false tone. This style of speaking is only tolerated in the church, because, unfortunately, it is so general there; elsewhere it would not be endured. What would be thought of a man who should converse in a similar way in a drawing-room? He would certainly provoke many a smile. Some time ago there was a warder at the Pantheon — a good sort of fellow in his way — who, in enumerating the beauties of the monument, adopted precisely the tone of many of our preachers, and never failed thereby to excite the hilarity of the visitors, who were as much amused with his style of address as with the objects of interest which he pointed out to them. A man who has not a natural and true delivery, should not be allowed to occupy the pulpit; from thence, at least, everything that is false should be summarily banished. In these days of mistrust everything that is false should be set aside; and the best way of correcting one’s self in that

respect, as regards preaching, is frequently to listen to certain monotonous and vehement preachers. We shall come away in disgust, and with such a horror of their delivery, that we shall prefer condemning ourselves to silence rather than imitate them. The instant you abandon the natural and the true, you forego the right to be believed, as well as the right of being listened to." You may go all round, to church and chapel alike, and you will find that by far the larger majority of our preachers have a holy tone for Sundays. They have one voice for the parlor and the bed-room, and quite another tone for the pulpit; so that, if not double-tongued sinfully, they certainly are so literally. The moment some men shut the pulpit door, they leave their own personal manhood behind them, and become as official as the parish beadle. There they might almost boast with the Pharisee, that they are not as other men are, although it would be blasphemy to thank God for it. No longer are they carnal and speak as men, but a whine, a broken hum-haw, an *ore rotundo*, or some other graceless mode of noise-making, is adopted, to prevent all suspicion of being natural and speaking out of the abundance of the heart. When that gown is once on, how often does it prove to be the shroud of the man's true self, and the effeminate emblem of officialism! — *From a course of lectures by C. H. SPURGEON, now preparing for the press.*

Prayer is not a winter garment meant for trouble alone: it is then to be worn indeed, but not to be left off in the summer of prosperity. If you would find some at prayer, you must stay till it thunders and lightens, and not go to them except it be in a storm. These are like certain birds which are never heard to cry or make a noise, but in or against foul weather. This is not to pray always, not to serve God, but to serve ourselves. Reader, how about thy prayers? Are they selfish, and brought forth by fear, or do they spring from love to God?

TO THE PROTESTANT MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

A FABLE: THE RITUALIST PRIEST AND THE ASS

A RITUALIST PRIEST meeting an ass, thus accosted her — "How durst thou presume to wear 'the sign. of the holy rood, seeing that thou art an unbaptized and unregenerate ass?"

The meek-spirited beast replied — “ Brother! God placed the cross on my back but I know not who placed it on thine.”

Moral. — *Self-imposed* crosses occasion arrogance.

FREDERICK JAMES BROWN.

NO. 32. — From C. H. SPURGEON’S “Sword and Trowel,” published monthly, price 3d.; post free, 4d. Tracts, 6d. per 100; post free for 8 stamps. — Passmore and Alabaster, 18, Paternoster Row.

A FABLE FOR THE TIMES

FABLE

A CERTAIN MAN had long accustomed himself to eat out of the same trough with a beast, and being rebuked for such unclean feeding, he replied that he did not object to it, and that by long-established custom he had acquired a right to eat in that fashion, for his fathers had so fed before him for many generations. As there was no other way of curing him of his degrading habit, his friends began to remove the trough, whereat he struggled and raved like a madman, calling them robbers and villains, and many other bad names. Meanwhile the beast at the other end of the trough patiently submitted to lose its provender.

FACT.

State support of religion, by tithes and other forced payments, is the trough. ‘The Irish Church feeds out of the same trough with the Church which it is wont to call the Romish beast, only it stands at the fullest end of it. The beast only gets a few handfuls of Maynooth Grant, but the Irish clergy are fed with tithes to the full. We want to see Protestants act like men who have faith in God and their own doctrines, and then they will maintain their own religion voluntarily; but, alas! it seems as if nothing but force will get them away from the degradation of state pay. How true it is that slavery deprives many men of the desire to be free! Wait a little, and when the trough is broken altogether, perhaps the man will play the man. Let every true Protestant help to deliver the Irish Church from her present condition; and may God defend the right.

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SOUL PROSPERITY.

(NOTES OF A SERMON BY C.H. SPURGEON.)

"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." — 3 John 2.

WHAT a change the gospel made in John! He was one who could call fire front heaven on opposers, but now, having received the Holy Ghost, how full of love he is! He had been often with his Master, he had leaned on his bosom, and, like men who have lain in beds of spices, he had the perfume of delight upon him. I do not say that grace will work so visibly in all — for some retain their natural temperament, only it is turned in a new channel — but sometimes the change is remarkably evident: the morose become cheerful; the gay, serious; the revengeful, loving. John, having experienced a change, we see love in him at all times, he is the mirror of love. Whether he receives penitent Peter, or writes to the churches, all is love.

A man's private letters often let you into the secrets of his heart. Read Ratherford's letters, and you see the man at once; or those of Kirke White, or Newton. A man's writing desk should be used to make his biography. Here we have one of John's private letters to Gaius, and it is a letter just like him: it has the postmark of charity on it; it is scented with love. Note, he calls himself simply "the elder." Great men can afford to stoop. He uses no proud title: humility is ever the sweet companion of love. In this letter he wishes Gains every blessing, and commences with an earnest desire for his better health. Gains, it would seem, was ill; like many of the Lord's favorites, he was sickly in body. Some of God's choicest plants are kept earthed up by troubles, but, blessed be his name, it whitens them and prepares them for his use. John desired that his friend might recover; and we are allowed, with submission to the Lord's will, to pray for our own health and that of our friends.

Health is an invaluable mercy, and, like every other, never properly valued till it is lost. But we notice that John puts soul prosperity side by side with it. Man has two parts: the one corporeal and earthy, the other immaterial and spiritual. How foolish is the man who thinks of his body and forgets his soul; prizes the vessel and despises the treasure; repairs the house, but allows the tenant to languish; keeps the garment whole, but neglects the wearer.

First, we will *examine the words of our text more carefully*; secondly, *describe the symptoms of ill health of soul*; thirdly, *mention the means of recovery*; fourthly, a *practical exhortation*.

I. THE TEXT.

“*I wish*,” says John to his “beloved” brother. But the word wish is not strong enough to express the force of the original; the Greek word is generally interpreted, as the margin has it, “to *pray*.” Prayer is a wish sanctified. A wish is but a chariot: prayer yokes coursers to it. Good wishes are bullion: prayers are stamped money. Wishes are seeds] prayers are flowers. Let us plant our wishes in the garden of devotion, that they may blossom into fruit. “*Above all things*.” Not that John desired bodily health above all things for his friend, but the phrase means “in all respects.” Our wishes for temporal things should never get into the throne, but keep on the footstool. “*That thou mayest prosper*.” This is one mercy he prays for, namely, prosperity. We may ask it for our friends, and especially if, like Gaius, they spend their substance in promoting the interests of religion. Some seem to suppose that religion makes men haters of their kind — no such thing: I can most sincerely pray for you all that you may prosper, and have what you require of worldly goods. “*And be in health*.” This second mercy requires no remark, it is a necessary ingredient in the cup if we are to enjoy prosperity. But, my friends, I am startled at the closing thought. I am sure Gains was a wonderful man — very unlike some of you. Why, look again: can you believe it? John wishes to have his spiritual health made the standard of his natural prosperity. Suppose I were to kneel down in my pulpit and ask God to make your bodies, in point of health, just like your souls. Suppose he should grant the petition. Half of you would drop down *dead*, for you have no spiritual life at all; you are dead in sin: this chapel would be a charnel house of corruption and death. Then as for those of you who have spiritual life, I should be afraid to pray this prayer for you. Many of you would begin to shake with cold, and I am afraid some of you

would be in a decline, if not in a rapid consumption. Shall I pray the prayer? then some of you would become weak in the knee, your hands would be palsied, and your eyes dim. How many would have their hearts affected? and I fear none of us would be entirely free from sickness. Oh! bless God that the body is not the index of the soul. But, still, if the picture be horrible, if we cannot endure a lazar-house of sick bodies, what must an hospital of sick and dead souls be, if we could only see within! The spiritual anatomist ought, however, to look beneath the surface, and penetrate between the joints and marrow of the soul. May God help us to deal honestly with ourselves. And this brings us to —

II. SYMPTOMS OF ILL HEALTH. THESE ARE MANY: I SHALL BUT HAVE TIME TO MENTION THE MOST PROMINENT.

1. *Lukewarmness.* This is mentioned by our Lord to Laodicea as a very dangerous symptom. A man lukewarm in business or politics will make but little way, but a man lukewarm in religion is worst of all. Do we not see this often the case? The place may be full or empty, what cares this man? Sinners may be converted or not, he does not mind, or, at any rate, he never bestirs himself to win souls himself. His prayers at the prayer meeting, if he ever comes, are cold as marble; his words seemed to have been packed in ice. His neighbors he cares no more about than Cain, who said, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” Or perhaps he is a man of a little better stamp — he does give, he likes to see the cause go on; but still he is not heart and soul in it. As for the truth, he does not *care* whether his minister be heterodox or orthodox; he does not trouble himself much; he is cold; he leaves his heart in his shop, puts his soul in his cash box, and brings us the empty chrysalis of what ought to have been a heart. This is bad. If the man be a true son of God, he will be healed before death overtake him, but be careful — it may be he is a mere professor.

2. *A narrow mind.* This is far from uncommon. While some run into one extreme, and think no one doctrine truer than another, and are latitudinarians, others run to the other pole, and call all men reprobates but their own little selves and the sect they belong to. Be sure that if you do not love the brethren something is out of order: If you kill all who cannot say Shibboleth, you will have to put many of the Lord’s little ones to death. I love baptism and the doctrines of grace, but I do not wish to look with a frown on all who differ from me. Cheerer talks of putting his things into a spring box, and then putting the key inside and shutting it. So some men

try to put all truth, and the *key* too, into their own heads; but if you have a chest as large as St. Paul's, you will not know how to put all truth in it. Love the brethren, love ALL the brethren, but if not, be sure all is not quite healthy within.

3. *A bad appetite* — *by* which I mean a want of desire after the word. Some say: "I cannot hear;" they go elsewhere while the place is crowded; they hear a little while, but soon the rolling stone has another turn, and they cannot hear again, while some good souls think it marrow and fatness. Let the minister utter one opinion they cannot agree with, they could not enjoy the sermon. Ah, you require some bark from the tree of affliction, or a draught of Jeremiah's wormwood! You think it wisdom, but it is a disease — you are out of order.

4. *A forsaken closet*. This is the cause as well as the chief symptom of all ills to the soul. Oh! if the beam out of the wall testify against thee; if the moldy air tells that thou hast seldom opened the door; if few angels ascend the ladder to heaven — then thou art sick indeed. Boast not of thine activity and zeal, I tell thee thou art sick if thy closet be unvisited. O critic, turn thine eye on thyself! thou hast often dragged the church like a bull to the altar, and driven thy knife into her flesh: stay thy fury; turn it on thyself. Thou lovest to lash Christendom as if she were a colossal culprit, and thou rendest off thongfull after thongfull of her quivering flesh; now; spare her notes till thou hast purged thine own beams: let thy reformations begin at home, and that thou mayst be recovered, hear the

III. MEANS OF RECOVERY.

I speak not now of the means God uses, though he is the great Physician. I know he cuts away the suckers, and prunes the superfluous branches from the trees of his garden, but I speak of a regimen we may use ourselves, May the Lord help you to practice it.

1. *Seek good food*. Hear a gospel preacher and search the Bible. Many diseases arise from insufficient or unwholesome food. Live on the finest of the wheat; eat ye that which is good.

2. *Breathe freely*. Let not prayer be restrained. Inhale the air of heaven by fervent supplication, and breathe it out again in grateful songs. Open the closet of prayer; climb up to the throne and live.

3. *Exercise thyself unto godliness. labor for God.* Fold not thine hands in apathy, but be up and doing while it is called to-day. This will circulate thy blood and warm thee if cold.

4. If these things fail, I will give you a good old prescription, and as it must be in Latin it shall be "*carnis et sanguinis Christi,*" taken several times a day in a draught of the tears of repentance. Those who have tried this declare that it cannot fail: it is health to the spirit and marrow to the bones. God the Holy Ghost helping you to practice the rules of the heavenly Physician, you will soon become fat and flourishing in the courts of the Lord. Turn to the old book called the Bible, and see what is the path of rectitude, for be sure that is the way of safety.

IV. I WOULD CONCLUDE, IF THE LORD ENABLE ME, WITH AN EXHORTATION.

O my *brother Christian*, is it a small matter to be weak and feeble? Amid all thy contests thou wilt need all the vigor thou canst gain. Wilt thou let thy heart be untended, thine infirmities unregarded? Surely no. Wilt thou not go to Calvary with weeping, and cry to him who giveth more grace?

And now, *sinner*, a word with thee. I also am a man as thou art; suffer me to address thee lovingly. Thou art dead — I insult thee not — thou art dead in sin, and thou knowest it not; but the dead are ever senseless. Thou art dead, and dost thou think there will be corpses in heaven? In Egypt we are told they sometimes sat a skeleton at a feast, to remind the guests of death; but. there shall be none such in heaven. It is the land of life. Thou canst not enter there: thou wilt be cast out as worthless carrion, to be fed on by the worm that never dies. Yet hear me. There is life in Christ: there is balm in Gilead. May God help thee now to seek it of him who gives freely to all applicants. Help, O Lord.

THE COLPORTAGE ASSOCIATION.

ALMOST forcibly pressed into the service by one of our most earnest and generous friends, we some time ago set on foot a Colportage Association, which, from want of funds, is still a small affair, but deserves to become a wide-spread agency. The gentlemen Who hare managed the society for us are striving with all their might to extend its bounds. The longer the agency is employed, the more clearly we see the need for it, and the economy with

which it may be worked; hence we feel growingly that this form of evangelizing ought not to languish, but to be pushed on with vigor. Laborers are not lacking, but the great need is for friends who would give guarantees of £30, so that a man could be sent to their district. Where this cannot be done by friends in a district, smaller donations will aid the work. The engraving will bring the worker in this form of service the more vividly before the reader's eye, and perhaps suggest a prayer for the success of the enterprise. With these few words we ask an attentive reading for the first report, of the Colportage Association.

Our Colportage movement was originated by a member of the church at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, who had become acquainted with the great success of the Religious Tract and Book Society of Scotland, which from a small beginning has in ten years so much increased that it now employs in Scotland and the North of England about 160 Colporteurs. Our friend was willing to contribute freely towards the support of a similar agency in the south of England, and requested Mr. Spurgeon to organize an Association for the purpose of spreading good wholesome literature, and, as far as possible, counteracting the influence of the pernicious trash so prevalent on every hand, and so injurious to the moral and spiritual condition of our countrymen. Mr. Spurgeon, recognizing the importance of such a work, notwithstanding his existing heavy responsibilities, at once sought the cooperation of brethren who would be ready to undertake the management of a society; and they, having formed themselves into a committee, held their first meeting on September 4th, 1866, and proceeded to obtain all possible information relative to the nature and requirements of the work.

After carefully arranging their plans (in which they were materially assisted by the Scotch Society), the first agent was appointed, and commenced his labors in the East of London, on 1st November 1866. In the district there has been so much poverty that the people, in many cases longing to purchase of the Colporteur, have been unable to do so, being in want of the commonest necessaries of life. Notwithstanding this, there have been circulated monthly (besides Bibles and other good books), about 500 periodicals all of a sound moral, and most of them of a religious character. This being the case, the committee have been loath to remove their agent, although his sales have contributed little towards his support, as they cannot but believe that his efforts must result in a great blessing to the people, many of whom, there is much reason to fear, would never have sought this class of literature for themselves. The total sales amount to

100pounds 5s. 5d. for the fourteen months, and the cost of the agency, after allowing for profit, on sale, was 57pounds 12s. 6d.

On the 1st December, 1866, and 1st January, 1867, agents were started in Cambridgeshire and East Kent, and their experience goes to show that while the rural districts are most in need of our help, they at the same time afford the best prospect of success; at least, in a pecuniary point of view. In Cambridgeshire the total amount of sales during thirteen months was 149 14s. 7d., and the cost to the society 34 15s. 6d., and in East Kent the sales for twelve months amounted to 189 2s. 5d., and the cost to the agency was 27 18s. 7d. It will be observed that the maintenance of these agents has been met, to a large extent, by profits on their sales. These two localities have afforded the greatest encouragement to the committee, and the success which has resulted proves that with zealous indefatigable men as Colporteurs, away may be found into the homes and hearts of those who are too often destitute of spiritual advantages, whose knowledge of the present life is confined to hard work and harder living, and whose sense of duty to God and man is fulfilled, they think, by a respectful bow or courtesy to the squire and the parson.

On the 1st February, 1867, three Colporteurs commenced to work in Wilts, Leicestershire, and Oxford respectively. The two first have been continued, not so successfully as those last alluded to, but there is reason to believe that much good has been done. In Wilts the villages are at considerable distances from each other, and the time taken in traversing the country doubtless accounts for smallness of sales, the total amount of which for eleven months was 78 4s. 2d., and the cost of agency 37 10s. 7d.; 20 of this amount has been contributed by friends in the neighborhood, through Mr. Toore, of Warminster, to whom the committee are much indebted for hearty sympathy and cooperation. In Leicester the sales have not been satisfactory, having amounted to only 68 17s. 3d., and the cost of the agency was 43 17s. The work was discontinued in Oxford after a five months' trial, but the indirect results of it remain to this day, and will continue, we trust for many years to come.

On 1st June another agent was appointed in Manchester, his sales for the seven months have amounted to 51 2s. 9d., and the agency has cost 25 6s. 7d. In making this appointment the committee acted upon information that there was a good field for their operations in Manchester, but their opinion, based upon the result of their first year's experience, is that the efforts of

the society should in future be directed chiefly to the villages and hamlets, and not to the cities and large towns.

The aggregate results of our business operations are as follows: 114,193 house-to-house visits have been paid; the agents have sold 1,670 Bibles, 1,806 Testaments, 657 portions of Scripture, 6,117 Mr. Spurgeon's Sermons, 1,326 "Pilgrim's Progress," 696 "Sword and Trowel," 1,613 Religions Tract Society's works, 2,504 copies of the "British Workman," and 6,125 Children's Magazines, which, with other books and periodicals, make a total of 39,270 publications. This has been done at a gross outlay of 507 9s. 1d., and the receipts have been — By profits on sales, 190 2s. 0d.; by subscriptions and donations, 335 17s. 0d.

The Committee rejoice that, while their ostensible purpose has been to sell good books, they have, at the same time, been privileged to send out men of n missionary spirit, ever eager to point the sinner to the only source of salvation and eternal life; and several instances have been brought to notice in which the word spoken has brought forth fruit to God's glory.

The following extracts from the agents' journals will speak for themselves. An agent from the North of Scotland commences his journal thus: —

"I left Portsay (Scotland) for London, and arrived 17th December. I was so sick on board the steamboat I was only able to distribute a few tracts; hand a book to a man. and tell a soldier that he had a soul to be ' saved' or lost. While in London, I distributed six hundred and fifty tracts, and attended the Tabernacle services.

"Sometimes there are many discouragements, and I feel that it needs the grace of God to uphold one in such a work as this.

"To-day I know what it is to be hopeful and cast down. Another anxious soul I found thirsting for the-water of life. O that I was always in a right frame of mind to deal with such.

"I had thirteen hours' hard work to-day, besides indoor work. After getting my calls through, I felt completely tired. The appearances of a spiritual harvest more than makes up. for my tiredness.

"Today I went to E.— , and enjoyed the Lord's presence all day. At night, I addressed a large cottage meeting.

“*To-day* I am ready to ascribe glory, praise, and honor to our God for his blessing on the work until now; this month far better than I had expected have been my sales and engagements.”

As to the need for such men let the following extracts speak: —

“A family of eight persons without a Bible for two years — gave them one, then almost next door an old man said, ‘It’s no use ‘to talk to me, I don’t understand anything about it.’ In answer to my question, ‘Are you converted?’ he said, ‘I have never been converted to the chapel.’ I then explained to him that he was a sinner, and must perish without Christ; when he said, ‘I never heard that before!’

“The clergyman is a Romanist out-and-out, and so ,’we some of his flock.

“The clergyman is quite indifferent to his flock.

“Light reading very common.”

With regard to the reception of agents they say: —

“The people gave a hearty welcome.

“The day,. has been wet and rather discouraging; again I am cheered by the welcome given me on my rounds.

“One man accused me of insulting him because I left the tract, ‘Young man, who is the foot?’ at his house, and threatens violence if I call again. Another says that my tracts are *the* thing, and he learns more from them than by going to his church for twelve months.

“The clergyman is not favorable.

“At L— I had an interview with the clergyman, who is much offended with my visits.

“I called at a house, and it happened to be the clergyman’s; he purchased a Bible and several texts.

“I sold a few books to a drunken squire.

“I called on the squire again, and he bought a few more books.

“The squire had another deal.

“Here is an old man paralyzed, so that he cannot speak; prayed with him — whilst doing so the old man and his wife sobbed aloud; never shall I forget it. When I rose from my knees to wish him ‘Good-bye,’ the old man took my hand and squeezed it with his own, so that it was with difficulty I got him to let me go. He could not speak, but the woman said ‘Come again, no one comes to talk to us.’”

“In my rounds I find the people much more willing to converse than when I first went amount them, they then seemed suspicious of me; but now I find them very different; but this winter they have been very poor, so that I could not sell many books among them. My great desire is to do all the good here for my Savior. seeing there is a great deal to do. and little time to do it in.”

The spiritual results are thus spoken of by the different agents: —

“In my rounds, I met a young man who was ill with consumption; I read to him the fifty-third Psalm, and pointed him to Jesus as the friend of sinners. I thought he was very indifferent about his soul, very anxious to get better. I tried to show him that to get ready to die was in reality getting ready ‘to live; for if we put our souls into the hands of Jesus, we have peace, and then the medicine has every chance of benefiting the body; therefore, both body and soul were safe in the hands of Christ. He kindly asked me to come again. I continued to visit him until he died; every time I visited him, he wished my visits to be more frequent, and often said he would sooner that I should come to talk to him than anybody else. His end was peace, trusting in Jesus.

“All through last summer on Sunday afternoons, and Wednesday evenings, I had the pleasure, in conjunction with two or three young men, to hold an open-air service at the corner of the police station, on a piece of ground which is always at our disposal just opposite the rector’s house. He very cordially wishes me good success, and if sinners are saved, he cares not whether they are Baptists or church people, if they but love the Savior — that is the principal thing with him. The result of my services there is that I have sold several Bibles to policemen, who would not otherwise have bought them.”

The committee think that, upon the whole, there is much cause to thank God and take courage. The first period has been necessarily one of much anxiety, as the work was commenced without any practical acquaintance

with its nature; and all the Colporteurs have had to break up fresh ground, to familiarize themselves with the people, and to overcome the jealousies of some who have regarded them as intruders. This having been to a very great extent accomplished, the way has been cleared for future action, and with God's blessing, and the largely increased support of his people, the committee hope that a grand and noble future is in store for the Society.

Various plans have from time to time been suggested, with a view to augment our funds, so that more laborers may be sent into the vineyard. An officer of the church has recently offered ten shillings a year, per man, for any number not exceeding twenty, and suggests this plan to the committee as a practical and efficient means of promoting the interests of the Society. The committee commend the work as one worthy of the sympathy, prayers, and cooperation of all who are anxious for the extension of the Master's kingdom, and they trust that such material aid will be speedily forthcoming, as will enable them to multiply the number of their agents, until they shall be found in every part of our land.

ROUGH WORDS FOR GREAT EVILS.

WE fear that our two pictures of last month greatly shocked a few of our good reader's whose souls are tender of the Establishment; but we do not in any degree apologize to them because the shock, like that of a cold bath early in the morning, will do them good, and strengthen their constitutions. We can assure them that they cannot be one-half' so much shocked by our ridicule of error as we are by the error itself'. We do not make the evil, we only expose it; and if' we use words and symbols which strike and stick, and' even offend, we believe that they are necessary, and ought to be used far more frequently. We are not going to handle the abominations of the present American establishment with kid gloves; and if' we judge sarcasm and ridicule to be deserved, we shall give the Lord's enemies their full quota of scorn. We have lately met with a Hudibrastic tractate, written by a Fen countryman, which has the right ring about it, and in order that our good friends may have another healthy shock, we have culled a few lines from it, descriptive of Anglican baptismal regeneration and confirmation, The author is dealing with Mother Church, and says: —

“She takes an infant in her arms,
Mutters her cabalistic charms,

Sprinkles some water on its face,
 Hight presto! 'tis a child of grace;
 Regenerated from that hour —
 Needing no other saving power —
 Made by the parson's magic rod,
 An heir of heaven and child of God!
 Oh, what a very wondrous man
 The priest must be indeed, who can
 Accomplish in so shot; a space
 The highest act of Sovereign Grace!
 And on such cheap and easy refills,
 Confer that gift on mortal worms,
 Which (in some simple people's view).
 No one but God himself can do.
 What wonder that he feels so proud,
 And claims such homage from the crowd;
 Assumes such consequential airs,
 And something "more than mortal stares"?.
 While the poor sponsors standing by
 Pronounce the customary lie,
 Repeated o'er and o'er for years,
 Till all its grossness disappears,
 As if a falsehood was no crime
 When told the hundredth thousandth time;
 Or that the sternest, strongest *vows*,
 The language of the land allows,
 Made to our Maker and our Judge,
 Were all mere moonshine, flash, and fudge.
 Their sanctions of as little away
 As old wives' chat, or children a play;
 Their sanctity a Cheap Jack's joke,
 Just "made like pie-crust to be broke;"
 Though promising to God and man.
 What mortal never did, or can;
 With neither strength nor wish, nor will,
 Their stern engagements to fulfill
 As reckless oft of right and wrong
 As it they hummed a come song;
 While, if not blasphemy, their sin
 Is something very near akin
 A fact, which matters not a straw.
 While countenanced by Prayer-book law;

The outrage is no consequence
 On Scripture truth, or common sense.
 Nor ought the parson to be freed;
 As an accomplice in the deed.
 Tis right that those who set the snare,
 The culprit's punishment should share;
 And God will surely in this way.
 Deal with the case some future day;
 Though his long-suffering patience still
 Spares those who thus transgress his will
 And when that Child in after years
 Before his Catechism appears,
 The simple, unsuspecting youth
 Is taught t' insult the God of truth;
 When to the question, "cut and dried,"
 The lying answer *is* supplied,
 Bearing upon its front, the sin
 Of falsehood "burnt and branded in"
 Combining in its impious claims
 The highest and the holiest names;
 Forging the work of the Most High,
 To countenance the daring lie,
 Which rises at a single stretch
 As high as finite sin can reach;
 Ascending to the throne of God
 Through paths by common sins untrod —
 Like Titans, in their fury driven,
 It scales the battlements of heaven,
 By mountains, in confusion wild,
 Of falsehood upon falsehood piled;
 Asserting things already done
 Which never yet have been begun,
 And surely never will unless
 A greater power than priests possess;
 Does for the glory of his name
 What they so arrogantly claim.
 Next comes the confirmation day,
 With one more wicked farce to play
 For which good Mother Church prepares.
 To show her most imposing airs,
 Decked out in all her best array
 To celebrate the gala day.

Her proudest trappings — alter all
 Picked up on some old Pagan stall,
 On which both Jew and Gentile bags
 Have poured their second-handed rags —
 Brought out to dramatize again,
 The ancient scenes of Dura's plain;
 While organs peal, and bells ring out,
 And white-smocked urchins scream and shout;
 And parsons gather “smart and slick”
 As “leaves in Vallombrosa thick,”
 From rectors in their plumpest trim,
 To leanest curates, spare and slim.
 Which altogether form a band
 Just as contemptible as grand,
 When 'tis considered how much brass
 And lead are molten in the mass;
 Which makes the little gold, in fact,
 Scarce worth the trouble to extract;
 Or to remunerate their toil
 Who pale the “precious from the vile.”

All joint performers in the play
 When Mother Church gets up to-day.
 When sponsors are to have their backs
 Eased of their self-inflicted packs;
 From those engagements set at large
 They ne'er attempted to discharge,
 Which those on whose account they “stood
 Have made as heavy as they could.
 Who now are told that they with zeal
 Must put their “*shoulder* to the wheel;”
 Avoid all Satan's sinful snares,
 And come to church and say their prayers,
 Since all those sins which heretofore
 Were placed at their, God-parents' door,
 Stand henceforth to their own account.
 However awful the amount.
 Advice which they will doubtless rate
 At its own proper estimate
 And now with all the pomp dud show
 That pride and priest craft can bestow,
 Forth comes the bishop to review

His regiment ranked in order due,
 Who at the signal of command
 Are taught to bow, to kneel, or stand,
 To catch what grace, by rule of art,
 Prelatic fingers can impart;
 Which, if results are any test,
 Is a small modicum at best.
 The blind, unconscious dupes and tools
 Of blinder dupes, and. guiltier fools;
 Some mere uncultivated dolts;
 Some wilder than wild asses' colts;
 Some as fit fuel for the fire,
 As Satan can himself desire:
 Though young in yearn. mature in sin;
 Steeped in transgression to the church,
 All which, compounded in the lump,
 Are held at one conclusive jump.
 Without inquiry or research,
 True genuine chickens of the church —
 Whom how their careful parent brings
 Beneath her fond maternal wings,
 And strews a feast of poisonous food
 Before her thankless, careless brood.
 When haunt led the graceless blades —
 Through all probationary grades,
 Relieved the sponsors of their vows,
 As far as Prayer-book law allows —
 A yoke, it must be owned, whose touch
 Has never oiled their shoulders much —
 And thanking God for having done
 A work that never was beau.
 And blandly complimented heaven
 For having all their sins forgiven.

The church her finished sons invites
 To join and share her holier rites —
 Howe'er "unworthy," or unfit,
 Of course it matters not a bit —
 So they but at her "altar" meet
 And make the mockery complete;
 Their own "damnation" to secure,
 And make perdition doubly sure.

So ends the confirmation day,
An empty show and vain display,
Which every truth taught Christian must
Contemplate with confirmed disgust.

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL

NOVEMBER, 1868.

THE CHRISTIAN MINISTER'S PRIVATE PRAYER.

ONE OF A COURSE OF LECTURES TO STUDENTS AND
YOUNG PASTORS.

BY C. H SPURGEON.

OF course the preacher is above all others distinguished as a man of prayer. He prays as an ordinary Christian, else he were a hypocrite. He prays more than ordinary Christians, else he were disqualified for the office which he has under- taken. "It would be wholly monstrous," says Bernard, "for a man to be highest in office and lowest in soul; first in station and last in life." Over all his other relationships the pre-eminence of the pastor's responsibility casts a halo, and if true to his Master, he becomes distinguished for his prayerfulness in them all. As a citizen, his country has the advantage of his intercession; as a neighbor, those under his shadow are remembered in supplication. He prays as a husband and as a father; he strives to make his family devotions a model for his flock; and if the fire on the altar of God should burn low anywhere else, it is well tended in the house of the Lord's chosen servant — for he takes care that the morning and evening sacrifice shall sanctify his dwelling. But there are some of his prayers which concern his office, and of those our plan in these lectures leads us to speak most. He offers peculiar supplications *as a minister*, and he draws near to God in this respect, over and above all his approaches in his other relationships.

I take it that as a minister *he is always praying*. Whenever his mind turns to his work, whether he is in it or out of it, he ejaculates a petition, sending up his holy desires as well-directed arrows to the skies. He is not always in the act of prayer, but he lives in the spirit of it. If his heart be in his work, he cannot eat or drink, or take recreation, or go to his bed, or rise in the morning, without evermore feeling a fervency of desire, a weight of

anxiety, and a simplicity of dependence upon God; thus, in one form or other he continues in prayer. If there be any man under heaven, who is compelled to carry out the precept — “Pray without ceasing,” surely it is the Christian minister. He has peculiar temptations, special trials, singular difficulties, and remarkable duties, he has to deal with God in awful relationships, and with men in mysterious interests; he therefore needs much more grace than common men, and as he knows this, he is led constantly to cry to the strong for strength, and say, “I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.” Alleine once wrote to a dear friend, “Though I am apt to be unsettled and quickly set off the hinges, yet, methinks, I am like a bird out of the nest, I am never quiet till I am in ray old way of communion with God; like the needle in the compass, that is restless till it be turned towards the pole. I can say, through grace with the church, ‘With my soul have I desired thee in the night, and with my spirit within me have I sought thee early.’ My heart is early and late with God; ‘tis the business and delight of my jire to seek him.” Such must be the even tenor of your way, O men of God. If you as ministers are not very prayerful, you are much to be pitied. If, in the future, you shall be called to sustain pastorates, large or small, if you become lax in secret devotion, not only will *you* need to be pitied, but your people also; and, in addition to that, you shall be blamed, and the day cometh in which you shall be ashamed and confounded.

It may scarcely be needful to commend to you the sweet uses of private devotion, and yet I cannot forbear. 2^o you, as the ambassadors of God, the mercy-seat has a virtue beyond all estimate; the more familiar you are with the court of heaven the better shall you discharge your heavenly trust. Among all the formative influences which go to make up a man honored of God in the ministry, I know of none more mighty than his own familiarity with the mercy-seat. All that a college course can do for a student is coarse and external compared with the spiritual and delicate refinement obtained *by* communion with God. While the unformed minister is revolving upon the wheel of preparation, prayer is the tool of the great potter by which he molds the vessel. All our libraries and studies are mere emptiness compared with our closets. We grow, we wax mighty, we prevail in private prayer. That we may be strong to labor, tender to sympathize, and wise to direct, let us pray. If study makes men of us, prayer will make saints of us. Our sacred furniture for our holy office can only be found in the arsenal of

supplication; and after we have entered upon our consecrated warfare, prayer alone can keep our armor bright.

Among other most notable uses of supplication, your prayers will be your tender assistants *while your discourses are yet upon the anvil*. While other men, like Esau, are hunting for their portion, you by the aid of prayer, will find the savory meat *near* at home, and may say in truth what Jacob said so falsely, "The Lord brought it to me." If you can dip your pens into your hearts, appealing in earnestness to the Lord, you will write well; and if you can gather your matter on your knees at the gate of heaven, you will not fail to speak well. Prayer, as a mental exercise, will bring many subjects before the mind, and so help in the selection of a topic; white as a high spiritual engagement; it will cleanse your inner eye that you may see truth in the light of God. Texts will often refuse to reveal their treasures till you open them with the key of prayer. How wonderfully were the books opened to Daniel when he was in supplication'. How much Peter learned upon the housetop! The closet is the best study. The commentators are good instructors, but the author himself is far better, and prayer makes a direct appeal to him and enlists him in our cause. It is a great thing to pray one's self into the spirit and marrow of a text; working into it by sacred feeding thereon, even as the woven bores its way into the kernel of the nut.

Prayer supplies a leverage for the uplifting of ponderous truths. One marvels how the stones of Stonehenge could have been set in their places; it is even more to be inquired after whence some men obtained such admirable knowledge of mysterious doctrines: was not prayer the potent machinery which wrought the wonder? Waiting upon God often rufus darkness into light. Persevering inquiry at the sacred oracle uplifts the veil and gives grace to look into the deep things of God. A certain Puritan divine at a debate was observed frequently to write upon the paper before him; upon others curiously seeking to read his notes, they found nothing upon the page but the words, "More light, Lord," "More light, Lord," repeated scores of times: a most suitable prayer for the student of the Word when preparing his discourse.

You will frequently find fresh streams of thought; leaping up from the passage before you, as if the rock had been struck by Moses' rod; new reins of precious ore will be revealed to your astonished gaze as you quarry God's Word, and use diligently the hammer of prayer. You will sometimes feel as if you were entirely shut up, and then suddenly a new road will open

before you. He who hath the key of David openeth, and no man shutteth. If you have ever sailed down the Rhine, the water-scenery of that majestic river will have struck you as being- very like in effect to a series of lakes. Before and behind, the vessel appears to be enclosed in massive walls of rock, or circles of vine-clad terraces, till on a sudden you turn a corner, and before you the rejoicing and abounding river flows onward in its strength. So the laborious student often finds it with a text; it appears to be fast closed against you, but prayer propels your vessel, and turns its prow into fresh waters, and you behold the broad and deep stream of sacred truth flowing in its fullness, and you feel that it is bearing you with it. Is not this a convincing reason for abiding in supplication? Use prayer as a boring rod, and wells of living water will leap up from the bowels of the Word. Who will be content to thirst when living waters are so readily to be obtained?

The best; and holiest men have ever made prayer the most important; part of pulpit preparation. It is said of M'Cheyne, ^{f8} "Anxious to give his people on the Sabbath what had cost him somewhat, he never, without an urgent reason, went before them without; much previous meditation and prayer. His principle on this subject was embodied in a remark he made to some of us who were conversing on the matter. Being asked his view of diligent preparation for the pulpit, he reminded us of Exodus 27:20: '*Beaten oil — healed oil for the lamps of the sane-using/.*' and yet his prayerfulness was greater still. Indeed, he could not neglect fellowship with God before entering the congregation. He needed to be bathed in the love of God. His ministry was so much a bringing out of views that had first sanctified his own soul, that the healthiness of his soul was absolutely needful to the vigor and power of his ministrations." "With him the commencement of all labor invariably consisted in the preparation of his own soul. The walls of his chamber were witnesses of his prayerfulness and of his tears, as well as of his cries."

Prayer will singularly assist you in the delivery of your sermon; in fact, nothing can so gloriously fit you to preach as descending fresh from the mount of communion with God to speak with men. None are so able to plead with men as those who have been wrestling with God on their behalf. It is said of Alleine, "He poured out his very heart in prayer and preaching, His supplications and his exhortations were so affectionate, so full of holy zeal, life and vigor, that they quite overcame his hearers; he melted over them, so that he thawed and mollified, and sometimes dissolved the hardest hearts." There could have been none of this sacred dissolving of heart if his

mind had not been previously exposed to the tropical rays of the Sun of Righteousness by private fellowship with the risen Lord. A truly pathetic delivery, in which there is no affectation, but much affection, can only be the offspring of prayer. There is no rhetoric like that of the heart, and no school for learning it like the foot of the cross. It were better that you never learned a rule of human oratory, but were fall of the power of heavenborn love, than that you should master Quintilian, Cicero, and Aristotle, and remain without the apostolic anointing.

Prayer may not make you eloquent after the human mode, but it will make you truly so, for you will speak out of the heart; and is not that the meaning of the word eloquence? It will bring fire from heaven upon your sacrifice, and thus prove it to be accepted of the Lord.

As fresh springs of thought will frequently break up during preparation in answer to prayer, so will it be in the delivery of the sermon. Most preachers who depend upon God's Spirit will tell you that their freshest and best thoughts are not those which are premeditated, but ideas which come to them, flying as on the wings of angels; unexpected treasures brought on a sudden by celestial hands, seeds of the flowers of paradise wafted from the mountains of myrrh. Often and often when I have felt hampered both in thought and expression, my secret groaning of heart has brought me relief, and I have enjoyed more than usual liberty. But how dare we pray in the battle if we never cried to the Lord while buckling on the harness. The remembrance of his wrestlings at home comforts the fettered preacher when in the pulpit: God will not desert us unless we have deserted him. You, brethren, will find that prayer before preaching will ensure you strength equal to your day.

As the tongues of fire came upon the apostles, when they sat watching and praying, even so will they come upon you. You will find yourselves, when you might perhaps have flagged, suddenly upborne, as by a seraph's power. Wheels of fire will be fastened to your chariot, which had begun to drag right heavily, and steeds angelic will be in a moment harnessed to your fiery ear, till you climb the heavens like Elijah, in a rapture of flaming inspiration.

After the sermon, how would a conscientious preacher give vent to his feelings, and find solace for his soul, if access to the mercy-seat were denied him? Elevated to the highest pitch of excitement, how can we relieve our souls but in importunate pleadings. Or depressed by a fear of

failure, how shall we be comforted but in moaning out our complaint before our God? How often have some of us tossed to and fro upon our couch half the night because of conscious shortcomings in our testimony! How frequently have we longed to rush back to the pulpit again to say over again more vehemently, what we have uttered in so cold a manner! Where could we find rest for our spirits but in confession of sin, and passionate entreaty that our infirmity or folly might in no way hinder the Spirit of God! It is not possible in a public assembly to pour out all our heart's love to our flock. Like Joseph, the affectionate minister will seek where to weep; his emotions, however freely he may express himself, will be pent up in the pulpit, and only in private prayer can he draw up the sluices and bid them flow forth. If we cannot prevail with men for God, we will, at least, endeavor to prevail with God for men. We cannot save;hem, or even persuade them to be saved, but we can at least bewail their madness and entreat the interference of the Lord. Like Jeremiah, we can make it our resolve, "If ye will not hear, it, my soul shall weep in secret places for your pride, and mine eyes shall weep sore and run down with tears." To such pathetic appeals the Lord's heart can never be indifferent; in due time the weeping intercessor will become the rejoicing winner of souls. There is a distinct connection between importunate agonizing and true success, even as between the travail and the birth, the sowing in tears and the reaping in joy. "How is it that your seed comes up so soon?" said one gardener to another. "Because I steep it," was the reply. We must steep all our teachings in tear's, "when none but God is nigh," and their growth will surprise and delight us. Could any one wonder at Brainerd's success, when his diary contains such notes as this: "Lord's Day, April 25th. — This morning spent about two hours in sacred duties, and was enabled, more than ordinarily to agonize for immortal souls; though it was carry in the morning, and the sun scarcely shone at all, yet my body was quite wet with sweat"? The secret of Luther's power lay in the same direction. Theodorus said of him: "I overheard him in prayer, but, good God, with what life and spirit did he pray! It was with so much reverence, as if he were speaking to God, yet with so much confidence as if he were speaking to his friend." My brethren, let me beseech you to be men of prayer. Great talents you may never have, but you will do well enough without them if you abound in intercession. If you do not pray over what you have sown, God's sovereignty may possibly ordain that it may be blessed, but. you have no right to expect it, and if it comes it will bring no comfort to your own heart. I was reading yesterday a book by Father

Faber, late of the Oratory, at Brompton, a marvelous compound of truth and error. In it he relates a legend to this effect. A certain preacher, whose sermons converted men by scores, received a revelation from heaven that not one of the conversions was owing to his talents or eloquence, but all to the prayers of an illiterate lay brother, who sat on the pulpit steps, pleading all the time for the success of the sermon. It may in the all-revealing day be so with us. We may discover, after having labored long and wearily in preaching, that all the honor belongs to another builder, whose prayers were gold, silver, and precious stones, while our sermonizing being apart from prayer, were but hay and stubble.

When we have done with preaching, we shall not, if we are true ministers of God, have done with praying, because the whole church, with many tongues, will be crying, in the language of the Macedonian, “*Come over and help us*” in prayer. If you are enabled to prevail in prayer you will have many requests to offer for others who will flock to you, and beg a share in your *intercessions*, and so you will find yourselves commissioned with errands to the mercy-seat for friends and hearers. Such is always my lot, and I feel it a pleasure to have such requests to present before my Lord. Never can you be short of themes for prayer, even if no one should suggest them to you. Look at your congregation. There are always sick folk among them, and many more who are soul-sick. Some are unsaved, others are seeking and cannot find. Many are desponding, and *not* a few believers are *backsliding* or mourning. There are widows’ tears and orphans’ sighs to be put into our bottle, and poured out before the Lord. If you are a genuine minister of God, you will stand as a priest before the Lord, spiritually wearing the ephod and the breastplate whereon you bear the names of the children of Israel, pleading for them within the veil. I have known brethren who have kept a list of persons for whom they felt bound especially to pray, and I doubt not such a record often reminded them of what might otherwise have slipped their memory. Nor will your people wholly engross you; the nation and the world will claim their share. The man who is mighty in prayer may be a wall of fire around his country, her guardian angel and her shield. We have all heard how the enemies of the Protestant cause dreaded the prayers of Knox more than they feared armies of ten thousand men. The Greens Welch was also a great intercessor for his country; he used to say, “he wondered how a Christian could lie in his bed all night and not rise to pray.” When his wife, fearing that he would take cold, followed him into the room to which he had withdrawn, she heard

him pleading in broken sentences, "Lord, wilt thou not grant me Scotland?" O that we were thus wrestling at midnight, crying, "Lord, wilt thou not grant us our hearers' souls?"

The minister who does not earnestly pray over his work must surely be a vain and conceited man. He acts as if he thought himself sufficient of himself, and therefore needed not to appeal to God. Yet what a baseless pride to conceive that our preaching can ever be in itself so powerful that it can turn men from their sins, and bring them to God without the working of the Holy Ghost! If we are truly humble-minded we shall not venture down to the fight until the Lord of Hosts has clothed us with all power, and said to us, "Go in this thy might." Satan's kingdom fears not our rhetoric, our literature, or our orthodoxy; prayer is the master weapon, and the enemy quails before *it*. Vain are our words till the word of the King comes with power to the con, science in answer to Our prayers.

The preacher who neglects to pray much as an habitual practice, must be very careless about his ministry. He cannot have comprehended his calling. He cannot have computed the value of a soul, or estimated the meaning of eternity. He must be a mere official, tempted into a pulpit because the piece of bread which belongs to the priest's office is very necessary to him, or a detestable hypocrite who loves the praise of men, and cares not for the praise of God. He will surely become a more superficial talker, best approved where grace is least valued and a vain show most admired. He cannot be one of those who plough deep and reap abundant harvests. He is a mere loiterer, not a laborer. As a preacher he has a name to live and is dead. He limps in his life like the lame man in the Proverbs, whose legs were not equal, for his praying is shorter than his preaching.

I am afraid that, more or less, most of us need self-examination as to this matter. If there be a man here who dares say that he prays as much as he ought as a student, I shall gravely question his statement; and if there be a minister, deacon, or elder present who can declare that he is occupied with Goal ill prayer to the full extent to which he might be and ought to be, I should be pleased to know him. I can only say, that if he can claim this excellence, he leaves me far behind, for I can make no such affirmation: I wish I could. I make the confession with no small degree of shame-needness and confusion, but I am obliged to make it. If we are not more negligent than others, this is no consolation to us; the shortcomings of others are no excuses for ourselves. How few of us could compare

ourselves with Mr. Joseph Alleine, whose character I have mentioned before? “‘ At the time of his health,’ writes his wife, ‘ he did rise constantly at or before four of the clock, and would be much troubled if he heard smiths or other craftsmen at their trades before he was at communion with God; saying to me often, ‘How this noise shames me! Does not my Master deserve more than theirs?’ From four till eight he spent in prayer, holy contemplation, and singing of psalms, in which he much delighted, and did daily practise alone, as well as in the family.’ Sometimes he would suspend the routine of parochial engagements, and devote whole days to these secret exercises, in order to which, he would contrive to be alone in some void house, or else in some sequestered spot in the open valley. Here there would be much prayer and medication on God and heaven.”^{F9} Could we read Jonathan Edwards’ description of David Brainerd and not blush? “His life,” says Edwards, “shows the right way to success in the works of the ministry. He sought it as a resolute soldier seeks victory in a siege or battle; or as a man that runs a race for a great prize. Animated with love to Christ and souls, how did he labor always fervently, not only in word and doctrine, in public and private, but in *prayers* day and night, wrestling with God in secret, and travailing in birth, with unutterable groans and agonies, until Christ were formed in the hearts of the people, to whom he was sent! How did he thirst for a blessing upon his ministry; and watch for souls as one that must give account! How did he go forth in the strength of the Lord God, seeking and depending on the special influence of the Spirit to assist and. succeed him! And what was the happy fruit at last, after long waiting and many dark and discouraging appearances? Like a true son of Jacob, he persevered in wrestling through all the darkness of the night, until the breaking of the day.”^{F10}

Might not Henry Martyn’s journal shame us, where we find such entries as these: “Sept. 24th. — The determination with which I went to bed last night, of devoting this day to prayer and fasting, I was enabled to put into execution. In my first prayer for deliverance from worldly thoughts, depending on the power and promises of God, for fixing my soul while I prayed, I was helped to enjoy much abstinence from the world, for nearly an hour. Then read the history of Abraham, to see how familiarly God had revealed himself to mortal men of old. Afterwards, in prayer for my own sanctification, my soul breathed freely and ardently after the holiness of God, and this was the best season of the day?”^{f11} We might perhaps more truly join with him in his lament after the first year of his ministry, that “he

judged he had dedicated too much time to public ministrations, and too little to private communion with God.”

How much of blessing we may have missed through remissness in supplication we can scarcely guess, and none of us can know how poor we are in comparison with what we might have been if we had lived habitually nearer to God in prayer. Vain regrets and surmises are useless, but an earnest determination to amend will be far more useful. We not only ought to pray more, but we *must*. The fact is, the secret of all ministerial success lies in prevalence at the mercy-seat.

One bright benison which private prayer brings down upon the ministry is an indescribable and inimitable something, better understood than named; it is a dew from the Lord, a divine presence which you will recognize at once when I say it is “an unction from the holy One.” What is it? I wonder how long we might beat our brains before we could plainly lint into words what is meant by *preaching unction!* yet he who preaches knows its presence, and he who hears, soon detects its absence; Samaria, in famine, typifies a discourse without it; Jerusalem, with her feasts of fat things, full of marrow, may represent a sermon enriched with it. Everyone knows what the freshness of the morning is when orient pearls abound on every blade of grass, but who can describe it. much less produce it of himself? Such is the mystery of spiritual anointing; we know but we cannot tell to others what it is. It is as easy as it is foolish to counterfeit it, as some do who use expressions which are meant to betoken fervent love, but oftener indicate sickly sentimentalism or mere cant. “Dear Lord! Sweet Jesus! Precious Christ!” are by them poured out wholesale, till one is nauseated. These familiarities may have been not only tolerable, but even beautiful when they first fell from a saint of God, speaking as it were, out of the excellent glory, but when repeated flippantly they are not only intolerable, but indecent, if not profane. Some have tried to imitate unction by unnatural tones and whines; by turning up the whites of their eyes, and lifting their hands in a most ridiculous manner. M’Cheyne’s tone and rhythm one hears from Scotchmen continually: we-much prefer his spirit to his mannerism; and all mere mannerism without power is as foul carrion of all life bereft, obnoxious, mischievous. Certain brethren aim at inspiration through exertion and loud shouting; but it does not come: stone we have known to stop the discourse and exclaim, “God bless you,” and others gesticulate wildly, and drive their finger nails into the palms of their hands as if they were in convulsions of celestial ardor. Bah! The whole thing smells of the

green-room and the stage. The getting-up of fervor in hearers by the simulation of it in the preacher is a loathsome deceit, to be scorned by honest men. "To affect feeling'," says Richard Cecil, "is nauseous and soon detected, but to feel is the readiest way to the hearts of others." Unction is a thing which you cannot manufacture, and its counterfeits are worse than worthless; yet it is in itself priceless, and beyond measure needful if you would edify believers and bring sinners to Jesus. To the secret pleader with God this secret is committed; upon him rests the dew of the Lord, about him is the perfume which makes glad the heart. If the anointing which we bear come not from the Lord of Hosts we are deceivers; and since only in prayer can we obtain it, let us continue instant., constant, fervent in supplication. Let your fleece lie on the threshing-floor of supplication, till it is wet with the dew of heaven. Go not to minister in the temple till You have washed in the laver. Think not to be a messenger of grace to others till you have seen the God of grace for yourselves, and received the word from his mouth.

Time spent in quiet prostration of soul before the Lord is most invigorating. David "sat before the Lord;" it is a great thing to hold these sacred sittings; the mind being receptive, like an open flower drinking in the sunbeams, or the sensitive photographic plate accepting the image before it. Quietude, which some men cannot abide, because it reveals their inward poverty, is as a palace of cedar to the wise, for along its hallowed courts the King in his beauty deigns to walk.

*"Sacred silence! thou that art
Floodgate of the deeper heart,
Offspring of a heavenly kind;
Frost o' the mouth, and thaw o' the mind."*^{F12}

Priceless as the gift of utterance may be, the practice of silence in some aspects far excels it. Do you think me a Quaker? Well, be it so. Herein I follow George Fox most lovingly; for I am persuaded that we most of us think too much of speech, which after all is but the shell of thought. Quiet contemplation, still worship, unuttered rapture, these are mine when my best jewels are before me. Brethren, rob not your heart of the deep-sea joys; miss not the far-down life by for ever Dabbling among the broken shells and foaming surges of the shore.

I would seriously recommend to you, when settled in the ministry, the celebration of extraordinary seasons of devotion. If your ordinary prayers

do not keep up the freshness and vigor of your souls, and you feel that you are flagging, get alone for a week, or even a month, if possible. We have occasional holidays, why not frequent holy days? We hear of our richer brethren finding time for a journey to Jerusalem; could we not spare time for the less difficult and far more profitable journey to the heavenly city? Isaac Ambrose, once pastor at Preston, who wrote that famous book, "Looking unto Jesus," always set apart one month in the year for seclusion in a hut in a wood at Garstang. No wonder that he was so mighty a divine, when he could regularly spend so long a time in the mount with God. I notice that the Romanists have what they call "Retreats," where a number of priests will retire for a season into perfect quietude, to spend the whole of the time in fasting and prayer, so as to inflame their souls with ardor. We may learn from our adversaries. It would be a great thing every now and then for brethren to spend a day or two with each other in real burning agony of prayer. Our seasons of fasting and prayer at the Tabernacle have been high days indeed; never has heaven-gate stood wider; never have our hearts been nearer the central glory. Even if our public work were laid aside to give us the space for special prayer, it might be a great gain to our churches. Our silence might be better than our voices if our solitude were spent with God. That was a grand action of old Jerome, when he laid all his pressing engagements aside to achieve a purpose to which he felt a call from heaven. He had a large congregation, as large a one as any of us need want; but he said to his people, "Now, it is of necessity that the New Testament should be translated: you must find another preacher — the translation must be made; I am bound for the wilderness, and shall not return till my task is finished." Away he went with his manuscripts, and prayed and labored, and produced a work — the Latin Vulgate — which will last as long as the world stands; on the whole, a most wonderful translation of Holy Scripture. If learning and prayerful retirement together could thus produce an immortal work, if we also were sometimes to say to our people when we felt moved to do so, "Dear friends, we really must be gone for a little while to refresh our souls in solitude," our profiting' would soon be apparent, and if we did not write Latin Vulgates, yet we should accomplish enduring work, such as would abide the fire.

BE JUST AND FEAR NOT.

A TRACT FOR THE ELECTIONS.

THE question in debate at the forthcoming election lies in a nutshell. It is a question of right and wrong which any honest man may decide without the help of lawyers, orators, or divines. Ought not every man to support his own religion? Has any church a right to tax those who hate it, or to compel its opponents to support it? In Ireland, nine persons of one religion are forced to pay their share towards the support of the religion of the tenth man, whose faith they detest. *Is this just?* Whether the nine men are Mahometans or Jews does not enter into the essence of the question, and if the tenth man be or be not the most orthodox of Christians, the inquiry is not at all affected, for it stands thus: — Ought the tenth man to force the other nine to ease him in the personal duty of supporting his religion, and has he any right to make them submit to the establishment of his church as the church of the whole ten? In the present case, the nine (who are mostly poor men) first support their own clergyman, and then are required to pay their quota towards the minister of the tenth, who is usually rich. Is this justice? If the nine were Protestants, and the tenth a Romanist, what would Protestants think of the case? Candid Protestants will own that they would not deliberate for a moment, but would be most resolute in sweeping away so glaring an oppression without a moment's needless delay. But if the victims in this case are Romanists, is it any the less wrong to do them an injustice? Is it more right for a Protestant to be an oppressor titan for any other man? Does our superior light entitle us to do wrong? Ought it not rather to forbid our dealing ungenerously? Honorable minds would rather be oppressed than oppressing, and candid persons think a wrong done by Protestants, who boast their love of liberty, to be more lamentable than one perpetrated by Catholics prejudiced by long ages of superstition. Better far to be persecuted for righteousness' sake than to do violence to other men's consciences under the notion of upholding the truth. In the name of our reformed faith, let no Romanist suffer injustice at our hands, lest our good cause be defiled.

The case is too simple for our opponents to meet it on its own merits, they therefore try to bamboozle the public mind by raising party cries and agitating other questions. We are told that Protestantism will be endangered by disendowing the Irish church! As if Episcopalianism and

Protestantism were one and the same thing. Look around, electors, and see if the Episcopal Church is not doing more to bring back Popery into England than any other agency in existence. What are these Ritualists but Papists almost undisguised? Are *they* not all but avowed Romanists? The cry of “No Popery” ill becomes the mouth of a Church of England clergyman, when it is by men of his cloth that the ceremonies of Rome are being forced upon us: the fox, with the hen in his mouth, might almost as well cry out, “No robbing of hen roosts!” Are not the Dissenting churches the most thorough Protestant communities in the land? Is it not a fact that very few of their ministers, or members, ever go over to Rome? Do they not, almost without a single exception advocate justice to Ireland? Are not these sound Protestants very well able to judge what will injure Protestantism? Are they not quite as much in earnest to maintain religious liberty and the reformed faith as any set of men living? They have suffered long; their roll of martyrs is all but endless; depend upon it they are not the men to lift; a finger to bring back Popery or even to aid its growth. Yet they all demand the disestablishment of the Irish Church, because they believe that injustice weakens the cause which is guilty of it, and that error is strengthened by oppression. They believe that it is for the best interests of Protestantism that everything like religious ascendancy should vanish. Truth they conceive to be most likely to conquer when unattended by anything like force and injustice. They hope that the day’ when religious equality is fully established will be the beginning of the end in which superstitions of all sorts will be utterly vanquished amid the songs of an educated and Christian people. Even if this hope did not cheer the honest man, even if he felt that his true faith might for awhile suffer loss, he dares not do evil that good may come; he leaves results with the eternal Patron of right, and commands that justice be done if the heavens fall.

The extreme age of the endowments of the Irish church is urged in their defense, but no lapse of time can make wrong right, or give immunity to robbery. Slavery was an ancient system, but it was right to abolish it, and the same holds good of state-churchism. The government has in past ages transferred ecclesiastical property from one sect to another by the same paramount right which now justifies it, while respecting all existing interests, in using church property for the general good. No one proposes to touch the private property of any church, it is only with its public endowments that the State will deal; they are now the source of continual irritation and abiding injustice. That noble statesman, Mr. Gladstone, is to

be honored for proclaiming that funds so long a curse to Ireland shall henceforth be employed for the benefit of the commonwealth.

Let every Christian vote for the proposed deed of justice as devoutly as he would pray, and feel as earnest in promoting it as in living righteously in his private life. Let Churchmen rise to disinterested nobility, as some of their clergy have done, and think more of right and of the national good than of party and power. Let Dissenters remember how long their fathers were oppressed, and show their gratitude to God for their present liberties by demanding the same justice for others which they hope to receive themselves. The sin of a national establishment founded in wrong belongs to us all as citizens until by voice and vote we have protested against its continuance. We must not be partakers of other men's sins, as we shall be if our inaction gives assent to them. We must do to others as we would that they should do to us; and as we would ourselves be free from oppression, we must aid our fellow subjects in dashing to the ground the galling yoke. Even if we avoid political discussions at other times, on this occasion we must act vigorously and promptly, and **MAY GOD DEFEND THE RIGHT!**

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THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL

DECEMBER, 1868.

THE MINISTER'S FAINTING FITS.

ONE OF A COURSE OF LECTURES TO STUDENTS
AND YOUNG PASTORS.

BY C. H. SPURGEON.

AS it is recorded that David, in the heat of battle, waxed faint so may it be written of all the servants of the Lord. Fits of depression come over the most of us. Usually cheerful as we may be, we must at intervals be cast down. The strong are not always vigorous, the wise not always ready, the brave not always courageous, and the joyous not always happy. There may be here and there men of iron, to whom wear and tear work no perceptible detriment, but surely the rust frets even these; and as for ordinary men, the Lord knows, and makes them to know, that they are but dust. Knowing by most painful experience what deep depression of spirit means, being visited therewith at seasons by no means few or far between, I thought it might be consolatory to some of my brethren if I gave my thoughts thereon, that younger men might not fancy that some strange thing had happened to them when they became for a season possessed by melancholy; and that sadder men might know that one upon whom the sun has shone right joyously did not always walk in the light.

It is not necessary by quotations from the biographies of eminent ministers to prove that seasons of fearful prostration have fallen to the lot of most, if not all of them. The life of Luther might suffice to give a thousand instances, and he was by no means of the weaker sort. His great spirit was often in the seventh heaven of exultation, and as frequently on the borders of despair. His very death-bed was not free from tempests, and he sobbed himself into his last sleep like a great wearied child. Instead of multiplying cases, let us dwell upon the reasons why these things are permitted; why it

is that the children of light sometimes walk in the thick darkness; why the heralds of the daybreak find themselves at times in tenfold night.

Is it not first that *they are men*? Being men, they are compassed with infirmity, and heirs of sorrow. Well said the wise man in the Apocrypha, ^{f13} “Great travail is created for all men, and a heavy yoke on the sons of Adam, from the day that they go out of their mother’s womb unto that day that they return to the mother of all things — namely, their thoughts and fear of their hearts, and their imagination of things that they wail for, and the day of death. From him that sitteth in the glorious throne, to him that sitteth beneath in the earth and ashes: from him that is clothed in blue silk, and wareth a crown, to him’ that is clothed in simple linen — wrath, envy, trouble, and unquietness, and fear of death and rigor, and such things come to both man and beast, but sevenfold to the ungodly.” Grace guards us from much of this, hut because we have not more of grace we still suffer even from ills preventable. Even under the economy of redemption it is most clear that we are to endure infirmities, otherwise there were no need of the promised Spirit to help us in them. It is of need be that we are sometimes in heaviness. Good men are promised tribulation in this world, and ministers may expect a larger share than others, that they may learn sympathy with the Lord’s suffering people, and so may be fitting shepherds of an ailing flock. Disembodied spirits might have been sent to proclaim the word, but they could not have entered into the feelings of those who, being in this body, do groan, being burdened; angels might have been ordained evangelists, but their celestial attributes would have disqualified them from having compassion on the ignorant; men of marble might have been fashioned, but their impassive natures would have been a sarcasm upon our feebleness, and a mockery of our wants. Men, and men subject to human passions, the all-wise God has chosen to be his vessels of grace; hence these tears, hence these perplexities and castings down.

Moreover, *most of us are in some way or other unsound physically*. Here and there we meet with an old man who could not remember that he was ever laid aside for a day; but the great mass of us labor under some form or other of infirmity, either in body or mind. Certain bodily maladies, especially those connected with the digestive organs, the liver, and the spleen, are the fruitful fountains of despondency; and let a man strive as he may against their influence, there will be hours and circumstances in which they will for awhile overcome him. As to mental maladies, is any man altogether sane? Are we not all a little off the balance? Some minds appear

to have a gloomy tinge essential to their very individuality; of them it may be said, "Melancholy marked the for her own;" fine minds withal, and ruled by noblest principles, but yet most prone to forget the silver lining, and to remember only the cloud. Such men may sing with the old poet"

*Our hearts are broke, our harps unstringed be,
Our only music's sighs and groans:
Our songs are to the tune of lachryrae,
W' are fretted all to skin and bones."*^{F14}

These infirmities may be no detriment to a man's career of special usefulness; they may even have been imposed upon him by divine wisdom as necessary qualifications for his peculiar course of service. Some plants owe their medicinal qualities to the marsh in which they grow; others to the shades in which alone they flourish. There are precious fruits put forth by the moon as well as by the sun. Boats need ballast as well as sail; a drag on the carriage wheel is no hindrance when the road runs downhill. Pain has, probably, in some cases developed genius; hunting out the soul which otherwise might have slept like a lion in its den. Had It not been in the broken wing, some might have lost themselves in the clouds — some even of those choice doves who now bear the olive-branch in their mouths and show the way to the ark. But where in body and mind there are predisposing causes a lowness of spirit, it is no marvel if in dark moments the heart succumbs to them: the wonder in many cases is — and if inner lives could be written, men would see it so how some ministers keep at their work a all, and still wear a smile upon their countenances. Grace has its triumphs still, and patience has its martyrs; martyrs none the less to be honored because the flames kindle about their spirits rather than their bodies, and their burning is unseen of human eyes. The ministries of Jeremiah are as acceptable as those of Isaiahs, and even the sullen Jonah is a true prophet of the Lord, as Nineveh felt full well. Despise not the lame, for it is written that they take the prey; but honor those who, being faint, are yet pursuing. The tender-eyed Leah was more fruitful than the beautiful Rachel, dud the griefs of Hannah were more divine than the boastings of Peninnah. "Blessed are they that mourn," said the Man of Sorrows, and let none account them otherwise when their tears are salted with grace. We have the treasure of the gospel in earthen vessels, and if there be a flaw in the vessel here and there, let none wonder.

Our work, when;, earliest undertaken, lays is open to attacks in the direction of depression Who can bear the weigh of souls without sometimes sinking' to

the dust? Passionate longings after men's conversion, if not fully satisfied (and when are they?), consume the soul with anxiety and disappointment. To see the hopeful turn aside, the godly grow cold, professors abusing their privileges, and sinners waxing more bold in sincere not these sights enough to crush us to the earth. The kingdom comes not as we would, the reverend name is not hallowed as we desire, and for this we must weep. How can we be otherwise than sorrowful, while men believe not our report, and the divine arm is not revealed? All mental work tends to weary and depress, for much study is a weariness of the flesh; but ours is more than mental work it is hearing work, the labor of our inmost soul. How often, on Lord's-day evenings, do we feel as if life were completely washed out of us! After pouring out; our souls over our congregations, we feel like empty earthen pitchers which a child might break. Probably, if we were more like Paul, and watched for souls of a nobler rate, we should know more of what it is to be eaten up by the zeal of the Lord's house. It is our duty and our privilege to exchange our lives for Jesus. We are not to be living specimens of men in fine preservation, but living *sacrifices*, whose lot is to be consumed; we are to spend and be spent, not to lay ourselves up in lavender, and nurse our flesh. Such soul dravil as what of a faithful minister will bring on occasional seasons of exhaustion, when heart and flesh will fail. Moses' hands grew heavy in intercession, and Paul cries out, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Even John the Baptist is thought to have had his hining fits, and the apostles were once amazed and were sore afraid.

Our position in the church, will also condotee to this. A minister fitly equipped for his work, will usually be a spirit by himself, above, beyond, and apart from others. The most loving of his people cannot enter into his peculiar thoughts, cares, and temptations. In the ranks, men walk shoulder to shoulder, with many comrades, but as the officer rises in rank, men of his standing are fewer in number. There are many soldiers, few captains, fewer colonels, but only one commander-in-chief. So, in our churches, the man whom the Lord raises as a leader becomes, in the same degree in which he is a superior man, a solitary man. The mountain-tops stand solemnly apart, and talk only with God as he visits their terrible solitudes. Men of God who rise above their fellows into nearer communion with heavenly things, in their weaker moments feel the lack of human sympathy. Like their Lord in Gethsemane, they look in vain for comfort to the disciples sleeping around them; they are shocked at the apathy of their little band of brethren, and

return to their secret agony with all the heavier burden pressing upon them, because they have found their dearest companions slumbering. No one knows, but he who has endured it, the solitude of a soul which has outstripped its fellows in zeal for the Lord of hosts: it dares not reveal itself, lest men count it mad; it cannot conceal itself, for a fire burns within its bones: only before the Lord does it find rest. Our Lord's sending out his disciples by two and two manifested that he knew what was man; but for such a man as Paul, it seems to me that no helpmeet was found; Barnabas, or Silas, or Luke, were hills too low to hold high converse with such a Himalayan summit as the apostle of the Gentiles. This loneliness, which I mistake not, is felt by many of my brethren, is a fertile source of depression, and our ministers' fraternal meetings, and the cultivation of holy intercourse with kindred minds will, with God's blessing, help us greatly to escape the snare. There can be little doubt that *sedentary habits* have a tendency to create despondency in some constitutions. Burton, in his "Anatomy of melancholy," has a chapter upon this cause of sadness, and quoting from one of the myriad authors whom he lays under contribution, he says, "Students are negligent of their bodies. Other men look to their tools; a painter will wash his pencils; a smith will look to his hammer, anvil, and forge; a husbandman will mend his plough-irons, and grind his hatchet if it's dull; a falconer or huntsman will have an especial care of his hawks, hounds, horses, dogs, etc.; a musician will string and unstring his lute; only scholars neglect that instrument (their brain and spirits I mean) which they daily use." "Well," saith Luean," see thou twist not the rope so hard that it break." To sit long in one posture, poring over a book, or driving a quill, is in itself a taxing of nature; but add to this a badly-ventilated chamber, a body which has long been without muscular exercise, and a heart burdened with many cares, and we have all the elements for preparing a seething cauldron of despair, especially in the dim months of fog —

*"When a blanket wraps the day
When the rotten woodland drips,
And the leaf is stamped in clay."*

Let a man be naturally as blithe as a bird, he will hardly be able to bear up year after year against such a suicidal process; he will make his study a prison and his books the warders of a goal, while nature lies outside his window calling him to health and beckoning him to joy. He who forgets the humming of the bees among the heather, the cooing of the wood-pigeons

in the forest, the song of birds in the woods, the rippling of rills among the rushes, and the sighing of the wind among the pines, needs not wonder if his heart forgets to sing and his soul grows heavy. A day's breathing of fresh air upon the hills, or a few hours' ramble in the beech woods' umbrageous calm, would sweep the cobwebs out of the brain of scores of our toiling ministers who are now but half alive. A mouthful of sea air, or a stiff walk in the wind's face, would not give grace to the soul, but it would yield oxygen to the body, which is next best. ,

*“Heaviest the heart is in a heavy air,
Ev’ry wind that rises blows away despair.”*

The ferns and the rabbits, the streams and the trouts, the fir trees and the squirrels, the primroses and the violets, the farm-yard, the new-mown hay, and the fragrant hops — these are the best medicines for hypochondriacs, the surest tonics for the declining, the best refreshments for the weary. For lack of opportunity, or inclination, these great remedies are neglected, and the student becomes a self-immolated victim.

The times most favorable to fits of depression, so far as I have experienced, may be summed up in a brief catalogue. First among them I must mention *the hour of great success*. When at last a long-cherished desire is fulfilled, when God has been greatly glorified by our means, and a great triumph achieved, then we are apt to faint. It might be imagined that amid special favors our soul would soar to heights of ecstasy and rejoice with joy unspeakable, but it is generally the reverse. The Lord seldom excludes his warriors to the perils of exultation over victory; he knows that few of them can endure such a test, and therefore dashes their cup with bitterness. See Elias after the fire has fallen from heaven, after Baal's priests have been slaughtered and the rain has deluged the barren land. For him no notes of self-complacent music, no strutting like a conqueror in robes of triumph; he flees from Jezebel, and feeling the revulsion of his intense excitement, he prays that he may die. He who must never see death, yearns after the rest of the grave, even as Caesar, the world's monarch, in his moments of pain, cried like a sick girl. Poor human nature cannot bear such strains as heavenly triumphs bring to it; there must come a reaction. Excess of joy or excitement must be paid for by subsequent depressions. While the trial lasts, the strength is equal to the emergency; but when it is over, natural weakness claims the right to show itself. Secretly sustained, Jacob can wrestle all night; but he must limp in the morning, when the contest is

over, lest he boast himself beyond measure. Paul may be caught up to the third heaven, and hear unspeakable things, but a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet him, must be the inevitable sequel. Men cannot bear unalloyed happiness; even good men are not yet fit to have “their brows with laurel and with myrtle bound,” without enduring secret humiliation to keep them in their proper place. Would from off our feet by a revival, carried aloft by popularity, exalted by success in soul-winning’, we should be as the chaff which the wind driveth away, were it not that the gracious discipline of mercy breaks the ships of our vainglory with a strong east wind, and casts us shipwrecked, naked and forlorn, upon the Rock of Ages.

Before any great achievement, some measure of the same depression is very usual. Surveying the difficulties before us, our hearts sink within us. The sons of Anak stalk before us, and we are as grasshoppers in our own sight in their presence. The cities of Canaan are walled up to heaven, and who are we that we should hope to capture them? We are ready to cast down our weapons and take to our heels. Nineveh is a great city, and we would flee unto Tarshish sooner than encounter its noisy crowds. Already we look for a ship which may bear us quietly away from the terrible scene, and only a dread of tempest restrains our recreant footsteps. Such was my experience when I first became a pastor in London. by success appalled me; and the thought of the career which in seemed to open up, so far from elating me, cast me into the lowest depth, out of which I uttered my sincerer and found no room for a _____. Who was I that I should continue to lead so great a multitude? I would betake me to my village obscurity, or emigrate to America, and find a solitary nest in the backwoods, where I might be sufficient for the things which would be demanded of me. I was just then that the curtain was rising upon my life-work, and I dreaded what it might reveal. I hope I was no faithless, but I was honourable and filled with a sense of my own unfitness. I dreaded the work which a gracious providence had prepared for me. I felt myself a mere child, and trembled as I heard the voice which said, “Arise, and thresh the mountains, and make them as chaff.” This depression comes over me whenever the Lord is preparing a larger blessing for my ministry; the cloud is black before it breaks, and overshadows before it yields its deluge of mercy. Depression has now become to me as a prophet in rough clothing, a John the Baptist, heralding the master coming of my Lord’s richer benison. So have far better men found it. The scouring of the vessel has fitted it for the Master’s

use. in suffering has preceded the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Fasting gives an appetite for the banquet. The Lord is revealed in the backside of the desert, while his servant keepeth the sheep and waits in solitary awe. The wilderness is the way to Canaan. The low valley leads to the towering mountain. Defeat prepares for victory. The raven is set forth before the dove. The darkest hour of the night transcends the day-dawn. The mariners go down to the depths, but the next wave makes them mount to the heaven, and their soul is melted because of trouble before he bringeth them to their desired haven.

In the midst of a long stretch of unbroken labor, the same affliction may be looked for. The bow cannot be always bent without fear of breaking. Repose is as needful to the mind as sleep to the body. Our Sabbaths are our days of toil, and if we do not rest upon some other day we shall break down. Even the earth must lie fallow and have her Sabbaths, and so must we. Hence the wisdom and compassion of our Lord, when he said to his disciples, "Let us go into the desert and rest awhile." What! when the people are fainting? When the multitudes are like sheep upon the mountains without a shepherd? Does Jesus talk of rest? When Scribes and Pharisees, like grievous wolves, are rending the flock, does he take his followers on an excursion into a quiet, resting-place? Does some red-hot zealot denounce such atrocious forgetfulness of present and pressing demands? Let him rave in his folly. The Master knows better than to exhaust his servants and quench the light of Israel. Rest time is not waste time. It is economy to gather fresh strength. Look at the mower in the summer's day, with so much to cut down ere the sun sets. He pauses in his labor — is tie a singuard? He looks for his stone, and begins to draw it up and down his scythe, with "rink-a-tink — rink-a-tink — rink-a-rink." Is that idle music — is he wasting precious moments? How much he might have mown while he has been ringing out those notes on his scythe! But lie is sharpening his tool, and he will do far more when once again he gives his strength to those long sweeps which lay the grass prostrate in rows before him. Even thus a little pause prepares the mind for greater service in the good cause. Fishermen must mend their nets, and we must every now and then repair our mental waste and set our machinery in order for future service. To tug the our from day to day, like a galley-slave who knows no holidays, suits not mortal men. Mill-streams go on and on for ever, but we must have our pauses and our intervals. Who can help being' out of breath when the race is continued without intermission? Even beasts of burden must be turned

out to grass occasionally; the very sea pauses at ebb and flood; earth keeps the Sabbath of the wintry months; and man, even when exalted to be God's ambassador, must rest; must trim his lamp or let it burn low; must recruit his Vigour or grow prematurely old. It is wisdom to take occasional furlough. In the long run, we shall do more by sometimes doing less. On, on, on for ever, without recreation, may suit spirits emancipated from this "heavy clay," but while we are in this tabernacle, we must every now and then cry halt, and serve the Lord by holy inaction and consecrated leisure. Let no tender conscience doubt the lawfulness of going out of harness for awhile, but learn from the experience of others the necessity and duty of taking timely rest

One crushing stroke has sometimes laid the minister very low. The brother most relied upon becomes a traitor. Judas lifts up his heel against the man who trusted him, and the preacher's heart for the moment thills him. We are all too apt to look to an arm of flesh, and from that propensity many of our sorrows arise. Equally overwhelming is the blow when an honored and beloved member yields to temptation, and disgraces the holy name with which he was named. Anything is better than this. This makes the preacher long for a lodge in some vast wilderness, where he may hide his head for ever, and hear no more the blasphemous jeers of the ungodly. Ten years of toil do not take so much life out of us as we lose in a few hours by Ahithophel the traitor, or Demas the apostate. Strife, also, and division, and slander, and foolish censures, have often laid holy men prostrate, and made them go "as with a sword in their bones." Hard words wound some delicate minds very keenly, Many of the best of ministers, from the very spirituality of their character, are exceedingly sensitive — too sensitive for such a world as this. "A kick that scarce would move a horse would kill a sound divine." By experience the soul is hardened to the rough blows which are inevitable in our warfare; but at first these things utterly stagger us, and send us to our homes wrapped in a horror of great darkness. The trials of a true minister are not few, and such as are caused by ungrateful professors are harder to bear than the coarsest attacks of avowed enemies. Let no man who looks for ease of mind and seeks the quietude of life enter the ministry; if he does so he will flee from it in disgust.

To the lot of few does it fall to pass through such a horror of great darkness as that which fell upon me after the deplorable accident at the Surrey Music Hall. I was pressed beyond measure and out of bounds with

an enormous weight of misery. The tumult, the panic, the deaths, were day and night before me, and made life a burden. Then I sang in my sorrow —

*The tumult of my thoughts
Doth but increase my woe,
My spirit languisheth, my heart
Is desolate and low.”*

From that dream of horror I was awakened in a moment by the gracious application to my soul of the text, “Him hath God the Father exalted.” The fact that Jesus is still great, let his servants suffer as they may, piloted me back to calm reason and peace. Should so terrible a calamity overtake any of my brethren, let them both patiently hope and quietly wait for the salvation of God.

When troubles multiply, and discouragements follow each other in long succession, like Job’s messengers, then, too, amid the perturbation of soul occasioned by evil tidings, despondency despoils the heart of all its peace. Constant dropping wears away stones, and the bravest minds feel the fret of repeated afflictions. If a scanty cupboard is rendered a severer trial by the sickness of a wife, or the loss of a child, and if ungenerous remarks of hearers are followed by the opposition of deacons and the coolness of members, then, like Jacob, we are apt to cry, “All these things are against *me*.” When David returned to Ziklag and found the city burned, goods stolen, wives carried off, and his troops ready to stone him, we read, “He encouraged himself in his God;” and well was it for him that he could do *so*, for he would then have fainted if he had not believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Accumulated distresses increase each other’s weight; they play into each other’s hands, and, like bands of robbers, ruthlessly destroy our comfort. Wave upon wave is severe work for the strongest swimmer. The place where two seas meet strains the most seaworthy keel. If there were a regulated pause between the buffetings of adversity, the spirit would stand prepared; but when they come suddenly and heavily, like the battering of great hailstones, the pilgrim may well be amazed. The last ounce breaks the camel’s back, and when that hast ounce is laid upon us, what wonder if we for awhile are ready to give up the ghost

This evil will also come upon us, we know not why, and then it is all the more difficult to drive it away. Causeless depression is not to be reasoned with, nor can David’s harp charm it away by sweet discoursings. As;veil fight

with the mist as with this shapeless, undefinable, yet all-beclouding hopelessness. One affords himself no pity when in this case, because it seems so unreasonable, and even sinful to be troubled without manifest cause; and yet troubled the man is, even in the very depths of his spirit. If those who laugh at such melancholy did but feel the grief of it for one hour, their laughter would be sobered into compassion. Resolution might, perhaps, shake it off, but where are we to find the resolution when the whole man is unstrung? The physician and the divine may unite their skill in such cases, and both find their hands full, and more than full. The iron bolt which so mysteriously fastens the door of hope and holds our spirits in gloomy prison, must be a heavenly hand to push it back; and when that hand is seen we cry with the apostle, "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort, who comforted us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." 2 Corinthians 1:3, 4. It is the God of all consolation who can —

*“With sweet oblivious antidote
Cleanse our poor bosoms of that perilous stuff
Which weighs upon the heart.”*

Simon sinks till Jesus takes him by the hand. The devil within rends and tears the poor child till the word of authority commands him to come out of him. When we are ridden with horrible fears, and weighed down with an intolerable incubus, we need but the Sun of Righteousness to rise, and the evils generated of our darkness are driven away, blot nothing short of this will chase away the nightmare of the soul. Timothy Rogers, the author of a treatise on Melancholy, and Simon Browne, the writer of some remarkably sweet hymns, proved in their own cases how unavailing is the help of man if the Lord withdraw the light from the soul.

If it be enquired why the Valley of the Shadow of Death must so often be traversed by the servants of King Jesus, the answer is not far to find. All this is promotive of the Lord's mode of working, which is summed up in these words — “Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.” Instruments shall be used, but their intrinsic weakness shall be clearly manifested; there shall be no division of the glory, no diminishing the honor due to the Great Worker. the man shall be emptied of self, and then filled with the Holy Ghost. In his own apprehension he shall be like a sere leaf driven of the tempest, and then shall be strengthened into a brazen

wall against the enemies truth. To hide pride from the worker is the great dirtiness. Uninterrupted success and unfading joy in it would be more than our weak heads could bear. Our wine must needs be mixed with water, lest it turn our brains. My witness is, that those who are honored of their Lord in public, have usually to endure a secret chastening, or to carry a peculiar cross, lest by any means they exalt themselves, and fall into the snare of the devil. How constantly the Lord calls Ezekiel “Son of man.” Amid his sourings into the superlative splendours, just when with eye undimmed he is strengthened to gaze into the excellent glory, the word “Son of man” falls on his ears, sobering the heart which else might have been intoxicated with the honor conferred upon it. Such humbling but salutary messages our depressions whisper in our ears; they tell us in a manner not to be mistaken that we are but men, frail, feeble, apt to faint.

By all the castings down of his servants God is glorified, for they are led to magnify him when again he sets them on their feet, and even while prostrate in the dust their faith yields Him praise. They speak all the more sweetly of his faithfulness, and are the more firmly established in his love. Such mature men as some elderly preachers are, could, scarcely have been produced if they had not been emptied from vessel to vessel, and made to see their own emptiness and the vanity of all things round about them. Glory be to God for the furnace, the hammer, and the file. Heaven shall be all the fuller of bliss because we have been filled with anguish here below, and earth shall be better tilled because of our training in the school of adversity.

The lesson of wisdom is, *be not dismayed by soul-trouble*. Count it no strange thing, but a part of ordinary ministerial experience. Should the power of depression be more than ordinary, think not that all is over with your usefulness. Cast not away your confidence, for it hath great recompense of reward. Even if the enemy’s foot be on your neck, expect to rise and overthrow him. Cast the burden of the present, along with the sin of the past and the fear of the future, upon the Lord, who forsaketh not his saints. Live by the day — ay, by the hour. Put no trust in frames and feelings. Care more for a grain of faith than a ton of excitement. Trust in God alone, and lean not on the reeds of human help. Be not surprised when friends fail you; it is a failing’ world, Never count upon immutability in man: inconstancy you may reckon upon without fear of disappointment. The disciples of Jesus forsook him: be not amazed if your adherents wander away to other teachers — as they were not your all when with you, all is

not gone from you with their departure.” Serve God with all four might while the candle is burning, and then when it goes out for a season, you will have the less to regret. Be content to be nothing, for that is what you are. When four own emptiness is painfully forced upon your consciousness, child yourself that you ever dreamed of being full, except in the Lord. Set small store by present r. e wards, be grateful for earnest by the way, but look for the recompensing joy hereafter. Continue, with double earnestness to serve four Lord when no visible result is before you. Any simpleton can follow the narrow path in the light: faith’s rare wisdom enables us to march on in the dark with infallible accuracy, since she places her hand in the of her Great Guide. Between this and heaven there may be rougher weather yet, but it is all provided for by our covenant Head. In nothing let us be turned aside from the path which the divine call has urged us to pursue. Come fair or come foul, the pulpit is our watch-tower, and the ministry our warfare; be it ours, when we cannot see the face of our God, to trust under THE SHADOW OF HIS WINGS.

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL

A RECORD

OF

COMBAT WITH SIN & LABOR FOR THE LORD.

EDITED BY C. H. SPURGEON.

1869.

“They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one With one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me.” — Nehemiah 4:17, 18.

PREFACE.

COURTEOUS READER,

For the fifth time we offer you a complete volume of our magazine, which we trust may retain sufficient interest to be worthy of perusal in future years. Accept it with our most hearty good wishes, and we may add with our cordial congratulations that you find yourself a member of this present generation, for no age was ever more propitious. Amid much of evil, this present era is certainly the nursing mother of much that is good. Although it seems but yesterday since the first number of our serial was issued, we are less impressed with the rapid flight of time than with the mighty rush of events which have crowded these last five years with gratifying incidents. We are most of all amazed with the world's progress. What changes have been wrought within this year 1869! Struggling principles have leaped to victory, truths despised have been enshrined, and landmarks supposed to have *been* far ahead have been left behind. Our fathers and their sires through a long succession battled for the eternal principles of right, but there seemed to be an impenetrable barrier in their way; to us also the inherited conflict was hopeless to *every* eye but that of our faith. We were content to fight on, for it had grown to be our normal condition, to fight in a minority, and wait. But to our surprise all was changed; new succours arose from unexpected quarters, circumstances combined to enlighten those whom truth had not aforetime reached, folly in the camp of our foes befriended us by stultifying; all their opposition, and victories were achieved for us as splendid as they were sudden. Nor is this all, the impetus which has already shaken the ramparts of time-honored errors, is at work with undiminished energy, testing all things, and dooming to destruction all that is not founded on the rock of truth and righteousness. No circumstances could be more encouraging to the champion of truth, than those which now surround us. The stars in their courses are contending for the cause of God. The great current of events sets towards the end desired. How soon the most gigantic falsehood may fall, or the most ancient abuse may be abrogated, we can hardly guess, but the overturning of things which may be shaken is clearly inevitable. The Judge of all the earth is now bestirring himself. He bids time, the great Iconoclast, beat in pieces the

images of the world's idolatry, and he slowly and surely establishes the throne of Jesus above the hills.

While time thus appears to have accelerated his pace, there is a loud demand upon each of us to redouble our exertions to make the pulse of our being keep pace with the pulse of time. When providence makes forced marches, we must not be laggards. To crawl, in an age of lightning, cannot be excused. God's servants must keep time in their praise with the music of events. /tear ye not the mighty songster of providence? let, not your notes drag behind, while his voice leaps on from bar to bar. If ever a man might wish to be ten met], and each of those. men a legion, it is now, when men's minds are awake, and things are on their trial. To idle now, is treason to God and man. The church of God expects every man to do his duty, and woe unto him by whom that duty shall be neglected.

Our magazine has maintained and even improved its circulation during this year, for which we thank God, and are grateful to our' readers. We have not borne the sword in vain, for with all our might we have waged war with spiritual wickedness, and have not spared the-errors of the times. Yet we hope we have no; neglected the trowel but have laid ourselves out to promote every enterprise by which the church of God may be built up. By means of these pages, the Pastors' College and the Stockwell Orphanage have derived a measure of hell,. so that our work has produced tangible practical result. Other good works we are happy to say have derived pecuniary assistance from our articles, and in this we greatly rejoice.

During the next year we hope to continue the Exposition of the Psalms; we hate also reason to believe that a relative of John Ploughman will send us contributions of the proverbial character, and we hare other good things in store. Upon our work during another year our Lord condescend to smile.

Meanwhile, one word with the courteous reader, and we have done. We often commune together on other matters, reader, permit the question, *Is your heart right with God?* Have you believed in the Lord Jesus Christ? Are you a regenerate to soul: If not, dear reader, be not at rest till in secret earnest prayer, you have sought and found a Savior. Consciences compels the asking of this question by us, may your conscience constrain you to answer it.

Yours, in this matter, anxiously,

C. H. SPURGEON

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL

JANUARY, 1869.

“BLESS THE LORD O MY SOUL.”

BY C. H. SPURGEON.

THE Orphanage at Stockwell was not of our designing, but a work given us by our Great Taskmaster, whom it is joy to serve. Entering upon the work at his bidding, we felt sure of his help; we prayed for it, and at once received delightful earnestness or what the Lord intended to bestow. Month by month the hand of the All-sufficient God has sent a goodly portion of the sum required to erect the buildings, until on this first month of 1869, we are able to record that when the students have paid all their amount, and Messrs. WINNER & GOODALL have finished the two houses given by the Baptist churches (and both these amounts are sure to be made up ere long), the whole of the Orphanage buildings will be paid for. *-In fact, the whole amount needed may be said to be raised.* Blessed, for ever blessed be the name of the Lord.

In the month of December there still remained £1,500 to be raised, and much prayer was offered by me both day and night distinctly for this amount. The Lord began to answer, and stayed not his hand till he had given all. A beloved sister in the Lord called with £100, half of which she gave to the College, and the other £50 to the Orphanage. Here was a commencement. A day or two afterwards, a legacy left by Mr. Doodle, of Long Crendon, which amounted net to £225, was paid. Two days after, our dear brother and deacon, MR. *Hands*, volunteered £200 to furnish the house which he had already given, and then to crown all, we received by post from some generous friend unknown to us, two Bank of England notes for £500 each: we believe it to be from the same hand which sent large sums before. The Lord abundantly bless all these donors, and especially that unknown steward of his house who so bounteously and secretly helps the orphan's cause. We sang “Praise God from whom all blessings flow” with the family in which we reside, and then retired to rest

with a heart full of gratitude, magnifying the faithfulness of the Lord. On the next service night we held a special meeting to the Lord that heareth prayer, and thus we set up our Ebenezer to his name.

Under our heavy domestic trial, which is now we trust much alleviated, the Lord in infinite pity has spared us all anxiety about the Orphanage and College. "He stayeth his rough wind in the day of his east wind." Blessed be his name!

To all donors, great and small, to all who helped the Bazaar, whether as sellers or buyers, to all collectors, to all who have prayed for us, we tender loving acknowledgments, and ask them to join with us in praise.

Thus encouraged, we set forward to the daily task of managing the Orphanage, and seeking from our heavenly Father the needed supplies. According to the amount of funds sent will be the number which the houses will contain. We shall begin with fifty, and proceed to receive fresh accessions as the houses are finished and fit for occupation, by which time we shall hope to have two hundred and fifty boys under our care. "The Lord will provide" is the motto which we have engraved upon the pillars of the entrance arch, and in confidence in that truth, we already rejoice with exceeding great joy at the misery which will be relieved, and the benefit which will be bestowed, by THE STOCKWELL ORPHANAGE.

THE APOSTOLIC WORK IN CHINA.

NO mission now existing has so gully our confidence and good wishes as the work of Mr. Hudson Taylor in China. It is conducted on those principles of faith in God which most dearly commend themselves to our innermost soul. The man at the head is "a vessel fit for the Master's use." His methods of procedure command our veneration — by which we mean more than our judgment or our admiration; and the success attending the whole is such as cheers our heart and reveals the divine seal upon the entire enterprise. Now comes lastly, the only thing wanted, the growl of the devil, the surest mark that his kingdom is in danger. At the risk, which we hope is a great one, that the readers of the *Sword and Trowel* have read" *China Inland Mission, Occasional Paper, Number 15,*" we give lengthy extracts from the narrative of the great trial and peril of Hr. Taylor, and the brethren in the city of Yang-chau; upon which we take leave to say, that

only weak-minded believers will be moved by the criticisms of newspapers, who revile, firstly, all evangelization, and secondly, the method adopted by Mr. Taylor of naturalizing his fellow-laborers and himself by the adoption of the Chinese dress and habits. *This is the right if not the only way.* Let these devoted men and women persevere in it. As to these missionaries causing strife, is it not always so where the true faith is in active exercise? Did not our Lord foretell that it should be so? A gun-boat has been sent, but Mr. Taylor never asked for it; if it be needed, it is not of his seeking. He has not resisted evil, but suffered it like the lowly Lamb who was dumb before his shearers. As an Englishman, he has a right to protection; as a Christian, he has not clamored for it. we question if a more wonderful instance of the patience of the saints has been exhibited since the days of Stephen. The whole matter is a loud call in providence to the Christian church in England. Friends must help who never helped before, and all must pray, and good will come out of evil.

“Yang-chau is a city of 360,000 inhabitants, some fifteen miles up the northern branch of the Grand Canal. We arrived there in our boats on the 1st of June, and went ashore to an hotel in the city on the 8th. After a tedious battle with difficulties, the narration of which within reasonable limits is impossible, and after fruitless negotiations for, perhaps, thirty different houses, we succeeded in renting one on the 17th of July, the Prefect having given us a proclamation; and some of my family moved into the house on the 20th. When the fact of our having been baffled in Chinkiang became noised abroad at Yang-chau, it suggested the idea that it would not be very difficult to eject us from that city; and, while the mass of the people were quite friendly, the literary classes were looking on our arrival with great jealousy, and commencing those efforts which resulted in the attacks on us on the 22nd and 23rd of August.

“More than a fortnight before the attack on us I was informed that there had been a meeting of some of the literary and military Bachelors, at which it was determined to stir up the people by ‘agitating reports,’ and thus to eject us from Yang-chau. I endeavored to quiet the fears of my informant, one of the agents who had assisted us in renting the house there; but from that time we were frequently annoyed, and sometimes endangered, by the throwing of stones at and into our windows.

“Ere long small anonymous handbills in manuscript were posted up, containing absurd charges against us, and threatening us, the landlord, and

the house-agents; and the people began to be very troublesome; but by patiently endeavoring to pacify them then we succeeded in avoiding any outbreak. These handbills proving insufficient to effect the malignant purpose of their authors, larger ones, nearly a yard long, were posted up, calling us ‘ Brigands of the Religion of Jesus,’ stating that we scooped out the eyes of the dying, opened foundling hospitals to eat the children, etc., etc. This roused the people so much that though we were able to prevent a riot by taking our stand at the door of the premises, and arguing all day with them as they assembled, I felt it incumbent on me to write to the Prefect, and request him to take such steps as should appear to him requisite. This I did on Friday, August 14th, but on the following day I only received an evasive reply from him.

“On Saturday, August 15th, some of the better disposed people forewarned us that a riot might be expected on the morrow, and advised our adopting every precaution to avoid collision with the people. We at once built up as many entrances to the house as possible, and on Saturday afternoon, placing two large chairs across the narrow passage which leads from the street to the house, two of us seated ourselves in them, and so closed the way. A crowd of from one hundred to two hundred persons were assembled, and from time to time we addressed them, with the effect of preventing any actual breach of the peace.

“On Sunday, August 16th, a new placard was freely posted about, more vile and irritating than the previous ones. It concluded with a notification that on the examination day the graduates and the people would come to our house and burn it down; when all, natives and foreigners, would be destroyed indiscriminately.

“On Saturday, August 22nd, I first became aware of imminent danger about four p.m., when one of the servants came running into the house and asked me to come out at once, as both the inner and outer gates had been burst open, and a crowd was already on the premises. Losing no time, I went and found it was indeed so, but succeeded in getting them out, and in stationing two of our number at the end of the entrance lane, as before, while the gates were repaired by the carpenters then working on the premises. A little later the people began to pelt those sitting at the door — a thing not attempted before; and at dark, instead of going home, the rioters only became more uproarious. We sent messengers at intervals to the Prefect; but they neither returned themselves nor did any help come.

The attack became general; some of the shutters of the upstairs rooms of the house were dashed in from behind, part of the garden wall was being pulled down, and it was evident that without help we could not long keep the people out. Mr. Duncan and I, therefore, determined to endeavor to make our way through the mob to the Prefect, as there was now no hope of Chinese messengers reaching him. Commending ourselves to the care of our Father, and asking the needed grace if a violent death were awaiting us (we had previously in the house commended those we were leaving behind to God's care), we assayed to set out. We saw at once that it was impossible to pass through the mob in front of the house, who now also occupied the rooms at the entrance and the end of the passage; but by passing through a neighbor's house we succeeded in eluding the rioters immediately about the door. We had not proceeded far, however, when we were recognized, and the cry was raised, 'the foreign devils are fleeing.' Happily I knew a by-way leading through some fields, by taking which we eluded most of those following us, while our rapid pace soon distanced those who still pursued us, and the thick darkness favored us much. Moreover, the path we had taken misled many of the people, who thought we were fleeing to the East Gate to escape from the city; and, consequently, many persons ran off by a short cut, expecting to meet us there. All this was providential, as it gave us a few minutes at a time when every moment was precious. But when we turned into the main street we were assaulted with stones, and a mob gathered behind us, increasing at every step. Our rapid strides still kept a clear space between us and them, but we were nearly exhausted, and our legs so hurt with the stones and bricks thrown at us that we were almost failing, when we reached the door of the Ya-mun. But for the protection afforded us by the darkness, we should have scarcely reached it alive. The gate-keepers were just closing the doors as we approached, alarmed by the yells of the people behind us; but the momentary delay gave time for the crowd to come up and close upon us; the as yet unbarred gates gave way to the pressure, and we were precipitated into the entrance-hall. I am convinced that had the gates been barred they would not have been opened for us, and we should have been torn in pieces by the enraged mob. We rushed into the judgment-hall and cried, 'Save life, save life,' a cry which a Chinese mandarin is bound to attend to at any hour of day or night. We were taken to the room of the secretary and kept waiting for about three-quarters of an hour before we had an audience with the Prefect, all the time hearing the yells of the mob destroying, for aught we knew, not only the property, but possibly the

lives, of those so dear to us. And at last, when we did get an audience, it was almost more than we could bear with composure, to be asked as to what we really did with the babies? Whether it was true we had bought them, and how many? What was really the cause of all this rioting? etc., etc. At last [told his excellency that the real cause of all this trouble was his own neglect in not taking measures when the matter was small and manageable; that I must now request him first to take steps to repress the riot, and save any of our friends who might still be alive, and afterwards make such inquiries as he might wish, or I would not answer for the result. 'Ah,' said he, 'very true, very true; first quiet the people, and then inquire. Sit still, and I will go to see what can be done.'

“He went out, telling us to remain, as the only chance of his effecting anything depended on our keeping out of sight; for by this time the number of rioters amounted to eight or ten thousand. (The natives estimated them at twenty thousand.)

“We were kept in the torture of suspense for two hours, when the Prefect returned with the governor of the military forces of the city — some 3,000 men, and told us that all was quiet now; that they had seized several of those who were plundering the premises, and would have them punished. We returned under escort. On the way back we were told that *all* the foreigners we had left in the house were killed. We had to cry to God to support us. though we hoped this might prove exaggerated or untrue.

“When we reached the house, the scene was such as baffles all description. Here, a pile of half-burned reeds showed where one of the attempts to set the house on fire had been made; there, *debris* of a broken-down wall was to be seen; and strewn about everywhere were the remains of boxes and furniture, scattered papers and letters, broken work-boxes, writing-desks, dressing-cases, and surgical-instrument cases; smouldering remains of valuable books, etc., etc.; but no trace of inhabitants within.

“It was sometime ere I was able to learn that they had escaped, and then it was not easy to ascertain where they were. At last I found them in the house of one of the neighbors, under the care of an officer. On learning from him that he considered it safe to remove them into the house, I took them back again, and was then informed of what transpired during our absence.

“After we left, Messrs. Reid and Rudland kept the doors and entrance as long as possible, determined only to retire from point to point as actually compelled, and hoping to retard the progress of the rioters until help arrived. While they were keeping the people out at the front door, a wall that had been built to close u a side door was pulled down, and they had to retire to a nearer point. Now all the teachers’ and servants’ things were at the mercy of the mob, by whom they were all removed or destroyed, save a few which one or two had previously managed to secrete elsewhere. In the meantime the windows in the main building continued to be assailed with showers of stones; and the walls at the hack were broken through. Mr. Rudland therefore went to try anal keep the people at bay there. The hope of plunder being evidently more promising behind the house, and the means of defense being absent there, the mob concentrated their efforts in that direction, and the front of the premises was left comparatively open. When Mr. Rid became aware of this, he left the servants in charge at the front and joined Mr. Rudland in the main building: the latter going upstairs while Mr. Reid remained below.

“Instead of attempting to describe what followed, I will simply transcribe an account written by Miss Blatchley. It commences with the departure of Mr. Duncan and myself to the Prefect’s : —

“The next four or five terrible hours it is difficult to describe, we were separated now; and to personal danger was added the tenfold more painful suspense as to the fate of those away from us. Mr. Taylor and Mr. Duncan were out in the streets, exposed to the fury of the mob; Messrs. Reid and Rudland, with the servants, were endeavoring still to guard the entrance; and we, ladies and children, were alone in the upper story of the house. It was unsafe to remain in any of the bedrooms, on account of the stones and bricks which were being showered in at the windows; so we brought the children into Mrs. Taylor’s room — the middle of the three front apartments — and gathered there ourselves to plead with God to protect and save us, and especially to take care of our brothers, who were in the fore-front of the danger. Sometimes a fresh outburst among the rioters made our hearts chill for a moment, but we preserved our calmness and sustained our courage by wrestling in prayer.

“Presently Mr. Rudland came up so exhausted that he could hardly stand, and with his clothes all stained with mud. He said that the people had already broken through, and were in the premises.

“We could hear that the rioters were already in the house, and were expecting every moment to see them come up the stairs, when Mr. Reid called out for, the court below, in a hollow, hoarse voice, as if utterly exhausted. ‘Mrs. Taylor! come down if you can. They’re setting the house on fire, and I can’t help you.’ We dragged the sheets and blankets off the bed, and Mr. Rudland got out upon the projecting roof under the window, and let down Mrs. Rudland, our head printer’s young wife, and Bertie. Mr. Reid hurried them away, and concealed them in the well-house, and then returned for others. But, in the meantime, a tall, strong man, naked to the waist, came into the room: and we could see others carrying off boxes from the adjoining rooms. Mrs. Taylor kept him parleying for a few minutes: but he soon began to lay hands upon us, and search our persons for money, etc. Mrs. Taylor had advised me to get a few dollars, in case we should need to escape by boat from the city, and I had tied a small bag with seven or eight dollars in it upon the sidefastening of my dress. The man snatched this from me, and asked for more threatening to cut my head off if I didn’t comply; but the threat was a very vain one, as he had no weapon to carry it unto execution. (We heard afterwards that the men downstairs were armed with clubs, spears, knives, etc.) He next tore off Miss Desgraz’s pocket, and took away her hair-ornament; and then being soon satisfied that nothing was concealed about the thin summer clothing we wore, he turned to the boxes and drawers.

“Somewhere about this time nurse escaped with baby by going downstairs. after a man who was carrying off a box, behind which she screened baby from the stones and brickbats. She rushed through the fire and the bottom of the stairs and so got to the front, and took refuge in the well-house. At the same time, Mr. Rudland was letting down by the blankets Freddy and Samuel, and the little Chinese girl whom Miss Desgraz had adopted, while the man in our room was still busy searching re,’ money and other small valuables which he could conceal in his waistband. Mrs. Taylor was speaking to him, with her hand raised, when he caught sight of her wedding-ring shining in the candlelight and tore it from her finger: remonstrance was, of course, vain.

“Mr. Reid was again calling to us to hasten, and the smoke was by this time becoming oppressive; while the noise of falling walls, and the almost fiendish yelling of. the mob, warned us that no time must be lost. Miss Desgraz was just safely down when the men below cast a heap of burning materials immediately under the window, and cut off escape for us who

remained — that is, Mrs. Taylor, Mr. Rudland, and myself. But just then our attention was directed, not to the means of escape, but to the immediate safety of Mr. Rudland. The man who searched us had now turned to him as he stood upon the roof. and reaching over the low wall caught him by the tail, and dragged him down upon the tiles. He felt about his person and discovered his watch, and struggled to get possession of it. But Mr. Rudland, determined that he should not have it, took it himself from his bosom and threw it out into the darkness, thinking it just possible that the man might leave us to seek it. This so enraged his assailant that he attempted to thrust Mr. Rudland off the roof, but Mrs. Taylor and I together caught hold of him and dragged him into the room. The man was becoming more and more exasperated; he snatched an immense brick from the wall, which had been partly broken down in the scuffle, and lifted his arm to dash it at Mr. Rudland's head. Again we saw his intention, and caught hold, of the raised arm in time to prevent what must have been a death-blow. Why the man did not attempt to resist or do *us* violence, I cannot tell. Except that God restrained him.

“Seeing Mr. Rudland on an equal footing with himself (for he was now inside the room), and in a position for fair play, the man, like a true Chinaman, preferred not to face his opponent under these circumstances, and with all haste climbing over the wall, made his way across the trees into the adjoining room, crying to his fellows below, “Come up, come up!” We were anxious now to make our own escape. One of us proposed trying the windows of the side rooms, but if we got out of these we should be outside our own premises, and, more over-separated from those who had got out at the front. To go down by the staircase was out of the question: at the bottom was a large fire, by the light of which several men were breaking open and ransacking boxes. Not knowing what to do, we returned to the front room, and found that the fire below had been dragged away by Mr. Reid, who had by this time returned after being many times obliged to hide among the rockery from his assailants. He said there was not a moment to lose; we must jump down and he would catch us. Mrs. Taylor went to the edge of the roof, and jumped from it — a height of from twelve to fifteen feet. I saw her fall upon her side, partially caught by Mr. Reid; and saw that Mr. Reid was ready to receive me. I let myself fall from the edge, but at the same time a brickbat struck Mr. Reid in the eye, and rendered him blind and almost insensible. Consequently, I fell upon the stones, upon my back. For the instant I felt that I was either dying or

stunned; but to lie there was certain death. Somehow I got upon my feet and then fell again: I got up and fell three or four times before I was able to keep up. Then I saw that Mr. Rudland, who had dropped himself from the roof uninjured, was assisting Mrs. Taylor: she could hardly stand. He had been attacked by a man with a club, but had escaped with a slight bruise. Mr. Reid, who was almost stunned by the blow he had received, and nearly fainting with pain, entreated that some one would lend him away: and the showers of bricks which were flying about us made us exert to the utmost what little 'strength we had remaining. The night was very dark, and the glare of the fire we were leaving made the darkness seem still more dense. With what haste we could we stumbled over the broken rocks towards the entrance, but finding one of the doors by which we must pass closed and barred, we were brought to a standstill. We waited here while Mr. Rudland went to fetch those who were in the well-house, and when we were altogether — the poor children only half dressed and with bare feet, for they had been taken out of bed — we made our way as quietly as possible round by an opening where the rioters had knocked down the wall, and so got into one of our neighbor's houses by a doorway. We were conducted first to one room, then to another, for concealment, as the danger of discovery seemed to increase; and were finally taken to the innermost apartments of the house. We sat there in the darkness — such a long, long time it seemed — hoping and fearing, as to what had become of Mr. Taylor and Mr. Duncan. Mr. Reid lay groaning with pain; the poor tired children wanted to sleep, and we dared not let them, as we might have to flee again at any moment. Mr. Taylor was almost fainting from loss of blood; and I now found out that my arm was bleeding from a bad cut, and it was so painful I could not move it: while many of us were stiff and sore with bruises.

“One of our teachers had joined us in our place of refuge, and from time to time he acquainted us with what was going on outside. From him we learned: that the Prefect had come with his soldiers, and was driving away the rioters; and was guarding the house in which we were concealed. But still no word of Mr. Taylor.

“At last, after the sounds of yelling and fighting had subsided, we received the joyful tidings that he and Mr. Duncan had come; and soon Mr. Taylor's own voice confirmed the report. He was not even wounded seriously, only somewhat felled by a severe blow from a stone which had struck him in the hollow of the knee, on his way to the Ya-mun.

“We were now once more all together, and all living; and our-first thought was to lift our hearts to God in thanksgiving. At that moment we thought little of the destruction of our property, the loss amounting as we have since estimated, to above ~500. Moreover, we found that our house had not been burnt down, as have been reported to us, for the neighbors had interfered and helped to put the fires out, for fear their own dwellings should be consumed. Mr. Taylor having called in the Che-hian to see Mr. Reid’s condition, and having previously ascertained from him that it was safe to return to our own quarters, the wounded were removed as soon as possible, and we once more entered the house.’ [Here Mr. Taylor resumes.]

“It was past midnight when we returned to the house. A guard of soldiers and some men from the Mandarin’s kept watch till dawn: then they left us, and it appeared that none were appointed to take their place. The people soon began to re-collect; and again commenced four or five long and anxious hours. After a short but ineffectual attempt to keep them out, they were able to make their way into the open ground, and it was evident that the plunder of the preceding evening had whetted the appetite of the people. Once more commending all to the care of our covenant-keeping God, who had so mercifully preserved us through the preceding night, I left them and went to the Prefect’s for aid.

“Another long and anxious delay here awaited me. The Prefect had not risen, had not bathed, had not breakfasted: I sent a message in that [did not wish for an interview, but that the riotous proceedings had again commenced, and that there was no one there to repress the mob. After a time I was told that the Prefect had dispersed the mob.

“To those I had left behind the time had been one of peculiarly painful suspense; indeed, it had seemed a climax of the anxieties and dangers of the night. As I “have before remarked, many were already injured.. Now, there was no darkness to favor an escape, and the front of the house was surrounded as well as the back. When the wall had been broken through Messrs. Duncan and Rudland took their seats at the entrance, the front garden and rockery being covered by a crowd which every moment increased. A few stones were thrown in at the open front of the upstairs rooms, but the Lord graciously restrained the crowd from doing much in this way: and just as anxiety was at its acme, and the impossibility of much longer keeping back the crowd from before and behind was evident, God

sent help; the soldiers began to disperse the people, and the grounds were gradually cleared; and ere long the soldiers had the undivided privilege of looting to themselves — a privilege they did not fail to improve.

“In the afternoon, the magistrate engaged four boats, and procured sedan-chairs, and coolies for the luggage, and sent us to the South Gate. Next morning we were escorted as far as Kwa-chau — the point of juncture of the northern branch of the Grand Canal with the Yang-tse-kiang — and proceeded to Chin-kiang.

“On our arrival in Chin-Kiang, we were received by the foreign residents with the utmost sympathy, and all seemed to vie with each other in their kindness and hospitality. Though most of us were perfect strangers to them, they opened their houses to us, and did everything in their power to assist us. Their kindness we can never forget.”

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL,

FEBRUARY, 1869.

DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE.

BY J. A. SPURGEON.

THE *object* of this paper is to direct attention to the discipline of our churches as distinguished from their creeds and constitution, thus contributing, it may be hoped, some assistance to the discussion of the best methods for securing and maintaining purity and peace within the gates of our Zion.

The *subject* of the paper is the discipline of the church at the Metropolitan Tabernacle. This particular example has been selected because with it the writer is more familiar than with any other. It is moreover the discipline of one of our oldest churches, and not the least successful of them, and it has been thought that there are elements of peculiar interest connected with it which it would be superfluous to enumerate.

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 Paedobaptist, 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 ferrets 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 of the word. If churches would only act with the prudence of any assembly 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 cooperation 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. Amongst the officers of the church, foremost stands *the pastor*, who, though its servant, is so to rule, guide, and discipline it as God shall help and direct by his Holy Spirit. In connection with the church at the Tabernacle two such officers are now laboring. It is a trite remark that if two men ride a horse one must sit behind, and he who is in the front must hold the reins and drive. Co-pastorships have been sources of discomfort or blessing as this principle has been understood. Wherever it may have been disregarded, it is not (by the grace of God) likely to be so in the case in hand. Where one of the two brothers has been so instrumental in creating the necessity for additional help, from the very fullness of blessing resulting from his labors; and is, moreover, so superior in talent, influence, and power, ^{f15} 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 division 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 disputing about the boundaries of their little empires. The spirit of peace has kept us from this evil, but a judicious arrangement has been helpful in producing the result. There are still Diotrefes in the present age — men loving to have the pre-eminence — but it is the duty of the minister to magnify his office, and rule even these, which is best done not by assertions of power or complaints of want of influence, but by possessing such personal weight of piety and prudence, zeal, godliness, gentleness, and forbearance, as will inevitably place him in the front in course of time. In the long run, the measure of any man's power and influence is the measure in which he deserves to possess them; and no man is entitled to expect any more. It is quite certain that no efforts to assert official dignity, when sound judgment and weight of character are wanting, will ever result in anything short of failure and contempt. 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 made and born; and day by day must they be sustained, or their office will be a shame to themselves and a burden to their flocks. From this may the Lord keep his servants evermore.

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 upon our side. It may and does often happen that the man of judgment, prudent in counsel, and skilled in money matters, is not gifted with speech so as to lead devotional exercises in the church or prayer-meeting, or beside the bed of sickness, or in the house of mourning. A good man for things temporal, in dealing with worldly matters, may not be an elder apt to teach and to exhort. On the other hand, a man may have all the qualifications of an elder, but be lacking in such abilities as are required for the serving of tables, the disposing of finances, and the securing of needed funds for the church.

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 general treasurer, and has been so for many years — long may he be spared to us; another takes all out-door work, repairs of the exterior, keeping the gates, appointing doorkeepers, etc.; another has all indoor repairs; while others watch over the interests of

the new churches which are springing from our loins; and one brother as a good steward sees to the arrangement and provision of the weekly communion, and the elements required for 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 a 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. As a whole we cheerfully bear our testimony to the beneficial working of the system of deaconate and eldership as distinct offices. Both works are in a few cases performed by the same person, but the existence of the two bodies of men is in a thousand ways a great assistance to good government.

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 attend 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 enquire as to the moral character and repute of the candidate. If the visitor be satisfied he requests the candidate to attend with him at the following or next convenient church meeting, to come before the church and 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, and any such facts of his spiritual history as may convince the church of the genuineness of the case. We have found this a means of grace and a rich blessing. None need apprehend that modesty is outraged, or timidity appalled by the test thus applied. 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 or satisfying a doubt previously entertained. We deny that it keeps away any worth having. Surely if their Christianity cannot stand before a body of believers, and speak amongst loving sympathizing hearts, it is as well to ask if it be the cross-bearing public confessing faith of the Bible? This is no matter of flesh and blood, but of faith and grace, and we should be sorry to give place to the weakness and shrinking of the flesh, so as to insult the omnipotence of

grace, by deeming it unable to endure so much as the telling in the gates of Zion what great things God has done for the soul. Of course, the system may be, and has been, abused, but we decline to recognize any argument drawn from the abuse of what we use lawfully. It need not be an offense to any, and it will be an immense blessing to that church which watches for souls, and rejoices over one repenting sinner more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance. 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, which is administered by the junior pastor after a week-day service, 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 on a form prepared — 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 a transfer, the 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 dismissal 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.

When details of cases under discipline are kept from the church, the fact is openly stated, and leave asked for the maintenance of such public reticence; while any member is informed, that if dissatisfied, the pastor will give him the reasons why the elders have advised the removal of the offender, and their motive in not giving details of the sin. When it would be for the injury of good morals, or expose the pastor to a suit-at-law, the officers ask the confidence of the church, and request it to adopt their verdict in the case without hearing detailed information; this is cheerfully accorded in every case, and much evil thus averted.

All money matters are audited by unofficial brethren selected by the church, and the accounts read and books produced at the annual church meeting, when all the members endeavor to be present.

All minutes of church meetings, deacons' and elders' courts, are entered, and confirmed at the following meeting. Unless notice is previously given, no business, as a rule, is entertained but what emanates from the chair, or is sent up from an elders' or deacons' session; though this custom is departed from if any manifest benefit is to be derived from so doing, and no one challenges the motion as irregular.

WORK

The discipline of service is one element of highest importance. The best officers and the wisest mode of government will only result in feebleness and discord if the church sits still with folded hands. A lazy people must, by a law of necessity, become a corrupt people. Purest water stagnating must putrify.

*“Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do.”*

It would lengthen out our paper, already too long, beyond all reasonable bounds, if we were to enter into details concerning the work at the Tabernacle. In general terms, we remark that our Sunday-school contains 1,077 children, under the tuition of 96 teachers; besides another band, in the almshouses, containing 180 children, with 20 teachers; a third, at Manchester Hall and Richmond Street, with 320 children and 25 teachers; and many schools connected with rooms and preaching stations too numerous to be mentioned in this outline.

We have an elders' class for the children of the officers of the church; a young woman's Bible-class, containing from 500 to 600 members, conducted by Mrs. Bartlett; and two young men's catechumen classes, averaging upwards of 100 each. We have no means of judging the amount of work done by our members in ragged schools and Sunday-schools apart from our own place, but we know of more than a dozen schools which depend mainly, and some of them entirely, upon our help.

Meetings for prayer are held every day in connection with the church; in the morning at seven, and in the evening, generally, at half-past seven. Two prayer meetings are held every Sabbath, besides some dozens of others,

held in the houses of friends, both in the week and on the Lord's-day. We are constantly hearing of these, and they are a source of great strength to the church. Railway porters, letter sorters, and others who cannot get to evening meetings, meet for prayer in the middle of the day. In several large houses of business, we have Bible-classes, etc. A number of our members have connected themselves with the Rescue Society, and have for some time visited the Homes regularly, and helped in this work with great success.

Our Evangelist's Society keeps in active operation the preaching of the gospel in the streets every Lord's-day, weather permitting, and in small rooms and preaching stations.

Our Tract Society, with 69 districts, has circulated 2,336 copies of sermons every week in the last year, which, when they have gone round the districts, are given away at the workhouses which are visited. Two brethren are maintained in connection with Mr. Oncken's work on the Continent.

Our sisters are not wanting in their efforts to do good. We have our Dorcas, our Benevolent, our Working meetings, our Maternal Society, and our Mothers' Meetings, all in full activity. Seventeen of our poor and aged sisters are maintained in our almshouses.

Nor are the young ones behind. We have a juvenile Sabbath-school Working Society, and prayer meetings amongst the scholars. A special service for the young is held every Sunday at the almshouses at 6.30. A large Band of Hope is also doing a good work.

Our College, with its heavy responsibilities and innumerable outgrowths, and the growing care of the Orphanage, we cannot dilate upon. These are well known.

Our Colportage Society employs eight colporteurs, who have visited during the year 1868, 91,528 families, and regularly visit two hundred villages every month.

Some of our brethren work amongst the police, and visit the government stores; while others call at shops open on the Lord's-day, to try and speak a word for the sanctity of the Sabbath.

Several of our elders have regular preaching stations, with all the organizations for worship and service, which are usually connected with separate churches. These will some of them develop into distinct interests in due season, to our nominal decrease, but to the increase of the general church, which is our ultimate end and object for God's glory. Among such are, our dear friend Field, at the Rosemary Branch; Friend Dunn, at Manchester Hall, with its Sunday, Day, and Ragged Schools, and many charitable societies; and Elder Perkins, at Gospel Hall, South Street, Camberwell, where a building has been secured for home mission work; and regular preaching is carried on both during the week and on the Lord's-day.

Our evening classes are, moreover, a fruitful source of blessing. A good education is given to all young men of moral character who will attend regularly. Two singing classes on the tonic sol-fa system are held, and one for choral music of a superior class. A Bible-class for the young on Wednesdays, and a public Bibles-class presided over by Mr. Rogers on Mondays at 8.30. We have also a flourishing day-school under a most efficient master. Popular and scientific lectures are given during the winter months by Professor Solway and others, to which the public are admitted on a merely nominal payment, so as to provide interesting and instructive pastime for our young people, and at the same time connect them with our work.

Many of our friends help in the raising of new churches, four of which have been formed this year.

We must not omit to mention our Loan Fund for Chapel Building, which lends out money without interest, on the principle of the Baptist Building Fund. This sum, which we hope before long to increase to £5,000, forms a reserve for the College in case of an emergency.

In conclusion, we feel bound to acknowledge that our dependence for prosperity and peace is solely upon the God who commands the dew of his grace to descend upon his church. All our springs are in him; no under shepherd's care, not the best built and guarded fold can ever keep out the wolf in sheep's clothing, nor the enemy so watchful and relentless, who goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Our help cometh from the Lord who made heaven and earth. The discipline of the closet and the prayer meeting, of close fellowship with God in secret, will bring the reward openly. Nothing in the shape of rules or customs, no, not

even the devoted services of apostles themselves, can compensate for low-toned piety on the part of the members. Whence come wars and rightings — is it not because many professors are still carnal, and walk not after the Spirit? Drawing nearer and nearer to the center and source of all grace and blessing will inevitably result in our being “one” to the glory of God the Father. We must raise our standard of individual and personal piety, and to that extent we shall destroy elements of evil. If thorns can spring up and choke the good seed, the same law may, if rightly turned upon the foe, destroy roots of bitterness which, springing up, would trouble us, by occupying the ground with the “fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance — against such there is no law.”

Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

CITY ARABS

IN a little pamphlet, published, for threepence, by Mr. Nisbet, of Berners Street, Mr. W. Burns Thomson gives a most amusing and delightful account of his labors among the wild lads of Edinburgh. We envy the man of God who can do such good service, endure such discouragements, and persevere so undauntedly. Great will be the reward of those who love their Lord so well that the offscouring of men are precious in their eyes for his sake. The lower the strata the more precious the ore, in moral mining. Jesus is glorified greatly when his gospel lifts the beggars from the dunghill and sets them among princes. The Medical Mission of Edinburgh is honored by having such a man as Dr. Thomson in connection with it: may it prosper richly. Being much pleased with the simple narrative, we take the liberty of giving our ^{fl6} readers copious extracts, believing that our selections will not hinder, but rather suggest the purchase of the little record.

The odd experiences of those who go upon soul-hunting expeditions among the ragged city pariahs, are illustrated by the following embarrassing predicament: —

“One afternoon, when discharging the usual class duties, we found ourselves in a moment in midnight darkness, The shutter of the only window was suddenly closed and fastened outside. As some of my scholars were not quite orthodox in their views respecting the distinction between Mine and Thine, I hastily planted myself, with outstretched arms, between them and the movables, and sent them to open the door, but that was found to be fastened outside. The stronger amongst us exerted ourselves to effect deliverance, but in vain. At length we thundered at the door and attracted the attention of the people opposite, but they brought no help. It was discovered afterwards that the handle of our door was tied by a rope to the handle of that fronting us, so that the harder we pulled, striving to get out, the more effectually we shut our neighbors in, and prevented their coming to the rescue. It was a clever trick, and I longed to make the acquaintance of its author.”

The hero of this practical joke was met with and subdued by love; there was found to be a tender, affectionate heart beneath the young rascal's rough exterior.

“After a free and full forgiveness, he promised to come to my Bible Class, at least for once, to see how he should like it. He came regularly afterwards, and I was sometimes able to comfort him. At the end of several months I was called to leave that district, and went one afternoon to bid good-bye to some of those with whom I had become acquainted. When passing along Downie Place on my way home, I received a gentle tap on the arm, and turning round, saw my young Arab friend. ‘I hear you're gaun awe’, he said, and the tears filled his eyes. ‘Yes,’ I replied, as kindly as possible, and tried to cheer him; but it wouldn't do. He fairly broke down, weeping like a child, and ejaculated betwixt his sobs, ‘I'll hae nae freen' noo to tak care o' me.’ This exhibition was as unexpected as it was impressive. These tears have never been forgotten. This was the first real Arab I had ever encountered, and I discovered that he had not only a *humam* but a *tender* heart.”

Mr. Thomson's endeavors to form a decent Ragged School were for a long time utterly baffled by the depravity of the young sinners who to his room, apparently for no earthly purpose but to plague their teacher.

“Plenty of boys came, but we could not manage them. It is difficult to imagine, and impossible to describe, the scenes we witnessed on these occasions. A boy looks you in the face as innocently as if mischief were a stranger to him, and perhaps addresses some interesting question to you, whilst his toes are drumming the front of the pew. If he detects a suspicious glance flitting across your eye, on account of the quarter whence the noise proceeds, he gives a punch to his neighbor, tells him to be quiet, and rebukes him for his wickedness in hindering him from learning the truth. In this, our first attempt, we never got the correct name and address of a single boy. ‘What is your name, my man?’ ‘John Russell, sir.’ ‘Ah! that’s an honorable name.’ ‘That it is, sir.’ ‘Where do you live, my boy?’ ‘At Moray Place, sir’ ^{f17} On expressing astonishment, and hinting that his garments were scarcely in keeping with ribands the sleeve of his jacket, he exclaims — ‘Many, many a time our Bible Class seemed transformed into a menagerie. The singing was marred by the intermixture of every discordant sound the ingenuity of the lads could invent. The cries of animals were ever and anon issuing from sonic quarter of the building. The mewing of the cat was particularly in request. The *mya-a-oo* was always prolonged into a dismal wail, and wound up with an energetic ‘fizz.’ ‘Talk,’ says Dr. Davidson, ‘of the gross darkness and depravity of heathenism! I can honestly say that I have never met in heathen countries ignorance more complete, and depravity more deep and hopeless, than I have seen in this Cowgate of Edinburgh. Certainly I should a thousand times rather deal with the poor ignorant Malagasy, whose depravity, great as it is, has not grown up under the sun of Christianity and civilization, than I would with your young Cowgate Arabs.’“

Such is the frequent lot of Ragged School teachers in London, and they deserve, and ought to have, our daily prayers that they be not faint and weary in their work. Ordinary workers know nothing of the self-denials of those who gather together the outcasts; they bear the brunt of the battle, and should have our heartiest sympathy and aid.

Undismayed by difficulties, our friend persevered, and having a considerable taste for singing, he was led to adopt a somewhat singular mode of laying hold upon his savage *proteges*.

“Whether I clung to these boys from pride or from piety — from a mere unwillingness to be beaten in my undertaking, or from an affectionate, prayer-fill interest in their soul’s welfare, or perhaps from a blending of both — I shall not stay to inquire; certain it is, I could never live in peace whilst they wandered around me uncared for. I longed and prayed, and worked for the opportunity of telling them, *in quietness*, of the love of God in Christ, and I could not resist the conviction, that, though Satan might be allowed to thwart, perplex, and baffle me in this precious and interesting work, the Lord would give the desire of my heart. During the remainder of the session I tried to keep up as much personal friendly intercourse as possible with the lads, that I might not fall out of acquaintance with them. Next winter I began an experiment of a kind entirely different from any hitherto attempted, mainly with the view of keeping the youths in contact with me. I engaged a professional singer, with whom Miss Mercer joyfully associated herself, to teach them music and singing. They assembled twice a week in the school-room at Cowgate-head in great numbers. I tried to prepare the teacher for rough work, but it was with him, as I doubt not it is with many of my readers — he had no conception of what I had been speaking about. Five minutes in the school-room opened his eyes, and when I entered shortly after I found him bewildered, helpless, and actually pale with fright. And little wonder — the youngsters had rushed in with feelings of jubilation as if this were the jolliest plan I had ever tried with them, when as many as pleased might come together for a rompus, which was the only idea they had of a singing class. To speak to them was out of the question, even roaring would not have been heard; but a song, beautifully sung, gained a gradually enlarging circle of attentive listeners, till the room was quiet. Oft that winter were we struck with the power of music. When the boys themselves sung, which they soon learned to do pretty well, and in parts, they were not at all subdued; the last note was frequently converted into a bray or shriek, whilst a companion got a poke in the ribs, or was toppled over the form, or received some other little courtesy of that nature; but when a duet was sung by the teachers, the pupils were fairly spell-bound by it; and even after the applause there was a season of quiet, in which they would listen to a word of advice. During the first half-hour songs were sung; and during the second, sacred melodies. In this way they became acquainted with the words and music of many of our most precious hymns, such as ‘Rock of Ages,’ ‘There is a fountain,’ etc., etc.; and truly it was not easy to survey the group and listen unmoved, whilst they poured forth with a real heartiness the glorious truths of the

gospel. The behavior improved on the whole as the session advanced; but from first to last the management of them was an arduous and exhausting duty. In addition to what might be called the normal stream of annoyance and worry, episodes of every, type and complexion were introduced to diversify the proceedings. One night a youth came in with a lighted coal in his jacket pocket. As he entered late, and I knew him to be a thorough rogue, he was kept so constantly covered with my eye, that he found it impossible to carry out the glorious exploit with which he no doubt expected to dazzle his companions; and in a short time my attention was drawn to an intolerable smell of singeing, followed soon after by a pretty dense cloud of smoke, in the midst of which the culprit rushed from the room. The burning coal had set fire to his jacket.”

On the occasion of a tea and treat given to these young hopefuls, their incorrigible *kleptomania* displayed itself, and was the source of an amusing anecdote: —

“One of the juveniles, true to his Ishmaelish instincts, slipped a saucer into his pocket, and no doubt chuckled over his success, as no notice was taken at the time of what he had done, although he had been observed. But before pronouncing the benediction I made the following intimation: — ‘There is a boy here who imagines himself clever enough to put a saucer in his pocket without my knowing it. The joke is all spoiled, for the boy was seen. You can place the saucer on the lobby table as you go out.’” To our astonishment we found *five* saucers. There were more culprits than one; but each, supposing himself the individual addressed, delivered up his article as he went out.”

The plan of giving free *breakfasts* was at last hit upon, and turned out to be the right method of reaching the poor lads. The respected writer tells us —

“We have got excellent classes this winter, and a fine description of boys to labor amongst; and, if these hasty sketches have been of any use in exciting an interest in their behalf in the minds of Christian readers, we trust you will hold up our hands in the good work by your sympathy and prayers. We should rejoice were you encouraged to do a little amongst them yourselves. If you live in a district less depraved than ours, and where fewer difficulties would beset your efforts, thank God and begin. Let me remind you the boys *must* be taught. Though we should foolishly leave them alone,

still they must be taught, and taught too at our expense. It is a costly thing to pay police officers to hunt the youths from crime to crime, judges to condemn them, drunken drum-majors to flog them, governors and warders to guard them, not to mention chaplains, teachers, food, and clothing, *all paid for out of our pockets*. A little kindness, suitably administered, might at least help to make good citizens of them, and what a saving to our pockets, not to speak of the comfort to our hearts. Today, when coming down Anderson's Close, I met one of our wildest *quondam* Arabs, well dressed and respectable looking in his appearance, with the mallet under his arm, going to his work. He is now a journeyman mason, and doing well: and this is not a solitary case."

If a gentleman incessantly engaged in medical and educational pursuits could render such service to the church of God, what might not gentlemen of leisure accomplish! Our beloved friend and brother, Mr. Orsman, is another case in point. He toils all day at the Post Office, and then begins a second day's work among the costermongers and crossing sweepers of Golden Lane, and all for love of his Lord. Such men shame us; especially do they shame the race of Christian loungers, who go from meeting to meeting in search of pious dissipation, but never buckle down to hard work. Let those who are great at religious tea-drinkings, *soirees*, and public meetings, but very little in actual service, hide their diminished heads in the presence of the apostles of the Cowgate and Seven Dials. All honor to the excavators of souls buried under accumulated mounds of ignorance and poverty. May such men be multiplied. Not to help them with funds would be an outrage upon all the instincts of our new-born nature; not to pray for them would be to prove ourselves graceless. He who pens these lines would cheerfully resign all the honors of a most popular ministry to have the singular grace of being counted worthy of the matchless glory of bringing the outcasts into the kingdom of Christ.

C. H. SPURGEON.

“OH, YOU WRETCH!”

A PRAYER-MEETING TALK. BY C. H. SPURGEON.

I QUITE agree with the remark made by a cheerful believer, that the Christian life may be described as “good, better, best” — “the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day;” but close researches into our own heart lead us to apply very different adjectives to our own carnal nature, of which we feel far more inclined to say that, to our apprehension, it is bad, worse, worst. All is light in the Lord, but all is darkness in self; in the Lord Jehovah have we righteousness and strength; in ourselves nothing but sin and weakness.

*“In him is only good,
In me is only ill;
My ill but draws his goodness forth,
And me he loveth still.”*

I heard today from a friend an odd story, which has much amused me and something more. He kept a parrot of loquacious habits, and next door to him there lived a minister, who called upon him one morning and asked him to be so good as to remove the talkative bird, for it worried him exceedingly. It was not its noise, but what it said, which was the cause of annoyance. It did not swear like a trooper, or scream like a termagant, but still it disturbed the divine beyond all bearing. Its voice had not vexed his ears one-tenth so much as its utterance had rent and torn his conscience. My friend was anxious to know what dreadful words those might be which had thus turned poor harmless Poll into a tormenting spirit, a very accuser of the brethren. It turned out that the bird, when he was hanging outside the window near to the preacher’s study, had screamed out with all his might, “Oh, you wretch! Oh, you wretch!” “Just,” said the minister, “when I am trying to prevail with God in prayer, or am endeavoring to confess my sins, a voice seems to mock me and sarcastically cry, ‘Oh, you wretch!’ And,” said the good man, “it is so true; I feel it is so; it comes home to me; it makes me remember that I am not praying as I ought, nor laying hold upon the promise as I should, and it causes me to feel deeply ashamed of myself. When I am writing my sermon, and preparing for the Sabbath, and am perhaps mourning over my cold-hearted and dilatory studies, the parrot calls out, ‘Oh, you wretch!’ and I think within myself, that is really just what I am. That parrot deeply distresses me by so continually bringing

before my mind my shortcomings and unworthiness. It was all very well for a time, but it is now a perpetual blister to me.” My friend was very fond of his parrot, though he must have sadly neglected its education; but he parted with it to relieve his neighbor, hoping thus that he had given a cup of cold water to one of the Master’s little ones.

I thought, when I heard the story, that I should like to have that parrot hung up in my study, but perhaps a little bird which lodges in my breast will do as well. My conscience softly moans to me like a turtle dove, “Oh, wretched man that I am!” and the note is so true, that my heart repeats it again and again: the shadow of my infirmities is ever upon me. I dare not hold my head on high, for I am deeply conscious of the evil within my bosom. Nor do I desire to feel other than ashamed of myself, for I never pray better than when the mournful, note of self-accusation is heard, and I never love Jesus more than when I feel my great need of his cleansing blood. So far as I can judge, I never quicken my pace so well in the spiritual pilgrimage as when my heart cries with all her might, “God be merciful to me, a sinner.” They run fastest home who most fear the storm; hence, “Blessed is the man that feareth always.” They carry most of Christ who have least of self, hence the richness of spiritual poverty.

As once a message from God came from the mouth of an ass, I shall borrow a text from a parrot, and use the words, “Oh, you wretch!” as a peg on which to hang a brief homily.

These words might be applied to some of us at sundry times and in divers places. For instance. Our Lord has been very gracious to us, and he has answered our prayers and fulfilled his promises times beyond number; he has brought us through six troubles, and in seven there has no evil touched us; we have been through fire and through water, and been divinely shielded from every ill. If, in fresh trials, we grow unbelieving and desponding, what excuse can be made for us? Some of you have been preserved sixty or seventy years; others of us have been kept by all sufficient grace, and have known the Lord now these twenty years, and have proved his faithfulness every moment during that long time. Now, when we begin to distrust and suspect the goodness of our God, our conscience might well say, “Oh, you wretch! Oh, you wretch!” What wretched creatures we must be so to dishonor our God, to question his immutable love, to doubt the veracity of his word, and suppose that he can change in his affection, or forget his people! How much more saintly to

sing, "Away, distrust, my God hath promised: he is just!" Nothing degrades us more than unbelief. Nor is there any sin over which we ought to grieve with deeper anguish of repentance than mistrust of God. Oh, it is a high crime and misdemeanor to impute unfaithfulness to him who cannot lie! Wretch that I am, that I should thus insult my God! What fountains of evil must be in me when the streams are so polluted with unbelief of my faithful God!

To bring to remembrance another evil, let us reflect how often during the day we wander from God in heart; our love is fixed on an earthly creature, and images of jealousy are set up in opposition to the Well-beloved of our souls. Dagon is elevated hard by the ark. If it were not for grace, we should forsake our Lord, and as it is, it almost comes to that; idolatry well nigh supplants our worship of God, and our love to the creature leads us to undervalue our Creator's goodness, and even to repine if the object of our overweening affection is removed. Then may we well chide ourselves —

*“Wretch that I am to wander thus,
In chase of false delights!”*

We have been deceived so often by the dried-up brooks of earthly joy, why fly we to them again? We have been to the broken cisterns so many times, and found no water in them, why do we leave the everlasting spring to trust the leaking creatures?

So too, dear friends, such a word as that might be spoken to us by our conscience when we have been angry under provocation, so as to have spoken rashly with our lips. That may not be the temptation with some of you, but it is the besetting sin of not a few. Some believers soon lose their balance; they speak hard and biting words, and think very unholy things. How hardly and sharply may conscience cry, "Oh, you wretch!" When Christ has forgiven you all sin, to be so easily enraged and to find it so hard to forgive your offending brother! When the Great Creditor frankly forgave you ten thousand talents, what a wretch are you to think it so difficult to let your brother go who only owes you the hundred pence! What a wretch to have your hand upon your neighbor's throat with "Pay me what thou owest." May we learn the mischief of an angry spirit, hate ourselves for ever yielding to it; and by the softening power of the Holy Ghost, be preserved in patience and meekness in imitation of our gentle Lord.

I need not mention the many, many times during the day in which such a cry as that of the poor imitating bird might be a needful reminder to us if a tender heart would but let us feel its power. O Savior in heaven, when we think of what we are in ourselves, we would lie in the very dust before thee. What is there in us that can recommend us to thee? How is it thou canst love us at all? It is a Wonder of wonders that ever thy august and ennobling love should have been set upon us. We cannot see anything lovely in ourselves; what is there of attraction that thy far more observant eye can by any possibility discover? We are but wretched men, as the apostle saith, in ourselves, and yet for all that, such is the exceeding greatness and abounding fullness of the love and mercy of God, that we are as surely dear to Jesus as if we were perfect in the flesh, and as much beloved of him as if we had never sinned; yea, our sins have given opportunities for matchless and amazing displays of his love, which otherwise, so far as we can judge, had not been exhibited to the wondering gaze of principalities and powers. Loathsome as sin is, I am almost ready to agree with Augustine when speaking of the fall, he said, "*Oh, beata culpa!*" — "Oh, happy fault!" — because it opened such room for redeeming love and divine compassion. Disastrous as was our first parents' sin, yet inasmuch as it made room for the wonderful display of the divine love to such sinners as we are, we can only magnify the depth of the wisdom and the height of the grace, and the breadth of the love of God, in the way in which eternal mercy overcomes the evil which was permitted, doubtless, for that very end.

It is essential that we should always maintain in our inmost hearts, a deep sense of the humbling truth that we are in ourselves nothing but dust and ashes, sin and defilement; wretches in the worst sense if it were not for grace. When a man begins to think, "Well, there is something praiseworthy in my flesh after all," depend upon it, there is nothing in him of any real worth. I remember a friend of mine who, one morning met in the market a deacon for whom up to that hour he had entertained the highest respect. This deacon said to my friend, "Friend So-and-So, I want you to do me a good turn." "Well," he replied, "I am sure I will if it is at all reasonable." Then said the other, "I want you to lend me a hundred pounds." My friend had it on his tongue to say, "Yes, I will write you a cheque at once," when the deacon said, "You can trust me, you know, I am perfectly safe; I am not like a young man, who may be led into doing wrong; I have been in the ways of the Lord for so many years, and have had so much experience that

I am past temptation.” “Past temptation!” muttered my friend. “Past temptation! I would not lend you the value of a sixpence.” “Why not?” said the man with surprise. “Because I would not trust you with any money of mine.” “But why not?” “Because you say you are past temptation, and man who is so confident in himself is one I have no confidence in.” That deacon knew right well that he had committed himself most grossly in pecuniary matters, and when he was talking so proudly he was consciously playing the hypocrite in the vilest manner. I was gratified at the shrewd common-sense of my friend, and glad that he saved himself from losing one hundred pounds, for the boaster went to pieces and was in prison within a month of that time. Whenever we allow our hearts to dream that we are beyond the region of indwelling sin, we are encircled by its coils. When we imagine that we are resplendent with a thousand virtues, we are besmeared and bespattered with defilement. Our congratulatory addresses to ourselves are the sure evidences of spiritual unsoundness. All trust in our own experience, or acquired wisdom, is a sandy foundation. No slippery morass, or all-devouring bog, is more treacherous than a self-flattering estimate of human nature. Quaint Herbert says:

*“Surely, if each one saw another’s heart,
There would be no commerce,
No sale, or bargain pass; all would disperse
And live apart.”*

The poet does not tell us what a man would do if he could see his own naked self in the glass of truth. It will not be an exaggeration if we say that it would be enough to drive him mad. Whenever we censoriously exclaim, “See how others behave! If I were in their position, how much better I should be than they are,” we are already well nigh gone and ready to slip with our feet. Ah! we do not know ourselves, my brethren, or instead of hearing laudatory words with pleasure, we should often shiver at the sound of a still small voice crying out, “Oh, you wretch!”

If you have a bird which cries, “Good master,” wring its neck; but if it shrieks, “You wretch,” be thankful that if neither your own heart nor your neighbors are honest to you, there remains yet one truth-telling creature upon the earth.

The Lord keep us empty in ourselves and full of himself, so that though we may mournfully confess, as David did, “So foolish was I and ignorant, I

was as a beast before thee;” yet with him we may add, “Nevertheless I am continually with thee; thou hast holden me by thy right hand.”

SERVICE OF JESUS IN LITTLE THINGS.

To turn every opportunity to account for Jesus is an art which all believers should learn. All cannot be eminent in the ministry of the pulpit; but the path to distinguished usefulness in the walks of every-day-life lies open to every Christian. Fish are not only taken in nets which surround them by hundreds, but they are captured by anglers, who concentrate their attention upon a single individual; soul fishery may be conducted in the like manner. In reading the life of John Milne, ^{f18} which has just been compiled by that man of God, Dr. Horatius Bonar, we have been struck with Mr. Milne’s power in dealing with souls one by one. His life lacks those stirring incidents which make a biography popular, but for this reason it will be all the more useful to those of whom it may be written.

*“Along the cool sequest’red vale of life
They keep the even tenor of their way.”*

He was associated with M’Cheyne and Burns, and other honored brethren, by whom the Lord worked mightily. Together with their soft and sweet radiance they made up a bright and lovely constellation, comparable to the Pleiades, and he was one of the brightest of the stars. Alas! that so many of them should shine no more for earth. The one thing, however, which has struck us in his life has been his readiness to catch at the slightest opportunity for saying a word in season; while the whole of his life was such as to shed a sacred influence all around, and to make his memoir precious to those who value grace and truth. This peculiar trait of character, which his biographer has perhaps unconsciously illustrated most lavishly, gave a * Life of the Rev. John Milne, of Perth. By Horatius Bonar, D.D. London: James Nisbet & Co., Berners-street tone to his life which we fail to note in many other good men. As our readers peruse the following interesting instances, let them earnestly pray that they may be filled with the same spirit. On his way to India, to labor in Calcutta, “He was not idle on board, though unable to do so much as he wished. He found opportunities, from day to day, of doing or speaking something for eternity. His light could not but shine during that voyage, and of this there were found some traces on the vessel’s return. A gentleman coming from

India in that same year (1853) was surprised to find tracts and little books lying about the steamer. He asked how and by whom this had been done. He was told that, last voyage a 'curious gentleman' had been on board, going to India. Every evening he used to go among the sailors, talking to them and listening to their stories. When they had done with their talk, he would take out his Bible from his pocket, and read a portion to them. Then he prayed with them. It was he who had given the tracts and books. There was no difficulty in discovering who this 'curious gentleman' was.

“On the same voyage, he went about among the cabin-boys, getting hold of them whenever he could. He used to promise them a sixpence or a shilling if they would learn a certain psalm or chapter, and repeat it to him. This was his practice on shore as well as at sea; and his card would frequently be handed in to Mrs. Milne by some boy, with this penciled on it, ‘Give the bearer sixpence [or a shilling as it might be] if he repeats the 53rd of Isaiah, or 55th, as the case might be. His devices for getting hold of people, or getting a word spoken to them, were as various as his zeal was unflagging. In Perth, or on the road, he might be seen helping a baker to carry his board or basket, or a man with a wheelbarrow, that he might get an opportunity of speaking to them. A Roman Catholic woman, who went about as a hawker, selling plates and dishes, tells that, meeting him once as he was coming down a long stair, he said to her, ‘You are looking weak;’ and then he insisted on carrying her basket down to the street, dropping a word as he went. These were frequent occurrences; and he would say on such occasions, ‘You know we should bear one another’s burdens,’ or some such word. Some would have thought it beneath his dignity to hand his coat to a poor man who complained that he could not get to church for want of clothes; or to give chase to three boys who ran off when he was trying to persuade them to come to the Sabbath-school; or to rush out of his house one snowy day to the Inch (or public green) to help a poor woman to get down her washing-ropes; but he never thought of his own comfort or dignity when he could assist another. Whether on shore or on ship-board, in Scotland or in India, his benevolence and obligingness was the same. In one pocket you might find a bottle of wine for some sick person, in another a bunch of grapes, and in another a packet of tracts or books. He was ‘ready, aye ready,’ for every good word and work. He ‘called nothing common or unclean’ whereby he could serve the Master, or comfort a disciple, or arrest a wanderer.

Mr. Bonar says of him in 1855 — “Of this date is the following sentence, so expressive of the man, reminding us of Paul’s ‘This one thing I do.’ It is a word for all, especially for ministers. *‘Let us try to say something to every one we meet.’ I have been trying it today.* When in London, among some Government officials, he astonished them by speaking personally to them about eternity, especially one venerable gentleman, who, not at all offended, simply made the remark, ‘I was never spoken to in that way before.’ It was most pleasant, but somewhat perilous, to have a walk with him. The stoppages were many; — Words to be dropped; tracts to be given; kind deeds to be done to passers-by.”

“Traveling in a train (1864), he writes afterwards: — ‘A news-boy was sorting his papers; I said, I have a newspaper that never grows old. He looked up with such an amazed, inquiring face, ‘What’s that?’ I took out my little Bible, and the poor boy felt it.”

“During a visit to London, at one of the metropolitan railway stations, while waiting for a train, he was interested with a fine little boy, whose father was pretending he would throw the child on the rails, much to the little fellow’s amusement. At last Mr. Milne said to the boy, ‘Why are you not afraid? If he throws you down, you will be killed.’ ‘Oh!’ said the child, with a shout of laughter, ‘he’s my papa.’ Mr. Milne paused a moment, and then turning to the gentleman, said, ‘What a lesson your boy has taught us, that, under all circumstances, we should trust our heavenly Father that he will not hurt us!’ and then walked on. In a few minutes the gentleman followed and said, ‘It is very remarkable that you should have made that remark to me just now. I am now on my way to visit my own father, who is in a lunatic asylum, and I am afraid I have had hard thoughts of my heavenly Father; but’ — at that moment his train came up, and all he could add was, ‘Thank you, thank you.’“

“Coming from church one afternoon he saw three women, in a humble rank of life, going out to walk on the Inch. One said to the others, ‘Stop, I have lost something.’ ‘Yes,’ said Mr. Milne, ‘stop; for though I do not know what you have lost, I know what you are losing.’ They looked amazed. ‘Yes,’ he continued, ‘you are losing your Sabbath; and if you lose your Sabbaths now, you will lose your souls by-and-by.’ The women did stop and turned back to their house.

“Walking in the country, near Bridge of Allan, he met a woman, to whom he offered a tract. She seemed most willing to take it, and he added, ‘I

hope you can say, Christ is mine.’ She hesitated; so holding out the tract, he said, ‘I offer you this, is it yours?’ She said, ‘Not till I have taken it.’ ‘Well,’ he said, ‘it is the same with Christ. God, by his ministers, offers him to you. Accept of him, and then you can say, Christ is mine.’“

“He had preached one Sabbath on ‘The harvest is passed, the summer is ended, and we are not saved;’ and during the course of the following week he saw one of his people walking along with a companion. He went up, and putting his hand on his friend’s shoulder, said, “ ‘The harvest is passed, the summer is ended, and we are not saved’ — are You saved?’ and immediately passed. His friend’s companion said, ‘Was not that very forward and uncalled for?’ ‘No,’ said the other, ‘it is a most important question.’ That question led to a true conversion.”

Reader, go and do thou likewise. C. H. SPURGEON.

POPERY IN THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND.

THIS IS NO FANCY PICTURE, but a tolerably correct *representation* of a clergyman of the church of England, occupied in the performance of some part of his ritual; we confess we know not which, but we vouch for the accuracy of the sketch. It was time that such foolery was stopped, but if the symbol be forbidden, the doctrinal Popery remains in the church. That many clergymen preach the gospel of Jesus right well and earnestly we joyfully admit, and we heartily wish that all did so; but how does this excuse the Establishment for teaching baptismal regeneration in her prayer-book, and so inviting the upgrowth of Popery in her pale? Some of her physicians prescribe the balm of Gilead for dying men: does this justify her in speaking so ambiguously in her prayer-book that men are poisoned with abominable and idolatrous nostrums borrowed from the old destroyer at Rome? It is said that the Ritualists will one day be turned out of the church by the exercise of her discipline: we sincerely hope so; but believe that so long as the prayer-book is unrevised, the church will remain but half reformed. The prayer-book is *for* the Ritualist in much of its teaching. The mere snuffing out of a few candles is nothing, the evil lies deeper than courts of law can reach. The only cure is for all true Evangelicals to come out of the church, and no longer bear the sin of fellowship with an Anglican Papacy: if they have not the courage to do this, let them agitate for the separation of the church from the state, in which case they would

reform their church at once. Something ought to be done, and done soon, for as matters now stand the established church is the recruiting sergeant for Rome, and the pope's work is being better done by our state-paid clergy than by his Jesuits or Cardinals. It is intolerable that a Protestant nation like England should much longer be saddled with the support of a church which is a nursery for Papists. Every Christian should shake himself free from all complicity with the Popery which is insidiously covering the land. How can he do this if he remains in fellowship with Ritualists? Come ye out from among them; be ye separate; touch not the unclean thing.

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THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL

APRIL — 1869

THE FLORENTINE MONK

IN the month of May this year it is proposed to hold a conference of Italian Christians in the fine old city of Florence. Gavazzi, whose evangelistic work among his countrymen has inspired new hopes in English breasts, as to the future of Protestantism in that land of olives and cypresses, has, with the assistance of those who are equally enthusiastic for the cause of God and truth, formed an Evangelical Alliance in Italy, for the purpose of unitedly combating “the two great enemies of the divine religion of Christ — Popery and Rationalism.” They thus hope to “present a compact phalanx against the expected assaults of the Coming Ecumenical Council.” Florence has not inaptly been chosen as the scene of this Protestant demonstration. Exactly four centuries ago, it witnessed the martyrdom of a Florentine monk, who, ere the Reformation dawned, and while, indeed, Martin Luther was a youth of six years of age, had aroused the enmity of one of the vilest miscreants of all the debased wretches that wore the triple crown, and had struck a blow at the pretensions of the Papacy, which was only the precursor of that mightier onslaught which staggered the see of Rome, and ushered in the Reformation. It is worth while to run over the incidents of that short but eventful life, since its lessons are as useful today as ever.

Savonarola was born in 1452, of respectable parents, at Ferrara. From his grandfather, a physician to a noble duke, he gained his first acquaintance with learned pursuits; from his mother he obtained those lessons of goodness and piety which influenced his heart and molded his character. Designed for the medical profession, he soon evinced a passionate longing for other pursuits. Thoughtful, earnest, high-souled, his heart guided his head, and both became devoted to the inner world of spiritual life, into which he withdrew, bidding adieu to the scenes of greedy lust and worldly pleasures by which he was surrounded. He was not the first, we suppose, who sought to relieve his young burning heart by rhyiming. We have very

little left of his youthful effusions, but they indicate the great struggles of his soul, and foretell the thoughts of a riper and more matured experience and observation. Thus early, he seemed to have gained a profound sense of the deep-seated corruptions of the apostate church. The profligate sensuous age moved him to write in terms of just severity; and it is noticeable how emphatically he lays the axe at the root of the upas-tree —

*“The earth so staggers under every vice,
That never will it lift its head again;
Rome is that head, so bowed with wickedness,
That ended now for ever is her reign.”*

Deeply did he lament the corruptions of the church. Bitterly did he bewail its abandonment of the high mission to which he believed it had been called. And yet, when he saw the outside world, he viewed it with intense disgust. For him it had no attractions. He despised its allurements; he detested its vanities; and so, with a moral determination, and a stern self-denial, worthy of a nobler consummation, he retired into a Dominican cloister. At first a lay-brother, mending the garments and keeping the garden of the convent he became, after a year of probation, a monk. He was an enthusiastic student. As he himself confesses, he strove after truth with all his powers. Truth was the empress of his soul. He loved her for her own sake. “She illumines,” he says, “the soul with divine light, and leads it to communion with God, who is himself truth” Fortunately, he obtained, like his successor of the convent of Erfurt, a copy of the Holy Scriptures. How earnestly did he apply himself to a thorough investigation of its teachings! Here, in his solitary cell, shut out from the gaudies and fascinations of Italian life, isolated from others by his very earnestness and heart-yearnings, like a panting hart braying for the water-brooks, he thirsted for the translucent purity of God’s all-satisfying truth. It is true, he read the Scriptures in the light — always a “dim, religious” one — of the church, but he could not shut his eyes to the awful revelations it gave of the abomination of desolations. His soul luxuriated in the peace-infusing teachings of the Word; but his heart was stirred up within him as he compared the church as it was with its ideal state. “Where,” he asks, “are the precious stones — where the pure diamonds, the bright lamps, the sapphires, the white robes, and white roses of the church?” It was thus that fourteen years of retirement were spent; the fires of suffering purifying his nature, and leading him to that higher renunciation and nobler consecration so needed for the work of the future.

Called from the seclusion of his cell, at the age of thirty-seven, to active labor in the city of Florence, Savonarola journeyed thither on foot — a dark, mysterious providence overhanging him; a disturbed world of conflicting thoughts within him; and an atmosphere of disquietude and gloom around. To what had his God called him? What meant those ceaseless agitations which electrified his soul, and burdened him as with a message from the Lord, crushing him to the earth? Subsequent events developed the foreshadowings.

Just at this time, Florence was at the dizzying height of its renown. It possessed nearly a thousand fortified positions. Its beauty of situation, its rich lands, its luxuriance, its wealth, its treasures of art, its libraries, its seats of learning, magnificent palaces, unrivaled advantages and commercial prosperity, with its gaieties and worldly attractions, made it one of the wonders of Europe. If England be, as the keen satire of Napoleon has represented, a nation of shopkeepers, Florence was well-nigh a city of bankers and merchants. Being the great banking-place of the Continent, its wealth was enormous. As Corinth, under the fostering care of Augustus, and in the zenith of its commercial glory, grew licentious, and proud, and reckless, so Florence, under the luxurious sway of Lorenzo di Medici the Magnificent, became heathenish and viciously immoral. Savonarola's voice was soon heard in the church of St. Mark, censuring the tendencies of the age, and laying bare, with merciless severity, the corruptions of the church. It must have been a strange sight to see the spare, haggard form of this pale-faced, keen-eyed, Roman-nosed monk, exciting the crowds of listeners, and overpowering them with his vigorous eloquence. There was nothing in his voice to allure attention. It was thin and weak. Nor was there anything in his manner, for he was unpracticed in speaking; but his words carried weight, and each had a flaming fire-dart which pierced its way, and carried conviction. His denunciations of the paganism of Florence, and the gross abominations of the church, stirred the city to its depths. The friar's popularity grew and spread like living fire. Men listened and shuddered. Priests heard, trembled, and hated. The people grew enthusiastic. Salvation by faith, not by works — forgiveness of sin, not by absolution, but by Christ; these were unheard of truths from such a pulpit, and were as welcome as they were strange. With sternness of manner he denounced the prevailing sins of the time, and with affectionate entreaty besought men, like another John the Baptist, to "repent, for the kingdom of heaven was at hand." Indeed, his prophetic utterances of a

visitation from God were listened to with much dismay. His extraordinary faithfulness in rebuking those current sins of the wealthy to which they thought they had a prescriptive right; his personal form of address, without which no minister or reformer can hope to be successful in soul-winning; his clear evangelic utterances as to the natural state of the soul, its need of redemption, and the suitability of the free gospel of God's grace to meet that need, told upon the people. They wept. They were silenced. Men who took down his discourses, were known to drop the pens from their hands. Country people walked miles to hear the great preacher; came, indeed, the night before the Sunday, and besieged the church doors at early morn, that they might be sure of a seat. Rich burghers gave them victuals, and even acted as doorkeepers. The convent church was too small; nor could the cathedral accommodate more than the three thousand persons who flocked to hear the friar.

As prior of St. Mark, Savonarola was expected to pay homage to Lorenzo di Medici. He refused. In vain did Lorenzo seek to win the stern friar's confidence; he would loiter in the garden to attract his attention; money was given most royally to the poor; the sermons were heard; but all Lorenzo got in return was unsparing denunciation. Five men were sent to induce the friar to moderate his stinging criticisms, and to cease his prophetic utterances. "Go," was the stern answer, "and tell Lorenzo that he must repent of his sins, for God is about to punish him and his. He threatens me with banishment. Well, I am a foreigner, and he a citizen, and the first in the city; but know that I shall stay, and that he will soon be forced to quit." Strange to say, this declaration came true. Lorenzo the Magnificent lay on his death-bed. Anxious to be absolved from his sins, he sent for the monk, whom he had feared. Savonarola imposed three conditions. He was first to believe in God's ability and willingness to forgive; this the sick man confessed. Then he was to restore that which he had unrighteously gained. This duty he promised to perform by his heir. Thirdly, said Savonarola, "Give back to Florence her ancient liberty;" but Lorenzo turned his head away, and Savonarola departed.

After Lorenzo's death he addressed himself to the work of reformation. Beginning where reformation, as well as charity, should begin, at home, he renovated his convent, induced the monks to reform, to live higher lives, to study, and to preach. Next, he sought the reformation of the Florentine State. Henceforth he must become a politician. It is useless to criticize and condemn: he may have been fanatical, unwise, foolish. He, at least, did not

think so. He had his dreams of an ideal government, and he lived to see them come true, though they hastened his fate. He preached on the downfall of the State; declared that soon the Lord's vengeance would come upon the Florentines; announced the termination of the great house of Medici; and predicted that "Over the Alps one is coming sword in hand against Italy to chastise her tyrants. His coming will be in the storm and in the whirlwind, like that of Cyrus." At the time, no one believed the warning voice of the strange prophet. The city was at peace; people were married and given in marriage, and the end came not. But lo! the King of France came over the Alps, with an immense army, took Naples, and marched into Florence. Then believed they the message of the friar. The Medici were expelled. Savonarola appeared before the King of France, secured peace, obtained milder terms; and the Florentines were allowed to choose their own mode of government. On the friar, however, was devolved this task. He chose the democratic form; but Jesus Christ was to be King of the city. A general amnesty was proclaimed, and the streets of Florence were thus saved from the deluge of blood which seemed inevitable. A contemporary writer states that "Apart from the Father's preaching, streams of blood would have been seen to flow in the city; but his words and his authority, which stood at that time very high, appeased the storm, and hindered the carrying out of revengeful thoughts."

It was marvelous how his power was felt. He was looked upon as a deliverer and a prophet. His words were treasured up, and were held as coming from God himself. His holy ascendancy was such that men everywhere saw it, felt it, were cowed under it, and not a few wished to be delivered from it. He waged relentless war against the sins of the rich, and denounced the vices of the poor. He changed for a time the character of society in the city. Dr. Seibert, in his biography, "Savonarola der Reformator von Florenz," describes the wondrous effect of the friar's teaching: — "Mortal enemies fell into each other's arms and became reconciled; the rich spontaneously restored ill-gotten gains: one citizen in particular made restitution of 3,000 ducats, the possession of which disquieted his conscience. Women renounced of their own accord their pride of dress, and went about in modest garments of drab. Ballads and love songs were heard no longer in the country, and religious singing took their place. In the city the theaters and taverns soon became empty and desolate, and in a short time cards and dice were no longer to be seen, vain pomp disappeared, and moral earnestness, and a wonderful degree of love

and devotion to eternal things laid hold of the people.” As one of his opponents said, “The people seemed to become fools from love to Christ.” At the season of carnival men delivered up their dice, cards, and card-boards, scandalous images, and immoral novels, and women their rouge, scented waters, veils, false hair, mirrors — indeed, never before, and we fear never since, were women more self-sacrificing — all these luxuries were collected in the marketplace and burnt, youths singing in procession, round what has been called this “*auto-da-fe*” of sin and worldly pleasures.”

Besides improving the social condition of the poor, he endeavored to reform the church. He never spared the priests — they were “the devil’s midwives.” Referring to the primitive church, he once said, “In those days they had a golden priest and wooden vessels, but now we have golden vessels and a wooden priest.” But especially was he emphatic in his testimony to the preciousness of the Scriptures. “The ruin of the church,” he said, “is to be traced to this, that Christians no longer read the Scriptures; it is owing to this that thick darkness broods over the Christian people, and that impiety gets so much the upper hand.” He very imperfectly understood the Scriptures, but he was alone in demanding that they should be read, and their lessons taught to the people.

A man like Savonarola, it is needless to remark, must soon have aroused the enmity of the Papacy. It was no difficulty for him to find foes; they compassed him about like bees. They were principally of the order of the Franciscans, who always hated the order of which Savonarola was a member — the Dominican. News reached Rome of the terrible power and popularity of the friar. The Pope’s first thought was to conciliate so dangerous a foe. He, therefore, offered him a cardinal’s hat. But it was declined. “I wish,” he said, “for no other red hat than that of a martyr, dyed with my own blood.” It was equally in the power of the Pope to grant him that favor — for which, indeed, he felt most inclined. He was then respectfully and in a most fatherly way invited to show himself at Rome. “Beloved son! Health to thee, and apostolic benediction.” But, as everyone knows, the Pope’s blessing was always a curse, and in this case the blessing concealed — or only partly concealed — a power that would by penance, prison, or poison, reduce the friar to everlasting silence. Savonarola was not to be caught. He knew the man with whom he was dealing. The Pope was the incarnation of all the devilry that ever escaped from hell. An abandoned wretch, guilty of scandalous crimes — who could trust him? And so, wisely, the friar refused to go. He did not refuse, however, to

fulminate against the Pope. He, too — like most of us — could issue his little bull from his diminutive Vatican. At last the Pope prohibited his preaching, and ordered that the congregation of St. Mark should be dissolved. Such elements were, however, not readily dissolved. Savonarola for a time maintained silence, but was stung into action by the Pope's Breve. "I cannot forbear preaching," he declared; "the word of God is as a fire in my heart; unless I speak it, it burns my marrow and bones." "It is now time," he said, "to open the den; we will turn the key; such a stench and so much filth will be vomited forth by Rome as will overspread all Christendom, and everybody will be tainted with it." At last the Pope applied to the Signori to deliver up this heretic; but it was in vain. Franciscan monks were sent to preach him down; but his preaching went up. Then it was, with his customary politeness, that the Pope sent a gracious message, hurling his curse at his head, cutting him off as a rotten member from the church's body, and giving him over to the powers of hell. Savonarola had his defenders in Florence, and those were among the wealthy as well as among the poor; but a host of circumstances were combining to ruin him. His friends were injudicious. His new state constitution was, as might be expected, a failure. His alliance with the King of France, who had done nothing for the church, damaged his popularity. Plague and famine irritated the people; and, as no miracle was wrought on their behalf, Savonarola was disliked. One of his friends foolishly put a controversy with the Franciscans upon the issue of a trial by the ordeal of fire. The fire was prepared in the marketplace of Florence; the citizens expected to behold a notable spectacle; but the Signori and a shower of rain interfered and dispersed the crowd. The mob then turned upon Savonarola; the monastery was assailed; the once popular monk was made a prisoner; and the Pope was communicated with. Overcome with joy, "His Holiness" granted permission for the monk to be tortured. A recantation was demanded of him, but he refused. He was then stretched seven times during the week upon the rack. In the height of his sufferings he cried, "Lord, take my spirit," and, worn out by the tortures, he agreed to confess. When, however, he had rested awhile, he withdrew his recantation, and boldly avowed all that he had previously taught. Between the day of his trial and the day of his execution he wrote an exposition of the fifty-first Psalm which Luther highly prized, and published in Germany.

He was burnt, with two friends, on the 22nd of May, 1498. The bishop deprived him of his priestly garments, saying, "Thus I exclude thee from

the militant and triumphant church.” “From the church militant thou mayst,” exclaimed Savonarola, “but from the church triumphant thou canst not.” He died blessing the people who had deserted him, and clinging to the Christ whose love had never departed from him.

The question has often been asked, How far was Savonarola the herald of Protestantism? The best answer to that question is, we think, furnished in his admirable work — far ahead of the times in which it was written— “The Triumph of the Cross.” We are glad that those enterprising publishers, Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton have brought, it out in a cheap and handsome form. ^{F18} For the sake of the memory of the martyr, it should be read; for the sake of the truths it so luminously sets forth, it deserves a wide circulation. Mr. Travers Hill, beside writing an interesting sketch of the Italian Reformer’s life, has ably translated the work. At a time when the church held every one in bondage, when the Scriptures were hid from view, and the masses were ignorant of the way of salvation — when darkness covered the earth and gross darkness the people — when the church to which every one bowed in lowly, submission was so corrupt as to allow a pope stained with every crime to preside over it — and when Luther’s shrill testimony had not as yet been given — it is pleasant to find words of such evangelic power written in the cloister of a monastery. And though Savonarola was wedded to many of the errors of the church, yet his testimony in favor of justification by faith and not by works, the forgiveness of sins by Christ and not by man, was clear and decisive. His object was undoubtedly to purify the church of Rome, not to destroy it; but it is evident that throughout his life he was, if loyal to his church, far more loyal to Christ.

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL

MAY — 1869

EAR-MUFFS.

BY C. H. SPURGEON

IN a Canadian paper we observe an advertisement of *Ear-muffs*, which are recommended to all who would not have their ears frostbitten. What sort of things these must be we have tried to imagine, but have so badly succeeded that we half hope some generous Canadian reader will make us a present of a pair, that we may no longer puzzle our brains about them. The climate must surely be sufficiently cool where men's auricles stand in such danger of mortal refrigeration. We half congratulate ourselves in the midst of London's fogs and constant droppings of rain, that at least we are not likely to lose a "piece of an ear," bitten off by the teeth of frost. Our good friends of the New Dominion we should think would hardly choose to be photographed while wearing such doubtful adornments as ear-muffs must be, and yet their heads are probably not put more out of shape by them than are those of our own fair friends in this tight little island by the muffs which they now wear on the summits of their craniums; besides, they have a substantial reason for the lateral extensions in the desire to save their ears, which cannot be urged for the perpendicular developments of our own community, which are neither of use nor ornament.

What reason, upon the earth or above it, can make the editor of the *Sword and Trowel* put pen to paper on such a trivial subject? Why, there are one or two excuses for our trifling. The first is the idea that ear-muffs might be of some service to those individuals who have itching ears, which can only hear while an excitement attends the ministry of some fresh popular favorite. After a few months, or even weeks, the flying camp who crowd the meeting-house of Mr. Newcomer find his sermons growing flat, stale, and unprofitable, their ears are frostbitten, and they raise the murmur that they cannot hear the preacher. Away they fly, like a flock of starlings, to light on some other field where their lingering will be about as temporary.

Poor souls! their ears are delicate; they need constant change, and a temperature of the conservatory order, or they become dull of hearing. The least decline in the heat of enthusiasm surrounding a newly-discovered luminary they feel at once; the preaching which could for any reasonable time content them must be like Nebuchadnezzar's furnace, heated seven times hotter; and even then their ears would freeze from a constitutional tendency supreme and unconquerable. Here, then, is a discovery for them. Here is an invention which, if it does not make both their ears to tingle, will at least make them comfortable in those precious organs. Such fine ears for pulpit music would be satisfactorily protected by ear-muffs, and their preservation is so vitally important in the critical department of ministerial eloquence, that the largest expense should not be spared. When ears are so remarkable for accurate taste and Athenian love of novelty, it is of the utmost moment to keep them well warned, for what would the church do if it should lose such infallible oracles as to the excellence, the improvement, or the decline of the gospel ministry? Diogenes, that cruel cynic, would probably hint that some ears are long enough already, without muffs appended, but such severity is foreign to our gentler nature, although even we are compelled to admit that in some rare cases, when a man has been charmed and wearied by half-a-dozen ministers in turn, there may be room for the suspicion that the hearer was a little fickle, and probably more nice than wise. Our spiritual ramblers, whose ears are not so much avenues to their hearts as passages to their superfine brains, will, we hope, thank us for the tender consideration which has led us to inform them of the little invention so suited to conserve their remarkably discerning conchoidal cartilages; we may not win equal gratitude if we quote, with some slight turn, the words of a standard author who says, "The critic, as he is currently termed, who is discerning in nothing but faults, and is evermore craving after novelties, may care little to be told that this is the mark of unamiable and vacillating dispositions; but he might not feel equally easy were he convinced that he thus gives the most absolute proofs of ignorance, want of taste, and absence of stability."

We have in our eye another class of persons to whom ear-muffs should seem to be utterly unnecessary, for they appear to possess them as a gift of nature. Their ear is muffed and muffled up to such an extent, that no mode of earnest speech has any real or even apparent effect upon them. In vain we cry —

"Friends, Britons, countrymen, lend us your ears;"

they sit gazing upon us like so many statues, and no appeals arouse them. A poet has told us that in the ear, lest sounds should pierce too violently.

*They are delay'd with turns and windings oft;
For, should the voice directly strike the brain,
It would astonish and confuse it much;
Therefore these plaits and folds the sound restrain,
45That it the organ may more gently touch."*

All very true, no doubt, but for some people it would surely be a grand thing if the turns and windings could be dispensed with for once, and if the word could go right straight down upon the brain like a pistol-shot, for there seems no other human chance for the great truths which we deliver to them. Why, the men are half asleep when we speak, in broken accents, of the love which on Calvary proved itself stronger than death! They are stolid when our souls, in awful vehemence, thunder and lighten, and pour forth showers of tears over their perishing souls! Deaf adders are as desirable an audience. Adamant itself softens as soon as they. Have they no souls, or have they gone to grass, like Babel's king in his derangement, when he became as the cattle and the fowls of the air? Why, in some ears even the wind awakens emotions —

*"There is in souls a sympathy with sounds,
And as the wind is pitched the ear is pleased,
With melting airs or martial, brisk or grave;
Some chord, in unison with what we hear,
Is touched within us, and the heart replies;" —*

yet our glad tidings, which are no wind from the wilderness, or wandering blasts from the mountains of vanity, pass in and out of these dull ears, and find the mind asleep, and like the sluggard in the Proverbs, disinclined to be awakened. Their heart is waxen gross, their ears are dull of hearing, and the celestial message comes to them like those "undescribed sounds" which Keats speaks of —

*"That come a-swooning over hollow grounds,
And wither drearily on barren moors."*

Another class of hearers who cannot be blamed for inattention, are armed with mental ear-muffs, which effectually prevent the entrance of the truth. They listen to commend our style, and applaud our boldness, but the bearing of the truth upon their own case is not a matter for inquiry with them. It is beyond measure saddening to a preacher to know that he is

viewed as an *artiste*, and is being peered at through mental opera glasses; his person, voice, gestures, idioms and mannerisms, being all noted down, while the message which he delivers is disregarded. What folly to throw away the priceless gem, and preserve the mere setting on account of its peculiar workmanship! To preserve the rind, and cast the fruit upon the dunghill! A very curious scene occurred some years ago in a Methodist chapel, exactly illustrative of our meaning. The village was famous for drunkenness, and the schoolmaster was one of the most guilty. Mr. Collins was the preacher, and during sermon the old dominie diligently and ostentatiously took notes of the discourse. At last, in a state of semi-intoxication, he leaped up, and began loudly to applaud. "Friend," said the preacher, "it saddens me to see your gray hairs thus publicly shamed; leave off this drinking, or it will surely drown your soul in perdition." "Hear him," cried the pedagogue! "What a gift he has! What language! What composition!" "Repent," was the reply, "and forsake your sins, lest they prove your eternal ruin." To which the drunken Critic responded with enthusiasm, "Choice words! So suitable! I assure all of you that I am a judge of composition, and I declare that it is wonderful." In distress, the preacher cried out, "Old man, be still, and listen, with prayer that God in his mercy may not suffer your heart to be for ever hardened by the deceitfulness of sin." "Ay, jewel," said the old man, determined to have the last word, "you are modest, but it was, I tell you, weel put together, very *weel* — *very weel indeed!*" Every rebuke was capped by a compliment, and the useless dialogue came to an end. Not often so publicly, but yet with equal pertinacity, our hearers applaud the sermons which condemn them, and find gratification in that which will increase their everlasting wretchedness. Like the sheep in Landseer's "Peace" picture, they thrust their heads into the cannon's month to reach a mouthful of herbage; they view the sword of the Lord as if it were a presentation weapon, about to be given to some hero by the Corporation at Guildhall; they gaze on the plains of heaven with the eye of connoisseurs; they speak of hell as a Dantesque imagining, and treat the unparalleled wonder of Calvary as if it were a fine artistic spectacle. Alas! for the poor preacher, when these are the stony materials out of which he seeks to raise up children unto Abraham.

We began this brief page with comedy, but we have arrived at tragedy, and our heart fails us as we think of the thousands whose ears seem closed with a Satanic wax. Alas! how constantly is Ear-gate barricaded! Immanuel alone can carry it by storm, and find a highway to the citadel of the heart.

“Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?” May he speak whose voice awakened echoes even in the grave, and may the dead hear the voice of the Lord, for they that hear shall live. “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.” “Incline your ear and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live.”

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL

JUNE — 1869.

ORDER IS HEAVEN'S FIRST LAW

A SERMON BY C. H. SPURGEON

“Neither shall one thrust another;
they shall walk everyone in his path.” — Joel 2:8

Those who have been able to observe the marching of an army of locusts, have been amazed beyond measure with the marvelous regularity of their advance. Solomon, who must surely have seen them, says, “The locusts have no king, yet go they forth all of them by bands.” The wonder is, that creatures comparatively so insignificant in size, and so low down in the scale of intelligence, should maintain such more than martial order, both in their long flights and in their devouring marches. The ablest commanding officers would be at their wits’ end if ordered to marshal a multitude numbering even a thousandth, or perhaps a millionth part of the countless hordes of these destructive marauders; and yet by instinct, the locust soldiery can and do, keep rank better than the most veteran regiments of the line, as I can personally testify, from having seen miles of them in one of the Italian valleys. “They shall march every one on his ways,” says the prophet, and they shall not break their ranks; neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path.”

As I considered this remarkable fact in insect life, my meditations led me to note the order which reigns, not amongst locusts only, but throughout the whole of God’s world; and then I said within myself, after this fashion should there be order and arrangement in the Christian church. God has trained his great insect army, and among them order reigns; but this is no exception to the general rule, for all the hosts of God are marshaled in rank and file, and are never left to be a disorganized mob of forces. From the most minute to the most magnificent, all creatures feel the sway of order, and they well observe the laws imposed by their Creator.”

*“The very law that molds a tear,
And bids it trickle from its source,
That law preserves the earth a sphere,
And guides the planets in their course.”*

Look up to the heavens, and observe the innumerable stars that glisten there so plenteously, that numeration fails. Looked at through the telescope, stars are so abundant that the heavens appear to be covered with dust of gold; and yet we have no record that one of these bodies has ever interfered with the orbit of its fellow sphere, or if such a catastrophe has ever been permitted, it has been part of the all-comprehending scheme. The majestic orbs move, each one in its own orbit, and all in perfect harmony. Even the aberrations, as we call them, are nothing but the result of regular law, and the astronomer finds that he can calculate them with the greatest possible accuracy. There are no irregularities, discords, or failures among the constellations; and if to the student of the heavens such should appear to be the case, he has but more fully to master the universal law, and he discovers with astonishment, that every eccentricity is a necessary incident in a system grander than he had thought. Mere tyros in astronomy talked of irregularities, but Newton and Kepler found a mathematical precision manifest in all. At no point need we be afraid that the universe will be thrown out of gear. If a man had placed innumerable wheels in a machine, there would be in due time a break down somewhere. Oil would be wanted here, a cog would be broken there, a band would be snapped in this place, or a piston would be immovable there; but God’s great machine of the universe, whose wheels are so high that the sublime Ezekiel, when he saw them, felt that they were terrible, has continued to revolve these many thousands, perhaps millions of years, and has never yet been stopped for cleaning or repair, because God has impressed upon every atom of it the most docile spirit of submission, and his powerful hand is at work every instant amidst the machinery giving force to his laws.

Nor is it so in the coarser inanimate forms of matter only, but the *same law holds good with the whole animal creation.* Not locusts alone, but the fish of the sea, and the birds of the air, all observe their Maker’s bidding, and both live and move according to rule and order, all forming portions of the perfect circle struck out by the divine compasses. What a wonderful thing it is that mighty streams of fish should come during certain seasons from the North, and swarm near enough to our coasts to afford our fellow citizens so large a portion of their daily food! If there be complaining in our

streets, there need not be, for extended fisheries would supply all the inhabitants of Britain, even if they were multiplied a hundred times; and yet there would be no perceptible diminution in the teeming population of the sea; for God has so arranged it that there shall be most of those kinds which are most required for food. But what a marvel that at the fixed period the unguided fish should migrate in such countless shoals, and should return again in due season to their old abodes among the Arctic waves! Mark, too, how every tribe of animals is needful to all the rest. So beautiful is the order of nature, that we cannot wantonly destroy a race of little birds without suffering from their removal. When the small birds were killed in France by the peasantry, who supposed that they ate the corn, the caterpillars came and devoured the crops. Man made a defect in an otherwise perfect circle, he took away one of the wheels which God had made, and the machine did not work perfectly; but let it alone, and no jars or grindings will occur, for all animals know their time and place, and fulfill the end of their being. You spoil the harmony of nature's concert if even the sparrow's chirrup is unheard. The stork and the crane fly at God's bidding, the swallow and the marten know their pathway; the prowling beasts and rapacious birds, as well as the domestic cattle, all hold their own in nature's arrangements. Like the bejeweled breastplate of the high priest, nature is full of gems, each one in its setting, and the glory is marred if one be wanting. Be assured that the wild ass and coney, leviathan and behemoth, eagle and dove, gnat and lizard, are all arranged for the highest good, and are beautiful in their season. "Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path."

Rising a little higher, *there is also order in the providence of God.* When you view the great world of human history, it looks like a skein of thread much twisted and tangled. When you study it, you see nations rise and fall, like boiling waves of a foaming sea. You read of horrible wars, wantonly commenced and wickedly continued. The human race seems to have destroyed its sons without a motive. Men rush upon each other with all the fury of fiends, and tear each other like wolves, and yet they eat not that which they have killed. The history of mankind appears at first sight to argue the absence of God. We say, How is this? We expected to find, if God were in providence, something more orderly and regular than we see here. Instead of a grand volume from a master pen, we see words flung together without apparent connection. We expected to find a sublime poem, such as angels might love to read; but all this is confusion, void and

unintelligible — strokes and dashes to us without meaning. Ay, my brethren, and so it is, but we are little children, and do not yet understand God's hieroglyphics; we write in large text, and have not the cipher of the celestial shorthand. Our limited field of vision only lets us see a brick or two of the great house, and straightway we begin to criticize the infinite Architect and his work. After all, supposing this world to have existed six thousand years! What is that? In God's sight it is but as a day, or as yesterday when it has passed: we see but one thread of history, a raveling of life, and then we vainly fancy that we can form a fair judgment of the tapestry curiously fashioned by the finger of the Lord.

If we shall be privileged to sit; down, in some age yet to come, and look at all God's wondrous works, and see the end from the beginning, we shall lift up our hands in astonishment, as we perceive the perfect symmetry of providence, the consummate wisdom reflected in every event. The history of the world will astonish principalities and powers in the ages yet to come. How apt we are to think that our own corner of human history is the major part, if not the whole! The prophets, not of Scripture, but of fancy, lately foretold that the world was coming to an end in 1866, and yet we have survived the fatal year, as perhaps we may yet; survive another such silly scare, and yet another. Our Lord comes quickly, but many thousands of years may come and go in the meantime. We should expect him constantly, but his promise will be well kept, even if he tarry till both saints and sinners cry out in weariness, "Where is the promise of his coming?" If the history of the world should have ended in 1866, it were hard to have seen its completeness; but if there are to be long centuries in which God shall gather in his elect, it is easier to understand the recompense of the Redeemer's sufferings. If there are to be seasons of refreshing in which the called ones shall come from the east and from the west, from the north and the south, we can more readily perceive the grandeur of the cross, and its surroundings, and the magnitude of the great work which God laid upon Christ in redeeming "a number that no man can number." The wicked have had the predominance up till now, and Satan has been triumphant; but what if this should only be the beginning of brighter days, and what if all the rest of history should continue to increase in light and brightness till the light of the sun shall be as the light of seven days! then may we begin to rejoice in the glory of history as it is written by the finger of God. But, let the era of the church militant be long & short — and we may not speculate, for we know nothing at all about it — we shall find in the consummation of it all,

that none of the events of history did thrust another, but that they proceeded every one in his own path, all tending to one sublime result, namely, the glory of God.

Coming down from these great things to our own selves, *depend upon it that all the events in our own little lives are marching straight on to a gracious consummation.* You, child of God, sometimes say, “What can be the design of this cross? What can be meant by that bereavement? Why am I perplexed by this dilemma? Why is this difficulty piled like a barricade across my path? “Well, you know not now, but you shall know hereafter; meanwhile settle it firmly in your faith that “all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to his purpose.” Your affliction does not jostle your prosperity, but promotes it. Your losses do not cause your loss, they really increase your true riches. Onward still, laden with untold blessings, every event is marching for the righteous and for the humble spirit. God has his way in the whirlwind, and the clouds are the dust of his feet: only be you patient, and wait upon him with childlike confidence, and the day shall come when you shall wonder and be astonished, that there should have been such order in your life when you thought it was all confusion, such love when you thought it unkindness, such gentleness when you thought it severity, such wisdom when you were wicked enough to impugn the rightness of your God. Brethren, the events of our history march on as rightly as a victorious legion under a skillful leader. Do not let us arraign the wisdom of that which happens to us, or fancy that we could order our affairs in better style. Our good and ill, our joy and grief, all keep their places. “Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path.”

But we must rise a little higher. We have come from the world of matter to the world of living creatures, and up to the world of intellectual beings, and *now let us think of God himself. We may say of all his attributes* that neither doth one thrust another, but each one walketh in his path. Let us be careful at any time in thinking of God, that we indulge not in reflections upon one attribute to the forgetting of the rest. Many Christians are much soured in their disposition by considering God only in the light of sovereignty. Now, that he is a sovereign is a most great, deep, mysterious, but at the same time blessed truth, and we would defend divine sovereignty with all our might against all comers; but, at the same time, absolute sovereignty is not the only attribute of God, and those who keep their eye fixed upon that to the exclusion of all other qualities and prerogatives, get an ill-balanced idea

of God, and very likely they fall into errors of doctrine, and, more likely still, they become hard-hearted towards their fellow men, and forget that the Lord hath no pleasure in the death of sinners, but had rather that they should turn unto him and live. On the other hand, many injure their minds very greatly by reflecting solely upon the one thought of God, that he is good. It is a blessed truth, that he is good, and benevolent, and full of compassion, and Holy Scripture tells us that the Lord is good to all, and that his tender mercies are over all his works. God forbid that we should seek to diminish the kindness of God, or think lightly of it, “for his mercy endureth for ever.” Yet some look at that one emerald ray as though it were the whole of the spectrum; they gaze upon one star, and think it the Pleiades, Orion and Arcturus, all in one; and, alas! worse results follow, for they are tempted to think sin to be a mere trifle, since they ignore the justice and sovereignty of God. God’s righteousness and vengeance they so exclude from their minds that when they hear of hell, and of the wrath that will come upon the impenitent, they shudder with inward unbelief, and try to doubt it, and perhaps, manage to find texts of Scripture which look as if they helped them in their perverted and jaundiced view of the Most High. They think they are glorifying God, but they are really dishonoring him, for God is no more altogether mercy than he is altogether sovereignty, and he is no more altogether sovereignty than he is altogether mercy. The fact is, that every glory meets in God. All that is good, and excellent, and great, may be found in him in complete perfection. God would have thee so to think of him, for in the atonement, which is his grandest revelation of himself, he has been pleased to show thee

*“How grace and justice strangely join:
Piercing his Son with sharpest smart,
To make the choicest blessings thine.”*

God is so merciful towards us in Christ Jesus, that his mercy shines full orb'd; but, at the same time, in the sacrifice of Christ, God is so righteous that justice is un eclipsed. The various attributes do not darken, but illustrate each other; grace magnifies justice, and vengeance extols mercy; righteousness meets with peace, and love kisseth holiness. There is a blessed agreement in all the divine attributes, so that when you look at the cross, as Dr. Watts says, you cannot tell

*“Which of the letters best is writ,
The power, the wisdom, or the grace.”*

Now, as God has fully revealed himself in Christ, let us think of him correctly, and not attach undue importance to any one attribute of God above the rest, seeing that “neither doth one thrust another; but each one walketh in its own path.”

This leads me on a step further, to observe that the same order is perceptible in the DOCTRINES of the WORD OF GOD.

Doctrines which look as if they contradicted each other, are nevertheless fully agreed. It is the defect in our mental vision which makes separate truths appear to cross each other's orbit, for it is certain that the truths of Scripture do not thrust each other, but each one goeth on in its own path. Perhaps the fiercest of fights has been all the world over between the great fact that salvation is of grace, and the equally certain fact that man is responsible to God under the gospel, and that if he perishes, his ruin is at his own door, and is not to be charged upon God in any sense whatever. This has been the arena in which intellectual gladiators have fought with each other from the very foundations of the world; and up till lately, no contest could be much more bitter than that between the Calvinist, who affirmed that salvation is all of grace, and the Arminian, who testified that damnation is the result of sin. If they had stood side by side with one another, and fought the common enemy, they would have done good service, for I believe in my soul that they both hold some truth, and that either of them will hold error unless he will yield something to his rival. There are some who read the Bible and try to systematize it according to rigid logical creeds; but I dare not follow their method; and I feel content to let people say, “How inconsistent he is with himself!” the only thing that would grieve me would be inconsistency with the word of God. As far as I know this book, I have endeavored in my ministry to preach to you, not a part of the truth, but the whole counsel of God; but harmonize I cannot, nor am I anxious to do so. I am sure all truth is harmonious, and to my ear the harmony is clear enough, but I cannot give you a complete score of the music, or mark the harmonies on the gamut, I must leave the Chief Musician to do that. You have heard of the two travelers who met each other opposite the statue of Minerva, and one of them remarked — “What a glorious, golden shield Minerva has!” The other said “Nay, but it is bronze.” They argued with one another; they drew their swords; they slew each other, and as they fell, dying, they each looked up, and the one who said the shield was made of bronze discovered that it had a golden side to it, and the other, who was so bold in affirming that it was gold, found that

it had a bronze side too. The shield was made of two different metals, and the combatants had not either of them seen both sides. It is just so with the truth of God, it is many sided and full of variety. Grand threefold lines run through it; it is one yet three, like the Godhead. Perhaps you and I have only seen two of the lines — many persons refuse to see more than one — and there may be a third yet to be discovered which will reconcile the apparently antagonistic two, when our eye shall be clarified by the baptism in the last river, and we shall ascend the hill of the Lord to read the truth of God in the light of the celestial city. However, it is clear that salvation is altogether of grace, and equally clear that if any man perishes it is not for want of invitations on God's side, honest invitations to come to Christ. We hear our Master saying, "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto everlasting life." We hear him bidding the laborer to come, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Some friends are so afraid of that text that they generally quote it "weary and heavy laden," which is of the true reading; but the laboring ones are invited to Jesus. Such invitations did Christ give, and yet did he not also say, "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him?" Amid the soft rain of tenderness we hear thundering overhead that truth, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." "Therefore, hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." As we listen to that thunder we bow to the sovereignty of God; yet amid the pauses we hear an angel voice sweetly saying, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely," and we hear the Master say, "Go into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled." We cannot tell you how it is that the thunder chimes in with the fall of the grace-shower and the angel whisper, for we are dwelling down below; but if we could soar above, somewhere between the two, we should be able to discover the full clear harmony. Let us be content to believe both sets of truths, and not oppose ourselves to friends who hold either the one or the other, but seek to bring them to believe both; for as the Bible is true, they are both of them the truth of the living God, and neither need one thrust another, but each doctrine goeth on in its own path. Observation leads me to believe that those persons who are willing to hold the whole of revealed truth are generally Christians of a more active spirit, and more desirous for the conversion of souls than those who contract their minds, and will only hold some one or two great theological dogmas. If we will but lay aside our Chinese shoes, and allow our feet to grow as they should,

we shall find it far better walking on the road to heaven, and we shall be more ready for any work which our Master may call us to do.

Such thoughts as these flitted across my mind on reading the text — God is a God of order everywhere, in himself, his creation, his providence, and his word.

Now we turn to the second holy and practical lesson, namely, AS TO THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

Dear friends, you and I who have entered into the kingdom of grace, and have received a life which the worldling cannot understand (for the carnal mind knoweth nothing of the spiritual life) *must remember that our thoughts, graces, and actions, ought all to keep their proper position, so that it may be said of them, "Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk everyone in his path."*

As to our thoughts, we ought to endeavor, as God shall teach us by his Spirit, to keep our thoughts of God's word in their due harmony. Some brethren, for instance, are altogether doctrinal in their inclinings. Doctrinal study is admirable; may God send us much of it! Yet doctrine is not all that we are taught in the sacred word; there are duties and promises also. Why despise these? Then, again, other professors of religion are altogether of a practical turn; and, while they value James, they depreciate Paul. They do not like an expository sermon; they cannot endure it; but if you give them a precept, they rejoice greatly. They are quite right as far as they go. The Lord send us much more practical Christianity! But then this is not all. There are others who are altogether experimental, and some of these will hear no sermon except it treat upon the corruption of the human heart, or upon the dark frames of the child of God: others will have no experience but the bright side, you must always preach to them out of the Canticles, inditing the good matter concerning the sweet love of Christ towards his spouse. Now, each of these forms of preaching is good in its season, but he who would keep close to the Scriptures, and preserve completeness in his thoughts, must weigh well the doctrines, and seek to get a clear view of the covenant of grace, and the economy of salvation; he must study the precepts, and ask the Holy Spirit to give the fleshy heart, upon which those precepts may be written as upon living tablets; and then he must watch his experience, mourning over inbred sin, but rejoicing also in fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ, through whose blood we have the victory. We must endeavor as much as possible to exercise our thoughts upon all the subjects

which God has given us to think upon in his word, and applied to our hearts by the workings of the Holy Spirit. Where this is done we shall avoid one thought thrusting another, and each will go in its own path. I have heard of doctrinal preachers who hated the very sound of the word, "duty;" I have also heard the practical brother declare that "election" he detested; while the experimental brother has affirmed that the doctrinal preacher was merely "a dead letter man," and so on. Oh, naughty words for God's children to use to one another! Bitter sentences which they only use because they know so little. If they had gone to school, and learned out of all books instead of sitting at home to play with their favorite toy, the one would have confessed, "How much my excellent brother excels me in doctrinal information!" and the doctrinal brother would have said, "How much more forcibly my dear brother James can inculcate practice than I can!" While the third would have said, "How experimental our dear friend is! What a master he must be of the science of the human heart! I can sit at his feet and delightedly learn, from his teaching." Shame upon us that we say, "I am of Paul," and "I am of Apollos," and "I am of Cephas," for all these are ours to profit by if we are Christ's. Learn from the doctrinal, learn from the practical, learn from the experimental. Blend the whole together, and let not one thrust another, but allow each to go straight on in its path.

The same should hold good in the graces which we cultivate. The Lord Jesus Christ is pleased to put, by his Holy Spirit, into the hearts of those whom he has saved, certain lovely and precious things, but it is not always easy to get these in due harmony. For instance, I know a brother who is very faithful; he does not mind telling you of your faults, but then, he is not affectionate in spirit, and so he never warns you of your infirmities in a way that does you good. Now, if that brother could get affection to balance his fidelity, what an admirable man he would make! I remember well another brother who was all affection, and nothing else. He was so affectionate as to be effeminate, and I poor rough creature as I am, could never bear the sight of him. He always reminded me of a pot of treacle, and his office appeared to be the anointing of everybody he met. If he could but have mixed a little fidelity with his sweetness, he would have been a much better and stronger man. Secker says, that Christianity ought first to make "a man more of a man, and then more than a man;" and so it would if we sought, by the power of the Spirit, to cultivate all the graces. The beauty of the human countenance does not consist exclusively in having a bright eye;

no, the fine eye helps, but all the other features of the face must balance it. A man may have the finest possible forehead, and yet he may be extremely ugly because his other features are out of proportion; so it is with character, character must have all the graces, and all the graces in harmony. Take, for instance, the virtue of meekness, it is a lovely thing to be of a meek and quiet spirit, but then, my brethren, how could reforms ever be wrought if everybody were so meek that they could not speak out against error? Where would you find your Luthers and your Calvins? Meekness must be balanced by the virtue which is its compensating quality, namely, courage. Affection must be strengthened by fidelity. A man must be patient under affliction, but he is not to be so patient as to be idle; he must couple energy with his patience, in order to manifest a practical faith. When we have each of these, so that neither doth one thrust another, but each one goeth on in his path, we shall be what Paul calls "perfect." Then shall we have come to be "entire, wanting nothing," having reached the "measure of the stature of men in Christ." Christian men should be men-Christians. If your child should have a rapid growth in its arms, but not in its legs, or if its legs should lengthen, but not its arms, what a strange being it would be! What a monster! It is the growth of each limb in proportion that brings the man to perfection. So, my brethren, when our heads grow faster than our hearts, it is an ill sign; yet how many know a great deal more than they feel, and criticize much more than they believe! It is also an evil thing when a man's tongue grows bigger than his head; when he has more to say than he knows or does; when, like Mr. Talkative, he can talk about the road to heaven, but makes no progress in it. God give you an abundance of his Holy Spirit, that you may never deserve our Lord's rebuke to the Pharisee, "These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone," but "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." May you have them all.

The same proportions, and balancings should be found in our Christian duties. This is too large and difficult a subject to go fully into now, but we will have a word or two about it. A man is not in his outward action a complete Christian because he is attentive to one duty, for God would have his people attend to all. It will sometimes be a question with you as to how much time should be given to private devotion, how much to family worship, and how much to church-worship; and you may easily make great

mistakes here. I recollect a brother, a very excellent man too, who was always at prayer-meetings and public services; but unfortunately, being always away from home, his family was so neglected that the sons grew up one after another to be the most precocious specimens of depravity that the parish could exhibit. We thought, and we hinted as much to our brother, that if he could be at home sometimes to teach the children, whose mother was as neglectful of them as the father was — and so the mischief became doubled — he would be infinitely more in the path of duty than in running after public services to the neglect of family piety; I only wish he had been able to see the propriety of our advice, for he has had to smart for his folly. It is not often that a man's private devotions obtrude in this way, but I knew one professor who used to spend so long a period in private prayer, that he neglected his business, and also the assembling of himself with God's people; it was, indeed, an unusual vice, but it came to be quite a sin in his case. This last is a very unusual fault, and one that I could almost excuse, because it is so unusual; but I recommend far more strongly the careful thinking of how much time is due to God in the closet, how much at the family altar, how much at the prayer-meeting, and how much to the week-night services, for we must give to each according to its due proportion.

Again, the difficulty will often occur to you, my brethren, as to how much is due to diligence in business and how much to fervency in spirit. No one can draw the line for another. Each one must judge for himself, but this must be the law: "Neither shall one thrust another; they shall walk every one in his path." There may be a season in which you may lawfully give all the hour's of the day to business. Your business may require it, and there are junctures with commercial men when to go to week-day services would be almost insanity; they must keep to their work, or else there will come a failure; and then the name of Christ will be evil spoken of. There will be times, too, with the working-man when, if he were to insist upon coming to the Monday evening prayer-meeting, or to the Thursday night lecture, he would be altogether out of the path of duty; there is a demand for labor just at some particular time, and he must obey the call, and he is in the path of duty in so doing. I am afraid that there are not many who fail in that way, but crowds who err in the opposite direction. Some will keep the shop open so late that there is no time for family-prayer; and others will confine their servants so strict]y, that they can never get out on the week-nights to hear a sermon. It does not strike the employer's mind that some

of the young people would perhaps like to be at the prayer-meeting on Monday night, nor will the employer be there himself. Some employers so grasp at the world with both hands, that they cannot go to this service nor that; and thus God's service is left uncured for by professing men who, if they were not false to their profession, would give much more of their time, and of their ability, to the promotion of God's cause. Now I cannot say to you, you must give so much time to God, and so much to business; you yourselves must ask God the Holy Spirit to guide you; but recollect, you must not let one thrust another. It is a good saying of an old divine, "Never bring to God one duty stained with the blood of another." As much as lieth in you, give to each distinct relationship its proportion.

There is a greater difficulty still with regard to the arrangement of distinct duties, *when they are likely to run counter to one another*. Here is a servant. His master expects him, after he has entered into an engagement with him, to do such-and-such unnecessary work on the Sabbath. The young man says "No, I cannot do that; it is clearly unscriptural, and I must obey God rather than man." But there are certain things which come somewhere between the necessary and the unnecessary, and the servant may properly enquire, "What is my duty?" You must settle it carefully within your own mind. Have you any sordid or selfish motive for deciding in any particular way? If so, be very cautious how you so decide; but seek the Lord's glory and the Lord's glory alone, and say, "While I am as a servant to serve man, yet I am the Lord's free man, and I must walk both as a servant and the Lord's free man, and not forget either." Sometimes the matter of the conduct of children towards parents has come under our notice. A harsh parent has said, "My children shall not carry out their religious convictions." In such cases we have had occasionally to recommend the child to wait until he has grown a little older; at other times we have bidden the child break through the parent's evil command, since we cannot hold that the parent can have any right to make his child disobey God. In the matter of the child's religion, when it is able to judge for itself, it is as free as its parent, and has a right to choose for itself; and while the parent should seek intelligently to guide it, coercion must never be tried. If the parent be ungodly, the child is free from all obedience to wicked commands; and must act then in obedience to a higher parent and to a greater law, namely the law of God. The like happens, at times, with regard to the husband and the wife. OF course, a good wife continually wishes to do that which will please her husband, and she is happy to be subservient to him as far as may be; but

when it comes to a point of conscience, and the two relations clash, the relations of the heavenly Bridegroom and the earthly husband, it is not always easy to decide upon a fitting course of action; but we may at least, be certain that we must not be actuated by selfishness, nor by a desire to avoid persecution, nor to please men; but we must stand on the side of honesty to God, fealty to the King of kings, and a regard for the truth as it is in Jesus. Do try if it be possible, and I believe it is possible, in every case to harmonize all your relationships, so that neither one of them shall thrust another, but each shall walk in its own path.

So, brethren, my last concluding remark shall be, that if this is to be true in the little commonwealth of the heart and the home, it ought also be true of the church at large.

Pray note this, you church members —

It is a great blessing when the members of the church do not thrust one another, but every one goeth in his own path. There are different orders of workers, and these must cooperate. Alas! workers in a Sabbath school do not always agree with one another. Then, workers in Sabbath schools are not always so fond, perhaps, of workers in ragged schools as they might be, and perhaps the workers in ragged schools may sometimes look down with coldness upon the distributors of tracts. It should never be so. We are like the different members of the body, and the eye must not say to the foot, "I have no need of thee," neither must the hand say to the ear, "I have no need of thee." Every man must work according to the gift of the Holy Spirit which dwells in him after the divine will. When a man steps out of his proper office into another, he makes a great mistake, both for himself and for the church at large; and when one brother envies another, and picks holes in his coat, and finds fault with his service, he needs to hear the Master's word "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth." I pray all the bands of workers to maintain a holy unanimity, being of one accord, minding the same thing, provoking one another to nothing but love and good works, striving for nothing except that they together promote the glory of the Lord Jesus.

And so as it is true in any one church with regard to the laborers, so it should be also with regard to the different ranks and classes of Christians. The rich should never say, "We do not want so many poor in the church," neither should the poor man say, "Our minister favors the wealthy; there is more thought of the rich than there is of the poor." There is just as much

fault on the one side as there is on the other, in these things. While we sometimes find the purse-proud man looking down on the poor, it quite as often happens that the poor man takes umbrage where there is no need for it, and is much more wicked in his jealousies than the other in his purse-pride. Let it never be so among Christians, but let the brother of high degree rejoice that he is exalted, and the rich that he is brought low. We want both, and cannot do without either, and having both in the church, neither should one thrust another, but each should go in his own path.

So with the educated and the uneducated. I have been saddened oftentimes when I have heard a sneer against a brother who cannot speak grammatically. The brother who *can* speak grammatically, perhaps, does not try to speak at all; and yet he sneers at the other, and says, "Well, really I wonder that such fellows should preach; what is the good of them?" Now, now, until you have done better than he, do not find fault with him. God uses him, surely you ought not to despise him! The fact is, brethren, that the learned and educated minister is necessary and useful; we have no right to sneer at those who have gone through a college course and earned a high degree of learning, for they are useful; but, on the other hand, who among us hears of such men as Richard Weaver and Mr. Carter, and others laboring amongst the poor, and dares to despise them? If I might have my choice I should prefer to work with them rather than with the fine-spun gentlemen; but still, every man in his own order, each man after his own fashion; let the one take his position and the other take his position, and never say a jealous or an angry word of each other, neither let one thrust another, but each one go straight on in his own path.

So it ought to be with all our churches. In this great city of London there is no excuse for anything like jealousy amongst the various Christian churches. If we were to build as many places of worship as would reach, set side by side, from here to London-bridge, on both sides of the road, and without a single house or shop in all the distance, and if we were to put gospel preachers into them all, I believe they could all be filled without any of them being a hindrance to another, for the mass of three millions and more in this city is so perfectly enormous that there is no chance at all of our being jostled by one another. We are like fishermen in the deep sea; because there are a hundred boats they need not any of them come off the worse. If there were fifty thousand boats they could all be full where the fish are so abundant. Do not you say, "I hear Mr. So-and-So, and what a dear man he is?" Very likely he is, but so is somebody else. It would be a

great pity if everybody could hear only one man. It would be a very sad thing if everybody wanted to come to the Tabernacle, for we cannot make it any bigger than it is; and it would be a very wretched thing if everybody wanted to go somewhere else, for then we should have an empty house; but now, each one listening according as his own spiritual taste may guide him, or as his spiritual appetite may dictate to him, we are formed into different communities, which prosper individually, but which would glorify God much more if all disunion were cast aside, and if we sought each other's good, and profit, and edification.

And so, to conclude, it ought to be with the different denominations. I sometimes think that these will continue for ever. They are of no hurt to the church of God, but a great blessing; for some of them take up one point of truth which is neglected, and others take up another; and so, between them all, the whole of truth is brought out: and it seems to me that the church is even more one than if all the various sections were brought together into one grand ecclesiastical corporation; for this would, probably, feed some ambitious person's vanity, and raise up another dynasty of priestcraft, like the old Babylon of Rome. Perhaps it is quite as well as it is; but let each body of Christians keep to its own work and not sneer at the work of others. Let each one feel, "Now we have this to do, and we will do it in the name of God." Let each body of Christians try to correct its neighbor in its errors and mistakes, but let each work hand in hand, and stand foot to foot in the common battle and the common service; for, O my brethren, the time will come when our little narrow jealousies will all melt away like the hoar frost when the sun arises. When the King shall come in his glory, or we are carried to the other side of the stream of death, and see beyond the curtain which parts us from the invisible world, we shall look with very different eyes upon some things which seem so important now. We shall then see that God has forbidden us to glory in anything but the cross of Christ, and that the one thing needful, after all, to contend for was, "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God."

Now, may the Lord help us to go straight on in our paths, not one thrusting another, but all working together for God. And if there be any among us who are not converted, let me remind them that they are out of order, and let me tell them what comes of that. When a man sets himself in opposition to God's laws, they crush him as sure as he is there. Throw yourself from the monument, and gravitation will not be suspended to save you. Even so, if you are out of order with God, there is no help for it, but

your destruction is certain, if you remain opposed. O that you may be led by divine grace to get into order with God; to be reconciled unto God by the death of his Son. He tells you the way to get into order. It is this — simply trust Jesus. That is the way to rectify all errors. He that believeth on the Lord Jesus Christ, shall be saved. May God bless us with that salvation, for his name's sake, Amen.

THE AGGRESSIVE WORK OF THE PASTORS' COLLEGE

BY EDWARD LEACH

AS a listener to the earnest and hearty short speeches addressed to some of the supporters of the Pastors' College, at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, last march, we were greatly struck by the fact, illustrated and amplified as it was in varied forms, that the institution was almost entirely of an aggressive character. To those who are best acquainted with its working, its power and success, this may appear but a trite reflection. To others who, like ourselves, have watched, as spectators, not uninterested we trust, its marvelous career, the fact comes with an acceptance second only to that felt by those who have been closely allied to its welfare and most prayerful for its success. With not a few, we fear, this distinctive character of the College is not sufficiently well understood; while some good brethren, whom from our soul we honor and love, misapprehend it altogether. Presidents and tutors have more difficulty to meet the objections of such dissidents, than to justify the existence of an institution, the fruits of which testify most to the wisdom of its origination. An outsider may best write in defense of a movement. He may not be in possession of all the information which has filtered through the official mind; he may not be so enthusiastic as its promoters; but at least he is capable of judging from a point of view not so easily taken by the official, and he may be more dispassionate. Not that we propose to take up the cudgels in defense of an institution which courts no other defense than that supplied by its own acts. If its works speak not well for it, no other praise is needed. Let it fall, "why cubereth it the ground?" But it is right and just that the character of its work should be known. The heavy-laden fruit-tree hides not its head. It fears no light from above, no scrutiny from beneath. The College has borne fruit of which it need not be ashamed. Under a hardy clime, it has grown until the smiles of

heaven and the fructifying dews of divine grace have brought it unto a fair stature. It has blossomed; it will do so again. Winds may blow — they have blown — but, well-grounded and firm, it will strike down its roots into the soil, and be stronger yet. It may not be perfect; its symmetry may be complained of; its boughs may sometimes be crooked; its leaves worse than green; its bark may be rough; its branches unequal in strength and length. But if it bear fruit it shall prosper, and the husbandman shall rejoice. It may not live for ever; but its fruits will. It may not be immortal; but it will be immortal till its predestined work has been done. In the year of grace 1969, its machinery may appear out of date — we hope it will; but the machinery is needed now, and, the prophet of Crown-court notwithstanding, may work well for some years to come. Its appliances were not devised for another generation, but for the present. We all work for today, and sufficient for the day is the work that is earnestly and faithfully executed with eyes open and minds free. The appliances are for today; the muscles, sinews, brains, are for immediate exercise — the results shall be for eternity.

Of the majority of the students, it may be said, they have formed for themselves their own spheres of labor and influence. It is on this point, especially with reference to our villages, that we wish to dwell. In ordinary life, the man who carves his own fortune is regarded as little else than a hero. Every petty tradesman that has worked his way up to a suburban villa and a footman, is held to be a genius of no common order. We all honor if not the rising, yet the risen, man. It is no disgrace to genius that it has striven in the face of almost insuperable difficulties, and by the strength of an unconquerable perseverance has vanquished them all. There is no reason why the honor due to a young preacher who struggles might and main to plan and prepare his own field of usefulness should not be cheerfully paid him. The work is heroic. The difficulties are disheartening. The disappointments are heart-breaking. By so much the more then are the courage, faith, patience, and perseverance praiseworthy. If the College deserved kindly cooperation on no other ground, it should obtain it on this — that it does seek, and has so far succeeded, to train up a race of heroes for God's service. These men are not allured by prospects of large salaries. They do not enter College with the expectancy of occupying at some future time distinguished posts of Christian usefulness. They are not animated by any morbid love of popularity. It is well-nigh a matter of certainty that in business they might succeed better in obtaining riches. Nor

are they encouraged in the College to expect high emoluments when out of it. We have known some of these brethren sufficiently well to have observed that, come weal or woe, they have surrendered their prospects, and their earthly future to the cause of God. We believe Mr. Spurgeon can corroborate our testimony that they have been more anxious to be in the *right* sphere than in the *best* sphere; more ambitious of serving God where he designs them to labor than where they would like to work; and that be the field small and the position unenviable, or untried, or apparently hopeless, it should nevertheless be tried, and never relinquished until failure is written indelibly on the attempt.

Few of our readers can understand the difficulties of a young village minister in starting a new effort. He goes down to a village, hitherto untried by, say, that portion of the Baptist denomination which aims to be aggressive. A room is hired. Three persons dissatisfied perhaps with the high sentiments and low practices of "Rehoboth" chapel are his only supporters. The unodorous traditions of the unpeaceful clique that has given the public such unpleasant notions of what Baptists are, are dead against him. The Congregational minister looks shy upon his impertinence in poaching near his manor. The high minister comes down low enough to preach against "the boy's" Arminianism, charges the young people who wish to hear him with having "itching ears," though he probably has imparted the disease by his incapacity to understand the young. The student is called one of Spurgeon's cubs." The curate condescends to stare at him. The parish clerk frowns; the charity boys laugh; the old women dependants on sick funds wonder at his impudence. He preaches in a lecture-hall; and he is animal to "do the grand." He takes to the open air; and he is vulgar. He visits the people at their homes; and he is said to be proselyting. He converses with them in the streets, and he is aiming after show. He takes up special topics for special services; and he is sensational. He preaches comforting sermons in the morning to Christians, and he goes "beyond his depth." He seeks to arouse the sinner in the evening, and he goes beyond the Bible and the five points, and consequently the whole five are maliciously turned against him. He preaches simple elementary sermons to people who need instruction; he is devoid of thought, is always harping on one string, is unprofitable and stale. He urges Christians to practical duty, and complaints arise that he doesn't "feed" enough — as if the sole purpose of religious instruction were to make religious gluttons, fattening on "comfort," until they become like Jeshurun, so fat that they kick

remorselessly. To add to his bewilderment, he is favored with the scum of other churches of all kinds; men who, finding their level among better Christians, sink into a distasteful obscurity; men who, ever aspiring after some petty authority, will forego convictions for honors; men who believe they were predestined to the diaconate, and who, if not believers in the "perseverance of the saints," are firm upholders of the doctrine of the perseverance of the ambitious. Some of these new-comers are Arminians, and happily they soon get offended with the young preacher's Calvinism; some are very "high," and these fly away to more seasoned food; some are intellectual, and an illustration makes them dyspeptic; others are too latitudinarian, and cannot find sufficient chaff to feed their empty souls. Thus, no sooner has the congregation been got together than the operation of weeding begins, and the process seems unending. The lecture-room is not so well filled. A few who cannot worship at all unless they worship respectably, are disappointed at the small numbers who are left. No one of position has come to hold the helm. The principal man is a butcher, and he has only just emerged from a journeyman into a tradesman in a poor way, with a small wife and a large family. Another — a veritable village gossip, with nothing to do and a superabundance of time to do it in — objects to the preacher's notes, or else want of notes, dislikes his method and his reception of criticism; fancies he can preach better himself, and so carries off a few relatives, dependents and children, and commences *very* independent services on his own account, where he can sing and bawl, and rant and rave, to his own delight and other people's wonderment.

The young minister has now, at least, this satisfaction: the sediment, earthy and gross, has fallen to its natural condition — the bottom; and the glass of the future is clearer. A few earnest souls are one in heart with him. They are not numerous; they are but poor; but they have "a mind to work," and a heart that is capable of generous impulses. It is true that their capacity is extremely limited, and their experience in encountering difficulties small. Authority may in time make them autocrats, unless the minister be sufficiently prudent and foreseeing to exercise his discriminative judgment. They have much to make them dispirited — the weak become cold, but the strong remain and grow more earnest. Strangers are brought in, and good is done. Perhaps the preacher may wait, with an anxious heart and an aching head, for months ere a conversion is known. We remember one case of an esteemed friend whom God has blessed to the salvation of many souls, who labored for six months without hearing of any conversions.

Then came the tide of divine favor; the set time to encourage, commenced and continued for four years, and is not concluded yet. Conversions do come when watched for with tears and looked for with faith. A small church is formed. A small salary is given. Bread and water are sure; but little else. Then the feeble folk begin to talk of building; without the slightest prospect of success, they pray for it. Oh, the agonizing prayers that have been offered in quiet villages for a few pounds wherewith to commence the erection of an inexpensive house for God! Oh, the contumely, bitter and plausible, heaped upon those earnest hearts, who believe God can be moved, and that he who possesses the silver and gold *can* give it to his cause, obscure and unknown though it be! Collectors canvass the congregation, and seek contributions from the composite “powers that be,” who hold the village in their supremacy. They are rebuffed where they anticipated pounds; they are rewarded with silver where they looked for gold. For months the task seems hopeless; they draw near to the gates of despair. “Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saves them out of their distresses.” The righteous see their faith, their courage, and their enthusiasm, and rejoicing over the work their Master has given his people to do, they help to turn “the wilderness into a standing water, and dry ground into watersprings.” Man’s extremity becomes God’s opportunity. Some generous friend sends a cheque which would be small in amount were the exigencies like those of a large effort, but which is a substantial sum in a little cause with which to commence operations. This gift necessarily stimulates others. The President of the College has his eye upon the movement, and in the “nick of time,” when additional help is absolutely needed, promises a stun which sends the fire of enthusiasm into the ranks, and is like a reviving cordial to the faint-hearted. The foundation-stone is laid; the edifice reared. Its progress is daily and lovingly watched, as if it were to be a cathedral of massive proportions and delicate prettinesses, instead of a plain, substantial, inelegant structure. And ere the day of opening arrives, pastor and people spend restless nights of feverish excitement, with joy looking for the dawning morn when the as yet unfinished doors shall be opened for the friends and neighbors to hear some of those choice sermons one hears about in our peregrinations with which our friend, Mr. J. A. Spurgeon favors these interesting gatherings.

The building opened, part filled, church increasing, earnest preaching, fervent praying — but still a debt, very heavy to the feeble folk, and a badly paid ministry, the stunted remuneration barely covering mere necessities.

The preacher perhaps is unmarried. He hears the glowing eloquence of married people, who move his very heart by the fervid strains in which they speak of matrimony. He makes pitiful contrasts between his cheerless home and the snug dwelling where love and sunshine are supposed perpetually to bless and to cheer. Some high-souled female, of heroic temperament, though not of exalted expectations, of suitable taste and genius, hovers around his vision, and surreptitiously gains an entrance into his heart. By-and-by, the Rev. Mr. Titus, assisted by the Rev. Mr. Timothy, conducts a ceremony that links the fortunes of poor minister and high-souled female indissolubly together. What is regarded as the inevitable blessings — though they are not always inevitable — come as intruders into the charmed circle, and add, if to the joys, yet to the expenses of life. For some years the pastor labors amidst the usual discouragements and vexations of early ministerial life, determined to succeed if success be possible, often pinched, often shunned, yet presenting a cheerful countenance, and never breathing a word to head-quarters about his difficulties. We once heard a tale of despondency that was confided to our ear with the strict injunction that not a word was to be breathed to the “governor” — a *sobriquet* by which Mr. Spurgeon was never christened, save by these Baptist followers who should be truer to their traditions. Indomitable energy and perseverance seem pre-eminently to characterize these young brethren. They defy the rules of logic and propriety in their estimate of duty. They have inverted the order which prudence has enjoined. Thus one young brother writes of those among whom he is settled: — “They shun Baptists as they would a viper; *therefore*, there is great need that we should have a Baptist cause here.” Why, such a resolution deserves, if anything can, a successful issue. Such heroism, in obedience to an inner impulse, if it permeate the whole character, must make the word “failure” so to tingle in the ear that, brave and self-denying, the whole soul will be poured out in living flame of enthusiasm upon the altar of divine service.

Two speeches delivered by two earnest brethren, Mr. C. Williams, of Southampton, at the British and Irish Home Mission meeting, and Dr. Landels, at the Exeter Hall gathering of the Foreign Missions, ought to be printed and circulated together, with such applications and comments as a judicious writer might append. The one speaker showed how fearfully we have neglected the villages. He pointed out how Dissent unquestionably prospered in towns, and how villages retrograded. He argued with much force and judgment that if it was desirable that healthful life-giving streams

should be turned into the large towns, the salt must be cast in at the source of those streams, the villages, and then most probably an improved religious life would be found in the great cities and towns. The other speech, brilliant and manly, urged in eloquent words the need of more self-denial and heroism in the propagation of the gospel in foreign climes. But truth to tell, England also wants enthusiasm, not only in foreign missions, but also in home labors. If the spirit of Dr. Landels' thrilling speech could but possess British Christians at home, evangelistic work would not cut so ridiculous a figure. The obstructive prudence to which Dr. Landels referred in such caustic terms, sits like a nightmare upon all aggressive work. These young brethren, who have eschewed all cold calculation, and armed with the panoply of divine truth, have sought to fight their way through hindrances and impediments that have damped the ardor of better, more cultured, but not more fervent men, demand, and deserve the smile of approval they need in the prosecution of their noble enterprise. We honor the men who, subsisting on scanty and humble fare, battling with adversity, and living down prejudice, are seeking to the best of their ability to plant new churches in apparently unhopeful districts. With the accent of conviction on their lips, the truth of God in their hearts, and undying perseverance leading them on, they must succeed in breaking the dreary monotony of a sinful village life. Their preaching may not please the highly cultured; their methods of working may not suit this decorous age; their unambitious lives may fall flat upon the feverish world; but their faithfulness to God, and persistency in his service, shall be rewarded with the divine "Well done, good and faithful." We know no greater heroes than these sufferers of contumely and hatred, who so gloriously bear up and strike dismay into the enemy's camp. Their imperfections are not worthy to be weighed with their virtues. If England is to be evangelized, it must be by such men. Fit them, train them to as great a degree of perfection as mortal man can bear — no standard is too high for God's ministers but let not culture destroy Christian simplicity (it does not in the truly great); let not learning quench earnestness and enthusiasm; let not supercilious affectation snub them, or selfishness despise them. A future generation may be proud of men who today are but lightly esteemed. Our hope is that the College will turn out many more such men; for our conviction is that as soon as it, as well as similar institutions, ceases to be aggressive, its days will be numbered.

DISTANCE LENDS ENCHANTMENT

ON the island of Ledo, within hail of Venice, one hears on the Sabbath a very heaven of music floating over the lagoon from the church bells of “that glorious city in the sea.” The atmosphere seems to ripple with silver waves akin to those which twinkle on the sea of glass before you. A mazy dance of sweet clear sounds bewilders you with delight; it is a mosaic of music, or, if you will, a lacework of melody. One would not wish to lose a note, or hush the glorious clangor of a single bell. How changed it all is when the gondolier’s fleet our has brought you close under the campaniles, when you are gliding smoothly along those marvelous streets, where “the salt seaweed clings to the marble of the palaces,” then the booming of the bells, incessant, impetuous, thundering, garrulous, discordant, becomes an almost unbearable affliction. On your right a little noisy demon calls from the hollow of his cracked shrine in a voice dolefully monotonous, and yet acutely piercing, awakening a whole kennel of similar sprites, each one more ill-conditioned than his brother; these, in turn, arouse a huge and monstrous Diabolus, who groans at you as if longing to grind your Protestant bones, and feed the departed souls of Inquisitors with the dainty bread. Two or three sweet little bells cast in their dulcet notes, but the ear resents as an impertinence theft unrequested addition to the deafening din; while worse than all, if perchance a moment’s pause should occur, and the discordant and the booming noise-makers should rest, as though from sheer exhaustion, some miserable cur of a bell close at hand is sure to yap out like a scalded puppy, to the utter despair of the wearied traveler. Charles Lamb may talk of bell-ringing as “the music nighest bordering upon heaven,” but too much of it is more suggestive of another place. At certain hours in Venice, the bells of a hundred churches, all near at hand, make day hideous to the ear, and cause one to wish for night, when —

*“Darker and darker
The black shadows fall;
Sleep and oblivion
Reign over all.”*

Thus and thus is it with this world everywhere and evermore. Far away and outside the world is harmony and delight, nearer and more closely known it is horror and confusion. To the young and inexperienced, the cadence sweet of love and mirth is rapture, and the towers of earth ring out a

concert, filling hope with transport; but when the gondola of experience has brought the man into the very city of life, he hears a horde of bells—

*“Solemnly, mournfully
Dealing their dole.”*

He is startled by mighty knells; wearied with piercing tones of care; and worried out of hope, as with mournful accents, troubles cleave the air, and the crazing clamors of peals of controversy, bobmajors of nonsense, and chimes of slander, frighten sacred quiet from the scene, and sound a hideous requiem to peace. “Things are not what they seem.” From afar, society is full of friendship; nearer, it is hollow and hypocritical; pleasure dreamed of is Elysium, but, mingled in, too much of it is Gehenna: philosophy seems deep and solid at a distance, but searched with care, it is proven to be vapid and pretentious. All the world’s a mirage; heaven alone is real. From thy din, O earth, we turn to the divine Sabbath bells of heaven, which from the far off hills proclaim the everlasting joy of the New Jerusalem. C. H. S.

MR. GRANT ON “THE DARBY BRETHREN” f20

MR. GRANT has with very great diligence collected much valuable information as to that section of Plymouth Brethren who follow Mr. Darby. As on all hands, with a diligence never exceeded, and a subtlety never equaled, they are laboring to seduce the members of our churches to the subversion of the truth and the overthrow of the needful order and discipline of our Zion, it may be well to disseminate information concerning their sentiments and tactics. There is nothing which they have so much to dread as being thoroughly unearthed and exposed; for their grosser errors are not generally made known to their dupes until they are fairly in their meshes. Mr. Grant has done real service to the churches by his treatise on “The heresies of the Plymouth Brethren,” which we trust he will publish in a separate form. It is almost impossible for even his heavy hand to press too severely upon this malignant power, whose secret but rapid growth is among the darkest signs of the times. Our large extracts are meant to stimulate a desire for the entire work. *On their errors*, Mr. Grant says:—

“Mr. Darby maintains that a part of Christ’s sufferings on the cross, were what he calls ‘non-atoning,’ that is, that in ‘smiting’ him as the shepherd on

the cross, God did not do so with a view to an atonement for our sins, until a particular point of time, while Christ was hanging on the tree, and that then the wrath of God, in its atoning character, coalesced with his legal wrath. In association with the doctrine that much of the sufferings of Christ on the cross were without any atoning object or effect, Mr. Darby, advancing a step farther, denies that the atonement for our sins consisted even in Christ's death. But as it is probable some persons will find it difficult to believe that any man, professing to hold evangelical principles, and especially the leader of an important religious sect, also professing to be sound in the faith, could entertain such notions, and that I must have misunderstood Mr. Darby's meaning — it is due to him, and may be desirable for the reader, that I should quote his own words. They are given, in substance the same as in his monthly organ, 'The Present Testimony,' for August, 1866, a later date than that in which his other publication, 'The Sufferings of Christ,' made its appearance, and, therefore, notwithstanding all the remonstrances addressed to him by some of his followers against that dreadful doctrine, they are proved to have been without effect. He then stands before the religious world as still adhering to these fearful doctrines:—

“‘There was, too, to him,’ says Mr. Darby, ‘in addition to the pain of the death, the *legal curse* appended, by God's righteous judgment as King of Israel, to the form of the death; as it is written, ‘Cursed is every one that baneeth upon a tree.’ But this *curse of the law* was not the same thing as *the wrath*, when he cried out, ‘My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?’ *The thieves bore it as he did*; that thief, too, who went with him to paradise the same day, and who could go there to be with his Lord, because *he*, the Prince of Life, had borne the wrath due to sin in his own body on the tree. But the cross had been endured by many an unrepentant rebel against man and God; and *the cross in itself would not take away sin*. Yea, more, while the time in which he endured the cross was the period in part of which the wrath came on him (when he endured the wrath of God's judgment against sin), he only of *the three that were crucified together*, could or did bear the wrath; and the agony of that wrath, if his alone *of the three then and there crucified*, was distinct from, though present to him at the same time as the agonies (infinitely lesser) of the cross of wood!’

“The italics are not mine; they are those of the Rev. W. H. Dorman, who was for twenty-eight years the friend and admirer of Mr. Darby, and

resigned the pastorship of a Congregational church in Islington to join his section of the Plymouth Brethren.

“The same sentiments are expressed in various other portions of Mr. Darby’s writings; and even in some respects in language more objectionable still. That part of his theory, that Christ suffered much and long on the cross before there was anything of an atoning nature in his agonies, and simply as lying under the wrath of God in his character as King of Israel, is brought out more fully and more plainly than in the extract I have given. This is, in effect, to say that Christ actually had sins of his own in virtue of the relation which he sustained to the Jewish nation, as their king or head. There is something inexpressibly painful in the idea that our Lord suffered on the cross in any other capacity than as the Substitute or Sin-bearer for us. There is not a sentence in the word of God which gives the slightest sanction to it, but the contrary: — ‘While we were yet sinners Christ died for *us*,’ ‘He was made sin for us who know no sin.’ Mr. Darby says he *did* know sin as the King of Israel. ‘He died for *our* sins and rose again for our justification; he died for *our* sins according to the Scriptures,’ ‘Who gave himself for *our* sins,’ ‘He is the propitiation for *our* sins,’ ‘Who bore *our* sins in his own body on the tree;’ ‘Who washed us from *our* sins in his own blood,’ etc.

“The effect of this fearful theory of Dr. Darby, believed in and taught, be it remembered, by all the Brethren of his party, would be (?) as is well remarked by the author of a pamphlet written in reply to the theory, in the following words:—‘Let the reader distinctly notice that in place of the single view of Christ’s obedience unto death which the apostles set before us, who see God in the cross only as the smiter of his own fore-ordained Lamb, the sufferer is, by this teaching, placed under a *triple* necessity of dying under the *hand of God*. He kills him as Messiah; he smites him as the companion of others on the cross, and apart from atonement; and he makes him *also* an atoning substitute.’ What a strange theological jumble, to say nothing of its pernicious tendencies wherever adopted.

“To say that our Lord suffered on the cross in any other way than as *our* sin-bearer, or as paying for us the debt which we owed to the justice of God, would be, to the poor law-condemned and self-condemned sinner, to divest the sufferings of Christ on the cross of much more of the grace and glory of his atoning sacrifice than language can express; while it would be to deprive the believer in them, in a corresponding measure, of that

supreme comfort which he derives from looking back to the cross, and feeling that all that Christ suffered on the cross was solely for his disciples...

“There is one of their doctrines which I regard as so vital that it appears to me it would, were it true, prove fatal to the whole scheme of man’s redemption.

“The doctrine to which I allude is, that Christ’s obedience to the law was not vicarious — was no part of the work which he wrought out for those for whom he became surety; in other words, that believers are in nowise interested in his obedience. Until Mr. Darby advanced this astounding doctrine, I am not aware that the notion was ever before even hinted at. The fathers, in the second, third, and fourth centuries, did entertain doctrines which were equally novel, astounding, and pernicious; but I am not aware that any of their number ever dreamt of advancing the notion that we had no interest whatever, directly or indirectly, in the obedience of our Lord when on earth. Yet there is not one single follower of Mr. Darby that does not unhesitatingly — I might almost say indignantly — repudiate the idea that our Lord obeyed for a single individual that ever lived, or now lives, or that will hereafter live, till the end of time. Were they right, the obedience, or the spotless life of Christ would, so far as relates to believers in him, be no part of the work which his Father gave him to do, and which he himself came to accomplish. This extraordinary notion involves an entire and lamentable misunderstanding of the whole scheme of man’s redemption. The law demanded obedience to its requirements, just as inexorably as it exacted the infliction of penalties because of its violation. And, therefore, it behoved him, who became our Substitute, to render obedience on our behalf, as well as to suffer in our stead the punishment to which we had, because of our violation of the law, rendered ourselves liable...

“In connection with the Plymouth Brethren’s rejection of the doctrine — most surely believed by all evangelical denominations in every age of the church’s history — of the vicarious purpose of Christ’s obedience, there is the equally unreserved rejection of another doctrine which the great bulk of believers regard as one of vital importance. I allude to the doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ. Not contented with pronouncing this doctrine as entirely unscriptural, the Plymouth Brethren seem to regard it with special aversion...

“With the deadly heresies entertained and taught by the Plymouth Brethren, in relation to some of the most momentous of all the doctrines of the gospel, and to which I have adverted at some length, I feel assured that my readers will not be surprised at any other views, however unscriptural and pernicious they may be, which the Darbyites have embraced and zealously seek to propagate. Among these, is the doctrine that the moral law is a thing with which believers in Christ have nothing to do, not *even as a rule of life*. This doctrine pervades the writings of the Darbyites, as well as their oral ‘teaching.’

“As the Plymouth Brethren will not use the Lord’s Prayer because it contains the expression ‘forgive us our trespasses,’ so they make no confession of their sins in the sense in which the words are usually understood. In acting thus, they are, at least, entitled to the credit of consistency. If one has no sins to be pardoned, it logically follows that he can have none to confess. The Brethren will, it is true, admit in general terms that we are all ‘poor weak creatures,’ but when they do so, they attach no definite meaning to the phraseology. It was but a few weeks ago that I had some conversation on this very point with one of the most intellectual and spiritually-minded lady members of the Darbyite party. In answer to my statement that the Brethren did not make any confession of sin, she said, ‘Where is the use of always looking at or confessing our sins, when we have Christ to look to?’ If, indeed, we had not Christ to look to, there would be no ‘use in looking at and confessing our sins,’ but it being our mercy to have Christ to look to, we shall all the more clearly discern his preciousness the deeper our sense of our sins and sinfulness. And unless we have vivid perceptions of the greatness of our guilt, we shall never sufficiently appreciate the merits of the Savior, to lay hold of his finished work for our salvation. Job and Moses, and David and Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and all the most eminent Old Testament saints of whom we read, had views on this point which were the opposite of those of the Plymouth Brethren, as is abundantly testified by the frequency and depth of their confessions of sin. Job could say, ‘Behold! I am vile, I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.’ And David had such a sight and sense of his sin that his Psalms are full to overflowing with heartfelt confessions of them. ‘Mine iniquities,’ he says, in one place, ‘have taken hold on me, so that I am unable to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head; therefore my heart faileth me.’ In another place we hear him saying in his address to the throne of grace, ‘I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever

before me.’ No Plymouth Brother would adopt this language of either Job or David. Nor is that of Isaiah ever heard in their assemblies, as applicable to those who compose them, when he says: — ‘Woe is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips.’ Neither did Paul’s sentiments accord, in relation to this point, with those of Mr. Darby and his disciples. Paul could say from the depths of his soul, in the overwhelming sense which he had of his guilt in the sight of God, notwithstanding the abundance of grace given him: ‘I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this sin and death?’ I cannot doubt that if the question were put to Plymouth Brethren, they would admit that Paul was at least as good a Christian as they. And yet no one ever heard a Darbyite employing this language as being applicable to himself.”

As to their modes of action and general spirit Mr. Grant writes largely, and we believe from correct data. Many facts which have come under our notice are confirmatory of Mr. Grant’s severe criticisms; we only hope none of our brother ministers may experimentally have so clear a revelation of the Darby spirit as has occurred to us. “Let me, then, first of all mention that, though as I have before stated, their numbers in London and the suburbs do not exceed 1,600, and their numbers throughout Great Britain do not exceed 20,000, they are so very active in their endeavors to make proselytes, and are so continually involved in controversies and quarrels among themselves, that they are more frequently before the public than sects of Christians who are more numerous. Take the sect called Bible Christians, for example. Their numbers in this country exceed 20,000, if, indeed, they be not considerably more; and yet for once that the name Bible Christian meets the eye we see that of the Brethren half-a-dozen times. The Plymouth Brethren, meaning the Darby section, are, indeed, at once the most active and most noisy sect of Christians of which we have any record in the annals of Christianity. And yet they have no missionary institutions, no organized propaganda of any kind; but what, I have no doubt, they find answer their purpose much better — they have their individual aggressive agents. They are first-rate tacticians. They have an intuitive perception as to who ‘among those who are without,’ to whom they have access, are likely to make the best ‘Brothers’ or ‘Sisters,’ and that conclusion come to, all their appliances are brought to bear upon them. And they are singularly happy as to the way in which they go about

the work of proselytizing. But before I proceed farther, I ought to remark that, with very few exceptions, the women are the great propagandists of Plymouth Brethrenism. And, as a natural consequence, women, are almost invariably the parties whom they seek to 'convert.' They are wise enough in their generation to know that if a man's wife is got over, she will give her husband no rest until she has made a resolute effort to prevail on him to join the 'gathering' along with her. Of course, it will be understood that I do not mean it to be inferred that there are no exceptions to this, but I do say — and I speak with no small knowledge of the philosophy and history of Plymouth Brethrenism — that the exceptions are rare indeed. In fact, I will go so far as to affirm that it would be almost incompatible with Plymouth 'Sisterdom' not to be a zealous and unwearied laborer in the field of proselytism. It is as true of them as a body as it was of those women to whom Paul in his Second Epistle to Timothy alludes when he represents them as creeping into houses. Their favorite plan is to single out the best members of other evangelical churches, and endeavor to get them over; and when they have succeeded in inoculating them with Brethrenism, they are advised not at once to leave the church of which they are members, but to remain for a time, in the hope of being able to convince others of the error of their way in 'sitting under such teachers.' The new convert to Darbyism is carefully instructed as to the way in which he or she is to proceed. They are not to seem to obtrude their denominational views on those at whose 'conversion' they aim, but to appear deeply grieved that so few 'excellent Christians' see, because they have never been taught by their ministers, the whole truth; and that this is all the more to be deplored because if they — the parties addressed — saw the truth in all its blessedness and fullness 'they would be able to teach others also.'

Of course, in many cases this ingenious mode of propagating Plymouth Brethrenism fails, but in many it succeeds. And the proselyte, fired with a zeal, which is proverbial in new converts, to bring others to embrace the new views which he or she has just adopted, applies him or herself at once to the task of bringing over others to the new fold which he or she has just entered. The new 'Sister' commences with certain stereotyped phrases in endeavoring to bring over the party aimed at, by remarking that the pastor of the particular congregation is a good man — a very excellent man according to the amount of his knowledge of the truth — but that he is not sufficiently taught of the Spirit on certain important points of doctrine. His deficiencies are specifically pointed out. On the next Sunday the device is

to say to the party whose conversion to Brethrenism is sought to be accomplished, something to this effect: 'That was, in some points, a very good sermon of Mr. Smith's yesterday morning, but there was something wanting. At any rate, I was not fed. Mr. Smith has not got the same clear view of the truth which Brother Black at the gathering at Blank Street has. I should like you to hear him a few times.' The other agrees; and the chances are that in a month or so she comes out a full-fledged Darbyite, accompanied by expressions of wonder that she should have been so blinded as not sooner to have seen such important truths, mingled with thanksgivings at being now mercifully brought into the light of the glorious gospel — as, of course, understood and taught by Mr. Darby. And, while the process of proselytism is going on, the kindest words are spoken, and the most winning manners practiced, on the part of the domestic missionary. A minister of the gospel, who knows from painful experience what these proselytizers are, assures me that he was personally cognizant of one instance in which a Plymouth 'Sister,' in her anxiety to make another 'Sister,' spoke to her within a few minutes of their meeting, though they had never seen or heard of each other before, in terms of endearment as strong and as frequently employed as if they had been sisters in the flesh. 'Oh, yes, my dear sister;' 'oh, no, my dearest sister,' were phrases spoken in the most tender tones, and were among the weapons which were liberally employed with the view of ensuring another recruit to the Darbyite army.

"What I have said will give some idea of the stereotyped way in which the Plymouth Brethren proceed to work in their mission of seeking to make proselytes to Darbyism. Other plans, varying according to circumstances, are resorted to. No one outside their circle can have any idea of the zeal and ingenuity which they display in their endeavors to bring other Christians over to Darbyism. The words of our Lord may, in a sense, be applied to them — 'They would compass sea and land to make one proselyte.' That one object consecrates every expedient to which they resort, no matter what it may be, to accomplish it. They may not be able to deny that a particular person is an eminent Christian, but still the party is not a Darbyite, and that is enough to justify whatever means they may have recourse to bring the particular party within the fold of Brethrenism.

"It matters not to them that, by going into churches or chapels in this way, in parts of the country where the minister, owing to the smallness of the number of his congregation, has the greatest difficulty imaginable to

continue to maintain the Christian ministry. That does not cause them the slightest compunctious visiting, even though he may be a man eminent for his personal piety and his devotedness to the cause of Christ. The minister, with his wife and family, may be thrown destitute on the world. The minister's heart, indeed, may be literally broken — still that will not cause them to experience a momentary pang. No amount, indeed, of misery they may have brought on God's faithful ministering servant will give them even a moment's uneasiness. On the contrary, they will rejoice at the ruin they have wrought in breaking up a church, because believing they are thereby doing God service. Many a provincial minister's heart have they literally broken, while hundreds of others have been made miserable for life by the dissensions which these 'troublers in Israel' have occasioned in their churches, and the dissatisfaction they have caused in the minds of many members who have not left, with the same kind of preaching to which they had for years before listened with pleasure and profit.

"A Congregational minister in the country, writes to me on this matter as follows: — 'What the Plymouth Brethren have done in country towns no one but those who are intimate with the life of country churches can tell. There is no Congregational minister, either Baptist or Independent, who is not ready to denounce them as the greatest troublers of the peace of Israel since the days of Ahab. Much in these days is said about the *Jesuits*, but the Plymouth Brethren will compare with them, both in respect to stealthy slyness and persistent effort to make converts. There are always in every church a few disaffected spirits, who only need the voice of the tempter to make them cantankerous. These are so much tinder to the spark of the Plymouth Brethren's tongue of fire, and straightway we have the following results: — The minister does not preach the gospel — the poor people are perishing for lack of food — another minister in the town cannot give it them; only let us get away from all this, and have no church, but just read the Bible for ourselves. A division ensues, and soon, instead of reading the Bible for themselves, one man gets the whole thing into his own hands, and another church is formed, virtually where there was to be no church and *no* minister.'

"This witness is true, and his testimony will be endorsed by hundreds of other ministers of the gospel in the country, all, like him, speaking from what they have seen and felt...

“Plymouth Brethren have no feeling wherever their principles are concerned. I know indeed of no sect or denomination so utterly devoid of kindness of heart. It is the most selfish religious system with which I am acquainted. It is entirely wrapped up in itself. It recognizes no other denomination, whether the Church of England, or either of the Nonconformist denominations, as a church of Christ. Mr. Darby has again and again said in print, as well as written in private, that those who belong to his party in the metropolis, constitute the *only* church of Christ in London...

“No one ever saw a Darbyite at any of our Bible, or Missionary, or other Evangelical Society meetings. The Brethren look upon all other denominations, however evangelical in sentiment, and however high their standard of personal religion, as so largely infected with error in doctrine, as well as wrong in relation to church government, that they believe it would be sinful to associate with them for the promotion of religious ends. And this conviction, which is never absent from their minds, naturally has the effect of puffing them up with spiritual pride. Believing that they alone of all religious bodies have attained to the knowledge of the truth, it could hardly be otherwise than that they should look down on every other Christian sect with supreme pity, mingled, even according to the admission of some of their own number, with contempt...

“With this feeling is naturally associated an amount of arrogance in the assertion of their own views, which those who differ from them often find to be unbearable. And in this respect their leader, Mr. Darby, sets them an example. In his case it assumes the form of infallibility. Mr. Darby is, to all intents and purposes a thorough Pope, though under a Protestant name. He will never admit that he is in error; and therefore very naturally declines to argue with those who controvert the soundness of his views. How, indeed, could it be otherwise? If Mr. Darby holds, which he does, with a firm grasp, the principle that whatever conclusions he and those acting in conjunction with him may come to, express beyond all question the mind of the Spirit; and if those Darbyites who gather together in London, can go so far as to exclude all other denominations, even the most godly among them, ‘believing themselves to be the *one* or *only*, assembly of God in London,’ how need we feel surprised that Mr. Darby, as the ‘prophet, priest, and king’ of the party, should exercise a perfect despotism within the domains of Darbyism?

“I have before glanced, but barely glanced, at the intensely controversial spirit which is a universal characteristic of the Plymouth Brethren. I say universal, because though I know much of them personally, as well as through the testimony of others, I know not a single instance where this controversial spirit did not exist in greater or less force. It is not for me to say that there are no exceptions to this rule; but I do advisedly say, that I am unacquainted with any single case to the contrary. This controversial feeling, often degenerating into something resembling regular quarrels, is the chronic condition of Plymouth Brethrenism. They are in a state of constant antagonism with the Bethesda party; ^{f21} and a minister of the gospel, who has seen much of them, seriously assures me that when they have no one of the opposite party to quarrel with, they will disagree among themselves. I can verify this statement, to a certain extent, from my own personal knowledge. So great, indeed, is their disposition to engage in controversy, often ending in something like a quarrel, that it would be a thing quite new to see two of their number remain together for many minutes without a decided disagreement on some one point or other.

“Their quarrels, too, occasionally acquire an intensity which bring them before the public. In the year 1860, they had what they call a Conference at the London Bridge Hotel, met together for the purpose of examining certain charges preferred by Mr. William Kelly, ‘pastor of the assembly’ in Guernsey, against a Mr. Havent, of the same island. Many of the ‘Brethren’ came from all parts of the country to this Conference. Referring to this great gathering, in connection with the leaders of the Darby party, by whom it was called, and by whom it was care- fully packed, Mr. Culverhouse, a man of standing among the Brethren, says in his published ‘Statement of the Guernsey and London Case:’ — ‘It is impracticable to describe the true state of things, either in the gatherings or at the Conference. Every remonstrance is unheeded; and the simple fact of the services being conducted chiefly by these Brethren is of itself appalling. *Insinuations, slanders, insolence, threats, and violence are resorted to* for the maintenance of their position. At a meeting of Brethren, held at the Hoxton Assembly on the 25th instant, our brother, Mr. Lean, publicly avowed, in answer to inquiries by myself, that the London Bridge Conference is a ‘private’ meeting. This being so, and regarding the character of its *acts* and usurpations, I designate it an ‘*Inquisition.*’ At the meeting of the 21st instant, the doors were guarded and locked. A Brother, on applying for entrance, was seized by the throat and thrust back. The fact of the doors being

guarded and locked excludes, as you see, even the ordinary excuse of 'excitement.' Surely, 'these things ought not so to be.' Do you sanction, my Brethren, such a state of things? Will you, my Brethren, submit to be governed by an *Inquisition*?'

“Behold,’ says David, ‘how good a thing it is for *brethren* to dwell together in unity!’ Behold a picture of the unity of *Plymouth Brethren* as drawn, printed, and published by one of themselves! It is a sorrowful description of the spirit and conduct of men who call themselves Brethren. Certainly this is not ‘Brethrenism’ according to what is usually understood as the scriptural meaning of the word...

“So late as March last one of the most extraordinary scenes of religious discord ever witnessed took place in the Freemasons’ Hall. Between four and five hundred Brethren were asked to come from all parts of the country to hold a conference together. The Darbyites and Bethesdaites were equally invited. Those who invited them did not mention for what special purpose they were to come. It was simply said it was desirable they should assemble together, and that the Holy Ghost would direct them as to what they should say and do when they met together. The expenses of the poorer Brethren were paid by some unknown and wealthy Brethren. They had only been met an hour or so before they were found controversially fighting with each other with a fierceness which could hardly be believed. And this state of things lasted four or five hours for three successive days. It by-and-by transpired that the real purpose for which the Conference was called was to endeavor to bring about a reconciliation between the Darby and Bethesda sections of Brethrenism. The very idea was enough to plunge the Darbyites into a state of something more than indignation. Scenes of indescribable uproar, mingled with expressions of the very worst feelings, took place on each of the three days. And I am assured by one who was present, who does not belong to either the Darbyite or Bethesda section of the Brethren, that not only the prime, but the sole movers in these most unseemly scenes were the Darbyites. What the exhibitions were which occurred may be inferred from the fact that a lady who was present said she could have wept tears of blood at what she saw and heard; and a gentleman of education and social position, who also witnessed these lamentable scenes, remarked to me that it was enough to have made even angels weep. This may seem incredible, but it is nevertheless the fact.

“But the saddest of all in connection with these deplorable scenes is that they are actually, in effect, represented as the results of the guidance of the Holy Ghost. There is no principle which the Darbyites more firmly hold, or to which they give greater prominence in their ‘teaching,’ than this — that the Holy Ghost is with them in all their assemblies, and that whatever conclusions they come to are the result of his special guidance...

“But I may be asked by some one incredulously, can it really be possible that the Darbyites should ascribe the distressing scene at the London Bridge Hotel as the result of the special guidance of the Holy Spirit? Deplorable as is the fact, it is even so. The question, as stated in Mr, Grove’s pamphlet, entitled ‘The Exclusive Brethren,’ meaning the Darbyite section of the Brethren, was put to some of the leaders of the Darbyite part in reference to this very meeting, and an affirmative answer was at once given. The question was put in various forms, that there might be no mistake in the matter, and the answer was in every instance unhesitatingly and explicitly in the affirmative. One of the forms in which the question was put was this: ‘Suppose an assembly err, what should then be done?’ The answer was, ‘Still, while you acknowledge it as an assembly, you must accept its *action* as that of the Holy Ghost.’ Then, continued the querist, ‘Is it the Lord’s mind that I should accept an error of judgment?’ Answer, ‘Yes.’ Again, ‘Then you would rather accept an *official blunder*, knowing it to be so, than act upon what you believe the Lord had shown you to be the truth?’ Answer, ‘*Certainly.*’“

The effect of Darbyism upon family life is perhaps its most awful feature. With a passage upon that point we close our extracts.

“There is just one point more to which I wish to advert for a moment before I conclude. It refers to the influence which Darbyism exerts on the social comfort of families. I shall be fully borne out, by the concurrent testimony of thousands of persons, all of them speaking from painful experience, when I say, that no tongue can tell what an amount of domestic unhappiness has been caused by the circumstance of some leading members of a family adopting Darbyite opinions, when the other members of the family were opposed to those opinions. I could unfold specific tales of this kind which could scarce be credited; but that would not be expedient. It might be attended with unpleasant consequences to individuals, even without mentioning names. Parties might be supposed to be pointed at in the cases in question, which I had not at all in my eye. Indeed, a greater or

less number of persons, of whose names I never even heard, would imagine that either themselves or some members of their families were alluded to. I will content myself, therefore, with stating the broad fact, and giving three illustrations — that Darbyism, as a rule, changes one's whole character, as regards the social relations of life, where a leading member of a family has plunged over head and ears into it. The former geniality, however great it may have been, disappears. The party, indeed, is no longer, as regards what is called amiability of manners, the same as before. It is a curious fact that a generous, open, agreeable Darbyite is very rarely to be met with. Plymouth Brethrenism changes the most kind, courteous, and winning manners into the opposite. And this is the case even where the family previously lived in perfect Christian harmony and happiness. I can testify from personal knowledge to an illustrative case of this kind which took place not, long ago. A gentleman of high rank in the army lived for years in as great happiness with his wife as perhaps any husband ever did. They were both eminent Christians. In an evil hour, the wife, one of the most amiable of women, fell into the hands of a Plymouth Sister, and the result of the intercourse was, that in a few weeks she became a thorough proselyte to Darbyism. The very firstfruit of her 'conversion' was her refusal to join in social worship with her husband and the other members of the family. Nor did the consequences of this lady's 'conversion' to Darbyism end even there. She would no longer even kneel with her husband alone in prayer before retiring to rest — a practice which they never omitted from the day of their marriage until the unhappy hour in which she was entangled in the meshes of Brethrenism. None but a truly godly man can form any conception of the misery of which this change in the opinions, the feelings, and the conduct of this lady, proved productive in a formerly happy household.

“Another illustration of the estrangement which Brethrenism causes in families, consisting with my own personal knowledge, presents itself at this moment to my mind. A Plymouth Sister, whose family do not share her views, cannot help expressing her dissent from any and every act of worship in the family. She even turns away her face when the head of the house asks the divine blessing on the meals of which they are all about to partake. Is not this sad? Does it not display a lamentable state of feeling on the part of the individual, and gives a deplorable view of the denominational system that could produce it.

“I am also acquainted personally with another case, in which it happened that a mother and daughter had adopted the opposite views on Brethrenism. The result was, that the two would not sit down together at the same Lord’s-table. What an unhappy condition it must have been, for each to be living together in this state of antagonism in relation to religious matters!”

NOTES ON RITUALISM.

THE Ritual Commission has issued its report, and with it a vast appendix. From amid dustheaps almost as huge as those which Dickens has immortalized, we have, by dint of fiddling and using the sieve, extracted a few pieces of gold and silver, which we hope will pass for good metal and be as useful now as they were in the days long past.

Many of the reformers were evidently as disgusted with the ceremonials tolerated in the Anglican church as ever we can be. Royal rather than spiritual authority, was the reason for sparing those Popish mummeries which have survived the reformers’ pruning knife. Bishop Hooper, if we mistake not, was always a greater admirer of vestments than plain Hugh Latimer, but the very meager lengths to which he would have gone are illustrated by the following extracts, which it must have been to the edification of the lords and gentlemen of the Commission to have heard read. They are from his work on the prophet Jonah.

In Hooper’s fourth sermon he remarks: —

“This prayer of Jonas is so acceptable, it might be thought of some men, that the place where Jonas prayed in, should have bettered it, as the foolish opinion of the world is at this time, that judgeth the prayer said at the *high altar* to be better than that which is said in the quire, that in the quire better than that said in the body of the church... This I would wish that the magistrates should put both the preacher, minister and the people, in one place, and shut up the partition called the chancel, that separated the congregation of Christ one from the other!”

Good advice indeed, and worthy to be carried out instanter, even if half the church edifices should need leveling to effect it. What are architecture and art compared with the vantage-ground afforded to error! If the nests were

pulled down, or thoroughly altered, the birds might be led to fly to their proper quarters in the dark woods of Popery, and Protestantism would be well rid of them.

In his sixth sermon, in allusion to Baptism, he observes:-”

The matter and element of this sacrament is pure water; whatsoever is added, oil, salt, cross, *lights*, and such other, be inventions of men, and better it were they were abolished than kept in the church... I pray the King’s Majesty and his most honorable Council to prepare a ship, as soon as may be, to send them home again to their Mother Church.”

In the same sermon Hooper says in reference to the Holy Eucharist: —

“If we have bread, wine, and a fair table cloth, let him [‘the minister’] not be solicitous nor careful for the rest, seeing they be no things brought in by Christ, but by Popes; unto whom, if the King’s Majesty and the honorable Council have good consciences, they must be restored again; and great shame it is for a noble king, emperor, or magistrate, contrary unto God’s word, to detain and keep from the devil and his minister any of their goods and treasure, as the *candles, vestments, crosses, altars*, for if they be kept in the church as things indifferent, at length they will be maintained as things necessary.”

How truly did Hooper foresee! for at this hour, the tolerated millinery is cried up as essential to acceptable worship. Blessed would be the vessel which should transport all such trumpery to the Holy Fathers’ own haunts, where Garibaldi and his waiting band would be glad to make a bonfire of them like that at Ephesus.

About that same time one of the reformed, who had returned from exile, wrote to his friend Peter Martyr: —

“What can I hope when three of our lately appointed bishops are to officiate at the Table of the Lord, one as priest, another as deacon, and a third as subdeacon, before the image of the crucifix, or at least not far from it, with candles, and habited in the golden vestments of the Papacy, and are thus to celebrate the Lord’s Supper without sermon!”

Archbishop Leighton, whose piety makes every word weighty, said in one of his sermons:—

“What is the shining of the true church? Doth not a church then shine when church service is raised from a decent and primitive simplicity, and decorated with pompous ceremonies, with rich furniture and gaudy vestments? Is not the church then beautiful? Yes, indeed; but all the question is, whether this be the proper genuine beauty, or no? Whether this be not strange fire, as the fire that Aaron’s sons used, which became vain, and was taken as strange fire? Methinks it cannot be better decided than to refer it to St. John in his Book of Revelation. We find there the description of two several women; the one riding in state, arrayed in purple, decked with gold and precious stones and pearls (Revelation 17:3); the other in rich attire too, but of another kind (Revelation 12), clothed with the sun, and a crown of twelve stars on her head. The other’s decorement was all earthly; this woman’s is all celestial. What need she borrow light and beauty from precious stones, that is clothed with the sun and crowned with stars? She wears no sublunary ornaments, but, which is more noble, she treads upon them. The moon is under her feet. Now, if you know (as you do all, without doubt), which of these two is the spouse of Christ, you can easily resolve the question. The truth is, those things seem to deck religion, but they undo it. Observe where they are most used, and we shall find little or no substance of devotion under them; as we see in the apostate church of Rome. This painting is dishonorable for Chrst’s spouse, and besides, it spoils her natural complexion. The superstitious use of torches and lights in the church by day, is a kind of shining, but surely not commanded here. No, it is an affront done both to the sun in heaven and to the Sun of Righteousness in the church.”

The notorious Puritan, Henry Burton (as the appendix calls him), most wisely, with almost prophetic foresight, wrote:—

“But besides all this, these men have one special sanctuary to fly into, and that is their cathedral churches... These be their old high places not removed.... These be those nests and nurseries of superstition and idolatry wherein the old boldarno of Rome had muzzled up her brood of popelings, and so preserved her *usum*

Sarum in life to this present day. And now these are become impregnable bulwarks to patronize our re-builders of Babel in all their innovations. ‘Innovations,’ say they. ‘We bring in no innovations, no new rites, but what hath been in use ever since the Reformation, and that in the most eminent places, even the mother churches of the land. Now, all that we go about is to reduce inferior churches to an unity and conformity to their mother churches....’ Thus do our master builders plead.”

It is no doubt true that the gaudy performances of the cathedrals have kept alive the Popish spirit in the church, and there will be no end to Ritualism while cathedral services are kept up in their present semi-popish fashion. Of course, what is good in a big church is good in a little one, and the cathedrals are little better than drill-grounds for Ritualistic performers.

The Puritan Smart, complains that: —

“Most of the bishops of our time.... busy themselves in nothing more than in setting up altars with all manner of superstitious furniture, crosses, crucifixes, candles, candlesticks, etc. Our bishops think it their bounden duty, as soon as ever themselves are consecrated, to fall to the consecration of churches, churchyards, altars, organs, images, crucifixes, tapers, etc. Our bishops think they seek the Kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, when they persuade his Majesty (Charles I) to restore altars, organs, images, and all manner of Massing trinkets, more than ever they were in the time of Popery. Our bishops teach and maintain stoutly that altars, images, crosses, crucifixes, candlesticks, etc., are not repugnant to our religion, nor contrary to the authority of Scripture; [and]... would have them brought in again according to the pattern, and after the example of the King’s Royal Chapel, and.... labor with all their might and main that the offense may be spread through all the king’s dominions, both cathedral and parish churches.”

Hickeringill writes with force and common sense: —

“He,” the ‘ceremony-monger,’ “does not say the mass indeed in Latin; but his hood, his cope, his surplice, his rochet, his altar railed in, his candles, and cushion and book thereon, his bowing to it, his bowing, or rather nodding, at the name of Jesus, his organs, his

violins, his singing men, his singing boys, with their alternate jabbering and mouthings (as unintelligible as Latin service), are so very like popery, that I profess, when I came from beyond sea, about the year 1660, to Paul's and Whitehall, I almost thought, at first blush, that I was still in Spain and Portugal; only the candles on our altars, most nonsensically, stand unlighted, to signify, what? The darkness of our noddles, or to tempt the chandlers to turn downright papists, as the more suitable religion for their trade? for ours mocks them with hopes only. He gapes and stares to see the lucky minute when the candles should be lighted; but he is cheated, for they do not burn out in an age."

O for an hour of John Knox or Martin Luther! Our comfort is that God reigns yet, and Antichrist must come down, defend her who may! He who removed the frogs from Egypt with a word, can yet send us a Moses whose uplifted rod shall consign to the Tiber a pest more dire than that which disappeared beneath the floods of the Nile.

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL

JULY — 1869

TIDINGS OF MRS. BAT'S-EYES.

BY SEARCHWELL

A FEW years after Christian had crossed the river, having gotten a warrant from the Lord of pilgrims, to go to the City of Destruction, and fetch thence divers of his rebellious servants, I went thither and tarried therein, dwelling in a tent by the wayside; the reason whereof being that it is forbidden the king's messengers in any wise to become citizens of so evil a city, but they are commanded to abide as strangers and sojourners, being aliens in the town, and not burgesses of it.

Now it came into my mind that I would search out and enquire for those ancient inhabitants of this city, who lived in the days of Christian and his wife Christiana, the fame of whose pilgrimage hath gone abroad unto the ends of the earth, if perchance any of them should be yet alive. It was my hap to light upon one Mistress Talkative, the wife of him who joined company with Christian and Faithful, just before they came to Vanity Fair. She is somewhat aged, and withered in her limbs, but in her mouth and cheeks she looketh like a young maiden, and certainly she hath lost none of her power of speech, but is withal so glib with her talk, that the selfsame which Christian said of her husband is true of her, she will beguile with her tongue twenty of them that know her not. She dwelleth still in the old house in Prating Row, and like her husband, she is something more comely at a distance than at hand. From this woman I learned the history, pedigree, age, marriage, character, health, wealth, temper, repute, and dealings of so many of her neighbors as I asked after, and many more besides; and moreover she desired to tell me of their children, their lovers, their eating, drinking, clothing, and such like; and if I could have borne to hear her, I dare affirm, she would fain have told me their very hearts, and inward and secret thoughts, for these escaped not the reach of her tongue.

She seemeth to be as the bird, which uttereth that which is spoken in the bed-chamber, but withal she is an arrant liar and twister of the truth, whensoever she hath an ill-will to any of her neighbors. From her I took words as men take apples which they pare before they eat; or as eggs, the one half of which are rotten, and therefore need testing before they be eaten; and indeed, when I had winnowed her talk, and blown away nine parts out of ten as worthless chaff, there was great plenty left, even good measure, pressed down, and running over, which if I had been so inclined, would have even smothered me in its heaps. She is a woman of some use to such a stranger to the town as I am, for she knoweth every house, and keepeth a register of every one that lodgeth in it; so that one needeth not to kneck at a peradventure at any door to seek one whom he desireth to know of, but hath only to ask of her; and let the place be in the darkest lane, or winding alley, straightway she saith, "Yea, I know it right well;" and she beginneth some history concerning the dwellers in it.

At my first sight of her she was sitting at the door of her house, taking the air in the cool of the evening with two or three gossips, whose names none need enquire after, seeing that the less that is known of them the better for the peace of one's mind. Seeing me to be a newcomer to the town, she saluted me of her own accord, hoping to gather some new thing at my mouth; but withal in a few moments she had forgotten to seek news of me, being so pleased with the sound of her own tongue and taken up with the desire of telling me concerning her acquaintance and kinsfolk. She told me that she remembered Christiana well, and that she was a decent woman, who would take a dish of tea and be merry with her neighbors, till she took up with the melancholy, peevish tempers of her husband, and must needs follow him in his mad pilgrimage. "One would have thought," said she, "that one fool was enough in a family; but, no doubt it runneth in the blood, for that woman was quite crazed after her husband's death. They tell me there is a book written concerning her, but they that lived near her, and ought to know, could tell a many things of her that for my part I should not care to utter, for I hate all backbiting and tale-bearing. This much, however, I do know, she was as unmannerly and haughty towards me as her husband was to my dear spouse who hath lately departed, who was as fair-speaking and good-natured a gentleman as ever talked; and, moreover, a very religious man, and one who could argue and dispute like the best of pilgrims. I was with her neighbors when they called in to see Christiana in her fits, and a more notable company of women cannot be

found within the walls of this city, but the willful woman would have none of them, and went her ways like one bewildered, befooled with her own obstinacy.”

When Mistress Talkative waited a second to take breath, I made speed to ask her whether she knew one Mrs. Bat’s-eyes, who was of those who would have kept Christiana from seeking the Celestial City. “Ay, ay,” said she, “I know her well enough; she is as good a woman as will be met with in a day’s march, and she is a great lady too, only Bat’s-eyes is not now her name, for she is married into a rich family of great title and repute. Her first husband was so weak in the eyes as not to be able to see anything in the sunlight, and once upon a time, walking abroad at noon with the blind priest of his own parish, that is to say the parish of St. Elymas the Great, they both fell into a ditch, and the poor man perished in the mire. A very fine funeral sermon there was preached for him from the text, ‘I will give thee the treasures of darkness.’ Now it was so, that her husband being dead, the widow had many suitors, and among the rest one Sir Herod Hateligt, who was of the honorable jury that condemned that scandalous fellow, Faithful. He being a personable man, and having large estates in Blindmanshire, commended himself much to the widow, and the more so because they both agreed to love darkness rather than light, and delighted much with thick curtains and dark shutters to keep out every beam of sunshine from their chambers. She liveth at this day in the finest square of this city, and her husband is an alderman, and was not long ago mayor of the town; a rare hater of your canting pilgrims, I warrant you, though the times are so altered that he cannot dispatch them out of the way as he once did, and the more’s the pity.”

How much more I might have heard I know not, but this sufficed me; and as I would fain learn more of Mrs. Bat’s-eyes, that is now Lady Hate-light, I first would see her husband; and therefore, in due time, I turned my feet towards the court wherein he sat as an alderman and as justice of the peace. His honor — for so they called him, for the men of the City of Destruction are very lavish in giving and taking honor one of another — had haled before him a prisoner whom I at once perceived to be in very truth a son of the famous Evangelist who, in the days of Christian, was employed by my Master in the suburbs of this city. This man, being very valiant for the truth, had dared to preach and teach such as might gather around him in the streets, having chosen out-of-the-way corners, where he did by no means hinder the lawful traffic, or molest those who passed by

the way. Nevertheless, certain of the men of the city being angered that he taught the people had laid to his charge that he did obstruct the king's highway, and bawl and shout at so lusty a rate as to disturb the quiet of the city, and create a stir and hubbub whereby the authority of the great prince Beelzebub was much endangered.

Now, because there sat upon the bench with him one Mr. Smooth-man, who thought it ill to be severe upon such fools and bedlams as he lightly judged the young man Evangelist to be, and as, moreover, the old cage for pilgrims was in a ruinous state, this Hatelight determined within himself to dismiss the prisoner at the bar with a warning and an admonition. Thus spake he, in high wrath and dudgeon, "*Sirrah*, thou art again brought before us, upon the charge of gathering together a company of lewd fellows of the baser sort, who stand in the ways and places of concourse, hindering those that pass by the ways, and troubling the respectable inhabitants of this ancient and loyal city. Thinkest thou that we will suffer thee to cry aloud in our streets, railing at and reviling the great lords Beelzebub and Apollyon and Legion, with their companions, who are the patrons of our fairs and markets, and by whom we get our wealth.* Thy voice is as the roaring of the bulls of Bashan, and thy speech is utterly contemptible. Thou shalt be silenced, and the town shall be in quiet, or it shall cost thee dear. I remember well when such as thou art would have been laid in the stocks, or their tongues cut out. I would that even now I could stop thy fanatical rant by the gallows. The gospel! A pretty gospel! Thou preachest hell and damnation! Who among us ever sought thee or paid thee for thy gospel? We hate it: our old parish religion is good enough for us, and I tell thee plainly we will have none of thy hypocritical cant dinned into our ears. Go about thy business, and keep thyself quiet or I'll teach thee and the fanatics that howl at thy heels, that the law knoweth how to shut your naughty mouths." My Master's young champion was fain to speak and ask a question, and after some ado they gave him audience. He said that he did in no way whatever let or stay the lawful trade of the city, that he had chosen a place wherein there was large room and but few who passed thereby. and therefore he was not guilty as his accusers had falsely witnessed. Moreover, whereas it was alleged that the sound of his voice was so great and terrible as to molest the quiet of the householders, he affirmed that this also was a charge whereof no man could maintain just cause. For he made bold to tell the court that certain musicians who afore-time had created no small noise in Vanity Fair, had been hired to make great sound with drums,

bugles, fifes, and horns in a public place of the city, and that, too, on the day which by the laws of a greater prince than Beelzebub was ordained to be a day of rest and worship And whereas these players on instruments, notwithstanding their outrageous din, were by no means seized by the officers and charged with being breakers of the peace, it seemed to be but sorry justice, and even a perverting of fair dealing, that he who used no trumpet, save only his tongue, should be said to disturb the peace of the city. To which Hatelight answered, in a towering rage, “We care nothing concerning thy Sabbath and thy gospel cant. These players on instruments of music are worthy and notable men, and by no means shall they be hindered or evil entreated. They are in the pay of honorable gentlemen, friends of mine own, who do well to spite both thee and thy Lord’s day. They ravish the ears of the inhabitants of this city, even as did the multitude of their brethren, who served the great king Nebuchadnezzar, with their flutes, harps, sackbuts, psalteries, and all kinds of music. Knowest thou not that this ancient borough is, always hath been, and always shall be, loyal to Apollyon; and therefore both thou thyself, and thy melancholy doctrines and bedlamite discoursings are an offense to them, a very stink in their nostrils, and a grating in their ears. Sirrah, I take thee to be an arrant knave, and doubtless thou makest a fine market of thy preachments and prayings: I warrant · t thee thou art well paid, or as the proverb hath it, ‘No penny no paternoster.’ I’ll stop thy music for thee, therefore beware how thou dost defy the law a second time. I hate this gospel and thee also; stand down, and hold thine impudent tongue, or I will make thee rue the day.”

How truly is it written by the wise man of old, “Evil men and transgressors will wax worse and worse!” When men cannot act as they desire, because somewhat is abroad which hindereth them, yet their stomachs are as high as ever against the gospel, and their heart burneth like a flaming oven against the Lord and against his Anointed. Verily the time cometh in which those who labor to quench the light of Israel shall have their own candle put out for ever.

*“Hatelight, beware, in vain thou dost essay
To quench the sun which bringeth day;
For as God lives and loveth light,
The hour draws nigh which endeth night.”*

Madame Hatelight is a meet companion and fit wife for her lord. She hateth schools and books, especially if they be cheap and teach the ways of godliness. “Why,” saith her ladyship, “nothing has gone well since every

Tom, Dick, and Harry, hath learned his letters and set up for a scholar. The lower orders respect not their betters as they used to do, and they talk even to admiration, concerning their rights and their souls. The world is at a sorry pass indeed when men prate of their souls; and will not leave such things to their clergy and the gentlefolk, who have understanding and learning. A parcel of noisy fellows set themselves to entice away the people from the old religion, and cry up what they call education. I cannot endure their prating. A set of ploughmen and servants pretend to know better than the parish priests, and say that the common herd are to judge for themselves. Not one single crown will I give to their schools, and their classes, and their missions. By these cometh all manner of evil, for they set men by the ears jangling about matters which are none of their business, and they puff up the vulgar with such *conceit* that they follow after men who are given to change, and they pull down the old customs, and go about to turn the world upside down." Her ladyship waxeth very wrath if she chanceth to meet a pilgrim, but she herself is wonderfully religious and goeth to a church at the corner of the English street, which hath a door in the Roman Row, for in this church they burn candles, the light whereof suiteth her eyes. She cannot away with the word of God, but she doateth on her Prayer-book, and more especially on those places thereof which tell her that she was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven when the priest did bespatter her forehead while yet she was in the arms of her nurse. She loveth a shaven crown and a black hood, and dealeth much in all Roman wares. She weareth a cross though she hateth the religion of him that died on it. A cloud of incense charmeth her. She believeth darkness to be light and the darker the city becometh the happier she is. And truly she has much to please her at this present; for what with the smoke from Mr. Sacra-mentarian's new forges, and the fogs from the *old* marshes of *unbelief*, and the general smother of all sorts of smiths and potters, and especially of the brewers, the city is often dark as pitch, and even at noonday one can hardly see the sun. However, my Master's servants still find out chosen men in this City of Destruction who feel their burden of sin, and therefore are willing to go on pilgrimage, and therefore Hatelight and his spouse are ill at ease; but as for the servants of the Great King, our souls abide in patient waiting, being steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in our Lord's work.

Much more might I have written, but it may fall to my lot to use my quill hereafter.

ON COMMENTING

A LECTURE DELIVERED TO THE STUDENTS OF THE PASTORS' COLLEGE.

BY C. H. SPURGEON

PREACHING in the olden time consisted very much more of exposition than it does now. I suppose that the sermons of the primitive Christians were for the most part expositions of lengthy passages of the Old Testament; and when copies of the gospels, and the epistles of Paul, had become accessible to the churches, the chief work of the preacher would be to press home the apostolical teaching's by delivering an address, the back-bone of which would be a complete passage of Scripture: there would probably be but faint traces of divisions, heads and points, such as we employ in modern discoursing, but the teacher would follow the run of the passage which was open before him, commenting as he read. I suppose this to have been the case. because some of the early Christian modes of worship were founded very much upon that of the synagogue. I say some of the modes, since I suppose that as the Lord Jesus left his disciples free from rubrics and liturgies, each church worshipped according to the working of the free Spirit among them, one with the open meeting of the Corinthians, and another with a presiding minister, and a third with a mixture of the two methods. In the synagogue, it was the rule of the Rabbis that never less than twenty-two verses of the law should be read at one time, and the preaching consisted of notes upon a passage of that length. Such a rule would be a mere superstition if we were slavishly bound by it, but I could almost wish that the custom were re-established, for the present plan of preaching from short texts, together with the great neglect of commenting publicly upon the Word is very unsatisfactory. We cannot expect to deliver much of the teaching of Holy Scripture by picking out verse by verse, and holding these up at random. The process resembles that of showing a house by exhibiting separate bricks. It would be an astounding absurdity if our friends used our private letters in this fashion, and interpreted them by short sentences disconnected and taken away from the context. Such expositors would make us out to say in every letter all we ever thought of, and a great many things besides far enough from our minds; while the real intent of our epistles would probably escape attention. Nowadays, since

expository preaching is not so common as it ought to be, there is the more necessity for our commenting during the time of our reading the Scriptures. Since topical preaching, hortatory preaching, experimental preaching, and so on — all exceedingly useful in their way — have almost pushed proper expository preaching out of place, there is the more need that we should, when we read passages of Holy Writ, habitually give running comments upon them.

I support my opinion with this reason: *that public reading of the abstruser parts of Scripture is of exceedingly little use to the majority of the people listening.* I can recollect hearing in my younger days long passages out of Daniel, which might have been exceedingly instructive to me if I had obtained the remotest conception of what they meant. Take again, parts of the prophecy of Ezekiel, and ask yourselves what profit can arise from their perusal by the illiterate, “unless some man shall guide them?” What more edification can come from a chapter in English which is not understood, than from the same passage in Hebrew or Greek? The same argument which enforces translation demands exposition. If but a few explanatory words are thrown in by a judicious reader, it is wonderful how luminous obscure portions may be made. Two or three sentences will often reveal the drift of a whole chapter; the key of a great difficulty may be presented to the hearer in half-a-score words, and thus the public reading may be made abundantly profitable. I once saw a school of blind children among the charming ruins of York Abbey, and could not help pitying their incapacity to enjoy so much beauty: how willingly would I have opened their eyes! Are ignorant people wandering among the glories of Scripture much less to be pitied? Who will refuse them the light?

Abundant evidence has come before me that *brief comments upon Scripture in our ordinary services are most acceptable and instructive to our people.* I have often heard from working men and their wives, and from merchants and their families, that my own expositions have been most helpful to them. They testify that when they read the Bible at home in the family, the exposition makes it doubly precious to them; and the chapter which they had unprofitably read in course at family prayers, when they peruse it the next time, recollecting what their minister has said upon it, becomes a real delight to them. The mass of our hearers, in London at least, do not, to any appreciable extent, read commentaries or any other books which throw a light upon the Scriptures. They have neither the money nor the time to do so; and if they are to be instructed in the Word of God in things which they

cannot find out by mere experience, and are not likely to have explained to them by their associates, they must get that instruction from us, or nowhere else; nor do I see how we are to give them such spiritual assistance except through the regular practice of exposition.

Besides, if you are in the habit of commenting, *it will give you an opportunity of saying many things which are not of sufficient importance to become the theme of a whole sermon*, and therefore would probably remain unnoticed, to the great loss of the Lord's people and others. It is astounding what a range of truth, doctrinal, practical, and experimental, Holy Scripture brings before us; and equally worthy of admiration is the forcible manner in which that truth is advanced. Hints given in the way in which the word of God offers them are always wise and opportune; as, for instance, the rebukes which the Word administers might have seemed too severe had they been made by the pastor, unsustained by the Word and unsuggested by it, but arising out of the chapter they cannot be resented. You can both censure sins and encourage virtues by dilating upon the histories which you read in the inspired records, whereas you might never have touched upon them had not the chapter read brought the matter before you. If you want to make full proof of your ministry, and to leave no single point of revelation untouched, your easiest mode will be to comment upon Scripture habitually. Without this, much of the Word will be utterly unknown to many of your people. It is a very sad fact that they do not read so much as they should at home; the ungodly in England scarcely read the Bible at all; and if only that part which we preach upon be expounded to them, how little of the Bible can they ever know! If you will mark your Bibles with lines under the texts from which you have spoken, as I have always done with an old copy which I keep in my study, you will discover that in twelve or fourteen years very little of the book has been gone through; a very large proportion of it remains unmarked, like a field unploughed. Try, then, by exposition, to give your people a fair view of the entire compass of revelation; take them as it were to the top of Nebo, and show them the whole land from Dan to Beersheba, and prove to them that everywhere it floweth with milk and honey.

Earnestly do I advocate commenting. It is unfashionable in England, though somewhat more usual beyond the Tweed. The practice was hardly followed up anywhere in England a few years ago, and it is very uncommon still. It may be pressed upon you for one other reason, namely, that *in order to execute it well, the commenting minister will at first have to study*

twice as much as the mere preacher, because he will be called upon to prepare both his sermons and his expositions. As a rule, I spend much more time over the exposition than over the discourse. Once start a sermon with a great idea, and from that moment the discourse forms itself without much labor to the preacher, for truth naturally consolidates and crystallizes itself around the main subject like sweet crystals around a string hung up in syrup; but as for the exposition, you must keep to the text, you must face the difficult points, and must search into the mind of the Spirit rather than your own. You will soon reveal your ignorance as an expositor if you do not study; therefore diligent reading will be forced upon you. Anything which compels the preacher to search the grand old Book is of immense service to him. If any are jealous lest the labor should injure their constitutions, let them remember that mental work up to a certain point is most refreshing, and where the Bible is the theme, toil is delight. It is only when mental labor passes beyond the bounds of common sense that the mind becomes enfeebled by it, and this is not usually reached except by injudicious persons, or men engaged on subjects which are unrefreshing and disagreeable; but our subject is a recreative one, and to young men like ourselves the vigorous use of our faculties is a most healthy exercise. Classics and mathematics may exhaust us, but not the volume of our Father's grace, the charter of our joys, the treasure of our wealth.

A man to comment well should be able to *read the Bible in the original*. Every minister should aim at a tolerable proficiency both in the Hebrew and the Greek. These two languages will give him a library at a small expense, an inexhaustible thesaurus, a mine of spiritual wealth. Really the effort of acquiring a language is not so prodigious that brethren of moderate abilities should so frequently shrink from the attempt. A minister ought to attain enough of these tongues to be at least able to make out a passage by the aid of a lexicon, so as to be sure that he is not misrepresenting the Spirit of God in his discoursings, but is, as nearly as he can judge, giving forth what the Lord intended to reveal by the language employed. Such knowledge would prevent his founding doctrines upon expressions in our version when nothing at all analogous is to be found in the inspired original. This has been done by preachers time out of mind, and they have shouted over an inference drawn from *a shall*, or an *if* gathered out of the translation, with as much assurance of infallibility and sense of importance as if the same language had occurred in the words which the Holy Ghost used. At such times, we, have been reminded of the story told by the late beloved Henry

Craik, in his book, on the Hebrew language. At one time, the Latin Vulgate was so constantly spoken of as the very word of God, that a Roman Catholic theologian thus coremured upon Genesis 1:10: — “The gathering’ together of the waters called he seas.” The Latin term for seas is *Maria*. On this ground, the writer asks, “What is the gathering together of waters but the accumulation of all the graces into one place, that is, into the Virgin Mary (*Maria*)? But; there is this distinction, that *Maria* (*the seas*) has the (i) short, because that which the seas contain is only of a transitory nature, while the gifts and graces of the blessed Virgin (*Maria*) shall endure for ever.” Such superlative` nonsense may be indulged in if we forget that translations cannot be verbally inspired, and that to the original is the last appeal.

Fail not to be expert in the use of your *Concordance*. Every day I live I thank God more and more for ,hat poor half-crazy Alexanter Cruden. Of course you have read his life, which is prefixed to the concordance; it exhibits him as a man of diseased mind, once or twice the inmate of a lunatic asylum, but yet, for all that, successfully devoting his energies to producing a work of absolutely priceless value; which never has been improved upon, and probably never will be; a volume which must ever yield the greatest possible assistance to a Christian minister, being as necessary to him as a plane to the carpenter, or a plough to the husbandman. Be sure you buy a genuine unabridged Crnden, and none of the modern substitutes; good as riley may be at the price, they are a delusion and a snare to ministers, and should never be tolerated in the manse library. To consider cheapness in purchasing a Concordance is folly. You need only one; have none but the best. At the head of each notable word, Cruden gives you its meaning, and very often all its particular shades of meaning, so that he even helps you in sermonizing. When you have read his headings, by following out the concordance you will observe connections in which the word occurs, which most advantageously and correctly fix its meaning. Thus will the Word of God be its own key. A good textuary is a good theologian; be then well skilled in using Crnden.

I make but small account of most *reference Bibles*; they would be very useful if they were good for anything; but it is extremely easy to bring out; a reference Bible which has verbal and apparent references, and nothing more. You will often turn to a reference, and will have to say, “Well, it is a reference, certainly, in a way; for it contains the same word, but it contains no reference in the sense that the one text will explain the other.” The

useful reference cuts the diamond with a diamond, comparing spiritual things with spiritual; it is a *bought-reference, and not a word-reference. If you meet with a really valuable reference Bible, it 'will be to you what I once heard a countryman call "a reverence Bible," for it will lead you to prize more and more the sacred volume. The best reference Bible is a thoroughly good concordance. Get the best, keep it always on the table, use it hourly, and you will have found your best companion.

Need I, after my previous lectures, commend to you the judicious reading of *commentaries!* These are called "dead men's brains" by certain, knowing people, who claim to give us nothing in their sermons but what they pretend the Lord reveals direct to themselves. Yet these men are by no means original, and often their supposed inspiration is but borrowed wit. They get a peep at Gill on the sly. The remarks which they give forth as the Spirit's mind are *very* inferior in all respects to what they affect to despise, namely, the mind of good and learned men. A batch of poems was sent to me some time ago for *The Sword and the Trowel*, which were written by a person claiming to be under the immediate influence of the Holy Spirit. He informed me that he was passive, and that what was enclosed was written under the direct physical and mental influence of the Spirit upon his mind and hand. My bookshelves can show many poems as much superior to these pretended inspirations as angels are to bluebottles; the miserable doggerel bore on its face the evidence of imposture. So when I listen to the senseless twaddle of certain wise gentlemen who are always boasting that they alone are ministers of the Spirit, I am ashamed of their pretensions and of them. No, my dear friends, you may take it as a rule that the Spirit of God does not usually do for us what we can do for ourselves, find that if religious knowledge is printed in a book, and we can read it, there is no necessity for the Holy Ghost to make a fresh revelation of it to us, in order to screen our laziness. Read, then, the admirable commentaries which I have already introduced to you. Yet be sure you use your own minds too, or the expounding will lack interest. Here I call to mind two wells in the courtyard of the Doge's palace at Venice, upon which I looked with much interest. One is filled artificially by water brought in barges from a distance, and few care for its insipid water, the other is a refreshing natural well, cool and delicious, and the people contend for every drop of it. Freshness, naturalness, life, will always attract; whereas mere borrowed learning is flat and insipid. Mr. Cecil says his plan was, when he laid hold of a Scripture, to pray over it, and get his own thoughts on it, and then, after he had so

done, to take up the ablest divines who wrote upon the subject, and see what their thoughts were. If you do not think, and think much, you will become slaves and mere copyists. The exercise of your own mind is most healthful to you, and by perseverance, with divine help, you may expect to get at the meaning of every understandable passage. So to rely upon your own abilities as to be unwilling to learn from others is clearly folly; so to study others as not to judge for yourself is imbecility.

What should be the manner of your public commenting? One rule should be always to *out very carefully wherever a word bears a special' sense*, for rest assured, in Holy Scripture the same word does not always mean the same thing. Tim Bible is a book meant for human beings, and therefore it is written in human language; and in human language the same word may signify two or three things. For instance, "a pear fell from a tree;" "a man fell into drunken habits." There the meaning of the second word "fell," is evidently different from the first, since it is not literal, but metaphorical. Again, "the cabman mounted the box; the child was pleased with his Christmas box;" "his lordship is staying at his shooting box." In each case there is the same word, but who does not see that there is a great difference of meaning? So it is in the Word of God. You must explain the difference between a word used in a peculiar sense, and the ordinary meaning of the word, and thus you will prevent your people falling into mistakes. If people will say that the same word in Scripture always means the same thing, as I have heard some assert publicly, they will make nonsense of the Word of God, and fall into error through their own irrational maxims. To set up canons of interpretation for the Book of God which would be absurd if applied to other writings is egregious folly: it has a show of accuracy, but inevitably leads to confusion.

The obvious literal meaning of a Scripture is not always the true one, and ignorant persons are apt enough to hll into the most singular misconceptions: a judicious remark from the pulpit will be of signal service. Many persons have accustomed themselves to misunderstand certain texts; they have learned wrong interpretations in their youth, and will never know better unless the correct meaning be indicated to them.

We must make sure in our public expositions that *obscure and involved sentences are explained*. To overleap difficulties, and only expound what is already clear, is to make commenting ridiculous. When we speak of obscure sentences, we mean such as are mostly to be found in the

prophets, and are rendered dark through the translation, or the Orientalism of their structure, or through their intrinsic weight of meaning. Involved sentences most abound in the writings of Paul, whose luxuriant mind was not to be restrained to any one line of argument. He begins a sentence, and does not finish it, perhaps, until eight verses further on, and all the interstices between the commencement and the end of the sentence are packed full of compressed truth, which it is not always easy to separate from the general argument. Hints consisting of but two or three words will let your hearers know where the reasoning breaks off, and where it is taken up again. In many poetical parts of the Old Testament the speakers change; as in Solomon's Song, which is mostly a dialogue. Here perfect nonsense is often made by reading the passage as if it were all spoken by the same person. In Isaiah the strain often varies most suddenly; and while one verse is addressed to the Jews, the next may be spoken to the Messiah or to the Gentiles. Is it not always well to notify this to the congregation? If the chapters and verses had been divided with a little common sense, this might be of less importance, but as our version is so clumsily chopped into fragments, the preacher must insert the proper paragraphs and divisions as he reads aloud. In fine, your business is to make the Word plain. In Lombardy I observed great heaps of huge stones in the fields, which had been gathered out from the soil by diligent hands to make room for the crops; your duty is to "gather out the stones," and leave the fruitful field of Scripture for your people to till. There are Orientalisms, metaphors, peculiar expressions, idioms, and other verbal *memorabilia* which arise from the Bible having been written in the East; all these you will do well to explain. To this end be diligent students of Oriental life. Let the geography of Palestine, its natural history, its fauna and its flora, be as familiar to you as those of your own native village. Then as you read you will interpret the Word, and your flock will be fed thereby.

The chief part of your commenting, however, *should consist in applying the truth to the hearts of your hearers*, for he who merely understands the meaning of the letter without understanding how it bears upon the hearts and consciences of men, is like a man who causes the bellows of an organ to be blown, and then fails to place his fingers on the keys; it is of little service to supply men with information unless we urge upon them the practical inferences therefrom. Look, my brethren, straight down into the secret chambers of the human soul, and let fall the divine teaching through the window, and thus light will be carried to the heart and conscience, make

remarks suitable to the occasion, and applicable to the cases of those present. Show how a truth which was first heard in the days of David is still forcible and pertinent in:these modern times, and you will thus endear the Scriptures to the minds of your people, who prize your remarks much more than you imagine. Clean the grand old pictures of the divine masters; hang them up in new frames; fix them on the walls of your people's memories; and their well-instructed hearts shall bless you.

Is a caution needed amongst intelligent men? Yes, it must be given. Be sure *to avoid prosiness*. Avoid it *everywhere*, but especially in this. Do not be long in your notes. If you are supremely gifted, do not be long; people do not appreciate too much of a good thing; and if your comments are only second-rate, why, then be shorter still, for men soon weary of inferior talking. Very little time in the service can be afforded for reading the lessons; do not rob the prayer and the sermon for the sake of commenting. This robbing Peter to pay Paul is senseless. Do not repeat incessantly commonplace things which must have occurred even to a Sunday-school child. Do not remind your hearers of what they could not possibly have forgotten. Give them something weighty if not new, so that an intelligent listener may feel when the service is over that he has learned at least a little.

Again, *avoid all pedantry*. As a general rule, it may be observed that those gentlemen who know the least Greek are the most sure to air their rags of learning in the pulpit; they miss no chance of saying, "The Greek is so-and-so." It makes a man an inch and a-half taller by a foolometer, if he everlastingly lets fall bits of Greek and Hebrew, and even tells the people the tense of the verb and the case of the noun, as I have known some do. Those who have no learning usually make a point of displaying the pegs on which learning ought to hang. Brethren, the whole process of interpretation is to be carried on in your study; you are not to show your congregation the process, but to give them the result; like a good cook, who would never think of bringing up dishes, and pans, and rolling-pin, and spice box into the dining hall, but without ostentation sends up the feast.

Never strain passages when you are expounding. Be thoroughly honest with the Word: even if the Scriptures were the writing of mere men, conscience would demand fairness of you; but when it is the Lord's own Word, be careful not to pervert it even in the smallest degree. Let it be said of you, as I have heard a venerable hearer of Mr. Simeon say of him, "Sir, he was very Calvinistic when the text was so, and people thought him an Arminian

when the text was that way, for he always stuck to its plain sense.” A very sound neighbor of ours once said, by way of depreciating the grand old Reformer, “John Calvin was not half a Calvinist,” and the remark was correct as to his expositions, for in them, as we have seen, he always gave his Lord’s mind and not his own. In the church of St. Zeno, in Verona, I saw ancient frescoes which had been plastered over, and then covered with other designs; I fear many do this with Scripture, daubing the text with their own glosses, and laying on their own conceits. There are enough of these plasterers abroad, let us leave the evil trade to them and follow an honest calling.

Use your judgment more than your fancy. Flowers are well enough, but hungry souls prefer bread. To allegorize with Origen may make men stare at you, but your work is to fill men’s mouths with truth, not to open them with wonder.

Do not be carried away with new meanings. Plymouth Brethren delight to fish up some hitherto undiscovered tadpole of interpretation and cry it round the town as a rare dainty. Let us be content with more ordinary and more wholesome fishery. No one text is to be exalted above the plain analogy of faith, and no solitary expression is to shape our theology for us. Other men and wiser men have expounded before us, and anything undiscovered by them it were well to put to test and trial before we boast too loudly of the treasure-trove.

Do not needlessly amend our authorized version. It is faulty in many places, but still it is a grand work, taking it for all in all; and it is unwise to be making every old lady distrust the only Bible she can get, or what is more likely, mistrust you for falling out with her cherished treasure. Correct where correction must be for truth’s sake, but never for the vainglorious display of your critical ability.

If I were bound to deliver a sermon upon the subject in hand I could not desire a better text than Nehemiah 8:8: “So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading.” Here is a hint for the reader as to his *leading*. Let it always be distinct. Aim to be good readers, and be the more anxious about it because few men are so, and all preachers ought to be so. It is as good as a sermon to hear our best men read the Scriptures, they bring out the meaning by their correct emphasis and tone. Never fall into the idea that the mere utterance of the words before you is all that is required of you in reading;

good reading is a high, but rare attainment. Even if you do not comment, yet read the chapter previously, and become familiar with it; it is inexcusable for a man to betray the fact that he is out of his latitude in the reading, traversing untrodden ground, floundering and picking his way across country, like a huntsman who has lost his bearings. Never open the Bible in the pulpit to read the chapter for the first time, but go to the familiar page after many rehearsals. You will be doubly useful if, in addition to this, you "*gh,e the sense.*" You will then, by God's blessing, be the pastor of an intelligent, Bible-loving people. You will hear in your meeting-house that delightful rustle of Bible leaves which is so dear to the lover of the Word; your people will open their Bibles looking for a feast. The Word will become increasingly precious to yourself, your knowledge will enlarge, and your aptness to teach will become every day more apparent. Try it, my brethren; for even if you should see cause to discontinue it, at least no harm will come of the attempt.

SPRINGS UNCOVERED

STANDING near the remarkable spring at Ewell, in Sarrev, and watching the uprising of the waters, one sees at the bo;ore' of the pool innumerable circles with smaller circles within them, from which extremely fine sand is continually being upheaved by the force of the rising water. Tiny geysers upheave their little founts, and from a myriad openings bubble up with the clear crystal. The perpetual motion of the water, and the leaping of the sand are most interesting. It is not like the spring-head in the field, where the cooling liquid pours forth perpetually from a spout, all unseen, till it plunges into its channel; nor like the river head where the stream weeps from a mass of mossy rock; but here are the fountains of earth's hidden deeps all unveiled and laid bare, the very veins of nature opened to the public gaze. How would it amaze us if we could in this fashion peer into the springs of human character and see whence words and actions flow! What man would wish to have his designs and aims exposed to every onlooker? But why this aversion to being known and read of all men? The Christian's motives and springs of action should be so honest and pure that he might safely defy inspection. He who has nothing to be ashamed of has nothing to conceal. Sincerity can afford, like our first parents in Paradise, to be naked and not ashamed.

If other men cannot read our motives we ought at least to examine them carefully for ourselves. Day by day with extreme rigor must we search into our hearts. Motive is vital to the goodness of an action. He who should give his body to be burned might yet lose his soul if his ruling passion were obstinacy, and not desire for God's glory. Self may be sought under many disguises, and the man may be utterly unaware that thus he is losing all acceptance with God. We must not impute ill motives to others, but we must be equally clear of another more fascinating habit, namely, that of imputing good motives to ourselves. Severity in estimating our own personal character very seldom becomes excessive; our partiality is usually more or *less* blinding to our judgment. We will not suspect ourselves if we can help it; evidence must be very powerful before it can convince us of being governed by sordid aims. The stream of generosity does not always spring from gratitude to God. Zeal is not at all times the offspring of deep-seated faith. Even devotional habits may be fostered by other than holy affections. The highest wisdom suggests that we spend much patient and impartial consideration upon a matter so fundamental as the heart's intent in the actions which it directs. "If thine eye be single, thine whole body shall be full of light." Dear reader, stand by thine inner springs and watch, and make faithful notes of what thou seest, lest thou be deceived.

THE "DARBY BRETHERN."

From one of the most earnest workers in London we have received the following letter. We only withhold the name at our own discretion, the author was quite willing that his signature should be printed with his letter. We have also received an explanatory letter from Mr. W. Kelly, denying many of the statements of Mr. Grant, but such a disclaimer has first of all a bearing upon Mr. Grant, and only secondarily upon us, and we must leave him to corroborate his own evidence, or to withdraw it. Little that is done, are can only say that our own experience leads us to believe that all alleged may very well be true; for match else of like nature we have seen and felt.]

DEAR SIR, — If any more testimony were needed in confirmation of the admirable and truthful article in this month's *Sword and Trowel*, I could give much from personal experience, and the more so that I had a narrow or rather providential escape from falling into the meshes of this truly Jesuitical system, which would probably have dried up every loving feeling in my heart, and sapped away every earnest desire for winning perishing souls for Jesus. I can endorse from personal observation almost every

sentence in your article as to the effect of Darbyism on personal character, though I was not aware before of the extent of the unscripturalness of their doctrines. It would be well if your article could be put into the hands of every Darbyite not too deeply inoculated with the pernicious principles of Darbyism, and circulated far and wide in every evangelical congregation of Christians.

The following story illustrating the principles and effects of Darbyism, and which I fear is only a sample of many others, I can vouch for: — Some years ago I attended an evening meeting for studying the word of God where believers of various denominations met, and for some time it went on very happily. In an evil hour an old Darbyite joined our meeting, and by his winning ways, gained a considerable influence, invited several of the brethren to his own house, to instruct them more fully in the new doctrines. The result was, they left the various churches in which they had been earnestly working for God, not to become unsectarian, but to unite with a sect more exclusive than any save the church of Rome. Three were members of the Tabernacle; one was a fellow worker with myself, one of the most loving spirits, my own son, in the Gospel, with a conscience so tender that he could not rest at night without doing something for his Lord. Those among them whom I still know personally have become the most selfish, unfeeling, and censorious of any Christians I know. Darbyism has so changed them as to quench every earnest purpose, to make them live only for the mutual edification of their narrow clique, and render them oblivious to the claim of the perishing millions around them. From being successful workers in the Master's cause, they have settled down at their ease in Zion, only to make a spasmodic effort when the Spirit moves them, which is very seldom. Were these brethren to allow the same liberty to others that they claim for themselves, we should not complain, but 'this they refuse — "They are the people," every other Christian is wrong; no matter how earnestly a man is working, or how many souls are added to the Lord by his ministry, if he cannot utter the Shibboleth of Darbyism, he is counted the veriest heretic. The scriptural text, "every tree is known by its Fruit," is utterly ignored; and while compelled to recognize the paucity of converts to the gospel through their preaching, and the mighty results through unorthodox laborers, it all goes for nothing: they tell you, with the greatest calmness, God is sovereign, and works as he wills, though it is certainly strange that God refuses to bless the select company to whom alone he has revealed the true interpretation of his will. Two other

thoughts concerning them might be added, in addition to Mr. Grant's evidence. First, preaching the gospel to sinners is but a secondary consideration, their main thought being "breaking bread on Lord's-day morning;" and though this precious ordinance is called by them by so simple a name, it is exalted to almost the same position and importance as the lying Romish sacrifice. The Christian brethren who are not actually taking a share in the preaching, by their own testimony, seldom attend the "gospel preaching," not needing to hear a reiteration of such simple principles, but remain at home on Sunday afternoon and evenings "studying the word," gaining more and more light while shutting it out from a dying world. Secondly, the Lord's-day is utterly ignored; about its claim they have literally no conscience. One of the most intelligent of them assured me he would as soon buy and sell on that day as any other except so far as it hindered worship; and those weak minded believers who are bold as to testify against the desecration of the day of rest, are looked upon with supreme contempt. Much might also be added of the guiltiness of the Darby brethren in neglecting missionary and benevolent works; unlike him they call their Master, they cannot descend to the earthly wants of poor sinners, but leave them to the tender mercies of their fellow sinners; and such a man of God as George Muller, before whose mighty faith they might well shrink, comes out for a fair share of their execration. To any earnest workers for Jesus who want to take ease without compunction, to shut their hearts and pockets to the cries of those who seek their compassion, to shirk the responsibilities God has laid upon them as Christian men and citizens, to shut up the genial sympathy they now feel to all who love the Savior, and to sneak into heaven without having a jewel to deck their crown — I would say join the Darbyites.

Yours very truly in the Lord,

SPLINTERS.

WHAT a mistake to imagine that, by hearing first one preacher and then another, we can derive benefit to our souls! More is wanted than such hearing. A raven may fly from cage to cage, but it is not thereby changed into a dove. Go from room to room of the royal feast, and the sight of the tables will never stay thy hunger. Reader, the main thing is to have and

hold. the truth personally and inwardly; if this be not seen to thou wilt die in thy sins, though ten thousand voices should direct thee to the way of salvation. Pkv indeed is it that the bulk of hearers are hearers only, and are no more likely to go to heaven than the seats they sit on in the assembly of the saints.

A neighbor near my study persists in practicing upon the flute. He bores my ears as with an auger, and renders it almost an impossibility to think. Up and down his scale he runs remorselessly, until even the calamity of temporary deafness would almost be welcome to me. Yet he teaches me that I must, practice if I would be perfect; must exercise myself unto godliness if I would be skillful, must, in fact, make myself familiar with the word of God, with holy living, and saintly dying. Such practice moreover will be as charming as my neighbor's flute is intolerable.

HINDHEAD

ON one of the hottest days of a sultry July, two of us, weary and worn from a long and dusty tramp along the Portsmouth road, reached at length the top of Hindhead. Not a tree or a shrub within hail, and the sun pouring down remorselessly a flood of fire, there was no sign of shadow except from a large stone cross which garnished Hindhead's summit. That cross was elaborately adorned with Latin inscriptions, and in form was accurate and classical; but its shadow was too narrow to furnish perfect shade even for one, much less for two. The shadow was most refreshing, but there was not enough of it, and one traveler must, parched as he was, stand or lie down beneath Sol's blazing beams, for there was no room for him within the cooling shade. Thus may it be with the gospel of Jesus as set forth by some ministries. Jesus is eloquently talked of, but the freeness of his grace and the abundant power of his blood are not enforced; or it may be systematic theology is the preacher's idol, and Christ is nan'owed down to the creed; accuracy of doctrine is fostered, but the Christ who is set forth has no breadth of love, no vastness of shade for the refreshment of weary sinners. At the same time too many take away the solid character of the atonement altogether, and, while aiming at breadth, give us instead of a granite cross a mere gauze with no shade at all. The true scriptural idea of the atonement is "*The shadow of a great rock in a weary land.*" The motto of the gospel of Jesus is, "And yet there is room."

Oh, the blessed shadow of Christ's cross! All the flocks of the Lord lie down under it, and rest in peace; millions of souls are delivered by it from the heat of vengeance, and myriads more shall find a covert within it from the wrath to come. Dear reader, are you within the shadow of the Crucified? Does he stand between God and your soul to ward off from you the burning beams of justice, which your sins so richly deserve, by bearing them himself. If you perish from want of shelter it will not be because there was no room for you in Christ, for no sinner was ever sent away for that reason, and none ever will be. If you die in the fierce heat of divine wrath, you will have yourself alone to blame, for there is the shadow of the great propitiation, cool and refreshing, and it is at every moment accessible to simple faith. If you refuse to believe, and count yourself unworthy of salvation, your blood must lie at your own door. Come, now, into the sure and blessed shelter, lest the sunstroke of despair should wither thee. Once beneath the shadow of Jesus, the sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night; thou shalt abide under the shadow of the Almighty. "The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand." He who would fain find the shelter of the cross, let him sing and pray with all his heart.

*"Where is the shadow of that rock
Which from the sun defends thy flock!
Fain would I feed among thy sheep,
Among them rest, among them sleep."*

From My Note Book. —C. H. S.

BATTLEMENTS.

AN ADDRESS BY C. H. SPUEGEON.

IN Deuteronomy 22:8, we meet with an interesting law which in its letter was binding on the Jewish people, and in its spirit furnishes an admirable rule for us upon whom the ends of the earth are come. "When *thou buildest a new house, then thou shall make a battlement for thy roof, that shall bring not blood upon to because, if any man fall from then.*"

It is not necessary to inform this audience that the roofs of Eastern dwellings were flat, and that the inhabitants were accustomed to spend much of their time upon the tops of their houses, not only conversing there

during the day, but sleeping there at night. If the roofs were without any fencing or protection around their edge, it might often happen that little children would fall over, and not infrequently grown .up. persons might inadvertently make a false step and suffer serious injury, if not death itself. Where there were no railings or low walls around the roof, accidents frequently occurred, but God commanded his people, while they were yet in the wilderness, that when they came into the promised land, and proceeded to build houses, they should take care in every case to build a sufficient battlement that it might not be lost through preventable casualty, for in that case the guilt of blood would lie upon them. This careful command clearly shows us that God holds life to be very valuable, and that as he would not permit us to kilt by malice, so he would not allow us to kill by negligence, but would have us most tender of human life. Such rules as the one before us are precedents for sanitary laws, and give the weight of divine sanction to every wise sanitary arrangement. No man has a right to be filthy in his person, or his house, or his trade, for even if he himself may flourish amid unhealthy accumulations of dirt, he has no right by his unclean habits to foster a deadly typhus, or afford a nest for cholera. Those whose houses are foul, whose rooms are unventilated, whose persons are disgusting, cannot be said to love their neighbor; and those who create nuisances in our crowded cities .are guilty of wholesale murder. No man has a right to do anything which must inevitably lead to the death or to the injury of those by whom he is surrounded, but he is bound to do all in his power to prevent any harm coming to his fellow men. That seems to be the moral teaching of this ordinance of making battlements around the housetops — teaching, mark you, which I should like all housewives, working-men, manufacturers, and vestrymen, to take practical note of.

But, if ordinary life be precious, much more is the life of the soul, and, therefore, it is our Christian duty never to do that which imperils either our own or other men's souls. To us there is an imperative call from the great Master that we care for the eternal interests of others, and that we, so far as we can, prevent their exposure to temptations which might lead to their fatal falling into sin.

We shall now lead you to a few meditations which have, in our mind gathered around the text.

GOD HAS BATTLEMENTED HIS OWN HOUSE. Let this serve as a great truth with which to begin our contemplations.

God takes care that all his children are safe. There are high places in his house, and he does not deny his children the enjoyment of these high places, but he makes sure that they shall not be in danger there. He sets bulwarks round about them lest they should suffer evil when in a state of exaltation.

God in his house has given us *many high and sublime doctrines*. Timid minds are afraid of these, but the highest doctrine in Scripture is safe enough because God has battlemented it; and as no man need be afraid in the East to walk on the roof of his house when the battlement is there, so no man need hesitate to believe the doctrine of election, the doctrine of eternal and immutable love, or any of the divine teachings which circle around the covenant of grace, if he will at the same time see that God has guarded those truths so that none may fall from them to their own destruction. Take, for instance, the doctrine of election. What a high and glorious truth this is, that God hath from the beginning chosen his people unto salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and the belief of the truth! Yet that doctrine has turned many simpletons dizzy through looking at it apart from kindred teachings. Some, I do not doubt, have willfully leaped over the battlement which God has set about this doctrine, and have turned it into Antinomianism, degrading it into an excuse for evil living, and reaping just damnation for their willful perversion. But God has been pleased to set around that doctrine other truths which shield it from misuse. It is true he has a chosen people, but “by their fruits ye shall know them.” “Without holiness no man shall see the Lord.” Though he has chosen his people, yet he has chosen them unto holiness; he has ordained them to be zealous for good works. His intention is not that they should be saved *in* their sins, but saved *from* their sins, not that they should be carried to heaven as they are, but that they should be cleansed and purged from all iniquities, and so made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light.

Then there is the sublime truth of the final perseverance of the saints. What a noble height is that! A housetop doctrine indeed. What a Pisgah view is to be had from the summit of it! “The Lord will keep the feet of his saints.” “The righteous also shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall be stronger and stouter.” It will be a great loss to us if we are unable to enjoy the comfort of this truth. There is no reason for fearing presumption through a firm conviction of the true believer’s safety. Mark well the battlements which God has builded around the edge of this truth! He has declared that if these shall fall away, it is impossible “to renew them

again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.” If those who are true saints should altogether lose the life of God that is within their souls, there would remain no other salvation; if the first salvation could have spent itself unwillingly, there would be no alternative, but a certain looking for of judgment and of fiery indignation. When we read warnings such as, “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall,” and others of that kind, we see how God has made a parapet around this tower-like truth, so that saints may ascend to its very summit, and look abroad upon the land that floweth with milk and honey, and yet their brains need not whirl, nor shall they fall into presumption and perish. That wonderful doctrine of justification by faith, which we all hold to be a vital truth, not only of Protestantism but of Christianity itself, is quite as dangerous by itself as the doctrine of election, or the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints; in fact, if a man means to sin, he can break down every bulwark and turn any doctrine into an apology for transgression. Even the doctrine that God is merciful, simple as that is, may be made into an excuse for sin. To return to the doctrine that we are justified by faith, and not by the works of the law: Luther put it very grandly, very boldly, and for him very properly; but there are some who use his phrases, not in Luther’s way, and without Luther’s reasons for unguarded speaking, and such persons have sometimes done serious damage to men’s souls by not mentioning another truth which is meant to be the battlement to the doctrine of faith, namely, the necessity of sanctification. Where faith is genuine, through the Holy Spirit’s power, it works a cleansing from sin, a hatred of evil, an anxious desire after holiness, and it leads the soul to aspire after the image of God. Faith and holiness are inseparable. “If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.” Good works are to be insisted on, for they have their necessary uses. James never contradicts Paul after all; it is only that we do not understand him. Both the doctrinal Paul and the practical James spake as they were moved of the Holy Ghost. Paul builds the tower, and James puts the battlement around it; Paul conducts us to the summit of God’s house and bids us rejoice in what we see there, and then James points us to the balustrade that is built up to keep us from overleaping the truth to our own destruction. Thus is each doctrine balanced, bulwarked, and guarded, but time would fail us to enter into detail, suffice it for us to know that the palace of truth is battlemented with wisdom and prudence.

Take another view of the same thought. The Lord has guarded the *position, of his saints if endowed with wealth*. Some of God's servants are, in his providence, called to very prosperous conditions in life, and prosperity is fruitful in dangers. It is hard to carry a full cup without a spill. A man may travel on the ground well enough, and yet find it hard work to walk on a high rope. A man may be an excellent servant who would make a bad master; and one may be a good tradesman in a small way who makes a terrible failure of it as a merchant. Yet be well assured that, if God shall call any of you to be prosperous, and give you much of this world's goods, and place you in an eminent position, he will see to it that grace is given suitable for your station, and affliction needful for your elevation. The Lord will put battlements round about you, and it is most probable that these will not commend themselves to your carnal nature. You are going on right joyously; everything is "merry as a marriage bell," but on a sudden you are brought to a dead stand. You kick against this hindering disappointment, but it will not move out of your way. You are vexed with it, but there it is. Oh, how anxious you are to go a step farther, and then you think you will be supremely happy; but it is just that perfect happiness so nearly within reach that God will not permit you to attain, for then you would receive your portion in this life, forget your God, and despise the better land. That bodily infirmity, that want of favor with the great, that sick child, that suffering wife, that embarrassing partnership — any one of these may be the battlements which God has built around your success, lest you should be lifted up with pride, and your soul should not be upright in you. Does not this remark cast a light upon the mystery of many a painful dispensation? "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I kept thy word:" that experience may be read another way, and you may confess, "Had I not been afflicted I had gone far astray, but now have I kept thy word."

'The like prudence is manifested by our Lord towards those whom he has seen fit to' place in *positions of eminent service*. Those who express great concern for prominent ministers, because of their temptations, do well, but they will be even more in the path of duty if they have as much solicitude about themselves. I remember one whose pride was visible in his very manner, a person unknown, of little service in the church, but as proud of his little badly-ploughed, weedy half acre, as ever a man could be, who informed me very pompously on more than one occasion, that he trembled lest I should be unduly exalted and puffed up with pride. Now, from his

lips, it sounded like comedy, and reminded me of Satan reproving sin. God never honors his servants with success without effectually preventing their grasping the honor of their work. If we are tempted to boast he soon lays us low. He always whips behind the door at home those whom he most honors in public. You may rest assured that if God honors you to win many souls, you will have many stripes to bear, and stripes you would not like to tell another of, they will be so sharp and humbling. If the Lord loves you, he will never let you be lifted up in his service. We have to feel that we are but just the pen in the Master's hand, so that if holiness be written on men's hearts, the credit will not be ours, but the great Spirit must have all the praise; and this our heavenly Father has effectual means of securing. Do not, therefore, start *back* from qualifying yourself for the most eminent position, or from occupying it when duty calls. Do not let Satan deprive God's great cause of your best service through your unholy bashfulness and cowardly retirement. The Lord will give his angels charge over you to keep you in all your ways. If God sets you on the housetop, he will place a battlement round about you. If he makes you to stand on the high places, he will make your feet like hinds' feet, so that you shall not fall. If God commands you to dash against the enemy single-handed, still "as thy clay thy strength shall be." He will uphold thee and *preserve* thee; on the pinnacle thou art as secure as in the valley, if Jehovah set thee there.

It is the same with regard to the high places of *spiritual enjoyment*. Paul was caught up to the third heavens, and he heard words unlawful for a man to utter: this was a very high, a very, very high place for Paul's mind, mighty brain and heart as he had; but then, there was the battlement — "Lest I should be exalted above measure, through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me." Paul was not in love with this drawback; he besought the *Lord* thrice to remove it; but still the thorn could not be taken away; for it was necessary as a battlement around the eminent revelations with which God had favored his apostle. The temptation, if we are at all happy in the Lord, is to grow secure. "My mountain standeth firm," say we, "I shall never be moved." Even much communion with Christ, though in itself sanctifying, may be perverted, through the folly of our flesh, into a cause of self-security; we may even dream that we are brought so near to Christ that common temptations are not likely to assail us, and by these very temptations we may fall. Hence it is that as sure as ever we have high seasons of enjoyment, we shall sooner or later endure periods of deep

depression. Scarcely ever is there a profound calm on *the* soul's sea, but a storm is brewing. The sweet day so calm, so bright, shall have its fall, and the dew of the succeeding night shall weep over its departure. The high hill must have its following valley, and the flood-tide must retreat at ebb. Lest the soul should be beguiled to live upon itself, and feed on its frames and feelings, and by neglect of watchfulness fall into presumptuous sins, battlements are set round about all hallowed joys, for which in eternity we shall bless the name of the Lord.

Too many of the Lord's servants feel as if they were always on the housetop — always afraid, always full of doubts and fears. They are fearful lest they shall after all perish, and of a thousand things besides. Satan sets up scare-crows to keep these timid birds from feeding upon the wheat which the great Husbandman grows on purpose for them. They scarcely ever reach the assurance of faith. They are stung by "ifs" and "buts," like Israel by fiery serpents, and they can scarcely get beyond torturing fear, which is as an adder biting the heel. To such we say, Beloved, you shall find when your faith is weakest, when you are just about to fall, that there is a glorious battlement all around you; a glorious promise, a gentle word of the Holy Spirit shall be brought home to your soul, so that you shall not utterly despair. Have you not felt sometimes that if it had not been for a choice love-word heard in the past your faith must have given up the ghost; or if it had not been for that encouraging sermon which came with such power to your soul, your foot had almost gone, your steps had well-nigh slipped? Now, the infinite love of God, dear child of God, values you far too much to allow you to fall into despair.

*“Mid all your fear, and care, and woe,
His Spirit will not let you go.”*

Battlemented by eternal grace shall this roof of the house be, and when you are tremblingly pacing it, you shall have no cause for alarm.

*“Weak as you are, you shall not faint,
Or fainting, shall not die;
Jesus, the strength of every saint,
Will aid you from on high.”*

From the fact of divine carefulness we proceed by an easy step to the consideration that, as imitators of God, we should exercise the like tenderness; in a word, WE OUGHT TO HAVE OUR HOUSES BATTLEMENTED.

A man who had no battlement to his house might himself fall from the roof in an unguarded moment. He might be startled in his sleep, and in the dark mistake his way to the stair-head, or, while day-dreaming, his steps might slip. Those who profess to be the children of God should, for their own sakes, see that every care is used to guard themselves against the perils of this tempted life; they should see to it that their house is carefully battlemented. If any ask, "How shall we do it?" we reply:

Every man ought to examine himself carefully whether he be in the faith, lest professing too much, taking too much for granted, he fall and perish. At times we should close our spiritual warehouse and take stock; a tradesman who does not like to do that is generally in a bad way. A man who does not think it wise sometimes to sit down and give half a day, or such time as he can spare, to a solemn stock-taking of his soul, may be afraid that things are not going right with him. Lest we should be after all hypocrites, or self-deceivers; lest, after all, we should not be born again, but should be children of nature, neatly dressed, but not the living children of God, we must prove our own selves whether we be in the faith. Let us protect our souls' interests with frequent self-examinations.

Better still, and safer by far, *go often to the cross*, as you think you went at first. Go every day to the cross; still with the empty hand and with the bleeding heart, go and receive everything from Christ, and seek to have your wounds bound up with the healing ointment of his atoning sacrifice. These are the best battlements I can recommend you: self-examination on the one side of the house, and a simple faith in Jesus on the other.

Battlement your soul about well *with 2Jrayr, r*. Go not out into the world to look upon the face of man till you have seen the face of God.: Never rush down from your chamber with such unseemly haste that you have not time to buckle on your helmet, and g'h'd on your breastplate, and your coat of mail.

Be sure and battlement yourself about *with much watchfulness*, and, especially, *watch most the temptation peculiar to your position and disposition*. You may not be inclined to be slothful; you may not be fascinated by the silver of Demas into covetousness, and yet you may be beguiled by pleasure. Watch, if you have a hasty temper, lest that should overthrow you; or if yours be a high and haughty spirit, set a double watch to bring *that* demon down. If you be inclined to indolence, or, on the other hand, if hot passions and evil desires are most likely to attack you, cry to the

Strong for strength; and as he who guards well sets a double guard where the wall is weakest, so do you.

There are some respects in which every man should battlement his house by denying himself those indulgences, which might be lawful to others, but which would prove fatal to himself. The individual who knows his weakness to be an appetite for drink should resolve totally to abstain. Every man, I believe, has a particular sin which is a sin to him but may not be a sin to another. No man's conscience is to be a judge for another, but let no man violate his conscience. If thou canst not perform a certain act in faith, thou must not do it at all; I mean if thou dost not honestly and calmly believe it to be right, even if it be right in itself, it becomes wrong to thee. Watch, therefore, watch at all points. Guard yourselves in company, lest you be carried away by the force of numbers: guard yourselves in solitude, lest selfishness and pride creep in. Watch yourselves in poverty, lest you fall into envy of others; and in wealth, lest you become lofty in mind. O that we may all keep our houses well battlemented, lest we fall and grieve the Spirit of God, and bring dishonor on Christ's name.

As each man ought to battlement his house in a spiritual sense with regard to himself, **SO OUGHT EACH MAN TO CARRY OUT THE RULE WITH REGARD TO HIS FAMILY.**

Family religion was the strength of Protestantism at first. It was the glory of Puritanism and Nonconformity. In the days of Cromwell it is said that you might have walked down Cheapside at a certain hour in the morning and you would have heard the morning hymn going up from every house all along the street, and at night if you had glanced inside each home you would have seen the family gathered, and the big Bible opened, and family devotion offered. There is no fear of this land ever becoming Popish if family prayer be maintained, but if family prayer be swept away, farewell to the strength of the church. A man should battlement his house for his children's sake, for his servants' sake, for his own sake, by maintaining the ordinance of family prayer. I may not dictate to you whether you should sing, or read, or pray; or whether you should do this every morning or evening, or how many times a-day; I shall leave this to the free Spirit that is in you, but do maintain family religion, and never let the altar of God burn low in your habitation.

So in the matter of discipline. If the child shall do everything it chooses to do, if it do wrong and there be no admonition, if there be no chastisement,

if the reins be loosely held, if the father altogether neglects to be a priest and a king in his house, how can he wonder that his children one by one grow up to break his heart? David had never chastised Absalom, nor Adonijah, and remember what they became; and Eli's sons, who never had more than a soft word or two from their father, how were his ears made to tingle with the news of God's judgments upon them! Battlement your houses by godly discipline, see that obedience be maintained, and that sin is not tolerated; so shall your house be holiness unto the Lord, and peace shall dwell therein.

We ought strictly to battlement our houses, *as to many things which in this day are tolerated*. I am sometimes asked, "May not a Christian subscribe to a lottery? May not a Christian indulge in a game of cards? May not a Christian dance or attend the opera?" Now, I shall not come down to debate upon the absolute right or wrong of debatable amusements and customs. The fact is, that if professors do not stop till they are certainly in the wrong, they will stop nowhere. It is of little use to go on till you are over the edge of the roof, and then cry, "Halt." It would be a poor affair for a house to be without a battlement, but to have a network to stop the falling person half-way down; you must stop before you get off the solid standing. There is need to draw the line somewhere, and the line had better be drawn too soon than too late; and whereas the habit of gambling is the very curse of this land — ah! during the last Derby week, what blood it has shed! how it has brought souls to hell and men to an unripe grave! — as the habit of speculating seems to run through the land, and was doubtless the true cause of the great panic which shook our nation a few years ago, there is the more need that we should not tolerate anything that looks like it. For another reason we should carefully discern between places of public amusement. Some that are perfectly harmless, recreative, and instructive — to deny these to our young people would be foolish; but certain amusements stand on the border ground, between the openly profane and the really harmless. We say, do not go to these; never darken the doors of such places. Why? Because it may be the edge of the house, and though you may not break your neck if you walk along the parapet, yet you are best on this side of the battlement. You are least likely to fall into sin by keeping away, and you cannot afford to run risks. We have all heard the old story of the good woman who required a coachman. Two or three young fellows came to seek for the situation; each of them she saw and catechized alone. The first one had this question put to him; "How near

could you drive to danger?" lie said, "I do not doubt but that I could drive within a yard of danger." "Well, well," the lady said, "*you* will not do for me." When the second came in, the good woman questioned him in like manner, "How near could you drive to danger?" "Within a hair's breath, Madam," said he. "Oh!" she said, "that will not suit me at all." A third was asked the same question, and he prudently replied, "If you please, madam, that is one of the things I have never tried; I have always tried to drive as far from danger as ever I can." "You are the coachman for me," said she; and surely that is the kind of manager we all should have in our households. O let us not so train up our children that in all probability they will run into sin! Let us, on the central, exhibit such an example in all things that they may safely follow us. Let us so walk that they may go step by step where we go, and not be cast out of the church of God as a reproach, nor be cast away from the presence of God. Battlement your houses, then; do not be afraid of being too strict and too Puritanic; there is no fear of that in these days; there is a great deal more danger of bringing solemn judgments on our families through neglecting the worship of God in our households.

The preacher would now remind himself that this church is, as it were, his own house, and that he is bound to BATTLEMENT IT ROUND ABOUT.

Many come here, Sabbath after Sabbath, to hear the gospel; the immense number and the constancy of it surprise me. I do not know why the multitudes come and crowd these aisles. When I preached yesterday in Worcestershire, and saw the thronging crowds in every road, I could not help wondering to see them, and the more so because they listened as though I had some novel discovery to make — they listened with all their ears, and eyes, and mouths. I could but marvel and thank God. Ah! but it is a dreadful thing to remember that so many people hear the gospel, and yet perish under the sound of it. Alas! the gospel becomes to them a savor of death unto death, and there is no lot so terrible as perishing under a pulpit from which the gospel is preached.

Now, what shall I say to prevent anyone falling from this blessed gospel — falling from the house of mercy — dashing themselves from the roof of the temple to their ruin? What shall I say to you? I beseech you *do not be hearers only*. Do not think that when you come here Sundays, and Mondays, and Thursdays, it is all done. No, it is only begun then. Praying is the end of preaching, and to be born again is the great matter. It is very little to

occupy your seat, except you hearken diligently, with willing hearts; looked upon as an end, sitting at services is a wretched waste of time. Dear hearers, be dissatisfied with yourselves unless ye be doers of the word. Let your cry go up to God that you may be born again. Rest not till you rest in Jesus.

Remember, and I hope this will be another battlement, that if you hear the gospel and it is not blessed to you, *still, it has a power*. If the sun of grace does not soften you as it does wax, it will harden you as the sun does clay. If it is not a savor of life unto life, to repeat the text I quoted just now, it will be a savor of death unto death. O do not be blind in the sunlight! Do not perish with hunger in the banqueting-house! Do not die of thirst when the water of life is before you!

Let me remind you of *what the result will be of putting away the gospel*. You will soon die; you cannot live for ever. In the world to come what awaits you? What did our Lord say? "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." The righteous enter into life eternal, but the ungodly suffer punishment everlasting. We will not dwell upon the terrors of the world to come, but let me remind you that they are all yours except Christ is yours; death is yours, and judgment is yours, and hell will be yours, and all' that dreadful wrath which God means when he says, "Beware, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver *you*." O run not on in sin, lest you fall into hell! I would fain set up this battlement to stay you from a dreadful and fatal fall.

Once more. Remember the love of God in Christ Jesus. I heard the other day of a bad boy whom his father had often rebuked and chastened, but the lad grew worse. One day he had been stealing, and his father felt deeply humiliated. He talked to the boy, but his warning made no impression; and when he saw his child so callous the good man sat down in his chair and burst out crying, as if his heart would break. The boy stood very indifferent for a time, but at last as he saw the tears falling on the floor, and heard his father sobbing, he cried, "Father, don't; father, don't do that: what do you cry for father?" "Ah! my boy," he said, "I cannot help thinking what will become of you, growing up as you are. You will be a lost man, and the thought of it breaks my heart." "O father!" he said, "Pray don't cry. I will be better. Only den'tory, and I will not vex you again." Under God that was the means of breaking down the boy's love of evil, and I hope it led to his salvation. Just that is Christ to you. He cannot bear to see you die, and

he weeps over you, saying, "How often would I have blessed you, and you would not!" Oh, by the tears Of Jesus, wept over ten in effect when he wept over Jerusalem, turn to him. Let that be a battlement to keep you from ruin.

God bless you, and help you to trust in Jesus, and his shall be the praise.

NET-MENDING.

THE fishermen had a good take of mackerel the other evening at Brighton, but while getting in the net it became very badly entangled among the rocks, and was sadly rent. Before that net can be used again, busy fingers must see to its mending. Records of net-mending are as old as the days of "him who trod the sea," for he found the boats at the sea of Galilee empty, because the fishermen were gone out of them, and were mending [their nets. The Lord's nets, the preachers of the word, need mending too. Our mind grows jaded, and our spirit depressed, our heartbeats with diminished rigor', and our eyes lose their brightness, if we continue, month after month, and year after year, without a rest. Mental work will as surely wear out the brain as friction will destroy the iron wheel. It is a bad policy to forego the regular vacation. There is no more saving in it than there would be in the fisherman's continuing to fish with a rent net, because he could not afford time to sit down and mend it. The mind, like a field, ought to lie fallow every now and then; the crops will be the better for it.

Congregations are most unwise who would grudge their pastor the time and the means to enjoy a thorough change, and a season of complete relaxation. Oh, how reviving to wander in the woods, or lie down amid the pillared shade of the pine forests! The hum of bees is Elysium. Every bell of the heather silently rings out peace and goodwill. One drinks in new life as the lungs receive the sea breezes, or the pure currents which sweep the glacier and the eternal snow. To watch the flying clouds, to mark the gathering tempest, to shelter beneath the rock, or in the cotter's hut, or even to brave out the rain — all this is .balm to the soul. Headache, melancholy, nervousness, suspicion, and all the other children of indigestion, fly before the staff or the alpertrock. Exercise is almost a means of grace; a walk with God is altogether so. Hope, courage, vivacity, zeal, resolve, all return on the wings of the wind when the right-hearted but weary laborer has had space to relieve the overwrought brain. Many a

regret for unearnest sermons and unweeping prayers might never have been needed if our minds were more themselves, and less threadbare with ever-passing anxieties. How can we help losing the fish if our net is full of holes? We may be blamed for bad fishing, but who can help it if the net be largely rent, and yawns with gashes? Mental weariness is too often the cause of spiritual powerlessness. Deacons and wealthy stewards of the Lord's goods should generously aid their pastors, where such aid is needed, that they may for the sake of their churches and their work mend their nets; or, to use the Master's words, may "go into the desert and rest awhile." Brethren, everywhere, see ye to it.

ENGLISH SERVICES IN PARIS.

Many of our readers are interested in the little French Baptist church which formerly assembled in the upper chamber at Rue St. Roch, but now in the rather more commodious *entre-sol* at 19, Rue des Bons Enfants, near the Palais Royal and the Hotel du Louvre. They will be glad to hear that the friends are in treaty for a lot of ground suitable for a chapel. In the meantime, their simple and earnest services are held every Sunday afternoon at two o'clock, and for the present there is an English service in the same place at 11.30 every Sunday morning.

MEMORANDA.

Psalm omitted this month from pressure of work upon the Editor.

THE delay in doing justice to Ireland, occasioned by the tyrannical action of the Lords, is precisely what we expected and desired. The country will be led to ask, how long these titled defenders of injustice are to rule a free people, and forbid the nation to fulfill its will. The bishops ought to be removed from the Upper House forthwith; let them look after their flocks, and they will have more than enough to do. With one or two exceptions, they are always the friends of everything oppressive. The monstrous injustice of compelling the Dissenters to support a church with which they have no sympathy, is as great in England as in Ireland, and the present crisis will bring this question before the public mind all the earlier. How men calling themselves Christians, much less Christian bishops, can have voted for the gross wickedness of compelling a Romish population to support a church which they abhor, utterly staggers us. That they should be willing sooner to endow Popery, than to lose their own pelf, stamps the whole party consenting to such a scheme with the black brand of hypocrisy and covetousness. These forsooth are your Protestants, par excellence! Why they would sooner endow the powers of the pit, than lose the golden fleece.

We do not intend to enter into a controversy upon the matter of Brethrenism. Dissenters have the same power to use the press as we have; and they have their own magazines in which to defend their creed and character. We believe most of Mr. Grant's charges to be correct, and he has sent us a long letter defending even the details of his statements, but we do not mean to insert it, as we have excluded, and probably shall exclude, the criticisms of his opponents.

The *New York Examiner* has the following notes upon our College : —

1. Where do the students of this College come from? Generally, as I have said, from the Tabernacle church. And in this church there are two sources which seem specially fruitful in supplying them. Of these, one is the Evening Classes and the other, the Evangelists' Association. Bearing in mind that the great middle class of English society loses itself, by insensible stages, on the one hand in the aristocracy, and on the other in the lower

classes, the great mass who attend the Tabernacle, whatever may be true of exceptions, will be found in the humbler of these sections of the middle class. From this t grade of the English people immense numbers of young men flock to the preaching of Mr. Spurgeon. For such young men the evening classes are organized, and in them are taught the various branches comprised in a good English education. From these classes young men are constantly passing into the College. So too they come from the Evangelists' Association, whose members go forth to waste places with the gospel, and tinder whose labors several flourishing churches have arisen. The Bible Class of the Tabernacle might be referred to as another source. This class brings young men of the church into immediate contact with the students of the College, and from it young men pass by a natural process to the College itself.

2. How is this College supported? The provision made for the young men embraces everything which is necessary for their support — in some instances, even to clothing and pin-money. They have their residences in families, and their daily lives are under pastoral supervision. The weekly offerings in the Tabernacle, amounting to an average of more than £30 every Sabbath, are devoted exclusively to their support. All around the Tabernacle are placards inviting offerings, and these are attached notices of the amounts contributed on the last previous Sabbath. These amounts, in the two instances in which I saw them, were above £3 on each Sabbath, and one of those a rainy day. To me this method has had special significance, as a reminder that the raising up of men to preach the gospel is the first ditty of the church. These weekly offerings for the support of their own College amount to little less than £2,000 per year, the total expense being about £5,000, and the remainder being raised chiefly by donations for that object.

3. By whom are the young men taught, and what is the scope and character of the teaching? The young men are taught by tutors, under the direction and with the stated teaching of Mr. Spurgeon himself, and of Mr. James Spurgeon, who holds the position of Vice-President of the College. The studies embrace the English language. Mathematics, Logic and Natural Philosophy, Intellectual and Moral Philosophy, Latin, Greek and Hebrew, Biblical Literature, Systematic Theology, which is always Calvinistic, and Homiletics. The studies on which special stress seem to be laid, are Mathematics, Logic, and Calvinistic Theology. Tim time of study is two years, rarely extended to three, and more frequently abridged from two,

under pressing calls for service. To ore' notions of the range of these studies, particularly when it is considered that no considerable preliminary education is required, the time allotted renders any extended acquisition simply impossible. Instruction within this period can be no more than rudimentary or superficial, and it may be presumed that no more than this is attempted. The aim is not to make scholars, but preachers for a particular sphere of society, in a land where society is cast in inflexible molds.

To these summary statements it need only be added, that the young men so taught find spheres of labor,' in London itself, and in other places near and remote. One hundred and eighty-six students have gone from the College, and settled ill the ministry, of wheel one hundred and seventy-seven still remain ill the work. *Forty-four new churches hare been formed by the distinct agency of the College. By the same affecting thirty new churches have been erected. In London alone, the formation of eleven churches by destitute districts, was in contemplation at the last annual meeting of the College.*

No mere array of facts, however, ellables one to form an ample and satisfactory judgment in respect to au institution like that here described. Failing to see the men, I instituted inquiries. It is, in the first place, a good deal to say, that the scheme has Mr. Spurgeon's own full confidence. He is not the man to spend his strength on unavailing labors. But I sought equally the views of brethren not connected in any wise with the Tabernacle. The opinions expressed to me were somewhat various, according to the points of view from which they were taken, but except in one or two instances they were not widely apart The sum of the testimony was ill favor of the College, and the objections urged were such as we should me oil this side of the Atlantic with even greater emphasis. The evangelical spirit, the godly earnestness of the young men, and the great usefulness of their labors of winning souls to Christ and gathering churches, were fully recognized and applauded. On these points I recall no exceptions to the common verdict. I think the *esvrit du corps* by which they are distinguished, sometimes takes forms which are not agreeable to outside brethren, and that while their intense zeal is recognized as the instrument of large immediate results, they are, in instances more or less frequent, regarded ms open to the criticism of lacking the intellectual discipline and culture necessary for sustained and permanent usefulness on the same fields. In other words, such of them as these are better evangelists

than pastors, better fitted for itinerant than for fixed service. Instances of this kind were named to me as bringing local discredit upon the whole system, a result equally natural and illogical.

Sufficient time has not yet elapsed for judgments to be regarded as final. Most of the men are still young — few or none have reached the full maturity of their powers. It is the belief, however, of Mr. Rogers, though I doubt whether it is greatly his ambition, that preachers and theologians destined to eminence and permanent fame will ultimately rise out of this mass of young men, as they have always arisen out of the mass of the Dissenting ministry of England.

We tender warmest thanks to our faithful contributors, through whose generosity our work in the College is sustained, but with about 15,000 subscribers to the *Sword and Trowel*, we ought to have the means sent us to do far more. Our thanks are especially due to contributors to the *Weekly Offering*; the system is a sound one, and we thank them for so heartily carrying it out.

In the Orphanage all goes well; and our faith is, that the Lord will provide.

Services in connection with the settlement of Mr. A. McKinley, as pastor of the Baptist church in Zion Chapel, Chatham, were held on the 4th and 5th of last month. On Sabbath, 4th, two sermons were preached, by Mr. Rogers, of the Tabernacle College. On the following day, after a public tea meeting, which was numerously attended, the recognition service was held. The Scriptures were read and prayer was offered by Mr. W. Harris, of St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Chatham; an address, including the usual topics on such an occasion, was given by Mr. McKinley. The ordination prayer was offered by Mr. V. Down, of the Free Church, Rochester; the charge to the pastor was given by Mr. Rogers; the charge to the church and congregation by Mr. B. Broadley, one of the chaplains of the Chatham garrison; addresses by Mr. T. E. Page, Wesleyan minister, Brompton, by Sir. Wyle, and Mr. Ashley, deacons of the church. Mr. McKinley has had many pleasing tokens of his having been called by the Great Head of the church to our in this important sphere; in the increase of the congregation, the cordiality of his reception by other ministers in the town, and, above all, in several decided instances of direct usefulness, resulting from his ministrations.

The anniversary services of the Newhaven Tabernacle were held on Lord's-day, June 20th, when two sermons were preached by Mr. D. Gracey, classical tutor of the Pastors' College. This was the first anniversary of the opening of this place for divine worship. During the year, this cause, which was commenced by Mr. W. Sargeant, in June, 1868, has had a share in the divine blessing; certainly the Lord has greatly favoured his people here, for the generosity of the gentlemen who built the place for us, and let it to us at so low a rental, is a proof that the Lord's hand was in it at the commencement. When no other place could be procured in the town, and every door seemed shut fast against us, this gentleman nobly offered, and that without being asked, to build the present place, and he has done so with a view to make a school-room of it when funds can be raised to erect a chapel on the ground in front. Mr. James Spurgeon opened this building on June 24th, 1868, and since that time Mr. Sargeant has labored there, for the first nine months only preaching on the Sabbath and attending college in the week, but is now settled with an earnest people, and hoping to do a good work in the town. During the year a church has been formed, now numbering twenty-five, of these Mr. Sargeant has baptized twenty-four, there having been no Baptists in the town when the cause was commenced. The greater portion of these have been brought to Christ within the last twelve months, under the ministry of Mr. Sargeant, and the Lord is still adding unto their number. A Sabbath-school of eighty children, and fourteen teachers, a Bible class of twenty two young men and women, a tract society with eight distributors, and a Missionary Society, have been commenced and are all, under God's blessing, doing good service. Outdoor services have been held for the last two months, which have been well attended by numbers, who, but for this opportunity, would not hear the gospel. There is a large field for labor in the town among the sailors and others, and also in the surrounding villages, where the joyful sound of salvation by grace is rarely heard. Two or three young men are now coming forward, who will be ready to help in the work of preaching the gospel in these villages. The recognition services in connection with the settlement of Mr. Sargeant, were held on Thursday, June 24th. Tea was provided at five o'clock, of which a good company partook. The service commenced at half-past six, and was presided over by Mr. J. Wilkins, of Brighton. Mr. W. Miller, of Lewes, read the Scriptures and offered prayer. Mr. Upton (in the absence of the deacon, who was ill) gave the statement from the church, Mr. Sargeant then gave an account of his early days in Newhaven (being a native), of his being brought to Christ, of his call to the

ministry, and of his being led to accept the pastorate of this church. The ordination prayer was offered by Mr. J. Holt, of Lewes, and the charge was given to the pastor by G. Rogers. A hymn being sung, Mr. J. Wilkins delivered the charge to the church, and Mr. W. Miller concluded with a short address to the unconverted. This service will long be remembered in this town.

The new Baptist chapel at Shooters' Hill Road, to which attention was called in the *Sword ad Trowel* a short time since, has just been opened. On Sunday, June 27th, Mr. George Rogers, of the Pastors' College, preached two sermons. On Sunday, July 4th, Mr. J. Teall, of Queen Street, Woolwich, preached in the morning, and Mr. H.R. Brown, minister of the church, in the evening. On Wednesday, July 7th, the series of opening services were brought to a close; Mr. C. H. Spurgeon preached in the afternoon, and presided over a public meeting in the evening. Tea was well served between the meetings. The following took part in the day's engagements : — Messrs. J. Teall, and W. Woods, of Woolwich; J. T. Wigner, New Cross; B. B. Wale, Dacre Park; B. Davies, Greenwich; W. P. Frith, Bexley Heath; A. Walker, Windlow; A. Buck, Old Kent Road; and A. E. Lamb; together with a minister from the small United States. The building was crowded at each of the meetings on Wednesday. The collections were good: upwards of £100 were realised in collections and contributions. Funds are still urgently needed, to reduce the debt on the building, which would not have been erected thus speedily had there been a suitable place for the friends to worship in. Services in connection with the settlement of Mr. C. T. Johnson as pastor of the Baptist church at Alford, in Lincolnshire, were held on the 11th and 14th of July last, Two Sermons were preached by Mr. G. Rogers, of the Pastors' College. On the afternoon of Wednesday, the 11th, Mr. Robinson, the Independent minister of Alford, commenced by reading and prayer; one of the deacons gave a statement on behalf of the church. Mr. Lauderdale of Grimsby, put the usual questions, to which answers were given by Mr. Johnson. Mr. Lauderdale offered the ordination prayer. Mr. Rogers gave the charge to the pastor; and Mr. Payne, Baptist minister at Lowth, concluded with prayer. After a public tea in the school-room, a service was held in the evening, at which an address to the church was given by Mr. Payne. Addresses were also delivered by Mr. Lauderdale, Mr. Robinson, Mr. Rogers, and Mr. Johnson. Mr. The church and congregation have revived greatly under the devoted labors of Mr. Johnson. The chapel and several

rooms connected with it are very neat and commodious; and there is much to encourage the hope of great usefulness in the future. Baptisms at Metropolitan Tabernacle by Mr. B. Davies, for the Pastor : — June 28th, Eleven; July 1st, Twenty-five; by Mr. J. A. Spurgeon : — July 12th, six.

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL

SEPTEMBER, 1869.

THE SEVEN CURSES OF LONDON

A REVIEW BY C. H. SPURGEON.

Under the title of "The Seven Curses of London," ^{f22} Mr. Greenwood, the "Amateur Casual," has produced a sadly interesting book — a book whose every page would be bedewed with tears, if all readers were like in heart set before us in this volume are not such as are so called by idle impatience, because they flutter the decorum of gentility, or disturb the quiet of heartlessness; they are real curses, deep and deadly, withering, soul-destroying, damnable: the descriptions given are all the more weighty, because they are not written from the point of view of the professional philanthropist or the spiritual teacher; if the merely literary man sees so much to lament in our leviathan city, what may still clearer eyes discern! After reading Mr. Greenwood's record, we are conscious of intense pain and anguish, mingled with vehement resolve to leave no means untried to alleviate the wretchedness of this Babylon. We wish every Christian man could be made aware of the vice, the destitution, and the misery which surround him; it would make him a better servant of the Lord. We are a vast deal too comfortable. We sin with complacency at the good which we are doing, when, like Mrs. Partington's mop, we are scarcely pushing back one wave of the seething ocean of iniquity around us. At our pious gatherings we half persuade ourselves that the world is being converted, and that gross vice is a *tara avis* in the land, and all the while the devil, with almost undisputed sway, rules the masses, and devours them at his will. Those lines of first-class residences, those long terraces of respectable houses, those miles of pretty villas, those leagues of busy shops — one rides along them by the hour, and feels that London is great, flourishing wealthy, orderly; ay, but turn out of that broad thoroughfare, stop at Paradise Court or Rosemary Alley, take your walks abroad where many poor you see, note the ragged children, the filthy Irishwomen, the harlots, the drunkards, the swarms of villanous-looking big boys; and now, as you

return, sick from the reek of gin and the mustiness of rags, you learn that London is poor, wretched, lawless, horrible. It is well to have the rose-water removed, and the rose-color washed off awhile. A better excuse for niggardly giving and shorthanded working will be torn away, when we are no longer in ignorance of our city's awful needs.

The first of the seven curses mentioned by our author is "*neglected children.*" Well may the writer call it a startling fact, that in England and Wales, three hundred and fifty thousand children, under the age of sixteen, are dependent more or less on parish authorities for maintenance; in London alone, one hundred thousand children wander in destitution, preparing for our gaols or for early graves. Children of the gutter, their food is scant, their lodging foul, their clothing ragged. Even when blessed with a mother, the young Arabs neither fare sumptuously by night nor by day. Cradled in a gooseberry sieve, or nestled in an egg box, the babies of the poorest class have no injurious luxury to enervate them. Strange facts come under our author's own observation. "Accompanied by a friend, he was on a visit of exploration into the little-known regions of Baldwin's Gardens, in Leather Lane, and entering a cellar there, the family who occupied it were discovered in a state of dreadful commotion. The mother, a tall, bony, ragged shrew had a baby tucked under one arm, while she was using the other by the aid of a pair of dilapidated nozzleless bellows in inflicting a tremendous beating on a howling young gentleman of about eleven years old. 'Tut! tut! what is the matter, Mrs. Donnelly? Rest your arm a moment, now, and tell us all about it.' 'Matter! shure it's matter enough to drive a poor widdy beyant her senses!' And then her rage turning to sorrow, she in pathetic terms described how that she left that bad boy Johnny only for a few moments in charge of the 'darlint comfortable ashleap in her bashket,' and that he had neglected his duty, and that the baste of a donkey had smelt her out, and 'ate her clane out o' bed.' . . . It was not long after the incident of the gooseberry sieve, that I discovered in one small room in which a family of six resided, three little children, varying in age from three to eight, perhaps, stark naked. It was noon of a summer's day, and there they were nude as forest monkeys, and so hideously dirty that every rib-bone in their poor wasted little bodies showed plain, and in color like mahogany. Soon as I put my head in at the door they scattered, scared as rabbits, to the 'bed,' an arrangement of evil-smelling flock and old potato-sacks, and I was informed by the mother that they had not a rag to wear, and had been in their present condition for *wore*

than three months.” If these things be true of children left under the care of poor penniless widows, what a plea we have for our orphanage, and how grateful should we and our band of helpers be that we are allowed to do a little to prevent such misery.

Had the stories told of the food of our little Arab hordes in London streets been narrated by a missionary as being true of Chinese or Patagonians, our hair would be on end with horror; but many will read the following with complacency. “They draw a considerable amount of their sustenance from the markets. And really it would seem that by some miraculous dispensation of Providence, garbage was for their sake robbed of its poisonous properties, and endowed with virtues such as wholesome food possesses. Did the reader ever see the young market hunters at such a ‘feed,’ say in the month of August or September? It is a spectacle to be witnessed only by early risers who can get as far as Covent Garden by the time that the wholesale dealing in the open falls slack which will be about eight o’clock; and it is not to be believed unless it is seen. They will gather about a muck heap and gobble up plums, a sweltering mass of decay, and oranges and apples that have quite lost their original shape and color, with the avidity of ducks or pigs. I speak according to my knowledge, for I have seen them do it. I have seen one of these gawky wolfish little children with his tattered cap full of plums of a sort one of which I would not have permitted a child of mine to eat for all the money in the Mint, and that at a season when the sanitary authorities in their desperate alarm at the spread of cholera had turned bill stickers, and were begging and imploring the people to abstain from tarts, that, and the other, and especially to beware of fruit unless perfectly sound and ripe. Judging from the earnestness with which this last provision was urged, there must have been cholera enough to have slain a dozen strong men in that little ragamuffin’s cap, and yet he munched on till that frowsy receptacle was emptied, finally licking his fingers with a relish. It was not for me to forcibly dispossess the boy of a prize that made him the envy of his plumless companions but I spoke to the market beadle about it, asking him if it would not be possible, knowing the propensities of these poor little wretches, so to dispose of the poisonous offal that they could not get at it; but he replied that it was nothing to do with him what they ate so long as they kept their hands from picking and stealing; furthermore, he politely intimated, that ‘unless I had nothing better to do,’ there was no call for me to trouble myself about the ‘little warmint,’ whom nothing would hurt. He confided to me his private belief that they were ‘

made inside something alter the orsestretch, and that farriers' nails would'at come amiss Io 'era if they could only get 'em down.'“

Very painful are the results of enquiries into the parentage of these “rank outsiders” of bumunity, these wretched waifs and strays of the race; and if possible, even worse are the revelations concerning the baby-farming, and other forms by which certain of these poor little souls are reared, or rather, mm'dered wholesale. Advertisements for nurse children, and for babes to be adopted, mean a great deal more thau unsuspecting readers have usually imagined. How many babes have passed into eternity through the “ha'p'orth of bread and a ha'p'orth of milk a-day” system, eternity alone can reveal. No longer need we wonder at the large proportion of infantile mortality. But what unnatural, brutal sin does all this mean! How must God be provoked as he sees *his* children deserted of their parents, *his* babes left as beasts leave not their young! Should these poor creatures live, and become bread-winners on their own account, they do'but escape the ogres to fall into the way of harpies equally as vile. The amusements provided for the youth of London are many of them such as Sodom could have never excelled for their depravity. The low theater, and the penny gaff, are simply open doors to hell; they smell or' Tophet, and this makes them none the less profitable. “Now that the police are to be roused to increased vigilance in the suppression, as well as the arrest of criminaliw, it would be as well if those in authority directed their *especial* attention to these penny theatres. As they at present exist, they are nothing better than hot-beds of vice in its vilest forms. Girls and boys of tender age are herded together to witness the splendid *achievements* of ‘dashing highwaymen,’ and of sirens of the Starlight Sall School; nor is this all. But bad as this is, it is really the least part of the evil. The penny ‘gaff’ is usually a small place, and when a specially atrocious *piece produces* a corresponding ‘run,’ the ‘house’ is incapable of containing the vast number of boys and girls who nightly flock to see it. Scores would *be* turned away from the doors, and fieir *halfpence* wasted, were it not for the wdthy proprietor's ingenuity. I am now speaking of what I was an actual witness of in the neighborhood of Shoreditch. Beneath the pit and stage of the theater was a sort of Jawe kitchen, reached from the end of the passage that was the *entrance* to the theater, by a fiigtlt of steep stairs. There were no seats in this kitchen, nor furniture of any kind. There was a window looking towards the street, but this was prudently boarded up. At night time all the light allowed in the

kitchen *proceeded* from a feeble and dim gas jet by the wall over the fireplace.

“Wretched and drem’y-lookin as was this underground chamber, it was a source of considerable profit to the proprietor of the ‘gaff’ overhead. As before stated, when anything peculiarly attractive was to be seen, the theater filled within ten minutes of opening the besieged doors. Not to disappoint the late comers, however, all who pleased might pay and go down-stairs until the performance just commenced (it lasted generally about an hour and a-half) terminated. The prime inducement held out was, that ‘then they would be sm’e of good seats.’ The inevitable result of such an arrangement may be easier guessed than described. For my part, I know no more about it than was to be derived from a hasty glance from the stair-head. There was a stench of tobacco smoke, and an uproar of mingled y,uthful *voices* — *swearing*, chaffin’, and screaming, in boisterous mirth. This was all that was to be heard, the Babel charitably rendering distinct pronouncing of blasphemy or indecency unintelligible. Nor was it much easier to make out the source from *whence* the hideous clamor proceeded, for the kitchen was dim as a coal cellar, and was further obscured by the foul tobacco smoke the lads were emitting from their short *pipes*. A few were romping about — ‘larking,’ as it is termed — but the m’ajority, girls and boys, were squatted on the floor, telling and listening to stories, the quality of which might but too truly be guessed from the sort of applause they elicited. A few — impatient of the frivolity that sin’-rounded them, and really anxious for ‘the play’ — stood alart, gzing with scowling *envy* up at the ceiling, on the upper side of whict, at frequent intervals, there was a furious clatter of hobnailed boots, betokeninc the delirious delight of the happy audiece in full view of Starlight Sall, in ‘silk tights’ and Hessians, dancing a Highlaud fling. Goaded to desperation, one or two of the tormented ones down in the kitchen reached up with their sticks and beat on the ceiling a tatto, responsive to the battering of the hobnailed boots before mentioned. This, however, was a breach of ‘gaff’ rule that could not be tolerated. With hurried steps the proprietor approached the kitchen stairs, and descried me. ‘This ain’t, the theeater; you’ve no business here, sir:’ said he, in some confusion, as I imagined. ‘No, my friend, I have no business here, but *you* have a very pretty business, one for which, when comes the Great Day of Reckoning, I would rather you answered than me.’“

In the chamber of horrors of this book the second door admits us to a view of *professional thieves*, an army, at least, twenty thousand strong. Think of that! remembering that this number is little short of the membership of all the Baptist churches in London; and painfully reflecting that every individual member of this synagogue of Satan is an earnest, genuine worker in the evil cause. If this vast and valiant host comprehended all the rillany of London the plague would be deep and horrible enough; but, alas! the infection of dishonesty taints all classes of the community, and honesty is almost as rare as in those days when the prophet complained that the best of them was "as a thorn-hedge."

Professional beggars figure in the third department; and from our own large and troublesome experience we can more than confirm many of Mr. Greenwood's statements. That there are beggars in London whose poverty is pitiable and who richly deserve assistance, we know; but that mendicancy is with thousands a profitable trade, a resort for the idle and the vicious, we are equally certain. Mere singing in the street, squatting down in maternal destitution on a doorstep, or exhibiting sham sores are old and timeworn dodges, which are but poorly remunerative; but the begging-letter dodge, the newspaper scheme, and other delicate processes of imposture, are still profitable speculations, and support an army of the vilest loafers that ever disgraced a city. We have had scores of the most ingenious epistles, touching enough to have moved a heart of stone, if there had not been around them a certain aroma of cant which rendered them ineffectual. In our more simple and verdant days we were waited upon by a foreigner, who threatened to destroy by charcoal, that very night, the lives of himself, his lovely wife, and three noble infants, unless we relieved his wants. In our terror at the anticipation of such a mass of murder, we counted out ten good shillings into the rascal's hand, only to have them returned with well-feigned indignation as an insulting pittance, of no service whatever to a man of his rank, and a degrading meanness on our part to offer. When the shillings were safely in our pocket, and the impertinent impostor was shown the door, his haughty mien suddenly descended into a curtsy, pitiful humility, and a whining entreaty, that, at least, the sum just refused might be returned to him. No; the police would accommodate him unless he went his way, and on that way he went, but no tidings of death by fumes of charcoal appeared in the next morning's newspaper. That man was one of our ablest instructors, and his successors continue to complete our education. We are entreated to lend

twenty pounds to save a tiano from the brokers, to give a guinea to buy a wooden leg (for a man who has two natural ones), to furnish twelve and sixpence to help purchase a cake of ultra-marine to finish a valuable painting, to aid in mending a bath chair in which the petitioner rides to business every day, to subscribe towards getting a basket of tools for a man in a white apron whom we saw wiping his mouth as he came out of the public-house next door; and other pretty little philanthropic schemes equally tempting. In none of these eases do you hear any more of the parties, if you ask for names and addresses in order that the case may be investigated; the hope of the option lies in your carelessly giving money to be rid of the applicant — there is never a shade of truth in the statement, or if a shade, it is of the most impalpable kind. To give to these schemers is to be partakers in their crimes. No man would willingly tax himself to maintain a horde of gross impostors, and yet every man may be morally sure that he is doing this every time he contributes his ready half-crown to save himself the trouble of “considering the poor,” and discerning between the deserving and the vicious. What vice is propagated by this troop of lying vagabonds only the great day will reveal; they are without doubt a terrible wing of the Satanic army.

On the fourth point, the curse *off allen women* we confess to be widely at variance with the author of this volume. We deprecate from the bottom of our hearts the idea of licensing prostitution. The French method, so far from having our admiration, excites our loathing’. May God avert from England the abiding pestilence of systematic debauchery, by which sin is made easy, and the path to hell more fascinating than ever. Yet our social evil is intolerable in its present shape, and something must be done to repress it. We look to the gospel as the only remedy, and pray that all who know its power may bestir themselves to bring it to bear upon the prevailing infamy.

The crowning cursp is *drunkendless*, which indeed is related to all the others, and is often their mother and always their nm’s e. Here it is not possible for the subject to be too highly wrought. We have heard it averted of Mr. Greenwood that he colors a subject quite sufficiently, and is no mean proficient in the imaginative; but in this volume we see no evidence to substantiate the charge, perhaps because the fault was impossible. The liquor served out for public consumption at our gin-palaces, beer-houses, and drinking bars, if all be true, wouht defile the foulest kennel; and if the whole stock were poured out into Barking Creek it would be well.

Ordinary hard drinking does quite mischief enough without the added horror of the fact that men and women swallow seas of disgusting mixtures in which *coculus indicus*, foxglove, green copperas, hartshorn shavings, henbane, jalap, not galls, *nux vomica*, opium, vitriol, potash, quassia, yew-tops, aml alum, are the choicer ingredients. No wonder the toppers grow mad drunk, the marvel is they do not die outright. It ought to need no persuasion to induce men totally to abstain from such abominations as the beers and porters, the withes and spirits, of most of our licensed poison-shops.

Our author might, we think, have spared our teetotal friends a good deal of the banter with which he very good-humouredly treats them. Their object is so praiseworthy, and the need of every well-intentioned effort so manifest, that it is a pity to throw cold water on any earnest temperance movement. If teetotalers are rather too prone to treat contemptuously the efforts of those who do not adopt their modes of operation, there is the more reason why the true temperance but non-teetotal man should behave with courtesy to his more irritable fellow worker, for whom he is bound to entertain a kindly esteem. This demon of drink must be fought, for it swallows men by thousands, makes their homes wretched, their children paupers, and their souls the prey of the devil. There should be combined and vigorous action among oil temperate men for such a control of licenses that the dens of drunkenness should be made far less numerous, to say the least, and if we went in for still severer restrictions so much the better. We are unmistakably overdone with gin-palaces and beer-houses; they are thrust upon us at every street-corner; they are multiplied beyond all pretense of demand. Not the public good but the publican's good appears to be the aim of the licensers. Quiet neighbourhoods cannot spring up because the beer-house rises simultaneously; or if such a thing should for a few months be seen under heaven as a sober region, universally respectable, and guiltless of intoxication, the Bacchanalian missionary soon opens his temple and converts the population to the common error of drinking ways. It is true, the demand for drink creates the supply, but it is as surely true that the all-surrounding omnipresence of the stimulant suggests, and propagates the craving. At any rate, no two opinions can exist upon one point, namely, that the accursed habit of intoxication lies at the root of the main part of London's poverty, misery, and crime.

Betting gamblers, in the sixth place, come in for their share of our author's condemnation. "There can be no doubt that the vice of gambling is on the

increase amongst the English working-classes. Of this no better proof is afforded than in the modern multiplication of those newspapers specially devoted to matters ‘sportive.’ Twenty years ago there were but three or four sporting newspapers published in London; now there are more than a dozen.”

Those who occupy the highest ranks of the social scale have the fearful responsibility of rendering gambling fashionable, and their example has had its influence upon all ranks, until even children bet their shillings and the lads of the gutter cry the odds. A tribe of “prophets,” blacklegs, and advertisers, feed upon this growing vice, swarming about it like flies around carrion. Marvellous are the fortune to be made by “putting on” a few pounds, and rich are the promised gains of even a dozen postage stamps, staked upon the horse whose name will be communicated upon the receipt of a fee; more marvellous still is the senseless folly which can be duped by such manifest quackery.

“Of all manner of advertising betting gamblers, however, none are so pernicious, or work such lamentable evil against society, as those who, with devilish cunning, appeal to the young and inexperienced — the factory lad and youth of the counting house or the shop. Does anyone doubt if horse-racing has attractions for those whose tender age renders it complimentary to style them ‘young men’? Let him on the day of any great race convince himself. Let him make a journey on the afternoon of ‘Derby-day, for instance, to Fleet-street or the Strand, where the offices of the sporting newspapers are situated. It may not be generally known that the proprietors of the *Sunday Times*, *Bell’s Life*, and other journals of a sporting tendency, in their zeal to outdo each other in presenting the earliest possible information to the public, are at the trouble and expense of securing the earliest possible telegram of the result of a horse-race, and exhibiting it enlarged on a broad-sheet in their shop-windows. Let us take the *Sunday Times*, for instance. The office of this most respectable of sporting newspapers is situated near the corner of Fleet-street at Ludgate-hill; and wonderful is the spectacle there to be seen on the afternoon of the great equine contest on Epsom downs. On a small scale, and making allowance for the absence of the living provocatives of excitement, the scene is a reproduction of what at that moment, or shortly since, has taken place on the race-course itself. Three o’clock is about the time the great race is run at Epsom, and at that time the Fleet-street crowd begins to gather. It streams in from the north, from the east, from the south. At a

glance it is evident that the members of it are not idly curious merely. It is not composed of ordinary pedestrians who happen to be coming that way. Butcher-lads, from the neighboring great meat-market, come bareheaded and perspiring down Ludgate-hill, and at a pace that tells how exclusively their eager minds are set on racing: all in blue working-smocks, and with the grease and blood of their trade adhering to their naked arms, and to their hob-nailed boots, and to their hair. Hot and palpitating they reach the obelisk in the middle of the road. and there they take their stand, with their eyes steadfastly fixed on that at present blank and innocent window that shall presently tell them of their fate.

“I mention the butcher-boys first, because, for some unknown reason, they undoubtedly are foremost in the rank of juvenile bettors. In the days when the Fleet-lane betting abomination as yet held out agailst the police authorities, and day after day a narrow alley betfind the squalid houses there served as standing room for as many ‘professional’ betting men, with their boards and money-pouches, as could crowd in a row, an observer standing at one end of the lane might count three blue frocks for one garment of any other color. But though butcher-boys show conspicuously among the anxious Fleet-street rush on a Derby-day, they are not in a majority by a long way. To bet on the ‘Derby’ is a mania that afflicts all trades; and streaming up Farringdon-street may be seen representatives of almost every cr,nft that practises within the City’s limits. There is the inky printer’s boy, hot from the ‘machine-room,’ with his grimy face and his cap made of a ream wrapper; there is the jeweller’s apprentice, with his bibbed white apron, ruddy with the powder of rouge and borax; and the paper-stainer’s lad, with the variegated splashes of the pattern of his last ‘length’ yet wet on his ragged breeches; and a hundred others, all hurrying pell-mell to the one spot, Bud, in nine cases out of ten, with the guilt of having ‘slipped out’ visible on their streaming faces. Take their ages as they congregate in a crowd of five hundred and more (they are expected in such numbers that special policemen are provided to keep the roadway clear), and it will be found that more thau half are under the age of eighteen. Furthermore, it must be borne in mind that in the majority of cases a single lad represents a score or more employed in one ‘office’ or factory. They cast lots who shall venture on the unlawful mission, and it has fallen on him. Again, and as before mentioned, the *Sunday Times* is but one of ten or a dozen sporting newspapers published between Ludgate-hill and St. Clement Danes; and in the vicinity of every office may be met a

similar crowd. Let the reader bear these facts in mind, and he may arrive at some faint idea of the prevalence of the horse-gambling evil amongst the rising generation.”

The following portrait, drawn from the life, is no doubt a fair specimen of the victims of the gambling demon. While the betting-men were making a stand in Farringdon-street in the open air against the city authorities, Mr. Greenwood made the acquaintance of the subject of his story. “I had noticed him repeatedly, with his pale haggard face and his dull eyes, out of which nothing but weariness of life looked. He was a tall slim young fellow, and wore his patched and seedy clothes as though he had been used to better attire; and, despite the tell-tale shabbiness of his boots and his wretched tall black hat, he still clung to the respectable habit of wearing black kid-gloves, though it was necessary to shut his fists to hide the dilapidations at their finger-tips.

“He was not remarkable amongst the betting blackguards he mingled with on account of the active share he took in the questionable business in which they were engaged; on the contrary, he seemed quite out of place with them, and though occasionally one would patronise him with a nod, it was evident that he was ‘nothing to them,’ either as a comrade or a gull to be plucked. He appeared to be drawn towards them by a fascination he could not resist, but which he deplored and was ashamed of. It was customary in those times for the prosperous horse-betting gambler to affect the genteel person who could afford to keep a ‘man,’ and to press into his service some poor ragged wretch glad to earn a sixpence by wearing his master’s ‘card of terms’ round his neck for the inspection of any person inclined to do business. The tall shabby young fellow’s chief occupation consisted in wandering restlessly from one of these betting-card bearers to another, evidently with a view to comparing ‘prices’ and ‘odds’ offered on this or that horse; but he never bet. I don’t believe that his pecuniary affairs would have permitted him, even though a bet as low as *twopence-halfpenny* might be laid.

“I was always on the look-out for my miserable-looking young friend whenever I passed that way, and seldom failed to find him. He seemed to possess for me a fascination something like that which horse-betting possessed for him. One afternoon, observing him alone and looking even more miserable than I had yet seen him, as he slouched along the miry pavement towards Holborn, I found means to start a conversation with

him. My object was to learn who and what he was, and whether he was really as miserable as he looked, and whether there was any help for him. I was prepared to exercise all the ingenuity at my command to compass this delicate project, but he saved me the trouble. As though he was glad of the chance of doing so, before we were half-way up Holborn-hill he turned the conversation exactly into the desired groove, and by the time the Tottenham-court-road was reached (he turned down there), I knew even more of his sad history' than is here subjoined.

“What is the business pursuit that takes me amongst the betting-men? Oh! no, sir, I'm not at all astonistled that you shotlid ak the question; I've asked it of myself sn often, that it doesn't come new to me. I pursue no business, sir. What business *could* a wretched scarecrow like I am pursue? Say that I am pursued, and you will benearer the mark. Pursued by what I can never get away from or shake off.’

“He uttered a concluding wicked word with such decisive and bitter emphasis, that I began to think that he had done with the subject; but he began a.ain almost immediately.

“I wish to the Lord I had a business pursuit! If ever a fellow was tired of his life, I am. Well — yes, I *am* a young man; but it's precious small consolation that that fact brings me. Hang it, no! All the longer to endure it. How long have I endured it? Ah, now you como to the point. For years, you think, I daresay. You look at me, and you think to yourself, “There goes a poor wretch who has been on the downhill road so long that it's time that he came to the end of it, or made an end to it.” There you are mistaken. Eighteen months ago I was well dressed and prosperous. I was second clerk to — — , the provision merchants, in St. Mary Axe, on a salary of a hundred and forty pounds — rising twenty each year. Now look at me!

“You need not ask me how it came about. You say thaf, you have seen me often in Farringdon-street with the betting-men, so you can give a good guess as to how I came to ruin, I'll be binind. Yes, sir, it was horse-betting that did my business. No, I did not walk to ruin with my eyes open, and because I liked the road. I was trapped into it, sir, as I'll be bound scores and scores of young fellows have been. I never had a passion for betting. I declare that, till within the last two years, I never made a bet in my life. The beginning of it wa, that for the fun of the thing, I wagered ten shillings with a fellow-clerk about the Derby that was just about to come off. I never

took any interest in horse-racing before; but when I had made that bet I was curious to look over the sporting news, and to note the odds against the favourite. One unlucky day I was fool enough to answer the advertisement of a professional fipster. He keeps the game going still, curse him! You may read his name in the papers this morning. If I wasn't such an infernal coward, you know, I should kill that man. If I hadn't the nmney to buy a pistol, I ought to steal one, and shoot the thief. Bt, what do you think? I met him on Monday, and he chaffed me about my boots. It was raining at the time. "I wish I had a pair of waterproofs like yours, Bobby. You'll never take cold while they let all the water out at the heel they take in at the toe!" Fancy me standing *that* after the way he had served me! Fancy this too — me borrowing a shilling of him, and saying, 'Thank you, sir,' for it! Why, you know, I ought to be pumped on for doing it!

"Yes, I wrote to "Robert B — y, Esq., of Leicester," and sent the half-crown's worth of stamps asked for. It doesn't matter what I got in return. Anyhow, it was something that set my mind on betting, and I wrote again and again. At first his replies were of a distant and business sort; but in a month or so after I had written to him to complain of being misguided by him, he wrote back a friendly note to say that he wasn't at all surprised to hear of my little failures — novices always did fail. They absurdly attempt what they did not understand. "Just to show you the difference," said tie, "just give me a commission to invest a pound for you on the Ascot Cup. All that I charge is seven and a half per cent. on winnings. Try it just for once; a pound won't break you, and it may open your eyes to the way that fortunes are made." I ought to have known then, that either he, or somebody in London he had set on, had been making enquiries about me, for the other notes were sent to where mine were directed from — my private lodgings — but this one came to me at the warehouse.

"Well, I sent the pound, and within a week received a post-office order for four pounds eight as the result of its investment. The same week I bet again — two pounds this time — and won one pound fifteen. That was over six pounds between Monday and Saturday. "This is the way that fortunes are made," I laughed to myself, like a fool.

"Well, he kept me going, I don't exactly recollect how, between Ascot and Goodwood, which is about seven weeks, not more. Sometimes I won, sometimes I lost, but, on the whole, I was in pocket, I was such a fool at last, that I was always for betting more than he advised. I've got his letters

at home now, in which he says, "Pray don't be rash; take my advice, and bear in mind that great risks mean great losses, as well as great gains, at times." Quite fatherly, you know! The scoundrel!

"Well, one day there came a telegram to the office for me. I was just in from my dinner. It was from B — y. "Now you may bag a hundred pounds at a shot," said he. "The odds are short but the result *certain*. Never mind the money just now. You are a gentleman, and I will trust you. You know that my motto has all along been 'Caution.' Now it is 'Go in and win.' It is *sure*. Send me a word immediately, or it may be too late; and, if you are wise, put a 'lump' on it."

"That was the infernal document — the death-warrant of all my good prospects. It was the rascal's candor that deceived me. He had all along said, "Be cautious, don't be impatient to launch out;" and now this patient careful villain saw his chance, and advised, "Go in and win." I was quite in a m,ze at the prospect of bagging a hundred pounds. To win that sum the odds were so short on the horse he mentioned, that fifty pounds had to be risked. But he said that there was no *risk*, and I believed him. I sent him back a telegram at once to execute the commission.

"The horse lost. r knew it next morning before I was up, for I had sent for the newspaper: and while I was in the midst of my fright, up comes my landlady to say that a gentleman of the name of B — y wished to see me.

"I had never seen him before, and he seemed an easy fellow enough. He was in a terrible way — chiefly on my account — though heaven only knew how much *he* had lost over the 'sell.' He had come up by express purely to relieve my anxiety, knowing how 'funky' young gentlemen sometimes were over such trifles. Although he had really paid the fifty in hard gold out of his pocket, he was in no hurry for it. He would take my bill at two months. It would be all rillt, no donht. He had coneiveed a liking for me, merely from my straightforward way of writing. Now that he had had the pleasure of seeing me, he shouldn't trouble himself a fig if the fifty that I owed him was five hundred.

"I declare to you that I knew so little about bills, that I didn't know how to draw one out; but I was mighty glad to be shown the wax' and to give it him, and thank him over and over again for his kindness. That was the beginning of my going to the bad. If I hadn't been a fool, I might have saved myself even then, for I had friends who would have lent or given me

twice fifty pounds if I had asked them for it. But I *was* a fool. In the course of a day or two I got a note from B — y, reminding me that the way out of the difficulty was by the same path as I had go into one, and that a little judicious ‘backing’ would set me right before even my bill fell due. And I was fool enouh to walk into the snare. I wouldn’t borrow to pay the fifty pounds, but I borrowed left and right,, of my mother, of my brothers, on all manner of lying preenees, to follow the ‘advice’ B — y was constantly sending me. When I came to the end of their Grbearanee, I did more than borrow; but that we won’t speak of. In fire months from the hegi.nning, I was without a relative who would own me or speak to me, and without an employer — cracked up, ruined. And there’s B — y, as I said before, with his white hat cocked on one side of his head, and his gold toothpick, charting me about my old boots. What do I do lbr a living? Well, I’ve told you such a precious lot, I may as well tell you that too. Where I lodge it’s a ‘leaving shop,’ and the old woman;imt keeps it c’m’t read or write, and I keep her ‘ book ‘ for her. That’s how I get a bit of breakfast and supper and a bed to lie on.”

We have little space and less heart to take up the seventh curse, *the waste of charity*; but we nmst conclude with entreating the tearful prayers of all God’s people for our wicked city; by exhorting all lovers of truth and righteousness to bestir themseives; and bv asking aid from our own friends, for those efforts which we ourselves are making to educate the orphan, and to instruct a ministry capable, in God’s strengh, of dealing wih these tremendous evils.

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL,

OCTOBER, 1869.

THE SAINT OF THE SMITHY.

BY C.H. SPURGEON.

WE have a great liking for everyday saints. The taste of the mediteval ages was enchanted wkh holy men who could sail over seas upon outspread table cloths, or fast for forty consecutive days, or carry their heads in their hands after decapitation; but these specimens of sanativity, besides being in these degenerate times most hard to get at, are too unearthly, we mean too little human to enlist our sympathy. St. Francis, when described as so elevated by his devotions that his disciples could only kiss the soles of his feet as he floated in the air, is too ethereal for our liking, we want a little more gravity than this in a saint, peradventure it may turn out that a little more levity would do as well.

The grace which unfits a man for the duties of this present life is a doubtful blessing; in a romance your superfine mystic may have a conspicuous place allotted him, but in real life he is a nullity, a chip in the porridge or worse. He who can pray like Elias is all the better an example for mankind if he avoids all affectation of superhuman refinement, and lets us see that, like the grand old prophet, he is a man of like passions with us. We admire Paul caught up into the third heaven, but those who were thrown into his company felt the power of his godliness all the more because he could make a tent or light a fire as occasion demanded. Itoliness in white gowns or black silk aprons, or lace half a yard dcep, reminds us of love on a valentine, very romantic, roseate, and all that, but quite another thing from solid flesh a.d blood affection. One longs to see the popular idea of holiness once for all dissociated from everything unreal and unpractieal, yoked with the common virtues cf everyday life: the smashing up of the whole caravan of sanctified waxworks which, in years gone by, have

attracted ignorant admiration, and the exhibition of real, household, commonsense religion in its most vigorous form, would be under God one of the greatest blessings which our age could receive.

Our remarks will not we hope be misunderstood, sanctification cannot, be carried too far, holiness unto the Lord can never be too complete; the very highest forms of elevated character are to be our models, and we ought not to rest until we have equalled them; but we have lived long enough in this world to be afraid of squeamish and pretentious sanctity. The grossest hypocrites we have ever been deceived by were superfluously unctuous in expression; and the faultless professors whose hills have saddened us, were superlatively fastidious in their religious tastes. We have come to be afraid of gold that glitters too much, and bread that is too white. Men always will be imperfect, and when they profess perfection, and become too good to attend to their duties as husbands, or servants, or children, or parents, so as to make others happy, they prove themselves to be “the worse for mending, washed to fenlet stains.” If they could manage to be perfect without making everybody else miserable, they should have our reverent admiration, but when we can find in the life of the only truly perfect man so much that is genial and intensely human, we shall never enshrine mere unearthliness in the heavenly places. Our Savior could not have been more a man had he been sinful, his humanity though immaculate was not effeminate, though without sin he was not therefore abrid’ged of any essential attribute of everyday manhood; he was no walker on stilts, his holiness trod on *terra firma* with other men; he was no recluse, he ate and drank with the many; he was not even an ascetic, but was found at marriages and festivals; a man among men, nothing that concerned mankind was alien to him, no joy of humble men was to him ridiculous, no sorrow of mournful women contemptible. Give to the world an exhibition of such holiness on a wide scale, and while convents and monasteries would moulder into ruins, the whole earth would be gladdened by a golden era worthy to match with the millennial glory. Let the parlour and the drawing-room be adorned with cheerful piety, let the kitchen and the scullery be sanctified with unobtrusive godliness, let the shop and the office, the shed and the factory, be perfumed with unassuming holiness; let forge and bench, and stall, and lathe and spinning-jenny, all be holiness unto the Lord, and the better times long sig’hed for will have come at last. We do not mean that men should become abject slaves of mere external religiousness, far from it, the true piety of which we write, will give them

the fullest freedom; when hearts are right, wills are rectified, and goodness becomes the highest delight of the soul: the reign of righteousness will be the era of liberty and joy. Men will be all the more men when they become God's men; and even the peculiarities of their individual temper and constitution will not be extinguished, but made to subserve the glory of the Lord by exhibiting in charming variety the beauty of holiness.

Such thoughts came into our mind as we took up a memoir which we read years ago, and which we dare say some of our readers have even now fresh in their memories, we refer to the "Life of the Village Blacksmith," Samuel Hick, or more correctly, Sammy Hick. Sammy was a Yorkshireman, belonging to no readily specified order of men; if you sort and arrange mankind, he comes under no genus; he was one by himself, after his own order; he was — well, he was Sammy Hick, and nobody else. Simple, yet shrewd, bold, yet cautious, generous to a fault, thoroughly original, quaint to a proverb, humorous, devout, full of faith, zealous, sufficiently self-opinioned, humble, rough, gentle, pure, dogmatical, resolute — he as a Christian a very remarkable amalgam of much gold and silver, with here and there a lump of iron or clay. Called by 'aee while wielding the hammer, he continued in his honest calling, and made his smithy the center of evangelical activities, which entirely changed the appearance of the society among which he moved. He was a man who could not be hid, and though poor and illiterate, the force of his character made him a power among all around. O that all our church members would make it their ambition to make their worldly avocations a vantage ground for fighting their Master's battles!

While Sammy' was yet a mere seeker, he showed the force of his nature by defending an open-air preacher against a clergyman. Just as his reverence was about to pull down the Methodist evangelist from the preaching-block, the youthful neophyte clenched his hands, and holding them in a menacing fashion before his face, accosted the surprised divine with the summary remark: "Sir, if you disturb that man of God, I'll drop you as sure as ever rou were born." The emphasis of the words prevented the necessity of the blows, and having secured a hearing for his teacher, the muscular Christian subsided into the attentive listener. When at length led to the cross, and admitted into peace with God, Sammy thought that he could make all the world believe, and resolved to commence operations upon the landlady of an inn, which he had frequented in his unregenerate days. The woman was surprised to hear words of warning and instruction from such a mouth, and

indignantly turned him out of her house; but having bug lately proved the power of prayer on his own account, Sam wi[h]drew to a quiet corner, and poured out his soul to God on her behalf. 'o sooner was the cry lifted up to heaven than it was heard: the woman, on his return to the house, begged his pardon for her rudeness, entreated him to kneel down and ask the Lord to save her, and lived and died a lover of the truths which she had once despised. Thus encouraged, Hick became a leader among a zealous band of Wesleyans, who were'inces-.santly seeking the conversion of souls; and so absorbed did he become in soul-winning, that one night, awaking suddenly from a dream, he aroused his wife, and accosting her by name, exclaimed, "Marty, I believe I am called to preach the gospel." Martha, who was his guardian angel, and an admirable make-weight in the direction of prudence, bade him goto sleep again, at the same time casting considerable doubts upon the authenticity of the call. His brethren in the ircuit judged otherwise than Martha, and Samm7 was allowed to deliver his singular but powerful addresses from the Methodist pulpits around his native village. His harangues would, doubtless, have been the reverse of edifying to our educated readers, but they created no small stir among the colliers and labonrers of the district. Hick, as a preacher, was adapted to his hearers, a matter of the first importance; it is of no use to try to open oysters with a Mappin's razor, and, on the other hand, delicate surgery is not to be performed with a bill-hook; every instrument must be adapted to its end. In so wide a world as this, it is a man's own fault if he does not find a sphere for which he is better fitted than any other man. Some of the quieter Methodists could not stand Samnel's noise; "But," said Samuel, "it was a mercy thW went out, for it rid the place of a deal of unbelief, which they took away with them." Xo good man can hope to please everybody, and no brave man will break his heart when he finds that he has failed in this respect, as others have done before him. Our hero went on with his praying and preaching, and left others to criticise or censure who felt a leaning in that direction. His discoursings were once condemned as terribly rambling, and the good man, instead of denying the charge, claimed some sort of merit for it — "For," said he, "those who go straight on may perhaps hit one, but my talk, as it goes in and out among the crowd, knocks many down." His best preachings, however, were not from the pulpit, but by the smithy fire. Though he ranged his circuit with burning zeal, and had his name on two sets of plans, because, as he said, "There is no living with half work." Yet it was at the forge that he dealt the heaviest strokes in riveting his life-work. A neigh-bouring squire rode up to Sam's forge, upon a horse

which had lost a shoe in the heat of the chase. His squireship commenced swearing at some other smith, who had yesterday put on the shoe so clumsily; whereupon, without further ceremony, the worthy blacksmith quietly informed him, that he paid the rent of the shop, and that while it was in his hands he would suffer no man to take God's name in vain within those walls, and that if he swore again, he would not set the shoe on. Many a man with a cleaner face would have hesitated before he so consistently maintained his Maker's cause. The rebuke was kindly taken, and when the horse was shod, a piece of silver was offered in payment, which he was expected to retain, but Sam, as honest as he was bold, returned the change, saying, "I only charge a poor man twopence, and I shall charge you, sir, no more." Shoeing must have been cheap in those days; but the return of the change has a nobility about it, grandly like the princely independence of Abraham, when he said to the king of Sodom, "I will not take from a thread to a shoe-latchet, lest thou shouldst say, I have made Abraham rich."

His rebuke of certain fox-hunting parsons was as clever as it was cutting. "They met *anent* (opposite) my shop,' says Samuel, 'and stopped till the hounds came. Among the party were the Hon. C. C — , vicar of K — , the Earl's brother; the Rev. W — , rector of G — ; the late Rev. C — , vicar of A — ; and Dr. E — , who followed the medical profession at K — . It came into my mind,' continued Samuel, 'that the three clergymen had no business there.' His movements generally corresponding with the rapidity of his thoughts, he instantly 'threw down the hammer and the tongs,' darted out of the shop door, and appeared in the midst of them with his shirt sleeves turned up, his apron on, his face and hands partaking of the hue of his emplaent, as fine game, in the estimation of some of them, to occupy the lingering moments, till other game should be started, as any that could present itself in human shape. 'Most of them,' says he, 'knew me. I said to them, gentlemen, this is one of the finest hunts in the district. You are rayon red wi[h two particular privileges; and they are privileges which other districts have not.' This excited curiosity, wh'ich was as quickly gratified; for the enquiW relative to '*privileyes*' was no sooner proposed, than the answer was given, 'If any of you should happen to slip the saddle, and get a fall, you have a *doelot* to b/eed you; and three *2arsons* to *Fray* for you: and what are these but privileges? THREE PARSONS! Oh! yes, there they are.'"

Methodists are great at begging, and our hero never flinched from his share of that hardest of labors. His success was remarkable, but his courage was more so. His begging was not confined within the limit which decorum usually suggests. “‘ I went to Ricall,’ says he; ‘ and as I parposed going to all the houses in the town, I thought there would be no harm ill calling upon the church clergyman. I did so; and found him in his garden. I presented my book, which he gave me again, and looked at me.’ The look would have had a withering effect upon many of Samuel[’s superiors; but the same spirit and views which had emboldened him to make the application, supperLed him in the rebuff with which he met. ‘ I am surprised,’ said the clergyman, ‘ that you should make such a request; that you should ask me to support dissenters from the Church of England!’ Samuel instantly interposed with ‘ No, sir, we are not dissenters; the church has *dissented* from us. The Methodists are good churchmen, where the gospel is p];eached. And as for myself, I never turned my back on a collecting paper when I went to church. I think there is no more harm in you helping to supporL us, than there is in us helping to support you.’ The clergyman here took shelter under the wing of the State — his only ground of defense, by replying, ‘ You are obliged to support us; the law binds you to do it.’ Samuel, in return, resorted to the only code of laws with which he had any acquaintance, and which he consulted daily, the *Christlian code*, saying, ‘ Ours is a law of love; and if we cannoL all think alike, we must all love alike.’” Though foiled by the ecclesiastic, he succeeded better wRh the laRy, and notably on one ,occasion when he carried a miser by storm. He had stated the needs of the Lord’s work, but found his friend utterly immovable. Down on his kness fell Samuel, and commenced fervently pleading for the miserly soul, that God would forgive him for daring to plead poverty when he had thousands of gold and silver, and for venturing to profess to be a Christian while he worshipped his pelf. “Sam,” cried the farmer, with greaL vehemence, “I’ll give thee a guinea if thou wilt give over.” This availed nothing, for the suppliant only began to plead with the reater fervor that pardon might be given to the miserly creature who could only give a single guinea towards the evangelisation of the world, wlen the Lord had done so much for him. This last assault ade the farmer alarmed lest he should be induced to give too much, and therefore he roared out, “Sam, I tell thee to give over: I’q give thee two guineas, if thou wilt only give it up.” The two guineas were instantaneously secured, and borne away in triumph. Shockingly bad taste no doubt all this; but the man could no more help it than an eagle can help flying. His heart and soul were as red

hot as his own coals when the bellows were going, and ‘there was no room in his *case* for deliberations as to taste and propriety, t{his own giving was always beyond the point which prudence and Martha would have tolerated; he emptied his pockets on all missionary and collecting occasions, was far more glee than money grubbers feel when they are filling theirs, he had a right to fetch another man’s ass for his Master, since he was delighted to put his own clothes upon it.

Sammy was great at a sick bed, though even there the eccentric element would occasionally crop up, as for instance, when he, going to visit a Roman Catholic, was repulsed by the priest, but urged as a reason for admittance that he could help the priest, for “two are better far than one.” Prayer was his delight, and his power in it with his God made many wonder. We know personally too well that prayer is a reality, to cast doubts upon the many instances narrated in which this childlike man prevailed in supplication. One of those most often earfiled at, is thus narrated by his biographer, Jfr. Everett: “Samuel was at Knottingly, a populous village in the neighborhood of *Ferry-bridge*, in 1817, where he took occasion to inform his hearers, that timre would be a love-feast at Micklefield, on a certain day, when he should be glad to see all who were entitled to that privilege. He further observed, with his usual frankness and generosity, that he had six bushels of corn, and that they should be ground for the occasion. These comprised the whole of the corn left of the previous year’s produce. When, therefore, he returned home, and named his general invitation and intention, Martha, who had as deep an interest in it as himself, enquired very expressively, ‘And didst thou tell them, when all the corn was done, how we were to get through the remainder of the season, till another crop should be reaped?’ *To-morrow*, alas! rarely entered into Samuel’s calculations, unless connected with the church. The day fixed for the love-feast drew near — there was no flour in the house — and the wind-mills, in consequence of a long calm, stretched out their arms in vain to catch the rising breeze. In the midst of this deathdike quiet, Samuel carried his conl to the mill nearest his own residence, and requested the miller to unfurl his sails. The miller objected, stated that there was ‘no wind.’ Samuel, on the other hand, continued to urge his request, saying, ‘I will go and pray while you spread the cloth.’ More with a view of gratifying the applicant than from any faith he had in him who holds the natural winds in his fists, and who answers the petitions of his creatures, the man stretched his canvas. No sooner had he done this, than, to his utter

astonishment, a fine breeze sprung up, the fans whirled round, the corn was converted into meal, and Samuel returned with his burthen rejoicing, and had everything in readiness for the festival. A neighbor who had seen the fans in vigorous motion, took also some corn to be ground; but the wind had dropped, and the miller remarked, 'You must send for Sammy Hick to pray for the wind to blow again.' "We have more faith in that story than all the Papist miracles put together, laugh who may.

His plain personal remarks to individuals were frequently the means of conversion. Would to God that we all were more skillful in the like means of usefulness. "A young lady, who had been known to him from her childhood, and whose palfry had lost a shoe, called at his shop to have it replaced. She appeared delicate. He looked compassionately upon her, and asked 'Do you know, *barn*, whether you have a soul? Startled with the question, she looked in return; but before she was permitted to reply, he said, 'Yo have one, whether you know it or not; and it will live in happiness or misery for ever.'" These, and other remarks, produced serious reflections. Her father perceived from her manner, on her return home — her residence being not far from Samuel's dwelling — that something was preying upon her spirits. She told him the cause: 'What!' he exclaimed, 'has that old blacksmith been at thee, to turn thy head? but I will *whack* (beat) him.' So saying, he took up a large stick, similar to a hedge-stake — left the house — posted off to Samuel's residence — found him at the anvil — and without the least intimation, fetched him a heavy blow on the side, which, said Samuel, when relating the circumstance, 'nearly felled me to the ground,' adding, 'and it was not a little that would have done it in those days.' On receiving the blow, he turned round, and said, 'What are you about, man? what is that for?' Supposing it to be out of revenge, and that religion was the cause of it, he made a sudden wheel, and lifting up his arm, inclined the other side to his enraged assailant, saying, 'Here, man, hit that too.' But either the man's courage failed him, or he was softened by the manner in which the blow was received; beholding in Samuel a real disciple of him who said, 'Whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.' He then left him; and Samuel had the happiness of witnessing the progress of religion in the daughter. Some time after this, the person himself was taken ill, and Samuel was sent for. He was shown into the chamber, and looking on the sick man, he asked, 'What is the matter with you? are you *bownd* to die?' He stretched out his arm to Samuel, and said, 'Will you forgive me?' Not recollecting the circumstance for a

moment, Samuel asked, ‘ Wllat for? I have nothing against you, *barn*, nor any man living.’ The case being noticed, the question was again asked, ‘ Will you forgive me?’ ‘ Forgive you, *bar?* I tell you I have nothing aai.st you! But if you are about to die, we will pray a bit, and see if the Lord will forgive you.’ Samuel knelt by the side of the couch, and the dying mau united with him: and from the penitence, fervor, and gratitude which he manifested, there was hope in his death. The dau,hter continued all object of his solicitude: she grew up to woman-hood — became a mother, and he afterwards exulted to see her and two of her daughters members of the Wesleyan Society. Four conversions are here to be traced, in regular succession, and attributable apparently to a word fitly and seasonably spoken, by one of the *weak thilgs* of this worM, becoming mighty through God.

So accustomed to success was our friend, that when he was in London he felt an impulse to try his hand at the conversion of a Jew, who kep a silversmith’s shop opposite his lodging. The result was such as one could have prophesied. Jacob eyed Samuel with keenness, thinking to himself, “Here is a greenhorn from the country, I will make some mouish out of him.” Samuel on the contrary, with childlike simplicity, said within himself, “*Here* is a soul to be saved, I will tell him the blessed gospel.” They exchanged looks, and Samuel opened fire. “Bless the Lord! here is a fine morning!” Jacob replied, “It ish, it ish ibry fine. ¥at be to besht news in to city.” “The best news that I cau hear,” replied Samuel, “is that Jesus Christ is pardoning sinners and sanctifying believers.” “Poh, poh,” rejoined Jacob, turning red as scarlet, “tuff and nonshensh! It ish all telusion.” Whereat Samuel rallied with the testimony of his own experience of this *blessed* delusion, which for forty years had comforted and sanctified his soul: but Jacob bad banged the shop door, and beaten a retreat into the little room, leaving Sanreel to bless the Lord that he had not been lefL to be numbered with unbelievers. Such a man would beard the Pope himself, and tell the Grand Turk to his hoe, that in Jesus alone is salvation. The fact is, he lived an artless life; he believed unquestioningly, and was strong; he acted conscientiously, and had no need to fear; he served his Lord un-waveringly, and his reward was power both with God and men. The reader may enquire concerning his death, but we shall give no details, fin’ more important is it to gather wisdom from his life. Like him, we may expect to die, singing, “Glory, glory, glow,” if we have lived under the power of grace.

We should be sorry to see any man imitate Sammy Hick, the copy would be disgusting; but if all our working men and women who are saved by gTace, would in some such way as he did, live and labor for the spread of the gospel, the dW would soon break, and the shadows flee away. 3lore genuine, simple, personal piety, and less burnish and mimicry of religion, and the world would behold the church as “terrible as an army with banners.”

A THURSDAY EVENING DISCOURSE

BY C. H. SPURGEON.

“The glory of the Lord shall bc thy rereward.’ — Isaiah 58:8.

THE church of God is an army marching through an enemy’s territory. She can never reckon upon a moment’s peace. If she were of the world, the world would love its own; but because true saints are not of the world, but Christ has chosen them out of the world, therefore the world hateth them. As the Amalekites suddenly fell upon the children of Israel, unprovoked, and without givin’ any warning of their hostile intention, so not only in times of persecution, but in these apparendy softer days when the world does not use the stake and the sword, at all seasons the world is ready to pounce upon the church of God, and to call in its grand ally the devil, to overthrow and destroy, as far as possible, the militant hosts of Israel.

Every Christian then, must be a soldier, and take hissbare in the battles of the cross. We must not look upon our life as being; a pleasure-journey through a fi’iendly land, but as a march, a march through the very midst of foes who Will dispute every foo of our way.

Now, if we thus view the church as an army, it is consolatory to know that we have a vanguard. “My righteousness shall go before thee.” We take our Lord Jesus Christ to be “the Lord our righteousness;” he is the forerunner, and he has gone before us, even through the river of death, and up to the skies, that he may prepare a place for all those who have enlisted under his standard.

Our text, however, speaks not of the vanguard, but of the “reward.” There is always dang’er there, and it is comfortable to behold so glorious a shield borne in the rear by so mighty an arin. “The glory of the Lord shall be thy

rereward.” It is but little I have to say to you this evening, but may Gd make that little profitable to you. We will, first of all, *dwell upon the rereward, and enquire what it is which is here intended; and, secondly, we will try to show how the glory of the Lord brings up the rear, and protects the saints on every side.*

I. In the first place, WHAT MAY WE UNDERSTAND BY THE REREWARD?

Taking the text to refer to *the church of God as a body*, we remark that there are always some who bring up the rear. God has never left his church without men to stand in the front. A few choice men have always been raised up by God, and who have led the way, both in testimony and in suffering. The race of the prophets will never be extinct. “The sceptre” in this sense will not depart from the members of the church until Christ shall come a second time. The teacher shall not be taken out of his place, nor the candlestick be removed, nor the bread of life be taken away. But the mass of the church are rather like the lody of the army, marching on and fighting well, but not attaining unto the first three mighties. We have, moreover, in the church, a considerable proportion of those who are always behind. Some of those are here tonight. You feel yourselves to belong to the rear, *because or are so weak i faith.* It is a blessed thing to enjoy full assurance of faith, and yet no doubt there are thousands in the fold of Jesus who never reach this attainment. It is a great pity that they should not reach it, for they miss much happiness and much usefulness, but still—

*“Thousands in the fold of Jesus,
This attainment ne’er could boast;
To his name eternal praises,
None of these shall e’er be lost.”
Deeply graven
On his hands their names remain.”*

There are some who, from their natural constitution, and other circumstances, are very apt to despond. Like Mr. Fearing, they not only go through the Slough of Despond, but, as Bunyan says, they carry a slough of despond about with them. They are little in faith, but they are great at foreseeing evil. They are always *expecting* some dreadful ill, and they cower down before a shadow. I thank God that those of you who have faith but as a grain of mustard seed, shall not be left. The glory of the Lord shall gather you up. The stragglers, the wounded, the halt, the lame — though these cannot march with the rest as we could desire, though, like Mr.

Ready-to-Halt, they have to go on crutches, yet the glory of the Lord shall be their shelter and protection. Then there are some of you who are not exactly weak in the faith. but ill your *humble eslimale of yourselves*, you put yourselves in the rear. "I am very poor," says one; "it is but little that- I can ever give; even if I gave a mite, as the widow did, I might almost give all my substance in so doing; I am obscure, too, for I have no talent; i cannot preach; I can scarcely prw in the prayer-meeting to edification; I hope I love the Lord, and that I am one of the stones in the walls of his church, but I am quite a hidden one." Ah! well, poor though you are, despised and forgotten, the glow of the Lord shall secure your safety. It is said of the tribe of Dan, "These shall go hindmost with their standards," and there must be some to be in the rear; so, while the rich may rejoice in what God has given to them, yet you, in your contentment with your lot, may be thankful for your poverty, and bless the name of the Lord that, though you may be in tke rear, you are yet in the army, and you shall soon, as much as those in the van, have your full share of the spoil.

Possibly there are some who get into the rear from a much more painful cause, namely, from *backslidiuy*. I would not say a word to excuse backsliding, for it is a dreadful thing that we should depart from our first love, or lose the rigour of our piety. It is dangerous to get even half a yard from the Savior's side. To live in the sun, like Milton's algol, that is blessed living; no lack of light or warmth there; bu to turn our backs on the sun, as the descendants of Cain did of old, and to go journeyin away from Christ, this is dangerous in the extreme. "The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways." Many men talk of David's sin: it were well if they would recollect David's repentance, and David's broken bones, after he had received pardon. He never was the same man afterwards that he;;as before. His voice was hoarse and cracked. You can tell the psahns that he wrote after his fall, for his pen quivered as he wrote them; and yet, blessed be God, he could sw, "Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure." Even these falling ones, Christ is kind to them. Though they have wandered, his ¥oice is not that of condemnation, but of consolation. Return, ye backsliding ones! He owns the marriage bonds still. "I am married'unto thee, saith the Lord." Backslider, let this be some comfort to you, if you are bewailing your backslidings; but oh'. if you are not conscious of them, or are conscious of them, but are not mourning them, tremble, tremble, lest backsliding should become aposLacy, and you should

prove beyond question that you never had a sound work of grace in your heart.

Now, whoever it may be in the militant host of the Lord that may be in the rear, here is comfort — that the glory of the Lord shall be the reward. Only one or two of you can guess, in any adequate measure, what the care of such a large church as this is. I have sometimes said, with Moses, “Have I begotten all this people, that I should carry them in my bosom?” But here is my consolation, “the Lord knoweth them that are his;” and those of you who do not always show due faith and courage — who do not advance to the front, as we could wish, in Christian service, we, nevertheless, commend you to the care of our God, praying that the rear may be divinely preserved. We wish that you would quicken your pace, that you would grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; but we know that, even as it is, you shall be found of him in peace in the day of his appearing, since your righteousness is found in him, and you are not trusting in yourselves.

But, now, *supposing the text to refer to the individual Christian*, how shall we translate it? “The glory of the Lord shall be your reward.”

We will translate it in three ways. First, *as relating to our past* — that which is behind us. We need a protection from the past. Now, what is that which is behind us? There is something to rejoice in, for God has been gracious to us, but there is yet much to mourn over, for we remember our former lusts in our ignorance, things whereof we are now ashamed. Christian, look back awhile upon those sins of yours, the sins of your youth, and your former transgressions; sins against law and against gospel, against light, and against love; sins of omission, and sins of commission! What about them? Suppose that, like a pack of hungry wolves, they should pursue you; suppose they should come after you, as Pharaoh and his chariots went after the children of Israel, when they escaped out of Egypt! Ah! then the glory of the Lord shall be your reward. Christ and his atonement shall come between us and our sins, and he shall drown our enemies in the Red Sea of his blood, even as he drowned Pharaoh and all his raging hosts who pursued the chosen people. Fear not your past sin, Christian. Tremble at the thought of it, by way of repentance, but thank God that you shall not be called to account for it; for your sins were numbered on the Scapegoat’s head of old, and he took them, and made an end of them, and carried them

away for ever. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" As to past sin, the glorious atonement shall bring up the rear.

Then there are *our past habits*. How much of injury we still suffer from these! A man who has been accustomed to witness scenes of vice will frequently have most fearful pictures painted upon his eye-balls, even when they are closed for prayer. Yes, and when the sacred hymn is going up to heaven, a word in it may suggest a snatch of a profane song, or bring to the recollection even blasphemy itself. It is a sad thing to have learned the arts of sin, to have acquired habits of passionate temper, of pride, or covetousness or of falsehood. We may well tremble lest these old enemies should at last prove too much for us. We have left them behind us! they do not lead and guide us as once they did, but they dog our steps; the dominion of sin is broken, but the law of sin is still there to vex us. The tree is cut down, but the sprouts still arise from the root, and are all too vigorous, especially at times when they have been watered by circumstances, for at the scent of water they will bud and grow. Ah! then, we must take our bad habits to the Lord Jesus. We must ask him to manifest his glory by helping us to conquer them, and we shall yet break these bonds which had become like fetters of iron; we shall snap them as Samson of old did his green withes, and we shall be free: but the glory of the Lord must do it, and we shall have to give him all the praise. So the whole of the past, if you take it in any of its aspects, need not cause the Christian tormenting sorrow, for he can believe that all his sinful past is left with God, so that as neither things present, nor things to come shall be able to separate him from the love of God, so not even things past shall be able to do it.

But again; understanding the text as referring to the individual believer, we may speak of the rear as signifying *that part of our nature which is most backward in yielding to the power of divine grace*. Brethren, often to will is present with us, but how to perform that which we would we find not. The understanding is convinced, and that leads the way; the affections are awakened, and they follow after; but there is a weaker passion which would, if it dared, consent to sin, and that is this flesh of ours in which there dwelleth no good thing. It is this dangerous rear, this weakest part of our nature, which we have most cause to dread. O friends, you know but little of yourselves if you do not know this, that there are such weak points about you that you might be overthrown in a moment if almighty grace did not preserve you. Peter is laughed at by a silly maid, and he falls. How are the mighty fallen! How little a thing brings an apostle to the level of a

blasphemer! As for this rear-part of our army, what shall we do with it? It is here that God's glory will be seen in conquering and overcoming. Thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, and gives us victory in the very place where we were accustomed to say, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Those straggling passions which we cannot marshal as we would into regular order; those wandering thoughts; those downward desires; that cold heart which will not grow warm as we would have it, but will lose its holy glow — all these powers of ours shall be brought into subjection and sanctified by grace. God shall gather up the stragglers, and bring the whole man safe to perfection by the sanctifying power of the Spirit.

Once again, understanding still the individual Christian, may we not speak of our rear as signifying *the end of our days*? The glory of the Lord shall be the reward of our mortal history. The van was blessed, when we looked to Christ and were lightened, and our faces were not ashamed.

*"Many days have passed since then;
Many changes have we seen;
Yet have been upheld till now —
Who could hold us up but thou?"*

But the rear of the march of life is coming. We shall soon be up to our necks in the chill river. The waves and billows must soon roll over us. We may desire to be with Christ, but death itself never can be desirable.

*"We shrink back again to life,
Fond of our prison and our clay."*

We long to be with Christ, for it shall be far better, but that last pinch, when soul and body shall be separated, cannot be looked forward to without solemn awe. Oh! how sweet to think that Christ shall bring up the rear if ever we have had his presence, we shall have it then. We shall

*"Sing when the death-dew lies cold on our brow,
If ever we loved thee, our Jesus, 'tis now."*

Perhaps our last day will be our best and brightest day, and we shall be surprised to find what floods of glory there are around and above the floods of death. I see, before me many, very many veterans. Your grey hairs tell of your nearness to heaven. I trust your locks are whitened with the sunlight of glory. Oh! be not afraid; you shall find it a blessed thing to sleep in Jesus: and even as you go to that last bed, you shall not tremble,

for he shall be so manifestly with you that you shall not be afraid. The glory of the Lord shall be your reward, and what that glory shall be, what heart can imagine, what tongue can tell? The glory that excelleth, the glory of perfection, the glory of being made like unto the first-born among many brethren; the glory of the Wellbeloved, which he had with his Father before the world was. "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them." Behold then your latter end. O that our last days might be with the righteous, and our last end be like theirs! The glory of the Lord shall be the Christian's reward.

II. But now, only for a minute or two, let me show now THE STORY OF THE LORD thus, both in the case of the church, and of each separate Christian, BECOMES THE MEANS OF GRACIOUS PRESERVATION.

What is this "glory of the Lord" which shelters the weak and preserves the saints? May we not understand it to mean, first of all, *the glorious attributes of God*? God's mercy is one of his glories. It is his great glory, you know, that he is a God passing by iniquity, transgression, and sin, and remembering not the iniquity of his people. Now, brethren, as to our past sins, and our weaknesses, and all those other senses in which we understand the rear of our spiritual host — as to all these, the mercy of God will glorify itself in them all. Notwithstanding our weakness, mercy shall find a platform for the display of itself, and where sin abounded there shall grace much more abound. When you think of the greatness of your sin, think also of the greatness of God's mercy at the same time. As Master Wilcox says, "If thou canst not keep thine eye on the cross when thou art repenting, away with thy repenting." A sense of sin which is not also attended with a belief in God's mercy is not an evangelical sense of sin. O to know the superabounding mercy of the loving God who delighteth in mercy, his last born, but his best-beloved attribute! He will glorify himself by his mercy in delivering you where you most need it.

So will he also use the glorious attribute of *his wisdom*. It takes a wise captain to conduct the rear. To be in the van needs courage and prudence, but to be in the rear often needs more wisdom, and even more courage still, and God will show the wisdom of his *providence* and the fidelity of his grace in taking care of the weakest of the host, and in preserving you, believer, in that place where you are most in need of preservation. So will he also show *his power*. Oh, what power it will be that will bring some of us

to heaven! We need a God to get us there. Nothing short of divine strength will ever be able to *preserve* some of us.

So crushed and hardened, and sometimes so stung with the venom of the old serpent, unless the bare arm of God be revealed, how shall we who are in the rear be kept? The glory of the Lord in mercy, wisdom, and power, shall shine transcendently in our case.

And here, too, shall be conspicuous *the immutability of God*. Beloved, of all the attributes of God, next to his love, this is, rhaps, the sweetest to the tried Christian, namely, his iramutability.

***“Immutable his will;
Though dark may be my frame.”***

You are not trusting in a Savior who was yours yesterday, but is not faithful to-day, or who will fail you to-morrow; but every word of his promise standeth sure, and he himself standeth fast to it. How the immutability of God will be illustrated in those who have had a long life, and borne trial all through it, but who find at the last that Christ who loved his own, which were in the world, did love them even unto the end. Yes, the weakness which you now discover and mourn over, shall only afford an opportunity for the faithfulness of God to reveal itself in your case. The glory of the Lord, in all its attributes, shall bring up the rear.

May we not also understand, besides his attributes, *his providence*? The providence of God is his glory. Thus he shows the skirts of his royal robes amongst the sons of men, as he has dominion over all the events of time. Ah! yes, you may rest assured that in all those points in the Christian church which are the most weak, and the most behind, the providence of God will be seen in bringing the entire army of God home, safely home, victoriously home. Looking at the history of the whole church, it is wonderful to see how God has never sustained a defeat, and when his army seems to have been repulsed for a time, it is only drawn back to take a more wondrous leap to a yet greater victory. One wave may recede, but the main ocean advances, the great tide of our holy faith is coming up; and as we water wave after wave dying upon the shore we must not weep, or think that God is sustaining a disappointment, for the main flood must advance, and it shall, till all the mud of idolatry and human sin, and all the sand of human rebellion shall be covered with the silver tide of truth and love, and against the rocks of eternity, the great waves of gospel truth shall

for ever beat. Courage, my brethren, the Lord will bring up the rear by his providence, ruling and overruling, making evil produce good, and good something better and better still in infinite progression, Not only to the whole church, but to you also shall it be so, and in due time if you will but wait, you shall not be disappointed, but your light shall rise ill obscurity, and the days of your mourning shall be ended. The glory of the Lord shall thus be on reward.

But may we not believe that the glory of the Lord which brings up the rear is *himself*? After all, we cannot dissociate the glory fi'tml the glorious One. God himself we must have if we would see his .dory. Ah! brethren, the wine of communion with our Father and his ,'-;oil Jesus Christ is the surest preservative, and espeecially ought we to cultivate this communion when we feel that we are most in danger. Near to the Savior's t;osom, and it does not matter what we suffer. Cloe to God, and he who is full of infirmities will overcome them all. Whatever your besetting sin may have been, put our head upon the Savior's bosom, and that besetting sin shall not overthrow you. Close to the Master, and since his garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia, you shall never want for perfume. Have Christ with you, and you cannot walk in darkness, however dark your way may be. Get you to your chambers. Wait upon him in prayer. In coming down from those chambers with your souls refreshed, say to him, "Abide with me from morn to eve," for you may rest assured that in this holy communion you shall find the true protection, while they who neglect this are most apt to slip with their feet.

And so, let me close these few words of address by *entreating you always to fly to the glory of the Lord whenever you feel your danger*, and even when you do not fed it, for it is well to be there. "Trust in the Lord, and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fcd." Trust not in man, nor stay thy confidence in the glory of man. Rest not in thy circumstances, thy wealth, nor thy health, for the glory of all these shall pass away as the beauty of the flower in the field, which is soon cut down beneath the mower's scythe. Trust thou in the Lord for ever, for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength. Yo sons of men, trust in your God, and ye shall be secure beneath the shadow of his wings. Ye sinners, fly to the Savior. "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found." Look to the cross of Jesus, and put all your dependence in his sufferings, and his merits, and you who have so done already, fly more than ever to your God; and to your God alone in every hour of ill, and every night of grief. The Lord bless you for Jesus' sake. Amen.

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL

NOVEMBER, 1869.

A SERMON FROM A SICK PREACHER.

BY C. H. SPURGEON.

MY brethren, I am quite out of order for addressing you tonight. I feel extremely unwell, excessively heavy and exceedingly depressed, and yet I could not deny myself the pleasure of trying to say a few words to you. I have taken a text upon which I think I could preach in my sleep, and I believe that, if I were dying and were graciously led into the old track, I could, with my last expiring breath pour out a heart-full of utterance upon the delightful verse which I have selected. It happens to be the passage from which I first essayed to speak in public when I was but a boy of fifteen years of age; and I am sure it contains the marrow of what I have always taught in the pulpit from that day until now. The words are in the second chapter of the first epistle of Peter, and the seventh verse; "*Unto you therefore which believe he is precious*"

We might find "ample room and verge enough" if we were to enlarge upon the preciousness of Christ; in his person as God and perfect man; his preciousness to his Father, his preciousness to the Holy Spirit, his preciousness to angels and glorified men. We might next speak of him in the preciousness of his work; showing his preciousness as the Mediator of the new covenant, and as the incarnate messenger of that covenant on earth; his preciousness as working out a perfect righteousness, and as rendering a complete expiation. We might dwell upon his preciousness in all his offices, whether as Prophet, Priest, or King, and in all his relationships as friend, brother, or bridegroom. Indeed, we have before us a subject as inexhaustible as the river of God, and as bright as the sapphire, throne. If we should endeavor to show how precious the Well beloved is in all respects, we should need eternity in which to complete the task.

*“Precious, Lord, beyond expression,
Are thy beauties all divine;
Glory, honor, praise, and blessing,
Be henceforth for ever thine.”*

The wording of the text binds our thoughts to one point. “*Unto you that believe he is precious,*” it is not so much how precious he is, as how precious he is to you. If you be a believer, the text affirms that Jesus Christ will, without any adverb to limit the extent of the descriptive word, be precious to you.

We shall, first, talk awhile upon the truth that *Jesus Christ is now precious to believers.*

Notice attentively how personally precious Jesus is. There are two persons in the text: “*Unto you that believe he is precious.*” “*You*” and “*he.*” You — you are a real person, and you feel that you are such. To yourself you must ever be the most real of existences. You do not think of yourself as a person of whom you have read in history, or heard of in discourse, or seen from a window years ago. You have (to use an ugly word, since I do not know any substitute for it), you have realized yourself; you are quite clear about your own existence; now in the same way I pray you strive to realize the other Person. “*Unto you that believe he is precious*” Jesus just as really exists as you do, and you must not regard him as a personage who was here one thousand eight hundred and sixty-nine years; ago, or one of whom you have heard, and whom you like to think of as a poetical conception; but there is a real Christ now existing; in spirit existing here; in real flesh and blood now standing at the right hand of the Father; and between him and you, if you be a believer, there exists a bond of unity which, though invisible, is nevertheless most matter-of-fact and positive. You believe in him, he loves you; you love him in return, and he she is abroad in your heart a sense of his love. You twain are bound together fastly and firmly; there is neither myth, nor dream either in him or in your union to him. He is and you are, and he is in very deed most precious to you.

Notice, too, that while the, text gleams with this vividness of personality, to which the most of professors are blind, it is weighted with a most solid positiveness: “*Unto you that believe he is precious.*” It does not speak as though he might be or might not be; but “*he is precious.*” There are some things about myself as a Christian which are frequently matters of question. I may gravely question whether I am growing in grace; and under such a

doubt I may search my heart to see whether I love my Lord better, or whether I have more fully conquered my sins; but one thing I do not question, namely, that being a believer in him, Jesus Christ is unutterably precious to my soul. If thou doubtest thy faith, thou mayst doubt whether Christ is precious to thee, but if thy faith be, certain, the preciousness of Christ to thy heart is quite as certain. “He *is* precious.” If the new life be in thee, thou art as sure to love the Savior as fish love the stream, or the birds the air, or as brave men love liberty, or as all men love their lives. Tolerate no peradventures here; allow no debate upon this vital point of thy religion! Jesus must be precious to thee. Cleanse thine *eye* if any dust hath dimmed thy sight of Jesus’ preciousness, and be not satisfied till, in the language of the spouse, thou canst say, “He is the chief among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely.”

Mark, further, the absoluteness of the text; “*Unto you that believe he is precious.*” It is not written how precious. The text does not attempt by any form of computation to measure the price which the regenerate soul sets upon her bosom’s Lord. There is no hint that he is moderately precious; it does not even say positively or comparatively precious. I infer therefore that I may if I choose insert the word “superlatively,” and certainly if I did so there would be no exaggeration. for more dear than light to the eyes, or life to the body, is Jesus to the sanctified beam Each saint can truthfully sing,

*“Yes, thou art precious to my soul,
My transport and my trust:
Jewels to thee are gaudy toys,
And gold is sordid dust.”*

Since no *sparkling* gems or precious metals, regalia, or caskets of rare jewels can ever equal the value of Jesus, the comparison is vain. We therefore place him by himself alone, and say that he is absolutely precious to believers. Gold is precious; but the diamond is more so, and in comparison with the diamond the gold is of small account. The diamond is precious; but give a man a bag full of diamonds of the first water, and put him down in a desert, or let him be out on the wild waste of ocean, he would give all his diamonds for a draught of pure water to drink, or a crust of bread to eat; so that in certain cases even the excellent crystal wealth lose its value. In fact, mineral substances are merely arbitrary signs of value, they have but little, worth in themselves; gold in itself is less useful than iron, and a diamond of little more account than a piece of glass. They

have no absolutely intrinsic value which would remain the same under all contingencies. But Christ is absolutely precious; that is to say, nothing can ever match him, much less excel him; and he is precious under all circumstances. There he, yet can arrive a time when we shall be compelled to confess his want of value, of lower our estimate of him. He is infinitely precious. O my soul, dost thou esteem him so? My heart, art thou sure of this, that; unto thee he is precious beyond compare; precious positively, precious comparatively, though heaven itself were compared, precious superlatively, beyond all things that can be dreamed of; or imagined? is he to thee essential preciousness, the very standard of all value? Thus it should be, for the text means no less: "Unto you that believe he is precious."

The thought which I desire to bring out into fullest, relief is this, that Jesus Christ is today *continually* precious to his people. The moment a soul believes in Jesus, his sins are forgiven. Well, then, the precious blood that washes all sin away, is not that clone with? Oh, no! Unto you that believe, though yea have believed to the saving of your seal. He is still precious; for your guilt will return upon your conscience, and you will yet sin, being still in the body, but; there' is a fountain still filled with blood, and thus unto you experimentally the cleansing atonement is as precious as when you first relied upon its expiating power. Nay, Jesus is more precious to you now than when first you were washed in his blood and were made white as snow; for you know your own needs more fully, have proved more often the adaptation of his saving grace, and have received a thousand more gifts at his blessed hands. I do fear me that some Christians imagine that after believing, all is done; but my Lord Jesus Christ is no old almanac, used up and of no further service. he is not; like the physic which I took months ago, which then healed me of my disease, so that now I can afford to put it on the shelf and laugh at it; oh, no! he is still my divine medicine. Still I want him, still I have him. If I believe in him, I feel I want him more than ever I did, and he is dearer to me than ever he was. If I needed him aforetime as a poor guilty sinner, I want him just as much as a poor needy saint, hanging, upon his daily bounty, deriving life perpetually from his life, peace from the virtue of his precious blood, and joy from. the outflowings of his love to me. Instead of Christ's losing value to the believer, the pith of the text is this — that you, believer, when you get Christ, and get what Christ bringeth to you, instead of esteeming him as though he were an empty vessel, out of which you had drained the last drop, you prize him

more highly than ever you did before. He is not a gold mine worked out and exhausted, a field reaped of its harvest, or a vineyard where the grape gleaning is done: he has still the dew of his youth, the fullness of his strength, the infinity of his wealth, the perfection of his power.

Now, beloved, just for a minute or two, let us think *how Christ is today precious to you.*

He is today precious to you because his blood even now this day is the only thing which keeps you from being a condemned sinner, exposed to the wrath of God. There has been enough sin upon your soul, my brother, my sister, this very day, to cast you into hell, if your Surety had not stood between you and God's justice. You have been into no sinful company today; you have been in your Sunday-school class, and I have been in the pulpit; but, ah! my pulpit sins would have damned me today, if it had not been for that precious blood, and thy Sunday-school sins had shut thee up in hell, if that dear Mediator had not stood between thee, and God. So you see it is not the first day in which you believe in which he is precious to you; but right on still, as long as you are a sinner, the Intercessor stands and pleads for you, evermore putting your sin away; being yesterday, today, and for ever, your Savior, your shield, and your defense, and therefore evermore supremely precious.

Remember, too, he is precious, because the only righteousness you have is, still, his perfect righteousness. That; which pleads with God. for you is not what *you* are, but what he is. You are accepted at this moment, but you are only accepted in the Beloved. You are not justified because you feel in a sweet frame of mind, or because your heart rejoices in, the name of God. Oh, no! your acceptance is all in your great Surety, and if it could be possible that he and the entire system of his grace could be withdrawn, and covenant engagements abrogated, you would be as unacceptable as even lost spirits are, and would be like them for ever driven from the face and favor of God. Is he not, then, as your accepted Substitute, at this hour most precious to you?

Moreover, beloved, Jesus Christ is precious to you at this moment, as much as ever he was, because from henceforth it is his example which you strive to imitate. So far as he is an example to his people, his character has always been most admirable in your esteem, and this day you delight to know that in his life God's law appears drawn cut in bring characters. You aspire to be like him now; you expect to be perfectly like him in the day of

his appearing. Now, because, he sinews you what you shall be, and because in him lies the power to make you what you shall be, is he not therefore daily precious to you? In proportion as you fight with sin, in proportion as you seek for holiness with inward longings and sublime pantings, in that proportion will Jesus Christ, the paragon of all perfection, be precious in your esteem. Beloved, you are to be crucified with him; your flesh, with its corruptions and lusts, must die upon his cross as lie died. Is lie not precious when you believe that it will be by virtue of his death that sin will die in you? You are to rise in him; nay, I trust you have already risen in him, in newness of life; I hope you are panting more and more after the resurrection life, that you may no longer *regard* the dead things of this world, but live for eternal things, as those whose life is hid with Christ in God. If so, I know you will prize a risen Savior, and your appreciation of him will increase as you drink deeper into the fellowship of the risen life. Forget not, beloved, that, our Redeemer has ascended and in that ascension every saint has; his share. I do not say that you all enjoy your share yet, but in proportion as you do so, you will reckon Christ to be precious; for he hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places; our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Lord Jesus, whose Second Advent is to be the perfection of our spiritual life, the unveiling of the hidden beauties and manifestations of the sons of God. Just in proportion as you enter into your royal heritage, and live in it, and believe in it, in this proportion Jesus Christ will be precious to you.

Beloved, let me tell you a secret. To many of you, there is as much in Christ undiscovered, as you have already enjoyed. Your faith has only yet grasped Christ as saving you from going down to the pit — Christ is precious to you so far; but if your faith could even now comprehend the fact that you are one with Christ, are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, that you are heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, ah, then, how doubly precious would Jesus be! As, surely as your faith grasps more, and becomes more capacious, and appropriating, Christ will grow in preciousness to you. I am persuaded that there is a meaning in these words which the whole of God's saints have not yet been able to discover, a deep mysterious preciousness of Jesus, only to be known by a close and intimate acquaintance with him such as falls to the lot of few. "Unto you that believe," just in proportion as you believe, the larger, the stronger, the deeper, the purer, the sublimer, the more full-grown your faith, the more

unto you Jesus Christ is precious. Ask, then, for more faith, that Jesus may be more precious to you, and God grant it to you, for his name's sake!

Thus much on that point. Now a few words on another. *Because Jesus is precious to believers, he efficaciously operates upon them.* The preciousness of Christ is, as it were, the leverage of Christ in lifting up his saints to holiness and righteousness.

Let me show you this. The man who trusts Christ values Christ; that which I value I hold fast; hence our valuing Christ helps us to abide steadfast in times of temptation. The world saith to a Christian, "Follow me, and I will enrich thee." "Nay," saith the Christian, "Thou canst not enrich me; I have Christ, and I am rich enough." "follow me," saith the world, "and I will bless thee; I will give thee the delights of the flesh." "Nay," saith the heart, "thou canst not bless me, for these things are accursed and would bring me sorrow and not pleasure; Jesus Christ is my pleasure, and to love him and to do his will is my joy." Do you not see, the greater your value of Christ, the greater your strength against temptation? Although the devil may tempt you with this and that, yet Jesus Christ being more precious than all things, you say, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou canst not tempt me while Christ is dear to my spirit." O may you have a very high 'value of Christ, that thus you may be kept firm in the day of temptation.

Notice further: this valuing of Christ helps the believer to make sacrifices. Sacrifice-making constitutes a large part of any high character. He who never makes a sacrifice in his religion, may shrewdly suspect that it is not worth more than his own practical valuation of it. When a man hath a very important document about him, on which depends his title to his estates, if a thief should try to take it from him, he will suffer the thief to tear away his garments, to rob him of anything he has except his treasure, that he takes care to hold fast as long as he can. Indian messengers when entrusted with jewels, have been known to swallow them to preserve them from robbers, and to allow themselves to be stripped naked of every rag they wore, but they would not lose the jewel with which their prince had entrusted them. So the Christian will say to the world, "Take away my fortune, take away my livelihood; take away my good name if thou wilt, O lying world, but despite all I will retain my Savior, for he is precious!" Skin for skin; yea, all that a man hath will he give for Christ, and he never will or can give Christ up if Christ be precious to him. See, then, that believing

in Jesus makes him precious, and his being precious helps us to make sacrifices most cheerfully for his dear sake.

Moreover, brethren, this valuing of Christ makes us jealous against sin. What, say we, does Jesus Christ deign to live under my roof? Then, while he lives in my heart, I will give no roosting-place to any foul bird of *sin* that might begin hooting in his ear. No! ye enemies of Christ, begone, begone, begone! My Beloved shall have the best chamber of my spirit, undefiled by your filthy feet. We are afraid lest we should do anything to grieve the heavenly Lover of our souls; this makes us keep our garments white, and pick our steps through this miry world Hence, a right valuing of Christ promotes directly the highest degree of sanctification. he who loves the Redeemer best purifies himself most, even as his Lord is pure.

Beloved high valuing of Christ helps the Christian in the selection of his associates in life. If I hold my divine Lord to be precious, how can I have fellowship with those who do not esteem him? You will not find a man of refined habits and cultured spirits, happy amongst the lowest and most illiterate. Birds of a feather flock together. Workers and traders unite in companies according to their occupations. Lovers of Christ rejoice in lovers of Christ, and they delight to meet together; for they can talk to each other of things in which they are agreed. I would recommend you to choose the church of which you would be a member, and the pastor whom you would hear, by this one thing; by how much of Christ there is in that church, and how much of the savor of Christ there is in that ministry. Oh! it is ill of a child of God to be enchanted by mere rhetoric. As well might you choose a table to feast at merely on account of the knives and forks, or the polish of its mahogany. You require food for the soul, and there is nothing that will long feed a true heart but Jesus Christ, who is the meat and the drink of his people. Love to Christ soon makes a Christian discontented with mere oratory. He cannot be satisfied even with the best doctrine apart from Jesus. "They have taken away my Lord," saith he, "and I know not where they have laid him." I must hear about Jesus; and if that silver bell does not ring, then all the rest may Chime as they may, but my ear is at unrest until I hear that celestial sound. Thus a lofty estimate, of Christ will be seen, if I had time to track it, to operate through the entire history of a Christian.

Little need is there more fully to particularize, but we must not fail to remark that a sense of the Redeemer's preciousness makes the Christian

useful, for that which is much on the heart will soon creep up, to the tongue, and the testimony of the heart is a notable method for spreading the gospel. If thou lovest Christ much, thou wilt speak about him. Thy restrained speech will almost choke thee, thy soul will be hot within thee whilst thou art silent, till a last, like a fire in thy bones which cannot longer be concealed, it will break out, and thou wilt say to others, “My Beloved is the fairest and noblest of all beloveds; O that you. all knew him and loved him as I do! If you see him, his face is brighter than the sun in its strength; if you hear him, his voice is sweeter than the chorus of heaven; if you draw near to him, his garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and cassia; and if you trust him, you will find him to be faithfulness and truth itself. Broken the words may be, the sentences may not flow with rhythmical harmony, but he that loves Christ must out with it, somehow or other. Thus telling out the things which he has made touching the King with a burning heart, others will hear the good news, and they will ask, “Who is this Precious One?” and they will, by God’s good Spirit, be led to seek him and find him too. So the Christian valuing Christ will come to be useful to the souls of men; indeed, as I have said before, it will exercise an operating power on the entire Christian manhood, and render it holiness unto the Lord.

Christ being thus precious, *his preciousness becomes the test of our Christianity.*

I shalt not prolong this humble talk, but shall, in conclusion, put a question to you. Beloved brother or sister, you know very well that I would be the last person in the world to speak lightly of the value of sound doctrine. I wish we were all acquainted with the Scriptures far more, and that the doctrines of grace were more clear to our understandings, and more imprinted upon our hearts; but there are some people who love a certain set of doctrines so much, that if you diverge a hair’s breadth they will denounce you as rotten at the core. They will not associate with any who do not say, “Shibboleth,” and sound the “sh” very harshly, too. They will cut off and condemn all God’s people who do not precisely agree with them. Now, mark you, it is not written, “Unto you that believe a code of doctrines will be precious.” That is true, but it is not, written so in the text. The text is, “Unto you that believe Christ is precious.” It is better to count Christ precious than it is to count orthodoxy precious. Oh, it is not loving a creed, but it is loving Jesus that proves you a Christian. You may become such a bigot that it may be only the laws of the land which keep you from burning those who differ from you, and yet you may have none of the grace of God in your heart. I love Protestantism, but if there is anything in

this world that I have a horror of, it is that political Protestantism which does nothing but sneer and snarl at its fellow citizens, but which is as ignorant as a cow about what Protestantism truly is. The great truths of Protestantism — not mere Protestant, ascendancy — and the great secret *power* of those truths, far more than the mere letter of them, is the thing to be prized. You may get it into your head that you are a member of the one only true church; you may wrap yourself about with any quantity of self-conceit, but that does not at all prove you to be a possessor of grace. It is love to Christ that is the root of the matter. I am very sorry, my dear brother, if you should hold unsound views on some points; but I love you with all my heart if Jesus is precious to you. I cannot give up believers' baptism; it is none of mine, and, therefore, I cannot give up my Master's word. I am sure that it is Scriptural. I cannot give up the doctrine of election, it seems to me so plainly in the word; but over the head of all doctrines and ordinances, and over everything, my brother, I embrace thee in my heart if thou believest in Jesus, and if he be precious to thee, for that is the vital point. These are the matters of heart work that, mark a Christian — nothing else is so true a test. If you cannot say, "Jesus is precious to me," I do not care to what church you belong, or what creed you are ready to die for, you do not know the truth of God unless the person of Christ, is dear to you.

This may serve as a test for each one here. My brother, my sister, dost thou believe in him who is the Son of God, and yet was born of the Virgin here on earth? Dost thou rely alone on him who on the cross poured Out his heart's blood to redeem sinners? Dost thou depend on him who now standeth with his priestly garments on before the throne of the infinite majesty, pleading for the unjust, that they may live through him? If thou dost, then answer this question: Dost thou love Jesus now? Dost thou love him with thy heart and soul? Wouldst thou serve him? Dost thou serve him? Wilt thou serve him? Wilt; thou subscribe thy hand to be his servant from this day forth? Dost thou declare now, if not with lip, yet honestly with thy soul, "He is precious to me, and I would give up all else sooner than give up him"? Then it is well with thee! Be thou happy and rejoice. Come thou to his table and feast with him at the banquet of love. If not, thou has; not built on the rock. If thou art; not loving Christ, I pray thee examine thyself, and see where thou art, for there is but a step between thee and hell. Repent thee! May God convert, thee, and give thee now to put thy confidence in Jesus, and now to be saved, that he may be glorified

in thee, for hitherto he has had no glory from thee. Unto you that do not believe, Christ is not precious, and you will go your way and despise him. O that you were made wise by the Holy. Ghost, and taught to consider things aright, and he would be precious indeed to you! He is the only way for your escape from the wrath to come! He is the only hope for you of ever entering the gates of heaven. He must be *your* only shelter when the world will be on a blaze, as soon it shall; when the stars shall, fall like withered leaves from the trees; when all creation shall rock and reel, and his voice shall resound in earth, and heaven, and hell, "Awake, ye dead, and come to judgement!" The only hope of a Savior in that last tremendous day must be found in Jesus. O seek him now while he may be found, call upon him while he is near! Turn not your heel away from him now, lest you turn once for all to perdition. Come to him now; believe in him now; and he shall have the glory. Amen.

THE FACE OF THE BELOVED.

BY C. H. SPURGEON.

THERE hangs in my sick room a print from Caracci's famous picture of the four Iarys lamenting over the dead body of our crucified Lord. I fix my eyes upon the face of the well-beloved corpse, and my thoughts, running as they will, leave as their residuum that which follows.

A countenance is the especial throne-room and pavilion of intelligence, the parade-ground of thought, the material mirror of mind, the papyrus whereon the soul writes out her mystic lore, the pillar on which she hangeth up her writing for the world to read. There is something regal in the face of every man: the aweless lion blenches before that imperial eye, the pitiless wolf. skulks from that commanding look. If we would picture angels' faces, could we select a higher model than the image of a man? Mysterious blending of matter and mind! The human visage is a sea of mystery. As Sir Thomas Wyatt says, it "Speaks without word such words as none can tell."

The face before us is not that of the first Adam. What a study might that have been! Natural innocence and free-will subdued in easy conflict by subtlety and sin. Beautiful as the Apollo Beh'idere, but probably more hirsute and patriarchal, the dead face of the great sire of men, was the

model of manhood at its best receiving the wages of sin. Dear face of martyred Abel! what footmarks of sweetness, tenderness, faith, and joy, did thy noble spirit leave behind, when, first of all human intelligences, it entered within the gates of pearl. One half wishes to see how Abraham slept; how Isaac closed his eyes; how Jacob composed his features; how Joshua reposed; how Samuel “fell on sleep.” Into the face of Goliath, with his brow all cavernous, where went the stone of David, we peer with triumph; brute strength is never so great but that mere earth force can overthrow it. “The Egyptians are men and not God; and their horses flesh and not spirit.” The head of that other great decapitated — great in a far nobler sense — teaches widely different lessons. Those thin crimson lips once cut like scimitars into the hearts of sinners; that emaciated visage was a living rebuke to the luxury of the godless: lying in the charger of Herodias, set in a ruby collar of its own gore, the head of the Baptist summoned both Herod and his paramour to the judgment-seat where every secret thing shall be revealed; a token of the victory of the faithful soul over all a tyrant’s arts and terrors.

But the face before us now in contemplation, is of one nobler than all these — the face of him whose “countenance is as the sun shining in his strength.” Believer, behold the head of your Head, the face of him through whom you see the face of God. Start not aside because death is ghastly, for in this case the wondrous warmth of lingering love may make you forget the chili which gathers round the corpse. There was never such a dead countenance before, for there is not one line of decay in it. At the very instant of death, the worm puts in its writ of habeas upon this mortal body, and, however little visible, corruption exercises instantly a defiling influence over the faces of all the departed; but our Lord’s case was not of this order. His holy body could not see corruption; sorrow and death might mar it, but decay could not pollute it. The imperishable gopher wood might be hewn and carved, but it could not rot; the axe might fell the cedar, but the worm could not devour it.

In every other human face, evil tempers and rebellious desires have left, after death, memorials of their power; but in the countenance of our Lord Jesus there was no sign or trace of personal sin. The noblest beauties of the material visage spring from the light of goodness within the nature, and the worst deformities of physiognomy are those which are the result of ruling vices; in the Redeemer’s case, every exquisite touch of the fair hand of virtue must have been there, and not one solitary trace of the jagged tool

and maniac iuand of passion. The material which formed the groundwork of the dear dead face, over which our love now sheds her reverent tears, was perfect; no original sin was mingled with the conception or birth of the Son of God; and “that holy thing” remained after thirty years of trial as perfect as when first produced. No evil was generated from within, and no evil was insinuated from without. In all those furrows of pain, and scars of anguish, there is not even a hair-line of transgression, so much as in thought. Here is a face indeed; dead, but alike free from presence of corruption and vestigia of sin.

That face must have been originally the most lovely ever gazed upon by a mother’s eye. A perfect soul could only fitly dwell within a comely body. “A body hast thou prepared me “ — a body, then, suitable for such a one to assume. Yet no face was ever more marred by pain than our blessed Lord’s; so that the natural comeliness was overshadowed with a cloud of grief. His sorrows were so many that they must have worn his visage as constant dropping frets the stone. See we not the grayings of that never-ceasing woe? Plagued all the day long, and chastened every morning, the products of such incessant workmanship are rich and rare. Some of his sorrows were peculiar to himself — great waves of misery unknown to lesser souls; abysmal depressions, hells of anguish. Against him were aimed spiritual and heart-penetrating arrows from the black quiyer, such as were never shot at human heart before. All those griefs, too, were unmixed with sin. The result of pure, unmingled sorrow on a mortal countenance is nowhere else to be discerned; the result must have been as singular as the cause was unique. The griefs of Jesus were none of them his own: “Surely he hath born *our* griefs and carried *our* sorrows.” Benevolence, then, left its line side by side with every pang, and the two great artists of love and grief combined to produce that matchless countenmlce. Gazing into that face, one remembers that in the wilderness those eyes beheld the tempter; at Jordan they saw heaven opened; at Golgotha they looked on death, and shot their glances into hell; yet now incapable of one glance of love at his mother or at Magdalene; unable to after one consoling word, the hero sleeps. Never such a history condensed into a face before.

*“Thou noble countenance!
 All earthly lights are pale
 Before the brightness of that glance
 At which a world shall quail;
 How is it quenched and gone!
 Those gracious eyes how dim!
 Whence grew that cheek so pale and wan?
 Who dared to scoff at him?”*

*All lovely hues of life,
 That glow'd on lip and cheek,
 Have vanished in that awful strife;
 The Mighty one is weak.
 Pale Death has won the day,
 He triumphs in this hour,
 When strength and beauty fade away,
 And yield them to his power.”*

Never had the grave such a captive, never death such a victim. Well might earth oar until her rocks were rent, for her Lord, her King, her glory was dead. Sit down, O soul, and bewail the dead Christ, and add thy tears to the spices brought to embalm him. But hush, the promise speaks and bids thee refrain from weeping. The battle is ended but not the victory. Is the life of Jesus closed? No! Glory be to God for ever — No!

The ghastly pallor which surrounds every feature of the most noble countenance in death cannot prevent our perceiving in the present case the peace and joy, deep and profound, which ruled our Lord's departing moments. The joy of the cross must have been as high as its agony was deep. “Lama sabachthani” is equalled, measure for measure, by “It is finished.” An exultation lingers in that eye, a glow of delight gleams still in you cheek, the lip is wreathed even now with a smile divinely exultant, and the brow is beetling with a majesty of conscious victory. That dead face is no relic of defeat, it is the epitome of the battle and victory by which men's souls were won. A spiritual Marathon, a mental Salamis, are in that countenance. Love makes each feature to be as a bed of spices; she reads over with delight the volume of his lovely face and studies every lineament; she lingers around the mouth which is most sweet; and in her heart she cries with the spouse in the Canticles, His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars: yea, he is altogether lovely.”

Never let us forget, as we perceive the Savior actually dead, that it was by yielding himself so completely that he achieved a perfect triumph. Carnal eyes beholding the dead visage of the Son of Man would have pronounced his cause hopeless, and his kingdom a chimera. Yet at that moment the Redeemer's throne was established never to be moved. He conquered when he fell. His death, like that of Samson, was the ruin of all his foes. Never let this lesson depart from us, for all truth must be conformed to the experience of him who is THE TRUTH. Every good and great cause must be betrayed into the hands of sinners, mocked, and despitefully used, and what if it be crucified and put to death? in that moment it shall consummate its victory. Comfort one another with these words, ye lonely champions of despised truth, your hour shall come, and resurrection shall follow on the heels of crucifixion.

Among those precious things in reserve, which are this day the expectation of our hope, is the sight of the King in his beauty. That very face which was veiled in the gloom of the sepulcher shall be seen in the glory of his appearing, *and seen by me*. Oh, blissful anticipation, mine eyes shall see him for myself, and not another! O for the enjoyment of that manifestation! When will the day dawn, and the shadows flee away? Surely, amid the royalties of our exalted Lord, when every sign of humiliation shall be exchanged for honor and dominion, there will still remain in that beloved face the memorials of his passion! Not to diminish, but to enhance his glory! Not to obscure a ray of beauty, but to reveal every unparalleled perfection. Let it be as it may, it shall be joy enough to me to behold the King's face in the day of the gladness of his heart.

*Adieu, ye lips, which once with sweetest words did overflow,
Fresh from sharp vinegar, and bitterness of gall
Adieu, ye cheeks, so often turned to bear the smiter's blow,
And spat upon in Pilate's judgment-hall.*

*Farewell, O mouth, so sweet and free from guile,
And yet, alas! by traitorous kiss betrayed;
Farewell, dear face, still bearing for my heart a smile;
I leave thee — thou art in the Garden laid.*

*But, O thou matchless face of God in human clay,
I wait to see thee, flaming like the sun, in glory bright;
Nor shall I wait in vain, for thou art on the way,
And all thy saints are pining for the sight.*

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND “DEGRADED TO THE LABEL OF THE SECTS”

BY C. H. SPURGEON.

IN Episcopal journals of all shades of opinion, we frequently meet with I a fear lest “our beloved church of England should be deluded to the level of a mere sect.” This catastrophe appears to be the climax of ecclesiastical evil. It is dreaded alike by the courageous and straightforward Evangelical, the intelligent and highly enlightened Ritualist, and the truly devout and scrupulously orthodox member of the Broad school.

The fear lest the church of England should become divided against herself, and so should come to nought, is scarcely expressed once for every hundred times in which the bugbear of “degradation to a mere sect” finds utterance. Alarm lest its ecclesiastical system should prove out of harmony with the age, or lest heresy should contaminate its faith, or spiritual life forsake its fabric, we have heard; but the sound thereof has been as feeble as the chirping of a grasshopper compared with the voice of trembling heard upon her high places, lest she should sink to the level of the sects. To the church mind there appears to be an innermost depth of inconceivable disaster and unutterable mischief in this contingency, and therefore against it ten thousand of the elect and faithful bow the knee, crying day and night, “from all fraternal association and Christian equality with other Protestant churches, good Lord deliver us.” Each Episcopal party has its own pet aversion; but all the aversions put together are not equal to this one object of dread. One churchman grows feverish at the name of the Pope, another is delirious if the famous Zulu is referred to, Dr. Temple is the horror of one, and Dr. Pusey of another; but these little family feuds are peace itself when compared with the inward violence aroused by the approach of that religious equality which is destined to make Episcopacy abate her arrogance.

Being always governed by the most generous sentiments towards the weak, and the tenderest sympathies towards the sorrowing, we are moved to offer to afflicted Episcopalians, whose hearts are overwhelmed within them by the hideous fear which we have mentioned, a few comfortable considerations.

In the first place, timorous friends, *if that which you dread should come upon you to the uttermost, what would it involve?* Your church would stand upon the same footing as other highly honorable and useful churches of Christ. They are sects or parts of that great spiritual church for which the Lord Jesus Christ shed his blood; for your community to be regarded in the same light, is an affliction which you might survive. Your church must either be a section of the one church of Christ, or the whole of it, or have no relation to it. The last it would be uncharitable to insinuate, and we do not raise the question. The second alternative we trust you have not the arrogance to suggest. It remains, therefore, that your church is already a sect, or section, or part, of the church of Christ. Peace to your fears! Behold how small a mouse the mountain hath brought forth! Like the man who discovered that he had been writing prose for several years without knowing it, so, O timorous Episcopalian, you have long been a member of a sect without being aware of it.

A second comfortable consideration may be drawn from the fact that *the elevation above the level of a mere sect, which the church of England is supposed at present to enjoy, is not of the most remarkably clear or valuable character.* Some measure of glory is supposed to flash from the church's corona, on account of *the preponderating multitude of her adherents.* When the Pan-Anglican Synod was sitting in all the pomp and circumstance of hierarchical dignity; English, Scotch, Welsh, Irish Episcopal, and the never-to-be-forgotten Bishop of Sodor and Man, side by side with Right Rev. Fathers in God from the Susquehanha River and the Big Mud Creek, and all the Presidents of all the Missionary Dioceses from Hong Kong to Natal; Protestant Episcopacy arose before the worshipful mind of the British churchman like a vision of the beatific glory, with rustling as of lawn sleeves and crumpling of black silk aprons, exceeding apostolic. To bring down such a church to the level of a mere sect, must have seemed to any mind, rendered ecstatic by the heavenly vision, a sin scarcely to be paralleled in atrocity by that which is called unpardonable. Now that the delirium caused by that transfiguration of prelacy may have abated, and minds may have become somewhat more able calmly to judge, the question may be put, "What is the actual size of the Episcopalian church compared with other Protestant denominations? Is she so vast as to exceed all the rest of Protestantism together? Walks she as the moon among the stars? Is she greater than any, or all other bodies of Christians? Or is she not rather beyond measure so grand in her proportions as to render it utterly ridiculous to institute comparisons, even as men no longer measure Himalayas by molehills?" To

assist us at arriving at some conclusion, we would venture to enquire whether those Protestant churches holding the Presbyterian form of church government do not very considerably, and even by a distinct multiple, outnumber the Episcopalians? Prussia, Holland, France, Switzerland, America, Scotland — all these countries pour forth hordes of Presbyterians, compared with whom Episcopalians are as a little flock. Where is, then, the superior elevation of the Episcopal sect beyond the Presbyterian sect? It would scarcely be a calamity to lose such elevation, seeing it has gone already, or rather at no time in history ever had an existence.

One matter too lightly regarded is the mode in which the strength of a church can properly be estimated. There are ways of manufacturing statistics seas-to make them say what you will; and there are methods of swelling the census of a church, by which rather its ideal than its actual strength is represented to the public eye. To count all the inhabitants of England as churchmen, would be as inaccurate as to consider them all Dutchmen. To reckon all but avowed Dissenters as being Episcopalians, would be as correct as to put all men down as having red hair who had not taken out certificates as being adorned with raven locks. Each church may claim its own adherents rightfully enough; but no one of the churches has any right to assert that all unacknowledged by other denominations belong, as a matter of course, to itself. It were, indeed, easy to swell the apparent numbers of a church by enrolling in it all who have no religion at all, but the process is as rational as if it were a law of the census to put down all persons of no trade at all as clergymen; the numbers of that class would then be increased, but its dignity would suffer in proportion by being united with all the vagabondage of the country. Of course, if any community chooses to found its claim for superiority to all others on the fact that the scum, and draft, the non-worshipping, the profane, the debauched, the imprisoned, are her peculiar heritage and glory, and constitute her preponderating spiritual strength, she will find no rival for the honor among those decent and holy churches of Christ which are called sects. We are assured that churchmen will not Wish to have their church's relative position calculated in such a manner that her numbers will rise or fall in precise ratio to the irreligion and villany of the country; such an elevation above the sects they would no more covet than the gallows of Haman. It has always seemed to us that the fairest and most practical estimate of a church's relative strength could only be made by counting the number of

her communicants. Those who love not a religion well enough to attend to her most sacred and central rite, may well be omitted from her muster-roll. Outward profession does not ensure genuine discipleship, but it would be folly to reckon those as disciples who do not even profess to be such. Let us try, then, this, test of membership. The Baptist churches do not claim any preeminence in numbers, but are content to rank with the smaller branches of the church of Christ, yet, in America and this country, the Baptist churches number about cue million and a-quarter of members. We ask the question for information, and enquire had all the ecclesiastics of the Pan-Anglican Synod anything like this number of constant, regular communicants under their care? We gravely doubt it. Be it remembered, also, that in Baptist churches watchful and stringent discipline is maintained; the door to the Lord's-supper is jealously guarded, and any known immorality at once excludes a man kern membership. No such discipline exists in the Episcopal church in. England; the merest mockery of such a thing may survive, but for all practical purposes, discipline in Episcopal membership is dead and buried. Yet it is a matter open to fair question, whether the entire body of such lax and necessarily corrupt membership would be found to equal the membership of the Baptist community. The next time the Episcopalian feels inclined to look down with contempt upon the *mere sect or*' Baptists, let him seek some retired spot where he may give his judgment a reason for the pride that is in him.

The statement could be defended, if it were boldly asserted, that, three or four other Protestant communities are each of them equal in numbers to the Episcopal body, if not superior to it. The Methodist, family, in all its tribes, might hold a "Pan-Methodist Synod," which would represent, we conceive, fully twice as many believers in Christ as the famous prelatial conclave. After all, numbers never did and never can, in themselves, give strength; the indwelling Spirit of God constitutes the true power of a church, and this, thank God, is not confined to Episcopacy, nor to any of us. If to know that it is not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the living God, is the level of the sects, as we honestly believe it to be, the sooner Episcopal believers come down to this level the better. The swollen greatness of a suppo-sitious preponderance of numbers is a form of falsehood and boastful-ness in which truly noble minds will scorn to indulge.

The connection of Episcopacy with the State has been supposed to lend her some peculiar charms, but even while we write, the error is vanishing into thin

air. There is the less room for us to denounce the unhallowed alliance, since Time's iron tongue appears to be at once proclaiming its shame and its end. Even churchmen are becoming disgusted with the unscriptural association which is rendering their church a victim to ten thousand ills, and denying her all rights of guarding herself against them. Denison and Pusey are at one with Miall and Binney. On all hands it is admitted to be a questionable dignity for a church to be established; and were it not that disendowment follows at its heels, disestablishment would be the universal prayer of all the church's thoughtful sons. It will be no calamity to be bereft of that faded chaplet which at this moment stigmatises her than adorns its wearer.

The forebodings of Episcopalians may receive some mitigation if they remember that it *might even involve an ascent, if their church should reach the level of the sects*. If the position of a community is fixed by its history, a church which has degraded itself by persecuting its rivals, by surrendering the headship of Christ to a human potentate, and by other sins of the same order, must take a lower room than another church which has been faithful under oppression, and has never resorted to an arm of flesh for succor. When the votaries of the prelatical church remember Scotland and the name of Claverhouse, they may bash* fully accept equality with Presbyterians, and wonder at the grace which overlooks the hateful past. How grievously must reminiscences of the Test and Corporation Acts, the Five Mile Act, and other infamous statutes, disturb the godly prelatist? What other church was ever girt around with an iniquitous rampart comparable to the Act of Uniformity? Have Methodists ever fined, and imprisoned, and cut off the ears or' dissenters from John Wesley? Have Baptists seized Episcopal furniture, and horses, and cows, for tithes and church-rates? To ravine like a wolf, and to plunder like a freebooter, has been the peculiar prerogative of the church of England. Meanwhile, where else upon earth has simony reigned so supreme? At this very hour, livings are bought and sold as publicly as pigs and bullocks. It has never been so much as insinuated that such infamy is practiced among "the *sects*." In fact, in this respect the most despised of the sects is as much above the church in character as an honest woman is superior to a common harlot. If, then, reputable churches of Jesus Christ, with unsullied histories are placed upon a certain level, let it be the hourly prayer of all good Episcopalians that by deep repentance, mortification, and amendment, their hitherto grievously erring and foully offending Alma Mater, may yet be elevated to the same

godly and honorable platform. It is true this prodigal church might well confess that it is not worthy to be called a son, and might count it a favor to be as one of the hired servants; but the past shall be forgiven, it shall yet be put among the children, and its brethren will receive it joyfully, when it shall lay aside its loftiness and confess that all we are brethren.

Once more, let the Episcopalian reflect that *to be red, wed to the level of the sects will be an incalculable gain to his church.* The sects are free to obey the laws of Christ without the intervention of the civil power, they choose their own bishops and deacons, and govern their own affairs; but the Episcopal bony is bound, hand and foot, and enjoys barely as much liberty as a mastiff chained and muzzled. No one congregation of Episcopalians can do other than receive for its pastor any stranger who may be thrust upon them; the people are usually no more consulted than if they were a flock of sheep to be sold to a butcher. As to the election of bishop% was there ever a more delectable farce? The Prime Minister calleth whom he wills, and saith to him, Sit there upon the episcopal throne, and rule in the midst of thy brethren. The Episcopal church in her fullest convocation can do nothing. The state has disarmed her of every weapon, even as mothers put edged tools ut of the reach of naughty children. All the deans, and prebends, and rectors, and vicars, and proctors, and surrogates, and canons, and archdeacons, and bishops put together, could not change one hair of the church white or black, though a single Act of Parliament could dye it green or ultramarine, if the Commons of England chose to do so. No church ever ate dirt more abundantly than “our beloved church of England;” her capacity for humiliation is infinite; there is no point at which she will become rebellious to her lords and masters. Among her matrons you shall never find a hand to wield the curry-stool of Janet Geddes, no, not even at this *day*, when mass is said to their faces at their own altars. If we were desired to draw the picture of a church enslaved to the uttermost, pliant to the last degree, degraded beyond comparison, we should point to the actual current history of the church of England, and cry, “Behold that which you seek!” The bishop of the smallest congregational church would resent with indignation the slightest approach to interference from any power beyond his church, and he would have the sympathy of all his brethren with him in maintaining his church’s independence; and yet here is a community crushed, overridden and manacled, which sneers at the flee, and dreads to be elevated to the level of the manly and independent. Must it be always one of the worst results of slavery, that it prevents the mind from

appreciating the privileges of freedom? If some such influence had not fascinated the church of England, her pious sons would long ago have cursed her golden fetters, and in a paroxysm of holy indignation have dashed them to the ground.

Possibly after all we have mistaken the meaning of the alarm which excites so many Episcopalians; it may be that their fear is *lest their church should become as sectarian in spirit and bitter in temper as the other sects*. It is fashionable to decry sectarianism, and commendable to desire to be delivered from it. If the church of England has been distinguished for her catholicity and Christian charity far above any of the sects, we devoutly pray that she may never fall from her high estate, but may remain in this an ensample to the whole Protestant community. But is it so? It is notoriously the reverse. There is no sect so schismatical, so unbrotherly, so insultingly unfraternal as the Episcopalian. Her canons remain to this hour the very quintessence of bigotry, their spirit is, to put it plainly, infernal; they are a standing disgrace to the nineteenth century. Have any of the sects similar specimens of religious spleen? No other body of Christians would tolerate for an hour the existence of such horrible canons, and if they did, they would be hooted out of civilised society. This sect denies permission to bury their dead within her graveyards, to two at least of its sister churches; nor will she even bury them herself — an inhospitality worthier of cannibals than Christians. Among the sects there is a frequent interchange of pulpits among their ministers, and a preacher of ability and grace is welcomed alike by all; but against every servant of God, who follows not with them, Episcopalians close the door. Nor must the Episcopal divine degrade himself by preaching in the pulpit of the most holy and eloquent pastor of another church. The separation is as complete as if the two parties were Buddhists and Mahometans, but it is solely maintained from one side; the sects are not so sectarian as to shut out the Establishment, but she, in her affected superiority, cries aloud, “*Stand by, I am holier than thou.*” the churches among the sects commend their members to each other’s care; a fraternal correspondence is always going on between the pastors, concerning disciples who are removing. A commendatory letter, for instance, from the church at the Tabernacle would not only admit the bearer to the loving regard of any Baptist church, but there is no Presbyterian, Independent, or Methodist church, which would not accept the credentials. The habits of the seats are, as a rule, as fraternal, as if they were parts of one organisation; but whoever dreams that this fraternal

intercourse would be endorsed by the Episcopalian clergy? As far as such mutual recognition is concerned, the Church of England has a great gulf fixed between her and all our Protestant churches. She does not regard the other churches any more favorably than Rome regards all Protestants. We are not sister churches, but dissenting bodies; to differ from the Episcopal persuasion being to dissent, as though she also did not dissent from us. To meet us at the Bible Society, or the Evangelical Alliance, is a condescension only achieved by the more godly, and then wondered at as a prodigy of liberality. It is a marvel that men do not see how absurd, how un-Christlike all this isolation and affectation makes them. An Episcopalian is not necessarily one whir better or worse than a member of another church; why will he give himself airs? why will he talk so exceeding proudly? Let him think of his fellow Christians as his equals; let him profit from their ministers; let him co-operate with them in efforts for the common weal; in fine, let him hold his own faith, and pay due deference to that of others, and then he will have nothing to fear, even should his church, in brotherly love and Christian charity, rise to "*the level of the sects.*"

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL

A RECORD

OF

COMBAT WITH SIN & LABOR FOR THE LORD.

EDITED BY C. H. SPURGEON.

1870.

“They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one With one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me.” — Nehemiah 4:17, 18.

PREFACE.

ESTEEMED READER,

Throughout another year you have kindly welcomed our monthly compilations of stirring words, and current histories; we trust you have been in some measure interested and benefited. We can truly say that we have aimed at edification in every monthly issue, and never at mere amusement. The responsibility of catering for so many readers month by month is not light in our esteem, and we write the preface of another Volume with reverent gratitude to the God of all grace for sustaining us to this hour. While thanking our Greatest Helper, we cannot forget also to tender thanks to many earnest friends for increasing our circulation, cheering us with kind words of encouragement, and aiding us by their contributions.

This Magazine has not been conducted in a timid, crouching spirit, neither have we pandered to popular tastes. Some of our articles have brought down upon us upbraids which we have borne without regret. Our reviews, when we have felt conscientiously bound to censure, have cost us many a postal lecture. We are not, however, penitent; we have nothing to retract, but doubt not that we shall sin again; we would not needlessly irritate, but we will not be silent in the presence of error, neither will we bespatter with flattery where honesty demands denunciation. A magazine which is not outspoken, and is destitute of principle, is a literary nuisance. We use the *trowel* wherever we can to aid every good cause, but we have a *sword* also and mean to use it. We expect to receive blows, and therefore when we do we are not overwhelmed with dismay. Christ's truth is too dear to us for us to flinch from its defense. In the widespread defection which is now so sadly apparent in certain quarters, we see not only signs of coming struggles, but calls to duty, stern and arduous, from which only cowards will desire to be excused. The ancient faith, assailed by foes on all hands, must not lack for champions.

This year the wants of the College have, through the bounty of the Lord, been met as they have arisen. There can be no doubt that the Orphanage attracts to itself much that would otherwise have gone to train the Lord's servants, to found churches, and open new places for preaching the gospel;

but this need not be if all believers who value the Institution will give the Lord his tithe in a conscientious manner. Our heart's longing is to see the College become more and more a Mission to the outlying places, both at home and abroad, and it may be, in answer to prayer, the Lord will make it so. This year, alas! many a good opening has been missed from want of funds; but it was necessarily so, and therefore we submit.

As for the Orphanage, let it be spoken to the praise of our faithful God, all its needs are met even before they arise. This year the Infirmary has been built, and no debt incurred. Our joy of heart is great for this and for other marvellous favors. The Lord hath done great things for us whereof we are glad. From small beginnings great things have arisen. The widow's heart has been made to leap for joy, and the fatherless have blessed their helpers.

Our Magazine has been of great service to our two labors of love, the College and the Orphanage. By its means our friends have been informed of our requirements. Tea thousand thanks to donors great and small, who have not only sent their money, but added cheering words of sympathy, more to be desired than silver.

We launch upon another year confident in the God of our strength. Mental labor in preaching, writing, and caring for our work, often lays us low, but with God's own promise beneath us we rise again. Dear brethren, give the weary laborer the rich dowry of your prayers. Some of you do thus remember us we know: the Lord reward you for it. Many of our dear friends and helpers have gone to heaven this year, but more will arise to fill their places. Those who are fed by the weekly sermon will not let our students and orphans want; and we hope the Colporteurs will not be forgotten.

With Christian love to friends each and all,
We are still your willing servant,

C. H. SPURGEON

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL

JANUARY, 1870.

A NEW YEAR'S LETTER

TO MY MINISTERING BRETHREN.

BELOVED FRIENDS,

The season invites to renewal of spiritual life. It suggests freshness and awakening. As there was of old a time when kings went forth to battle, so are there periods when to gird up our loins anew is the order of the day. The furnishing of the armor, and the sharpening of the sword, are the duties now incumbent. Let the year of grace, 1870, be to us all a year of greater consecration, and more incessantly indefatigable effort for the great cause and kingdom of the Lord Jesus. To achieve this it will -be most helpful to begin the year well, and to do this there must he holy resolve, and a settling of the whole soul to the work.

Being debarred from serving the Lord by my own public ministry, it has been laid upon my heart to endeavor to stir up my brother ministers to use increased diligence while they are permitted the great pleasure and privilege of preaching the word. It is a hard trial to be laid aside, and harder still if the heart be pierced with regrets for opportunities unimproved when health was in possession. That you may never know such poignant sorrows is my earnest wish, and to help in that end I ask leave to address a few words to you. I pray that every syllable I write may be approved of God, and may be by the Holy Ghost rendered serviceable to you.

It has struck me painfully, that for some little time a somewhat listless spirit has fallen upon many of the churches, and perhaps upon the ministers. A short time ago we heard more of special services, revival meetings, and aggressive efforts upon the world than we do at present; perhaps these may still be in full and vigorous operation among your people, but in many places it is not so; the pace of holy work has slackened, and the church is

falling back into that dreary routine which is easily reached and is so hard to escape. Nothing is more dreadful than stagnation, even heresy is not more deadly in its consequences. Sleep at the hour of battle would prove as disastrous to an army as the most deadly artillery. The spiritual morphia with which some churches appear to be drugged and drenched is for all practical purposes as injurious as the poison of infidelity. A church whose religion is mechanical and whose zeal is non-existent may soon become a nuisance but is never a blessing.

It may be a desponding fancy of a sick man, but my fear is, that we are many of us relaxing in our efforts for soul winning. We are not so bad as we were, but still we are declining from the proper temperature of zeal. Meanwhile our direst enemies, the Romanising Anglicans, have taken up the weapons which we have laid aside, and are making most ostentatious, and it is to be feared most successful, use of them. They are evidently wise in their generation, for they not only borrow from Rome, but they copy from us, as their late season of special services clearly testifies. Blending' a little precious gospel truth with their thrice accursed sacramentarianism, and disguising their popery with evangelical phraseology, these wolves of Antichrist have worn the clothing of the sheep t.; serve their crafty ends. Is this permitted by our Lord to irritate us to a renewed activity? Does he thus chide us by causing us to see how others burn with zeal, and in their ardor compass sea and land to make proselytes? Does he not say to us, "Behold how these men are quick to adopt all methods; are ye, my servants, dull of understanding?"

Allow me, beloved friends, to urge upon you, with all affection, the adoption of special means for the conversion of your congregations. Despite the mischief done by wild excitement, there can be no question that the Holy Spirit does very graciously bless means *prayerfully* adopted by his servants, for arousing the church and ingathering sinners. Many pastors can bear witness, that persons who have remained undecided under their ordinary addresses, have been led to surrender their hearts to Jesus, at a special meeting where exhortation, persuasion, and instruction were all aimed at the seeker's spiritual good. If God had but blessed such services in the smallest degree we ought to repeat them, but as he has in many cases eminently smiled upon them, our duty is dear as the sun.

Will you not then, ff you have hitherto omitted to do so, give serious heed to the suggestion that you should hold a series of services for calling in the

careless population around you, and for leading to decision, under the power of the Holy Spirit, those who have heard in vain? To secure the ear of the outside world let all means be used. If men will not come into our chapels, let earnest services be held out of doors, or in halls, barns, or theatres, or wherever else the people will come. Every church should have its mission beyond itself upon some neutral ground for a week or two at least at this season. Were this done by every church, what a vast extent of new ground would at once be broken up! and be it ever remembered that virgin soil always bears the most luxuriant crop. Our congregations are like moors that have been shot over till little game remains, but the outside masses are like unbroken covers where every shot will have its reward.

Let our members be exhorted to assist us in drawing in the outlying multitude to hear the gospel. Let them hold cottage meetings, tea meetings, and other gatherings, which they may be qualified to arrange or assist in conducting. To win attention from our neighbors it may be in some cases best to call in other preachers to give interest to the services. Certain individuals, whose gifts are of a special character, are better adapted for evangelising and exhortation than the best of pastors may be; we ought to feel no difficulty in accepting the aid of such brethren. A new voice may attract ears that have grown dull of hearing under us. An exchange with a trusty brother may be good for both congregations and both preachers. We would by any means save some, and therefore no stone should be left unturned. No personal vanity or jealous fear must prevent our accepting the aid of brethren whose adaptation to evangelising work may exceed our own. Who are we that our standing in the church should be of such consequence as to be preserved at the expense of souls? If men are but saved what matters it whether we be highly esteemed or little set by? I trust we are any or all of us willing to be made as the mire of the streets if the Lord Jesus may but have a glorious high throne in the hearts of the sons of men.

Certain of the performances of the late Ritualistic mimicry of dissent were singularly ridiculous. The candle business was enough to excite the derision of every sane man, and certain other tomfooleries were equally idiotic; they may serve as a caution to those eager but imprudent spirits in our own ranks who hope to gain the popular ear by advertising slang titles of sermons, and to impress the heart by mere rant and declamation. Solid Bible doctrine, with sober faithful *utterance*, will succeed better than all the claptrap and cushion~ thumping of zealots. We want nothing vulgar,

nothing theatrical, nothing in the Bombastes Furioso vein, in order to achieve success. The Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, eusured in all his plenitude of grace by the earnest entrearies of the church and the intercession of her Covenant Head, is our strength and pledge of victory: we dare not condescend to use unauthorised weapons when those appointed by the King himself are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.

My dear brethren, how soon shall we be laid aside from our work, and that for ever! Few and golden are the hours in which we may manifest our loving anxiety for our hearers' souls. Our grave is preparing. Is our work clone? If mine be accomplished, I tremble as I think how poverty-stricken my life has been, compared to my opportunities; and I pray to have my years lengthened, that I may render a better account of my stewardship. Your own feelings are much the same, and the more diligent you have been, the more surely will such confessions be made. None axe content with themselves but those who ought to be ashamed. Alas! we have been unprofitable servants, and deserve to be dismissed the royal service. Let us not allow our reflections to evaporate in mere regret, but let us, in the fear of God, seek to be more diligent in the future, Meanwhile, if we loiter, death does not; our hearers are perishing before our eyes; and the millions are passing into eternal misery (yes, my brethren, we dare believe no less than *eternal* misery) as fast as time can bear them. Impelled by the love which brought our Master from his throne, and made him a sacrifice for men, let us bestir ourselves. To us has he committed the word of reconciliation. We are ambassadors for Christ. Let us not bring contempt upon our office and reproach upon the gospel by a want of zeal; let us rather, by the good Spirit of the Lord, resolve to be instant in season and out of season.

Our private prayers, my brethren, must be more frequent and fervent'. Could we not, as united in the one family in heaven and earth, enter into a brotherly compact to mention each other in our prayers at least once every day? Could not the months of January and february be specially marked by our reminding our people of our brethren in the ministry, both at home and abroad, and pressing upon them the peculiar needs of ministers, that they may join their prayers with ours that all the bishops, evangelists, and deacons of our churches may be thoroughly furnished unto every good work? The next three months would be a season to be remembered, if there

should be unusual activity in all our churches, and prevalent intercession from all our members.

Brethren, what doth hinder us from receiving a great blessing? We are not straitened in God, let us not be straitened in our own bowels. For the love of our Lord Jesus, and the honor of his name, let us plead, and labor, and agonise, and believe, and the blessing will come, it shall not tarry.

Receive assurances of my purest and warmest love, pardon my forwardness in thus addressing you, and believe me ever to be your Brother and Servant for Jesus' sake,

C. H. SPURGEON.

SKETCH OF THE LATE MR THOMAS OLNEY'S LIFE. ^{F23}

THE Bible exhorts us to remember the way the Lord hath led us, and the fellow workers of our departed friend, Mr. Olney, earnestly desire to recal to mind the loving care and tender mercy of God towards their esteemed and aged brother.

He was born November 10th, 1790, in Tring, in *the* county of Herts. His father, Mr. Daniel Olney, was for many years a deacon of the Baptist church in theft town. Mr. Olney was sent to London from Tring, and apprenticed in the City to a wholesale mercer. He from his first entrance into London, attended the ministry of the well known Dr. Rippen, of Carter-lane Baptist Chapel. Here the Lord graciously met with him and saved his soul. He was proposed as a candidate for church fellowship, December, 1809. If we take this for a starting point, then he was for 60 years a consistent and useful member of the church. In company with his brother, Mr. Daniel Olney, he was baptised and received into the church. Shortly after, he was married to Unity, the daughter of Mr. Potter, deacon of the Baptist church, Amersham, Bucks. He was accustomed, even in their earliest years, to take his children to Carter-lane Chapel, having a little chair fixed on the pew seat for the youngest.

Here he formed friendships, faithful till death, with many old Baptist worthies. Between Dr. Rippen and our departed friend a most cordial friendship was formed. For many years he sat in the pulpit with him, and

also assisted his weak and failing strength in the administration of the ordinance of baptism.

The Sunday-school, the Baptist Home and Foreign Mission Societies, found in him a warm friend and liberal contributor.

In 1817, was commenced in Carter-lane Chapel an early Sabbath morning lecture. To be at the service by half-past six o'clock, to provide the necessary funds by collecting, to receive and welcome the various ministers, was to Mr. Olney at once a duty and a delight. His closest and dearest friendships were formed within the circle of the church. Not only did he say of the church, "Thy God shall be my God," but also, "Thy people shall be my people."

Great changes took place in the church. In 1829, Carter-lane Chapel became the property of the City, and was pulled down; Dr. Rippen became old and feeble; the love of some grew cold, and they left the church in its hour of peril. Not so Thomas Olney: he remained manfully with the church. He was appointed a trustee for the chapel in New Park-street, opened in 1833. His much-loved pastor and friend, Dr. Rippen, expired in his presence, it might as properly be said in his arms. It was our honored friend's great privilege for some months by his care and kindness, to cheer the last days of his highly-esteemed friend and pastor, towards whose memory he cherished till his last days a most tender affection.

During all the time of erecting the new chapel in New Park-street, 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, better known as Mr. Smith, of Cheltenham, the author of so many excellent little religious books. How gracious was God to our deceased brother? It was his happiness to see all his four sons baptised and join the church assembling within the walls of New Park Street Chapel. In 1838, he was, together with his friend Mr. Winsor, chosen deacon of the church. He faithfully served that office thirty-one years. *He was ever remarkable for his early and constant attendance at the prayer-meeting, and other week-day services.* He truly loved the habitation of God's house. But God had other mercies in store for him. His beloved Zion was to arise and shine. By the providence of God, Deacon Olney had his attention directed by his old friend, the late Mr. G. Gould, of Loughton, to our present honored pastor. The church was then seeking a minister, and from his recommendation Mr.

C. H. Spurgeon was invited, and became the honored and successful pastor of the church. Our Zion lengthened her cords and strengthened her stakes. The church abundantly grew and was multiplied.

A new and far larger building was needed, a meeting in Mr. Olney's house commenced the undertaking, and the work after much pains and prayer was accomplished. In 1855, "Father Olney," as he was playfully styled by pastor and deacon, was chosen treasurer of the church, and by the help of his sons fulfilled the office until his death, together with those of deacon and elder.

He was treasurer fourteen years. "Of his love and devotion to both the pastor and the church we all are witnesses." His greatest pride, we might almost use that word, was the work of God at the Tabernacle. He gloried and rejoiced in all that concerned the church. Every institution received his cordial co-operation; he loved college, orphanage, and almshouses, and helped them all to the extent of his ability. His fellow officers in the deaconship shared his esteem and love. And now that he has changed earthly for heavenly service and joy, may his memory and example stir us all to copy and follow him as far as he followed Christ.

Our departed friend had a childlike faith and humility. To believe in Jesus and to work for Christ was the very life of his new and better nature. He was eminently a true Baptist. In our departed "Father" the poor have lost a friend. The poor, and especially the poor of the church, always found in him sincere sympathy and help. By all his children his name will live in lasting remembrance and loving regard.

May the Lord raise up others like him for his church's sake.

DESPONDENCY.

COLTON' declares that in moments of despondency Shakespeare thought himself no poet; and Raphael doubted his right to be called a painter. We call such self-suspensions morbid, and ascribe them to a hypochondriacal fit; in what other way can we speak of those doubts as to their saintship, which occasionally afflict the most eminently holy of the Lord's people!

A WORD FROM THE BELOVED'S OWN MOUTH

BY C. H. SPURGEON.

“And ye are clean.”—John 13:10.

AS Gideon's fleece was fall of dew so that he could wring out the moisture, so will a text sometimes be when the Holy Spirit deigns to visit his servants through its words. This utterance of our Savior to his disciples has been as a wafer made with honey to our taste, and we doubt not it may prove equally as sweet to others.

Observe, dear reader, carefully what the *eulogium* is which is here passed upon the Lord's beloved friends. “Ye are clean.” This is the primeval blessing, so soon lost by our first parent. This is the virtue, the loss of which shut man out of Paradise, and continues to shut men out of heaven. The want of cleanness in heart and hands condemns sinners to banishment from God, and defiles all their offerings. To be clean before God is the desire of every penitent, and the highest aspiration of the most advanced believer. It is what all the ceremonies and ablutions of the law can never bestow, and what Pharisees with all their pretensions cannot attain. To be clean is to be as the angels are, as glorified saints are, yea as the Father himself is. Acceptance with the Lord, safety, happiness, and every blessing, always go with cleanness of heart, and he that hath it cannot miss of heaven. It seems too high a condition to be ascribed to mortals, yet by the lips of him who could not err, the disciples were said, without a qualifying word, or adverb of degree, to be “clean;” that is to say, they were perfectly justified in the sight of eternal justice, and were regarded as free from every impurity. Dear reader, is this blessing yours? Have you ever believed unto righteousness? Have you taken the Lord Jesus to be your complete cleansing, your sanctification and redemption? Has the Holy Spirit ever sealed in your peaceful spirit the gracious testimony, “ye are clean”? The assurance is not confined to the apostles, for ye also are “complete in *him*,” “*perfect* in Christ Jesus,” if ye have indeed by faith received the righteousness of God. The psalmist said, “*Wash* me, and I shall be whiter than snow;” if you have been washed, you are even to that highest and purest degree clean before the Lord, and clean *now*. O that all believers would live up to their condition and privilege; but alas! too many are pining as if they were still miserable sinners, and forgetting that they are in Christ

Jesus forgiven sinners, and therefore ought to be happy in the Lord. Remember, beloved believer, that as one with Christ you are not in the gall of bitterness with sinners, but in the land which floweth with milk and honey with the saints. Your cleanness is not a thing of degrees, it is not a variable or vanishing quantity, it is present, abiding, perfect, you are clean through the Word, through the application of the blood of sprinkling to the conscience, and through the imputation of the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Lift up then your head and sing for joy of heart, seeing that your transgression is pardoned, your sin is covered, and in you Jehovah seeth not iniquity. Dear reader, read no further, till by faith in Jesus you have grasped this privilege. Be not content to believe that the priceless boon may be had, but lay hold upon it for yourself. You will find the song of substitution a choice song if you are able to sing it.

*“In my surety I am free,
His dear hands were pierced for me;
With his spotless vesture on
Holy as the Holy One.”*

Much of the force of the sentence before us lies in *the person praising* To be certified as clean by the blind priests of Rome, would be small comfort to a true Christian. To receive the approving verdict of our fellow men is consoling, but it is after all of small consequence. The human standard of purity is itself grossly incorrect, and therefore to be judged by it is but a poor trial, and to be acquitted a slender comfort; but the Lord Jesus judges no man after the flesh, he came forth from God and is himself God, infinitely just and good, hence his tests are accurate and his verdict is absolute. I wot whom he pronounces clean is clean indeed. Our Lord was omniscient, the least evil in his disciples he would have at once detected; if there had remained upon them an unpardoned sin he must have seen it; if any relic of condemnation had lingered upon them he must have detected it at once, no speck could have escaped his all-discerning eye; yet did he say without hesitation of all but Judas, “Ye are clean.” Perhaps they did not catch the full glory of this utterance; possibly they missed much of that deep joyous meaning, which is now revealed to us by the Spirit; otherwise what bliss to have heard with their own ears from those sacred lips, so plain, so positive, so sure a testimony to their character before God! Yet our hearts need not be filled with regret because we cannot hear that ever-blessed voice with these our earthly ears, for the testimony of Jesus in the word is quite as sure as the witness of his lips when he spake among the

sons of men, and that testimony is, “Whosoever believeth is justified from all things.” Yes, it is as certain as if you, dear reader, heard the Redeemer himself speak, that you are free from all condemning sin, if you are looking with your whole heart to Jesus only as your all in all. What a joy is yours and mine! He who is to judge the world in righteousness has himself affirmed us to be clean. By how much the condemnation of guilt is black and terrible, by so much the forgiveness of sin is bright and comforting. Let us rejoice in the Lord whose indisputable judgment has given forth a sentence so joyous, so full of glory.

*“Jesus declares me clean,
Then clean indeed I am,
However guilty I have been,
I’m cleansed through the Lamb.*

*His lips can never lie,
His eye is never blind,
If he acquit, I can defy
All hell a fault to find.”*

It may cheer us to call to mind the *person,s praised*. They were not cherubim and seraphim, but men, and notably they were men compassed with infirmity; there was Peter, who a few minutes after was forward and presumptuous; and, indeed, it is not needful to name them one by one, for they all forsook their Master and fled in his hour of peril. Not one among them was more than a mere child in grace, they had little about them that was apostolic except their commission, they were very evidently men of like passions with us; yet their Lord declared them to be clean, and clean they were. Here is good cheer for those souls who are hungering after righteousness, and pining because they feel so much of the burden of indwelling sin; for cleanliness before the Lord is not destroyed by our infirmities, nor prevented by our inward temptations. We stand in the righteousness of another. No measure of personal weakness, spiritual anxiety, soul conflict, or mental agony can mar our acceptance in the Beloved. We may be weak infants, or wandering sheep in ourselves, and for both reasons we may be very far from what we wish to be, but as God sees us we are viewed as washed in the blood of Jesus, and we, even we, are clean every whit. What a forcible expression, “clean every whir;” every inch, from every point of view, in all respects, and to the uttermost degree! Dear reader, if a believer, this fact is true to you, even to You. Hesitate not to drink, for it is water out of your own cistern, given to you in the

covenant of grace. Think not that it is presumption to believe the word, marvellous though it be. You are dealing with a wonderful Savior, who only doeth wonderful things, therefore stand not back on account of the greatness of the blessing, but rather believe the more readily because the word is so like to everything the Lord doeth or speaketh. Yet when thou hast believed for thyself and cast every doubt to the wind, thou wilt not wonder less, but more, and it will be thy never-ceasing cry, “Whence is this to me?” How is it that I who wallowed with swine should be made pure as the angels? Delivered from the foulest guilt, is it indeed possible that I am made the possessor of a perfect righteousness? Sing, O heavens, for the Lord hath done it, and he shall have everlasting praise.

*“Yes, thou, my soul, e’en thou art clean,
The Lord has wash’d thee white as snow,
In spotless beauty thou art seen,
And Jesus hath pronounced thee so.*

*Despite thy conflicts, doubts, and fears,
Yet art thou still in Christ all fair,
Haste then to wipe away thy tears,
And make his glory all thy care.”*

The time when the praise was given is not without instruction. The word of loving judgment is in the present tense, “Ye are clean.” It is not “ye were clean,” that might be a rebuke for purity shamelessly sullied, a condemnation for wilful neglect, a prophecy of wrath to come; neither is it “ye might have been clean,” that would have been a Stern rebuke for privileges rejected, and opportunities wasted; nor is it even “ye shall be clean,” though that would have been a delightful prophecy of good things to come at some distant period; but ye are clean, at this moment, in this room, and around this table. Though but just then Peter had spoken so rudely, yet he was then clean. What comfort is here amid our present sense of imperfection; our cleanness is a matter of this present hour, we *are*, just here in our present condition and position, “clean every whit.” Why then postpone our joy? the cause of it is in possession, let the mirth be even now overflowing. Much of our heritage is certainly future, but if there were no other boon tangible to faith in this immediate present, this one blessing alone should awaken all our powers to the highest praise. Are we even now clothed with the fair white linen which is the righteousness of saints? then let us sing a new song unto Jehovah-Tsidkenn, the Lord our

Righteousness. May the Holy Ghost now bear witness with every believing reader, “and ye are clean.”

*“Then may your souls rejoice and sing,
Then may your voices sweetly ring,
For if your souls through Christ are dear,
What cause have you to faint or feat?”*

COURAGE

SIR FRANCIS DRAKE, being in a dangerous storm in the Thames, was heard to say, Must I who have escaped the rage of the ocean, be drowned in a ditch!” Will you, experienced saints, who have passed through a world of tribulation lie down and die of despair or give up your profession because you are at the present moment passing through some light affliction? Let your past preservation inspire you with courage and constrain you to brave all storms for Jesus’ sake.

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL

FEBRUARY 1, 1870.

THE EAGLE AND THE HEN ^{f24}

“As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: so the Lord alone did lead him.” — Deuteronomy 32:11, 12.

“How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not” — Matthew 23: 37.

WHAT great condescension it is on God’s part that he should compare himself to anything that he has made, for the Creator must always be infinitely grander than the created. Greater condescension still is it that the Eternal should liken himself to birds — to a bird of prey, and then to the familiar domestic fowl. He whom neither time nor space can compass, nor imagination conceive, yet speaks of fluttering with wings and covering with his feathers. Does not this assure us of the willingness of the Lord to reveal his love to us? Does it not prove his desire that we should understand his providential dealings with us? He does not aim at dazzling us by displaying his inconceivable glory, but his object is to comfort us by manifesting his gracious condescension. He uses these images that he may instruct our ignorance, and that our feeble minds may grasp those majestic truths which otherwise must remain veiled in mystery, sublime but incomprehensible. Just as a father stoops to talk in the nursery prattle of his little child, because otherwise it would not understand him even so does our heavenly Father employ homely images and common figures that we who are but babes in grace may comprehend him and confide in him. Ought we not to echo to this desire on God’s part to teach, by a more than willingness to learn of him? Where he thus bows the heavens that he may instruct us, should we not arouse all our powers to devout attention, saying with young Samuel, “Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.”

Having for the sake of bringing out a contrast, chosen two Scriptures for our meditation, we will commence with the metaphor of the eagle, and refresh our memories by reading the text again.

As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings, so the Lord alone did lead him.”

We do not intend to give a full exposition of these rich expressions, but merely to glance at thoughts which gleam upon the surface.

In the image of the royal eagle fondly cherishing its young, we see *love allied with grandeur unbending itself in tenderness*. The eagle, wearing the wings of the morning, and holding the blast in scorn, is the playmate of the lightning, delighting in the uproar of the tempest. Terrible sublimity surrounds “the warrior bird,” whose fiery glance dares fix itself upon the sun. “She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place. From thence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off. Her young ones also suck up blood, and where the slain are, there is she.”

*“The tawny eagle seats his callow brood
High on the cliff, and feasts his young with blood;
On Snowdon’s rocks, or Orkney’s wide domain,
Whose beetling cliffs o’erhang the western main,
The royal bird his lonely kingdom forms
Amidst the gathering clouds and sullen storms.
Through the wide waste of air he darts his sight,
And holds his sounding pinions poised for flight.”*

The text portrays this monarch among the birds of the air as practising endearments towards its young of the most affectionate kind; you see no allusion to its strength of wing, or to the brightness of its eye, or to the ferocity of its nature; it is sporting with its eaglets, with all the fondness of a dove, and in such an attitude is the right worthy emblem of greatness bowed by force of love unto familiar tenderness. When we speak of God unto what shall we liken him? Where are words by which we can describe him? Since we cannot in any way set him forth, we will not attempt the task, yet will we quote the psalmist’s words, and bid you note the blending of love with loftiness. “He bealeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. He telleth the number of the stars; he calleth them all by their names.” And yet further would we remind you that “He maketh the clouds

his chariot: he walketh upon the wings of the wind, yet doth he dwell with the humble and contrite and with those who tremble at his word." He thundereth marvellously with his voice, and is terrible in majesty, and yet a bruised reed he will not break, and a smoking flax he will not quench. "The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world and all that dwell therein;" yet hath he said to his people, "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem." Wonder of wonders, that the Infinite should stoop to commune with the insignificant and impure. It is beyond all things marvellous that God should *love* man. We can easily comprehend that he should be kind to man, and deal benevolently and even mercifully with him, seeing that he is the creature of his hand; but that the infinite God should bow his heart to love a finite and sinful being, is a miracle surpassing all miracles. Herein in very deed the heavens are rent, and the glory of the Lord is revealed among men. Talk not of the resurrection of the dead, or the opening of the eyes of the blind, or the ears of the deaf, these are small marvels when compared with God's loving man after man had wilfully broken the most just of laws and hardened himself in rebellion against his Lord. To speak of the eagle stooping to its young is nothing; here is a far more amazing triumph of love, when the Most High and Holy One revealeth himself in tenderest affection to the people of his choice.

A second glance at our text fixes our attention upon *love allied with prudence bestirring the loved ones*. Note the words, "As the eagle stirreth up her nest;" here love arouses wisdom, wisdom seeks the good of the fledglings, and paternal foresight breaks their repose. The parent birds make the young eaglets uneasy in the nest. Having been so well cared for before their feathers appeared, the young eagles might be well content to abide in the nest, they might be slow to try those callow pinions, and begin to shift for themselves; but the prudent bird will not allow its offspring to remain in indolence; it stirs up the nest and makes it uncomfortable for them that they may desire to leave it, and may test their wings by taking short flights which by-and-by shall lengthen into heavenward searings. Now, observe that God in dealing with his people exercises the same prudent love, and uses trials as a preventative for spiritual sluggishness. Most of the saints have experienced the discipline of grace. They were growing too fond of earth, too wrapped up in creature joys, too carnal-minded, and lo, it came to pass that the desire of their eyes was taken away with a stroke, or their riches made to themselves wings and flew away, or their bodily frame

began to quiver with pain, or their honor among men faded like a flower, and in every case the result was to wean from earth and to wed to heaven. How easily can God fill the downiest nest with thorns, and how good it is for us to find it so! We do not always at once perceive the wisdom which spoils our comforts, but in future days I wet that we shall consider our sharpest trials to have been amongst our richest privileges, and perhaps in heaven next to the note which resounds the dying love of Christ, the highest will be that which sings of the wisdom of God in the tribulations with which he graciously afflicted his people on the way to their rest. Next to the cross of Christ, we may prize the cross we are daily called to carry. The eagle stirs up its nest, and even thus we may expect that God in infinite love will often spoil our earthly repose. The Israelites were in Egypt in the land of Goshen, and as they found fat and fertile pastures for their flocks they would by insensible degrees have become fully naturalised, the chosen seed would have degenerated into Egyptians, and grovelled in all the idolatries of that land; but the Lord sent a Pharaoh to rule them, who knew not Joseph, and the people were put under cruel taskmasters, and their male children ordered to be destroyed, then it was that they remembered the Lord's promise to visit them and bring them out of Egypt. Then they bethought themselves of the land that floweth with milk and honey which God had covertanted to give them, and their minds were all the readier for Moses the servant of God and the miracles with which he brought them out. Nor was this the only instance of the stirring up of Israel's nest, for all the time they were in the wilderness their daily trials prevented their finding rest until they came to Canaan. The desert was not a smooth highway or a luxuriant pasture land. Serpents bit them, thirst parched them, Amalekites assailed them. They found few wells and palm trees; the wilderness was desolate to them, and all in order to keep them from attempting to find a dwelling out of the land of promise. Their only rest must be where God had said it should be: they must build no houses and plant no vineyards out of Canaan. See, then, in Godpeople the image of ourselves and let us admire the prudence of divine love.

*“It needs our hearts be wean’d from earth,
It needs that we be driven,
By loss of every earthly stay,
To seek our joys in heaven.*

*For we must follow in the path
Our Lord and Savior run;
We must not find a resting-place
Where he we love had none.”*

Again turning to the text, we perceive in the next few words *love by its example leading the way*. The eagle, having stirred up her nest, flutters over her young, as if to show them how to fly. She tries every fond endearment to induce them to trust the buoyant air, her own fluttering being the best practical instruction she can yield. The eagle, according to naturalists, takes much pains to teach its young, and educates them in the best manner — namely, by example. Sir Humphrey Davy had an opportunity of witnessing the instructions given, and thus records the fact: — “I once saw a very interesting sight above one of the crags of Ben Nevis, as I was going in the pursuit of black game. Two parent eagles were teaching their offspring — two young birds — the manoeuvres of flight. They began by rising from the top of the mountain, in the eye of the sun. It was about midday, and bright for this climate. They at first made small circles, and the young birds imitated them. They paused on their wings, waiting till they had made their first flight, and then took a second and larger gyration, always rising towards the sun, and enlarging their circle of flight, so as to make a gradually ascending spiral. The young ones still slowly followed, apparently flying better as they mounted; and they continued this sublime exercise, always rising, till they became mere points in the air, and the young ones were lost, and afterwards their parents, to our aching sight.”

After a more glorious sort, the Lord God of our salvation trains his people for high and holy endeavours by the leadings of his providence and the examples of his holiness.

When Israel came out of Egypt, the Lord led forth the people, showing them how and where to march. If they had to pass through the Red Sea, the pillar of cloud and fire went before them; if they were afterwards called to traverse the sandy desert, the Lord in majesty marched in the van. They were never commanded to advance until Jehovah’s mysterious footsteps had first trodden the path. In a more spiritual sense we see and admire the

abundant grace of God reflected in the sympathy of Christ, for he has borne already what we bear, as it is written, "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old." The example of Christ fulfils to the utmost the comparison of the fluttering eagle. He who would learn to be holy must study the life of his Redeemer, and copy its every line. Jesus the eagle of God, teaches us how to fly towards heaven. His example is our noblest incentive and encouragement. In subordination to this the saints who have gone before us in their experience of sustaining and sanctifying grace, are so many divine flutterings by which the Lord teaches us to trust him, and to rejoice in him. Thus you have love in prudence stirring up the nest — love, by its example, exciting to effort and showing the way.

The text further brings before us *love lending its strength to educate and discipline its beloved*. "Taketh them, beareth them on her wings." The eagle has been said to place her callow eaglets between her wings, and when she has borne them up to a certain height, she casts them off her back to compel them to fly. They must try their wings or fall and be dashed to pieces; thus they are driven to their first attempts, but if the old bird perceives that their little wings cannot bear them up, she darts beneath them in a moment and catches them between her wings again; and carries them aloft in safety to repeat the experiment as they are able to bear it. Whether this is literally true or not we cannot say, but assuredly the illustration it affords is valuable, for thus does the Lord exercise all his people. Suddenly he takes away all manifest supports from us, and we are compelled to live by faith. At first we fear that we shall surely be destroyed, for our faith is very weak; but underneath us the everlasting wings are again revealed, and though a moment before falling rapidly, we find ourselves rising quite as suddenly, upborne again, beyond all clouds and mists of despondency, into the divine sunshine of joy; perhaps to descend again into trembling and anxiety when faith again is tried. Thus it is that we learn the flight of faith — not so much by comforts as by the lack of them. Thus it is we gather strength not so much by a sense of strength as by discovering our weakness and being compelled to repose upon Christ. The sacred discipline of trial develops all the graces which almighty love had wrought in us, and makes us mature, vigorous, valiant, and confident.

Still, we must not forget that in the text we see *love lending its needful aid in time of peril*. The eagle upholds and upheaves her eaglets while yet too weak to take care of themselves. She never suffers them to fall so as to be dashed in pieces. Her wings still bear them up beyond all risk of downfall. Equally safe are they from the hunter's deadly aim, she flies too high for him to reach her, or if such danger should occur, the shot must first pass through the mother bird before it can possibly wound her young — they are perfectly safe. So God bears his people up; they shall not fall totally or finally; they shall be sustained by his grace. He protects them from every danger, and he will safely bring them into his kingdom and glory.

Taking the illustration of the eagle as a whole, we have before us *disciplinary love*. This is the most prominent view of God under the Old Testament dispensation. It is love in awful majesty of greatness, thundering from the top of Sinai, "I am the Lord thy God;" love training a wayward people to make them fit for their noble calling; love educating as by a schoolmaster, training as by a captain, chastening as with a rod. The eagle metaphor is a very precious revelation of divine love; we could not afford to miss the blessings which it vividly sets forth; we want just such a God as Israel had in the wilderness — a God with the eagle's strength, with the eagle's love to its offspring, with the eagle's prudence in stirring up its nest, and with the eagle's care in instructing its young by doing itself what it would have its eaglets do. We want just this, but is there not something more sweet, more tender yet? In the New Testament do we not see love in even fairer colors? Is there not a gentleness, a nearness, a tenderness even more consoling to the troubled breast? We think we see all this in the second text. We are far enough from depreciating the first, yet would we magnify the second. Not for a moment would we allow that the Old Testament revelation is of inferior worth, yet do we discover in the New Testament points of inexpressibly glorious grace, surpassing everything before revealed.

We will now turn to *the metaphor of the hen*. We have it in two places in Scripture, but one will serve us, it is contained in the twenty-third of Matthew at the thirty-seventh verse: —

"How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not."

Here we have *love connected with familiarity*. The idea suggested by the eagle is sublimity; the thoughts aroused by the brooding hen are of familiar

tenderness. Let us so think of God, for so he reveals himself in the gospel. In the person of our Lord Jesus Christ our God comes very near to us, and he would have us come very near to him. It is the same God, great as he that overthrew the Egyptians in the Red Sea, and answered Job out of the whirlwind; yet when we draw near to his throne by faith in Jesus Christ, his greatness is not our first thought. We feel then the glow of his loving nearness to us, for the Lord has condescended to place us in union with his dear Son, to make us his own children, to give to us all the privileges of sons and the nature of sons, and to promise that we shall be with Jesus where he is. It is a blessed thing that the child of God need no longer lie like a slave beneath the throne. We are brought nigh by the blood of Christ. It is to be feared that many heirs of heaven have never enjoyed the spirit of adoption as they ought to do. They have suffered themselves still to abide under the spirit of bondage. Their prominent thought of God has been still the eagle and not the hen; they have not yet learned to cower down beneath the divine protection, with the familiarity of the chicken beneath the parental wings. We are not to think less of the infinite greatness of God, nay, we should think more of him; for let our ideas of him be ever so much enlarged, we shall never reach the height of his glory; but still let there be no distance, let not his majesty chill and freeze the genial current of our soul, but let us remember that his love is as great as his power, and his tenderness is as infinite as his existence; he himself comes near to us; be not abashed to come near to him.

The comparison of the hen sets forth *love bestowing perfect rest*. The eagle stirred up her nest. The hen does the very opposite, she gathereth her chickens under her wings. Her object is not to excite and to arouse, but to shelter and cherish. Have you never observed the little chicks delightedly sheltering beneath their mother's feathers, a head peeping from under the wing, and another thrust out between the plumage of the breast. How happy they all appear to be! Scarce any little note has more music of delight in it than the happy twittering of chicks when they are in warm Elysium of rest. There is nothing that they want; there is nothing more they could think of wanting. So, under the New Testament dispensation, the Lord reveals himself to his people as giving them rest. "We that have believed do enter into rest." "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you." Note well, that the two ordinances which distinguish the two Testaments differ just as do the two metaphors before us. The passover — how did they eat it? In haste, each man with his loins girt and his staff in his

hand, for they expected to hear of judgment upon Egypt, and to go forth themselves by night in great haste from the iron bondage. But how did our Lord and his apostles celebrate the sacred supper? Not superstitiously kneeling, or uncomfortably standing. No, all the disciples reclined at the table, after the Oriental custom, manifesting that they were at perfect ease; and we are accustomed to advise you, when you gather together to break bread, to sit as easily as you can. The best posture at the Lord's Supper is that in which you may decorously enjoy the greatest rest. There is the great difference; the law bids you gird up your loins, for you must up and away; but the gospel says, "It is finished; you who are troubled, rest with us. Christ has ascended up on high, he has taken possession of the better Canaan for you." May we all know our God in Christ as the Lord and giver of peace! Peace, because our sin is washed away by the precious blood of Jesus; peace, because our righteousness is complete through the perfect work of Christ which is imputed to us; rest, because the everlasting covenant cannot be broken; rest, because the Beloved has gone to prepare a place for us, and will soon come again; rest, because we have east all our care on him who careth for us, and henceforth enjoy a peace which passeth all understanding, which keeps our hearts and minds through Jesus Christ.

Further, the simile of the hen brings out *love communing in the dearest manner*. The hen not only covers the chickens, but she supplies them with warmth from her own body. She, as it were, communicates of her vital force to the little tremblers whose strength is small, and who are cherished greatly by being nestled beneath her wings. Even so the Lord not only comes near us but he comes near us so as to communicate the mysterious warmth of his love and the mystic vitality of his own spirit to us. We have before us not so much love fluttering over its fledglings teaching them what to do, as love brooding over its offspring and communicating of its own self to them. Beloved, this is not a mystery to be talked of, except in friendly fellowship with those who have experienced it, but this is a matter rapturously to be enjoyed by each Christian for himself. When we know by experience that the sap of the branch is the sap of the stem, that the life of the Christian is Christ Jesus, then know we this secret. "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God;" we derive from Christ all that we have, and by coming into contact with him in heartfelt communion we receive love out of his love, peace out of his peace, joy out of his joy, and life out of his life, as the chickens receive their nurture from the hen. May we understand this and enjoy it evermore!

Again, observe that in the figure of the hen we see *love concerning weakness*. In the eagle it is love stirring up activity and developing latent strength, but here it is love bestowing protection upon those who are passive in receiving it, being weak. The little chicks do not try to uplift themselves on their own wings; they have nothing to do but to get fully beneath the mother, and there to rest. We need as in the first simile to be trained to use power when we have received it, and it should be our prayer that we may be strengthened with all might by his Spirit in the inner man. But there are times of sorrow, times of weakness, times of despondency, when that view of God yields us no comfort, and then we find it a peculiarly appropriate consolation that God has compared himself to the hen, so that we who are weak, trembling, powerless, may hide beneath his power and love, and find that nothing is required of us, but everything bestowed upon us. We rejoice to serve God, we delight, as saved souls, to honor our Redeemer, but it grates on our ears when we hear exhortations to serve God addressed to those who are dead in trespasses and sins, as if such services would save them, or as if their own strength would suffice them. They *are* to be exhorted to seek salvation in Christ by fleeing to him that he may gather them beneath his wings, Scripture warrants us in doing that; but we should be very wrong if we exhorted them to perform Christian duties as if they could fly up to heaven on their own wings. All the efforts of human nature will never save a soul. Men are not saved as eagles learn to fly, but they are saved as chickens are housed beneath the hen. They are not saved by activities, they are saved by passively accepting the activity of another and the sufferings of another — even Jesus Christ.

Hence we should carefully observe that this second metaphor was addressed to sinners, not to saints; not to Israel receiving God's mercy, so much as to Israel rejecting it; for Christ says, "How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." This last, then, is peculiarly a metaphor of encouragement and rebuke to sinners: the first is very instructive to the advanced saint, but this is suitable for saints and sinners too; and we delight to speak of it in the hope that some poor seeking heart, without strength, with no wings of its own, may come and hide beneath the wings of God, and find a refuge where Jesus Christ has provided it, under the shelter of eternal love, as it manifests itself in the atonement of the Lamb of God. There is a difference, then, between these two figures, though they are both marvellously instructive. The first was an Old Testament type, revealing

sternness, majesty, sublimity, power, prudence, discipline; the second is a New Testament emblem, manifesting sweetness, tenderness, familiarity, rest, security, content. The first is a symbol which only a saint can take to himself, and that not in the matter of his salvation, but only of his education. The second is a figure which is for the sinner as well as for the saint, for the doubter, for the trembler. May each of us live to know the second first, and then the first afterwards, as we grow in grace.

The lesson which the two comparisons may teach is not far to find.

First, to the child of God, the lesson is one of encouragement. Are you in trouble? Rejoice in your trouble: it is the eagle stirring up the nest. The eagle has not forgotten her young, when she stirs them up, love moves her to that deed: God has evidently not forsaken you if he is exciting you to look above this world of care. I could bless God when I was lately in acute pain, when the thought occurred to me, "My Master has not quite forgotten his servant. I am not cast away like a wilted, withered flower, flung out of the hand because it yields no fragrance. My Lord is bruising me, as men do spices, to bring out of me whatever of fragrance he perceives. He has some esteem for me, else would he not bruise me."

Perhaps you are called by God to a certain very difficult labor. Accept that labor, and if the service be beyond your strength, be not startled at it; the eagle taketh her young upon her wings, and bears them aloft. Get upon the wings of God in all your labor. You can mount well enough (who could not?) on another's wing? You shall swim well enough with the life-belt of omnipotence about you. You shall be strong enough to perform even miracles when God is at your right hand. Fear not, for as your days are so shall your strength be. Go to your service not only with utter distrust of yourself, even with the sentence of death written on your own strength; but go also with an unwavering trust in God, and with the confidence that he cannot forsake you.

Perhaps you are the conscious subject of great weakness. The longer the Christian lives the weaker he grows in his own esteem. He *thought* himself weak at first, but he *knows* himself weak now. Then let this text encourage you. If you are weak, come like the chickens, who being weak, hide under the hen. Sing with Wesley-

*"Cover my defenceless head
With the shadow of thy wing."*

There can be no better plea for you in going to God than this. If he should say, "Why come you here?" be content to reply, "Lord, I am *weak*, I come to thee for strength. I am defenceless, I come to thee for protection!" Necessity is the best argument with God's mercy. Your sense of weakness, therefore, should encourage you to hide beneath the wings of your God. "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust. His truth shall be thy shield and buckler." "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 lesson to the unbeliever is equally plain. Unbeliever, there is nothing consoling in these metaphors for you if you remain as you are. They can give you no encouragement. Suppose the eagle should find in its nest a bird which, when the parent fluttered, never responded to its flutterings, which when taken on the father's wings would never learn to fly! The royal bird would soon understand that an intruder was there; and what would be the result? An eagle is a dreadful bird when incensed. So remember when the Lord groweth angry and his longsuffering endeth, and his mercy is clean gone for ever, you will be in an awful condition. Did you never read those words, "Beware, ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver"? Behold in those words the divine wrath revealed as the eagle. That same eagle which thus taught its young to fly, tears in pieces that which it hates. O yield yourselves to God; yield yourselves by repentance and faith to him against whose wrath you cannot stand. May God grant you grace never to try passages at arms with the Almighty! Let not a worm contend with the devouring flame, nor the chaff wrestle with the whirlwind, nor a sinner fight with his God.

Look at the other metaphor — that of the hen gathering her chicks. Suppose you unbelievably remain apart from Christ, and are not gathered, so that the Savior may weep over you, and say, "How often would I have gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and *ye would not*;" O then remember how Jerusalem perished, and see in her fate a picture of your own. The chick which is unguarded by the mother's wings is always in danger. There is a speck in the sky; it is a hawk; see you not how it descends like a flash of lightning, and takes away the little one to be destroyed? The falcon of justice is searching for its victim, beware lest it bear you away to the place of doom. When the trumpet shall peal, and the dead shall awake, and the pillars of the earth shall shake, and the earth shall rock and reel, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, then swift-

winged vengeance shall soar aloft, and if you have no God to cover you, it will bear you away, into everlasting destruction from *the* presence of the Lord. My hearer, my reader, may you never know what it is to be *left* out when God shall read the muster-roll of his people. Without God! Without Christ! It will one day be everlasting misery to be without Christ! Seek ye the Lord while he may be found. The little chick does not need to prepare itself to come under the hen: it is not called upon to bring anything, or do anything. It merely runs, stoops its little head, and finds a shelter. Even thus, must we come to Christ, with desire in our hearts, prayer on our lips, and faith in our souls.

SPIKED GUNS

TO render a cannon useless there is no need to blow it to pieces, or melt it down, or fracture it, let but a small piece of iron be driven into the touch-hole, and the gun is disabled for service. In like manner, to render a man useless in the gospel war, there is no need for the devil to ruin his character, render him a heretic, or pervert him into a blasphemer, let but the entrance by which the divine fire reaches his soul be stopped up, and the mischief is effectually done. Alas! too many professors are like spiked guns, the heavenly spark has no admittance into their souls: in all other respects they are in right trim, but worldliness has blocked up the communication with the heavenly fire, and the divine enthusiasm being shut out, they are useless in the church, the mock of Satan, and the grief of those who are zealous for the Lord God of Israel. — *From My Note Book, now preparing for publication.*

MINISTERS SAILING UNDER FALSE COLOURS

BY C. H. SPURGEON.

OUR forefathers were far less tolerant than we are, and it is to be feared that they were also more honest. It will be a sad discount upon our gain in the matter of charity if it turn out that we have been losers in the department of truthfulness. There is no necessary connection between the two facts of growth in tolerance and decline in sincerity, but we are suspicious that they have occurred and are occurring at the same moment.

We freely accord to theological teachers a freedom of thought and utterance which in other ages could only be obtained by the more daring at serious risks, but *we also allow an amount of untruth-fullness in ministers, which former aries would have utterly abhorred.* It is upon the grounds for this last assertion that we mean to utter our mind in a brief paragraph or two; our love to the most unlimited religious liberty inciting us to all the sterner abhorrence of the license which like a parasite feeds thereon.

Upon the plea of spiritual liberty, of late years certain teachers who have abjured the faith of the churches which employ them, have nevertheless endeavored, with more or less success, to retain their offices and their emoluments. A band of men who maliciously blaspheme the atonement and deny the deity of our Lord, continue at this hour to officiate as pastors of more than one Reformed Church upon the Continent. A powerful body of sceptics, whose doubts upon the inspiration of Holy Scripture are not concealed, yet remain in churches whose professed basis is the inspiration of the Bible. Ministers are to be found who deny baptismal regeneration, and yet put into the mouths of children such words as these, "In my baptism; wherein I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven." In the same establishment may be found believers in nearly every dogma of the Popish creed, who nevertheless have declared their faith in articles which are distinctly Calvinistic; and now last, and, to our minds, most sorrowful of all, it comes out that there are men to be found among Caledonia's once sternly truthful sons who can occupy the pulpits and the manses of an orthodox Presbyterian church, and yet oppose her ancient confession of faith. Our complaint is in each case, not that the men changed their views, and threw up their former creeds, but that having done so they did not at once quit the office of minister to the community whose faith they could no longer uphold; their fault is not that they differed, but that, differing, they sought an office of which the prime necessity is agreement. All the elements of the lowest kind of knavery meet in the evil which we now denounce. Treachery is never more treacherous than when it leads a man to stab at a doctrine which he has solemnly engaged to uphold, and for the maintenance of which he receives a livelihood. The office of minister would never unwittingly be entrusted by any community to a person who would use it for the overthrow of the principles upon which the community was founded. Such conduct would be suicidal. A sincere belief of the church's creed was avowedly or by implication a part of the qualification which

helped the preacher to his stipend, and when that qualification ceases the most vital point of the compact between him and his church is infringed, and he is bound in honor to relinquish an office which he can no longer honestly fulfill. Scrupulous conscientiousness would not wait for any enquiries of church courts, but with noble delicacy, jealous of her own honor, would come forward and boldly say, "Gentlemen, the doctrines which you believe me to hold are no longer dear to me: I know that your church is not likely to alter her belief, and as I cannot square mine with hers, I leave her. I could not profess to be what I am not, or eat the bread of a church whose articles of faith I cannot accept." Having said this, the preacher has restored things to their natural position, and has a right, as far as his fellow men are concerned, to prophesy whatsoever seemeth good unto him. Whether he becomes orthodox or heterodox, more enlightened or less sound, is mainly his own business, and that of those who may accord with him; certainly, it is no concern of ours at this present, nor indeed is it so the concern of any soul breathing, that the man should be in any degree denied unbounded liberty of utterance; he has a right to speak what he believes, and in God's name let him speak. To put him to the loss of civil rights, or social status (so far as this last is a matter of voluntary act), is a suggestion to be scorned. To touch a hair of his head, or label him with an opprobrious epithet, would be disgraceful. He has cast off the bond which he found irksome; he scorned to be in fetters; he in common with all his fellows may now tell out his message in the world's great audience chamber, and our prayer for him is, the Lord send him divine light and love, and may his labor never be frustrated. But if the man make no such declaration to the religious body from whom in heart he differs, and offers no such resignation, but remains with it in name and in pay while secretly or openly opposing its covenanted faith, we have no words which can sufficiently describe the meanness of his conduct. If a priest engaged in sacrifice in the temple of Juggernaut should be converted to Mohammedanism, he would be a great rogue should he continue his ministrations in honor of the Hindoo deity; and every rupee that he received from the worshippers of the idol would be the fruit of fraud. Or to change the instance, should the pastor of a Christian church become a conscientious believer in the divinity of the goddess Kalee, he would be nothing short of a villain if he held his position and pocketed the contributions of believers in Jesus. The cases may be said to be extreme, but they are scarcely more so than some existing among us, and the principle is the same as in less glaring instances. By what tortuous

processes of reasoning could it be made to appear consistent with uprightness for an Arminian to accept emoluments upon the condition of teaching Calvinistic doctrines, or how could a Calvinist be justified should he enter into covenant to *teach* the opposite tenets? Would it be any decrease of the inconsistency of either official if he should, after gaining his position and securing its salary, become a stickler for ministerial liberty and insist upon delivering himself of his own real opinions which he dared not have avowed at his instalment, and which, *ex officio*, he ought to denounce? A church, having a written creed, virtually asks the candidate for her pulpit, "Do you hold fast our form of sound words, and, will you endeavor to maintain it?" On the response to that enquiry, other things being settled, the appointment depends. The candidate's "yea," is accepted in confidence as being sincere, and he is inducted; but if it be a lie, or if at any time it cease to be altogether true, it is only by a sophistry unworthy of an ingenuous mind, that a man can justify himself in retaining his place; he is bound in honor to relinquish it forthwith.

It may be said that churches should leave their ministers free to preach whatever they please. Our answer *is*, that it may or may not be the proper course, to us it seems to be a plan worthy only of a race of triflers, but that is not the point in hand. When churches agree to leave their preachers perfectly unbound as to doctrine, our remarks will have no relevancy, for where there is no compact there can be no breach of it; but the fact is that the churches as a rule do not give such boundless license, but lay down more or less distinct creeds and rules of practice, to which assent is given by all their ministers; and while these are still in use, no man can promise to maintain them, and yet war against them, profess to esteem them, and yet despise them, without his conduct being a great moral mystery to those who fain would think him an honest man.

It is frequently bewailed as a mournful circumstance that creeds were ever written; it is said, "Let the Bible alone be the creed of every church, and let preachers explain the Scriptures as they conscientiously think best." Here again we enter into no debate, but simply beg the objector to remember that *there are creeds*, that the churches have not given them up, that persons are not forced to be ministers of these churches, and therefore if they object to creeds they should not offer to become teachers of them; above all, they should not agree to teach what they do not believe. If a man thinks the banner of a political party to be a wrong one, he should not enlist under it, and if he does so, with his heart in another camp, he may expect

ejectment with remarks unflattering. Protest by all means against creeds and catechisms, but if you sign them, or gain or preserve a position by appearing to uphold them, wonder not if your morality be regarded as questionable.

It has been insinuated, if not openly averred, that to deprive a man of his office in any church because he denies its doctrines is persecution. But if the members of a religious community are forced to support a man who undermines their faith, are *they* not most clearly persecuted? If they are compelled to endure as their spiritual leader a person who impugns the doctrines which he was chosen to defend, is not this persecution of the heaviest sort? The liberty of preachers is important, but the liberty of hearers is important too. It would be wrong to oppress the individual, but it is not less so to oppress the many. Let the preacher use his tongue as he wills, but by what show of right should a congregation support him while he is opposing their views of truth? There is the whole world for every earnest speaker to talk in, but for what reason is he to have possession of a pulpit dedicated to the propagation of dogmas which he glories in refuting? We have scarcely patience to expose so self-evident an absurdity. The whine concerning persecution is effeminate cant. Not thus did the heroes of the Disruption set up a caterwaul when, because they could not agree with regulations forced on the Scottish Establishment, they surrendered all that they possessed of church house room and provender. Did Luther and Calvin claim to remain priests of the church of Rome, and hang on to benefices under the Pope's control? Did the Nonconformists of two hundred years ago claim to eat bread episcopally buttered after they had refused compliance with the Act of Uniformity?

Every free association has at least a civil right to make its own laws; no man is bound to join it, but, having joined it, if he disobey the rules it is no persecution, but the purest justice, to cast out the offending member. To put such a perfectly justifiable and even necessary expulsion on a level with thumb-screwing, burning, or imprisonment, is sheer idiotic maundering; and one wonders at the littleness of the souls who allow such pleadings to be offered on their behalf. Half a grain of heroism would make a man say, "No, I have no right to a stipend which I am disqualified from earning. I shall be a loser, but the world is wide, truth is precious, and while I am true to my sacred calling, and the spirit of truth, I doubt not that God will bear me through, and that there are true hearts beating in unison with mine who will rally round me: at any rate, I dare not act dishonestly." However great

a man's error, one feels a sympathy with his person when he is moved by honor-able sentiments to make personal sacrifices; but, even if we were certain that truth was on his side, if he violated the rights of others by forcing his opinions upon them, indignation should be excited in every just man's bosom.

But suppose a church to be founded upon compromise, and intended to embrace parties of many shades of opinion? Then, of course the latitude specified may be enjoyed without infraction of the code of honor, although it is possible that difficulties of another sort may arise; but even in such a case there must of necessity be some points settled, something not to be considered as moot, and our remarks are applicable to deviations from those settled standards to the fullest degree. Concerning these there must be no shuffling, or honor is gone. Ecclesiastics may not think so, but the common sense of observers outside never hesitates in its verdict when the clergy play with words. The proverb concerning the falseness of priests owes its' origin to the aptness of ecclesiastics to twist, language. No conceivable mode of expression could fix a doctrine if certain divines had the exposition of them. Black is white, and red no color, and green a peculiar shade of scarlet with theological word-splitters. Alas! that it should be so, for the crime is great, and thousands have died at Tyburn for faults not a tithe so injurious to the commonwealth.

What is to be done with persons who will not leave a church when their views are opposed to its standards? The reply is easy. They should have a patient hearing that they may have opportunity to explain, and if it be possible to their consciences, may sincerely conform; but if the divergence be proven, they must with all the courtesy consistent with decision be made to know that their resignation is expected, or their expulsion must follow. The church which does not do this has only one course before it consistent with righteousness; if it be convinced that the standards are in error and the preacher right, it ought at all hazards to amend its standards, and if necessary to erase every letter of its creed, so as to form itself on a model consistent with the public teaching which it elects, or with the latitude which it prefers. However much of evil might come of it, such a course would be un-impeachably consistent, so consistent indeed that we fear few ordinary mortals will be able to pursue it; but the alternative of maintaining a hollow ecru?act, based on a lie, is as degrading to manliness as to Christianity. Much and often have we marvelled at the inertia of Christian manhood. An Imaum who traduced the prophet from the pulpit of the

Mosque, would have small tolerance from the disciples of Mahomet beyond {;he leave to go his way, and never pollute the place a second time. Not even the most debased of idolatries would so stultify itself, or become so heartlessly hypocritical, as to enrich with the gold and silver of its votaries priests who avowedly and laboriously opposed the gods, and the teachings of the Shastras. It is reserved for certain Christian churches to degrade themselves by tolerating as their teachers the acknowledged and professed propounders of another gospel, and allowing the inspiration of the Bible, the deity of Christ, and the verities of the faith, to be scoffed at to their faces on the Sabbath-day by their own paid ministers. How long ere this reproach shall be rolled away!

COVETOUS

COVETOUS men must be the sport of Satan, for their grasping avarice neither lets them enjoy life nor escape from the second death. They are held by their own greed as surely as beasts with cords, or fish with nets, or men with chains. They may be likened to those foolish apes which in some countries are caught by narrow necked vessels; into these corn is placed, the creatures thrust in their hands, and when they have filled them they cannot draw out their fists unless they let go the grain, sooner than do this they submit to be captured. Are covetous men, then, so like the beast? Let them ponder and be ashamed.—From “*My Note Book.*”

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL

MARCH 1, 1870.

THE VOICE OF THE TURTLE

“The voice of the turtle is heard in our land.” —
Solomon’s Song 2:12.

THERE had evidently been a previous season of discomfort when the voice of the turtle was not heard, for preceding these words, we read, “the winter is passed, the ram’ is over and gone. This indicates that the spouse had previously passed through a winter of sorrow and adversity, but now enjoyed a time of joy, prosperity, and peace, fitly represented by the appearance of flowers, the singing of birds, and the voice of the turtle. Brethren, there are periods when in the little world of our manhood, rain, and frost, and tempest, rule the cheerless day; but there are also times, especially with believers in Jesus, when all these are things of the past, for a hallowed summer reigns within, with blossoming graces, growing fruits, and sounds of tuneful praise. In the delightful calm of the heart peace spreads her silver wings, and notes prophetic of coming bliss are heard on every side; the mountains and the hills break forth before us into singing, and all the trees of the field clap their hands.

I. Our first remark concerning this text will be, THERE ARE SEASONS SET AND APPOINTED FOR PROSPERITY AND JOY.

The turtle was in Palestine what the cuckoo is with us. Its voice made proclamation that the rainy season was over, that spring had arrived, and that summer drew near. One of the prophets tells us “the stork in the heaven knoweth her appointed times; and the turtle and the crane and the swallow observe the time of their coming/’ These migratory birds never came at the wrong time. If their note was heard it was a far surer indication of the weather than a day of brightness which might be but a break in the gloom. A poet of Israel might have said of the turtle dove,

*Delightful visitant! with thee
I hail the time of flowers,
And hear the sound of music sweet
From birds among the bowers.*

Guided by the unerring wisdom of God, which in birds men call instinct, the some-time wanderers to other lauds returned to Jordan's banks and Sharon's plains as the messengers of brighter days. Our times of peace and comfort are as surely appointed as the turtle's return, and in their seasonableness we may see infinite wisdom and love. Like birds of passage, our halcyon times will not visit us before the predestinated hour, neither will they tarry beyond the foreappointed moment; and they are as wisely timed as the ascent of the Pleiades or the falling of Orion. It is most fit that there should be a winter; it would be neither for human health nor for the earth's fertility, that vernal verdure or autumnal ripeness should run round the year. Everything that is seasonable is best. Our joys are the better because they alternate with griefs. We could not endure perpetual sunshine this side the stars; there is a need that we be in heaviness, an argument for every stroke of the rod, a reason for every hiding of the face of the Wellbeloved. Not by chance but by most wise and tender love are our days of trial and of joy ordained for every one of us.

There is a set time *in which, for the first hour in our lives, we enjoy peace with God.* Seekers would fain be finders the moment they seek. Earnest spirits, when the tears of repentance stand in their eyes, would wipe them away immediately; and truly if Christian people were earnest in teaching the simple gospel to them, and in sympathising with them, and praying for them, the hour of comfort would not usually be far off; but even then there would be cases in which the clear shining would be delayed by the shower. The case of John Bunyan, who was for years in spiritual darkness, is to the point, and his floundering in the Slough of Despond form by no means a solitary experience. Men who have afterwards become most eminent in the kingdom of God, have been long seeking the light and groping like blind men for the wall, crying out by the month together, "O that I knew where I might find him, that I might come even to his seat." Distracted with dreadful forebodings, oppressed with the weight of conscious guilt, ignorant of the way of salvation, and unable through unbelief to lay hold on eternal life, there are some who weary themselves with doleful searchings even for years, and only at last return unto their rest. One could wish that their liberation from so horrible a prison-house were more speedy, but yet

we have noticed that certain of them have been the most joyful of believers when their fetters have been filed, have had little bondage during the rest of their lives, and having lain long in Doubting Castle themselves, have been the better able to use the key of promise on behalf of the desponding. Dear friend, believe thou in Jesus Christ now, and thou shalt have peace; but if as yet the light break not upon thy spirit, still do thou hope on, for the morning soon shall dawn. Prisoner of hope, the day shall come when HE who looseth the captives shall set thy feet in a large room. Slow breaks the light but surely. The blessedness of pardoned sin shall obliterate thy woes. "Thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more." Ere long thou shalt sing,

*The winter of my woe is gone,
The summer of my soul comes on,
The Sun of Righteousness shines forth
And scatters all the clouds of wrath.*

In the same manner *our times of joy after conversion are all set and appointed.* The life of the Christian is not one of uninterrupted peace. It is often his own fault that he loses the joy of salvation, but still it is very rarely that we meet with a Christian who always walks in the sunlight. Clouds appear to be common on most earthly skies. Do not wonder, my dear friend, if you do not always feel equally alive and happy in spiritual things. Do not be astonished if sometimes the dark side of your nature is most conspicuous; be not surprised if you have to contend with inbred sin, rather than to rejoice in the mercies of the covenant. Look abroad on nature in the wintry months, see how the fields are white with frost, as though the earth were wrapped in a winding-sheet. Those meadows should be emerald with hope, and so they yet shall be; ay, and more, they shall put on the beautiful array of realised enjoyment, the kingcups shall strew them plenteously with gold, and the daisies shall look up with their sweetly simple eyes, and smile because the summer has come. Bright is the hope, but it must be waited for, and meanwhile snow; and hoar frost, and ice, and rain must hold their carnival; yet not one hour beyond the set time shall they riot and rule us, for the Lord hath set it as his covenant for ever, that summer shall not cease. The voice of the turtle will soon be heard; even now the almond hastens to put forth her flowers. So is it with you. You must endure your trouble, and it shall be followed by deliverance in due season. "It is good for a man that he both hope and quietly wait." Look at the sea — the pulsing life-blood of the world — it is not always at flood tide; at ebb it

must retreat far from the shore. And yonder noble river, Father Thames, how foul his banks, how manifest the shoals in mid-river; wait till the hour comes round, and you shall see the milk white swans sailing over the sparkling waters, where you see at this moment nothing but mire and dirt. That subtle element, the air, has its appointed changes; scarce a leaf moves on the tree to-day, and yet to-morrow hurricanes may lash the sea to fury, rend up the oaks, and dash whole navies on the rocks. Even the solid earth has its paroxysms of disturbance, when it forgets its ancient stability, and imitates the restless sea. In the nature of things it must be so. We are in a material world, a world of changes, a world that is by-and-by to be dissolved. We are in a body subject to pains and infirmities, a body that must decay; how can we expect to find unchanging peace in a changing world, and undying joy in a dying body? How can you hope to find rest where your Savior found none, and where he has told you that you are not to find it? Be not cast down at severe trial, as though some strange thing had happened unto you. Others beside you have heard the raven's croak, and the owl's hoot, and the bittern's cry, but in due time they have heard the turtle's voice again, and so will you. Your brightness shall come forth as the noonday. The Lord shall turn your captivity as the streams in the south. Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning, and that morning is not far off; the watchful eyes of faith can catch the first gleams thereof, even though darkness shadows all things visible to sense. If the vision tarry, wait for it; it shall come, it shall not tarry. God hath appointed it, and in due season the voice of the turtle shall be heard in your land.

This is equally true *wills regard to the future of our lives*. How fond are we of being amateur prophets! Of all callings the most unprofitable is that of a self-ordained prophet. When we take the telescope and try to look into the nearer future, we breathe on the glass and create a haze, and then declare that we see clouds and darkness before us. We know not what shall be on the morrow; sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof; our guesses at coming disaster are foolish and wicked. Yet the vilest pretenders to necromancy and astrology are not more busy at foretelling than many of the Lord's people. One knows that in old age he will be unable to earn his living, and will be imprisoned in the workhouse; another is equally sure trade will be ruined and he will be a bankrupt; a third expects that with her growing infirmities she will become a weariness to all her relatives, and they will wish her dead; while a fourth is equally clear that she shall turn

aside into sin, and be a castaway. These favourite theories of misery remind me of a friend who keeps pet vipers, which I earnestly recommend him to kill, or I fear they will kill him. What can be the use of indulging these fears, suspicious, and imaginings? Trials are appointed, but joys also are reserved. It is idle to paint the sun as if he were all spots, or life as if it were only sorrow. The eternal hand measures out to the heirs of heaven due portions both of affliction and prosperity, and it is a dangerous misrepresentation to talk only of the wormwood, and never of the wines on the lees. I would have you anticipate joy rather than sorrow. Remember, child of God, you are nearing heaven every hour; it should be brighter with you as you near the sun. Nearer the angels' harps, you may surely expect more music of joy. Every hour shortens the storm and brings closer the everlasting calm. Rejoice in your prospects! You shall soon come to the land Beulah, that peaceful country which borders on the glory-land, and forms the suburbs of Jerusalem the Golden. Though your outward man decayeth, your inward man shall be renewed day by day. You shall bring forth fruit in old age to show that the Lord is upright. At eventide it shall be light.

*On the margin of the river
You shall hear the turtle's voice,
Telling of the joys for ever
Bidding you e'en now rejoice.*

One almost longs for the grey hairs, for the mature faith, for the deep experience, and the consummated hope, which are the portion of aged Christians. The voice of the turtle shall be heard in your land, in the halcyon days of waiting for the call to heaven, and when the hour of your departure shall be actually at hand, your soul shall be at peace. 'Tis thus the Lord ordains, and thus it shall be with all the saints.

II. Secondly, THE VOICE OF THE TURTLE — WHAT DOES IT INDICATE?

There are three excellences in the sound. First, it is *the voice of peace*. The cry of the eagle tells of strife, the scream of the vulture speaks of carnage, but the soft voice of the dove proclaims peace. The dove is associated not with the laurel of war, but with the olive-branch of peace. Many of us are now enjoying the purest form of peace. Believers have a right to peace. Sin, the peace-breaker, was put away by the one sacrifice of Christ; and therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. We have one to answer for us whose righteousness

covers all our transgressions. We rest in his love and in his finished work, and therefore our soul is perfectly at rest with regard to sin and the punishment of it. We have peace too, as to the future. We can leave all in the hands of God. We can say, "Father, thy will be done." We believe that our covenant God will never forsake us, nor will he try us above what we are able to bear. So, then, we have peace with regard to every future circumstance. Grace ruling within us, puts away all anger and malice, and thus we have peace with all mankind. If any have offended us, we have from our hearts forgiven them. If we have offended any, we desire to make all restitution, to humble ourselves if need be, and as much as lieth in us to live peaceably with all men. We are in a happy state of mind when we can feel that even the new-born child is not more at peace with mankind than we are. Specially are we at peace with our fellow Christians. We would not constantly be raising discussions and controversies upon vexatious and unprofitable questions. Quibbles which gender strife are not for us. We can truly say that our desire is to minister to the peace of the church, to the edification of the saints, to the upity of the body of Christ. Where this is the case, the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. O may no other voice but that be heard in this church! These many years, I bless God, we have been kept without division, and without internal strifes, and by his grace many more years we shall continue in the same condition, knit together in love, and bound together in the perfect bond of charity. So may it be in all the churches of Jesus Christ, and may the time come when in every place all churches and their pastors shall be able to say, "The voice of peace is heard among us; we have love one towards another, and are of one mind, striving together only for the gospel of Christ, and knowing no emulation except which shall please his brother to his good for edification."

The voice of the turtle was, next, *the voice of love*. We have always associated with the turtle dove the idea of love. We have heard of its pining for its mate, and of the peculiar fondness which it has for its young. The gazelle among animals and the dove among birds are the favourites of love. Happy is it with us when love rules in our breast. I hope, beloved, that you love the Lord Jesus Christ because he first loved you; that his love constraineth you, his great love wherewith he loved you even when you were dead in trespasses and sin, the love which brought him to the cross to pay with his own heart's blood the price of your redemption. You can sing,

*“My Jesus, I love thee, I know thou art mine,
For thee all the follies of sin I resign;
My gracious Redeemer, my Savior art thou,
If ever I loved thee, my Jesus, ‘tis now.”*

Oh! it is blessed to feel the heart knit to Christ, drawn to him, going forth in lively flames of affection towards him. As the sparks of fire seek the sun, as though they knew their origin, so should our love mount towards Christ from whom it came. May it be so! Do you feel your hearts glow with love to God? It may be that you are under his chastening hand, and you smart in your body; or it may be you have a sick one at home, or there are anxieties in your business, but if you love the Lord intensely you will still say, “Blessed be his name!; [‘hough he slay me, yet will trust in him.” What can be more like heaven than to feel the affections going forth to God with fervor? Sweet is it also to feel sincere love to all believers in Christ, so as to recognize that there is but one family, and that we, individually, are a brother or sister in that family, not in name only, but in deed and in truth. He who is one with ‘Christ is one with all those who are born again. It is a blessed thing when the voice of the turtle sounds in the soul indicating a burning love to sinners. It is well when the believer pines to see others saved. To sigh and cry be[ore God because the ungodly continue to reject him and to despise his gospel, is a most gracious sign. O that we may always continue in that same loving frame of mind, not having to ask,

“Do I love the Lord or no?”

but feeling’

*“There’s not a lamb among his flock
I would disdain to feed;
There’s not a foe before whose face
I’d fear his cause to plead.”*

May our love to Christ, and to all the saints, and to the souls of men, grow exceedingly; and in that sense may the voice of the turtle be heard in our land, because the love of God is spread abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.

The voice of the turtle also, in the third place, had associated with it, a degree of *mournfulness*. This is no[at all inconsistent with peace and love. There is a passage in Nahum in which the voice of the dove is used as an expression and illustration of deep-seated sorrow. There is a plaintive

monotony about the notes of the dove suggestive of mourning. Now, even when the Christian is perfectly happy from one point of view, he will still feel a measure of godly sorrow, which indeed lies at the root of all spiritual joy. Just as some poets have sung the praises of a “pleasing melancholy,” so there is associated with the highest joy of the Christian a sweetly serene sorrow. I will show you of what kind it is. When you live to God, and are conscious of his love, your soul is sure to say, “O that I were always here! O that I could always feel as I feel now!” Or else you mourn to think that you could ever have sinned against one so gracious. It is not a bitter moaning over unpardoned sin. You know you are forgiven; you are sure of that; but it is the mourning of one who laments to think that he should have needed to be pardoned, and that he should ever have gone astray.

*“My sins, my sins, my Savior!
How sad on thee they fall,
Seen through thy gentle patience,
I tenfold feel them all.”*

There is a great *difference* between the agony of remorse and the sweet sorrow of repentance. Indeed, the tear of repentance, though it be salt, is also sweet. It is acceptable to God, and must therefore be seasoned with preserving salt, but it is also sweet as honey to the soul. Rowland Hill was wont to say that he almost regretted he could not shed the tear of repentance in heaven. He hoped to walk repenting all his life long, till he got up to the gates of Paradise, and could almost wish that he might be allowed the sweet exercise of repenting even among the angels. There is more joy in holy tears than in laughter; and when our sacred sorrows most abound “a secret something sweetens all.” In the mines of soul-sorrow we find diamonds of the first water, such as glitter nowhere else.

*“Lord, let me weep for nought but sin,
And after none but thee,
And then I would — O that I might!
A constant weeper be.”*

It is perfectly consistent with peace and love to be sighing after more holiness, more fellowship, more usefulness, and still to be lamenting deficiencies, and deploring imperfections, “Blessed are they that do hunger and thirst after righteousness.” They are blessed, and yet they continue to hunger and thirst, and that is a part of their blessedness. May we also long to be with Jesus, and in this sense may we ever hear the turtle-voice in our

souls, “My Savior, when shall I come to the promised land, the land that floweth with milk and honey”?

*“My heart is with thee on thy throne,
And ill can brook delay;
Each moment listening for the voice,
‘Rise up, and come away.’”*

Such pining does not break our peace. We sometimes sing—

*“I thirst, I faint, I die to prove
The fullness of redeeming love,
The love of Christ to me.”*

Such thirsting such panting, such dying, may we always experience, for thus shall we live in joy and peace.

These are the turtle’s three notes. May they be ever in our souls: the note of peace, the note of love, the note of holy mourning and pining after the Savior.

III. Now, supposing this to be the condition of our soul, WHAT THEN? This shall make our third point. There is an appointed season for all this; the season has a threefold blessedness about it: WHAT ARE ITS PECULIAR DUTIES?

Art thou in peace to-night? Is thy love flaming like coals of juniper? Then surely thou shouldst *seek to grow in grace*. The old proverb is, “Make hay while the sun shines.” The mariner takes care to hoist all sail when he has a propitious wind. Now, Christian, now is thy time to make progress in the divine life. The other day thou wert at war with thy corruptions, doubting thine interest in Christ, and lamenting under the hidings of Jehovah’s face, but now it is all calm with thee, therefore arise and build up thyself on thy most holy faith. The frost has gone; now lay the stones with fair colors, with windows of agates and gates of carbuncles. If the flowers do not grow in spring and summer, when will they grow? If the birds do not build their nests in propitious times, when will they? Now is your opportunity, seize it. The Master has given you good merchandise spiritually, take care to trade much and grow rich in grace. These times are not meant for you to sleep in; depend upon that. You are not blessed with this peace and quiet that you may say to your soul, “thou hast much good laid up for many years, take thine ease.” If you do so it will be proof that you are naked, and poor,

and miserable, and there is fear that your peace is no peace, but the dangerous security of the ungodly. Now that you feel yourself so full of sacred love, and holy excitement, and divine ardor, and your spiritual pulse is quickened, and your whole spiritual nature is in health, be much at the throne of grace, and say, "Lord, help me now to push forward in my pilgrimage. Let me not grieve the Spirit, but accept his comforting and reviving influences. May I now, my Lord, spread every sail to thy gracious wind, and make good headway towards my desired haven." There is such a thing as growth in grace, depend upon it, though some Christians do not manifest it much. My two children have always been photographed on their birthdays, and I have had the pictures all framed in one. There are twelve of them now, and I sometimes point them out to friends, and say, "There they are in the perambulator the first year, and here they are twelve years afterwards, stout, well-grown lads," and then I ask my brethren — "Do you think if we could have our spiritual nature photographed in this way, that we should see that we had as distinctly grown as these children have?" Why, there are some Christians whom I knew twelve years ago in a spiritual perambulator, and they are in the perambulator now. They are still nothing better than babes in grace. They have not learned to walk alone in spiritual things. We have still to address them as Paul did, when he said — "I have spoken unto you as unto babes in grace." He saw that they had made no advance in the divine life. Now, a little child is a very beautiful object; in an infant there is a beauty that strikes one's eye at once, and mothers delight in their babes; but what parents would be pleased to see their children at twelve or fifteen years of age of the same size as they were when they were but one year old? Their littleness at that age would strike you with the greatest sorrow, and the wife would say to the husband, "We are the parents of a dwarf," and both would feel shocked and grieved. May you never suffer such a calamity. But is it no calamity that Christian people remain dwarfs, that year after year they make no advance, but are infants still? Such non-progress is very much the result of neglecting these appointed seasons of divine influence of which I have spoken. Because of an unhallowed indolence professors come not unto the stature of men in Christ Jesus, to which it is most desirable that all saints should attain. This, then, is the duty of the season; if you have peace, and joy, and holy power within, it is a voice bidding you "go forward."

The next duty is, *be as useful as you possibly can to others at this time.* One of the best ways to keep what God gives you is to give it away, "There is that

scattereth and yet increaseth.” It is by distribution that Christians amass grace. If we seek only our own and not the things of others — our fellow Christians and the unconverted — we shall soon grow poor in spiritual things. He that watereth others shall be watered also himself. Is it a good season with thee? Tell the news to the Kings household. Has the King favored thee with a dish from his table? Deal out a portion to the hungry, and let the faint-hearted partake of thy comforts. Is there no doubt about thine own salvation? Why, man, now is the time to seek after the salvation of others. Hast thou a full assurance of thine own interest in Christ? Why, then thou hast nothing to distract thee from spending and being spent for the increase of thy Master’s kingdom. He that has constantly to guard his own gates when the foe is at the door, may have some excuse for not watching another man’s house; but he who has peace in his borders, and is filled with the finest of the wheat, should care for his fellow citizens. “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest;” “*In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they shall be alike good.*”

Lastly — Are you in this happy state? *Then take care to praise God while you are in it.* Do not restrain the flow of your grateful spirits. You were ice-bound some time ago; now your heart is thawed, let the streams gush forth according to the Master’s word, for hath he not said out of the midst of thee shall flow rivers of living water? Praise thy God with all thy heart. When thou liest awake in the night, and thy soul is happy within thee, offer thy Lord “songs in the night.” Praise him when thou goest to thy labor. Worldly men have their songs, why should not the Christian sing the songs of Zion? Praise him in thy silence, with thy henri’s music. Let thy soul talk sweetly to him with gratitude and love. Speak well of his name to others. We are sometimes slow to utter the goodness of the Lord, but very seldom slow to reveal our troubles. Our griefs we pour into our fellow creatures’ ears all too readily — amend this, and be eager to tell out your joys. A minister calling once on an aged woman, she began to tell him about her rheumatism and her poverty, and as he had heard that story perhaps twenty times before, he said, “My dear sister, every time I call you tell me of your troubles, and I have no objection to hear about them, for I sympathise with you, but could you not for once tell me of your mercies?” She thanked him for reminding her of that unused string of her harp, and may I not remind

some of you to dwell more frequently on the Lord's goodness to you? Let men know that the people of God are a happy people. Constrain them to enquire what it is that makes you so glad, so calm, so patient. Compel them to desire to- know Christ, if for no other reason than this, that their faces may shine with the same cheerfulness that lights up yours, I know I am bringing before you a hard duty for wintry seasons, but when the voice of the turtle is heard it will be easy to you — nay, natural You have lain among the pots, but now that you have the wings of a dove, covered with silver, and your feathers with yellow gold, mount, mount, mount, and as your spirit mounts, become like the lark which sings as it rises, and is heard where it is not seen, still pouring down a flood of song from the invisible into which it has ascended. Live near to God, but let your communion with the sons of men be cheerful and joyous. Compel them to hear your praises. This is the duty of this present season, and if you neglect it, the voice of the turtle may not be heard in your land any longer, and you may have to sigh, and pine, and cry for the Lord to return.

*O sing unto the glittering glorious King,
O praise his name, let every bring thing;
Let heart and voice, like bells of silver, ring
The comfort that this day doth bring.*

I would to God that this subject were the property of you all. Even in the most, select congregation there are some who have no interest in Christian peace and love, and one's heart is grieved to think of that. No turtle's voice can sound in hearts where Jesus is not trusted, where sin reigns, where spiritual death binds all the powers in iron bands. May you be led to feel your sad estate, may the rain of repentance fall, and then may the birds of faith and hope begin to sing; for then, and then only, will you understand the inward serenity of the people of God.

SAGTEY OF BELIEVERS

“A BRITISH subject may be safe although surrounded by enemies in a distant land — not that he hath strength to contend alone against armed thousands, but because he is a subject of our queen. A despot on his throne, a horde of savages in their desert, have permitted a helpless traveler to pass unharmed, like a lamb among lions — although like lions looking on a lamb, they thirsted for his blood — because they knew his sovereign's

watchfulness, and feared his sovereign's power. The feeble stranger has a charmed life in the midst of his enemies, because a royal arm unseen encompasses him as with a shield. The power thus wielded by an earthly throne may suggest and symbolise the perfect protection of Omnipotence. A British subject's confidence in his queen may rebuke the feeble faith of a Christian. 'O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?' What though there be fears within and rightings without, he who bought his people with his own blood cannot lose his inheritance, and will not permit any enemy to wrest from his hand the satisfaction of his soul. The man with a deceitful heart and a darkened mind, a feeble frame and a slippery way, a fainting heart and a daring foe — the man would stumble and fall: but the member of Christ's body cannot drop off; the portion of the Redeemer cannot be wrenched from his grasp. 'Ye are his.' Christ is the safety of a Christian."

OUR SOLDIERS.

WE are not about to discuss the vexed question of the lawfulness of war.. For our purpose, it is enough that governments have deemed it necessary, and that the military profession does really exist. We remember once being startled out of the few senses we have, by the question seriously and piously put, "Can a soldier be a Christian?" Dismal thoughts arose in one's mind of millions of men who, if a harsh creed were to determine the question in the negative, were excluded from all hope of salvation; and of numbers of godly soldiers, who, on such a sweeping hypothesis, were deluding themselves or deluding others. *We* are not troubled, however, with any such alarming doubts. It is enough for ordinary understandings that many Christian men, wearing Her Majesty's uniform, have endured hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Still we regard war as something akin to murder done on a large scale, for which God holds those responsible who wilfully and eagerly, from love of conquest or thirst of gain, embroil the nations in perplexities and quarrels. Poetry has sought to throw its gilded charms around the monster War, Romance has given it the appearance of chivalrous enterprise, and Heroism has imparted to it a fleeting glory; but under the thin veil of poetry, romance, and heroism, lay hid the stern facts, prosaic enough, of a thousand evils painful to contemplate: while the suffering on the battle field which fills the air with shrieks, and groans, and agonising yells, and calls for heaven's vengeance,

is augmented by the woe which desolates many a sequestered hamlet and many a humble family, expressed with the widow's moan and the orphan's lamentation. Whether we regard war in its physical aspect, causing grief and suffering, and lifelong misery to once active but now crippled men, or whether we look upon it in its social aspect, draining the nations of their youngest, manliest blood, interrupting commerce, and severing ties consecrated by God; or whether its moral aspect be regarded, as evoking all the cruel arts and Satanic subtleties of diplomacy, the brutal passions of anger, malice, and revenge, and causing a fearful forgetfulness of the laws of humanity in the midst of the mad, turbulent excitement of the hour; or whether we view it in its higher aspect — its violation of every religious consideration, its delight in ushering into eternity those unfitted for it and unconcerned about it; whatever view we take, the verdict is the same — war is an unutterable evil, a curse to humanity, a pestilence to nations, and frequently an atrocity which excuses cannot palliate or eloquence conceal. Christian men should bend the whole weight of their power and influence to prevent its occurrence and to expose its evils. It were an inhumanity unpardonable to treat war as less than an evil—

*“As if the soldier died without a wound —
As if the fibres of this godlike frame
Were gored without a pang; as if the wretch
Who fell in battle doing bloody deeds,
Passed off to heaven, translated and not killed,
As though he had no wife to pine for him—
No God to judge him!”*

And yet war, by the same great unalterable law that converts the wrath of man into God's praise, has brought great public benefits in its train. The desolation of carnage, and the bloodthirstiness of regal tyranny and cruelty, have not unfrequently ushered in liberty to the captive and freedom to the enslaved.

Since the thrice-happy dawn of Messiah's peaceful reign has not yet shed its undying lustre upon the earth; since the predicted era has not come when men “*shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more;*” since war's sterile wastes have not yet been turned into the fruitful gardens of the *Lord*, war will, rightly or wrongly, be deemed a necessity. If Christians cannot prevent hostilities, they may mitigate their severity and alleviate their miseries. Since soldiers fight our

battles, we should seek to equip them with the armor of truth. Our book of “standing orders” is the Word of God. It should be theirs. No soldier, indeed, should be without his Bible. A general would not send his troops to battle unarmed; a Christian country should not send its soldiers to death without doing the little it can to prepare them for the change. It is not so long ago when it was held that only the scum of our population should recruit the ranks of the army — that irreligiousness was a qualification for the service, and drunkenness a passport to it. The latter degrading system is still flourishing in many parts of England. Cromwell’s Ironsides should have taught men differently. The biographies of officers and commanders, and the histories of perilous and trying campaigns, have undoubtedly proved that sober and Christian soldiers are most to be depended on in the crisis of battle.

The religious condition of the soldiers of England is a subject fraught with sad and serious considerations, and charged with much importance. Those acquainted with military stations know too well the evils which beset, and the temptations that surround our brave de-tenders. There is deep cause for sorrow in the sad fact that barrack towns are the seat of the most degrading and polluting sins. The occasional revelations made in the newspapers, based on official and medical reports, cause a thrill of sorrow to pass through every sensitive Christian heart. Equally, indeed more profoundly, sad must he feel at the moral condition of our soldiery abroad. Soldiers should of all men be Christians. Their temptations are so peculiarly alluring and pleasing to human nature, that they need “the whole armor of God” to resist the insidious attacks of their enemies. Sunday after Sunday we pray for them in public worship; but rarely do we torre a fair conception of the vast number of souls falling under the designation of soldiers, or of their great spiritual need.

Without doubt, the best method of proclaiming the truths of the gospel to our soldiers would be by the men themselves becoming volunteer mission agents. We might fill our paper with records of successful work among various regiments done solely by Christian soldiers.. It is one peculiarity of the converted soldier, that he is not ashamed of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ which has been the power of God to his own salvation. Working men know what it is to run the gauntlet of ridicule and scorn for Christ. That is an awful feeling of solitariness which a consistent man has when he is surrounded by his fellows, none of whom sympathise with his religious convictions, but all of whom seek to waylay and entrap him. It is

even worse with the Christian soldier. He must boldly take his stand for Christ, fearless of the scorn of men. Let a man aim to be godly, and forthwith a hungry pack of human wolves race to run him down. The isolation of consistency is no mere sentiment with the Christian soldier. Yet his trials strengthen him. He abides the more manfully at the post of duty, and takes his stand the more bravely by the standard of his Master's cross. This is excellent material out of which teachers and preachers of the Word may be made. Better evangelists and Scripture-readers could not be had than godly soldiers.

But what of army-chaplains? The writer would not deal uncharitably, but he would re-echo the question — what of them? We know what is the general run of gaol, workhouse, and barrack chaplains, but have not been wonderfully struck with their zeal or capabilities. They are ordinarily very pleasant, agreeable, estimable men, well suited for any other kind of work; too often not remarkably adapted for this important service. When the Romish church seeks in fair and promising fields to proselytise, it picks out really earnest and assiduous men who, whatever else they may not be, are undoubtedly enthusiasts. When the Anglican church chooses its agents, what principles are they that too often guide the selection? Is as much ardor for the cause of Christ expected in a chaplain as is required in an ordinary soldier for the cause of the Queen? Is it not unfrequently of far more importance that the chaplain should be a social fellow, who can joke with the officers, and converse respecting balls and fashionable gaieties, than that he should be skilled in the mysteries of the kingdom of God and be able to minister comfort to the weary and heavy laden heart of a distressed soldier? Again I say, I would not be harsh, but are not these things so?

It is clear that the chaplain should be on terms of sufficient intimacy with the soldiers to enable them most heartily to welcome him when ever he visits them, and to induce them to pour out their hearts, and confidently state their difficulties in spiritual intercourse. But is it so? At the first sight of the chaplain the soldier will stand erect and look as demure and touch his cap as mechanically as if he were a commander-in-chief who had met him. He knows the said chaplain will within five minutes be again in the mess-room, and in conference with the officers. He must, therefore, mind those difficult letters, his P's and Q's, or he may be reported. No one can suppose that there can be that freedom existing between the "spiritual adviser" and the advised which is absolutely essential in every ease to

evoke sympathy and impart the highest confidence. Was it ever intended that in placing a gentleman chaplain *over* the men he should be placed *with* them? We all know what it is to see soldiers "stand at ease," which is about the last thing we can say of the uneasy and unnatural attitude of the soldier in obeying that command. But do they "stand at ease" before their chaplain? Now, since there must be, according to present arrangements, an m-finite distance between the chaplain and the soldiery, it is the more needful that some other Christian men, of humbler habits and less lofty notions, should fill up the great gap. We are not sure that our way of putting the matter will meet with the approval of the committee, who may repudiate altogether our criticism of chaplains, but it strikes us that the Army Scripture Readers' Society really does supply the want, or rather it *seeks* to do so; for it cannot meet the emergency adequately. This society has been in existence for some years. We believe its origin is due to our friend, Mr. W. A. Blake, of Brentford. At first its work was very small, and its income insignificant. During the Crimean War, it attracted considerable public notice, and did a large amount of good. A union was effected with a new and similar society; and it secured the approval of the Commander-in-Chief, the Secretary of War, and the Chaplain-General, so that it is more directly under the sanction of the military authorities than when first instituted. This has been found essential, since the slightest interference with military discipline would produce great mischief. Consequently, the agents of the society must work under and in connection with the chaplain. Each chaplain has between 500 and 2,000 men under his care. Whether Scripture-reader and chaplain work harmoniously together in every case we cannot venture to say: perhaps it would be too much to expect; but in many cases the union is regarded as a great blessing; while the detailed reports show that much good is done by the various agents of the society. There are twenty-seven readers employed in the various stations of England; eight are in Ireland, five in Scotland, one in Gibraltar, five in Canada, and sixteen in India, making a total of sixty-two agents supported by the society. The work of these men is very simple. Primarily, the reader's duty is to read and expound the Scriptures to the men and their families, enforcing the great doctrines of truth, and urging the necessity of decision for Christ. He is to hold Bible-classes, to distribute books and tracts, and converse with the soldiers on the fundamental truths of religion. The society has its publications, all of them of the martial stamp, and eminently suitable for the purpose of distribution. Increased facilities have been afforded to the Scripture-readers by the military authorities; and the

lakes[and most agreeable privilege afforded them was announced in the leading newspaper about fourteen months since. In consequence of the heat, it is needful that the soldiers in India should have a room for meditation and prayer. The only places available for such purposes were noisy huts and barracks, which were exceedingly inconvenient and unpleasant. Now, however, by order of Sir John Lawrence, a room is allowed, with needful furniture, in the barracks of every British regiment in India, "to which," says the order, "the men can resort for private reading and prayer, and for holding prayer-meetings and other meetings of a similar character." The room is to be in a central position, but not in the barracks. Furthermore, a residence is assigned for a Scripture-reader in the married quarters, a most beneficent; and welcome concession, which will benefit the society pecuniarily.

In looking at what these humble men are doing so unostentatiously, we would first glance at their work at home. Here their labors are highly appreciated. At Aldershort three men are engaged in visiting the soldiers, and addressing them on the love of the Savior to fallen humanity. The hospitals furnish fields of labor most important to occupy. Cases occur of young men, whose sinfulness of heart and obduracy of will had stifled the convictions of guilt, being aroused to reflection by the earnest, simple utterances addressed to them. Not a few have left the hospital hating the sins which before they so fondly cherished. The Society's reader at Colchester gives us an insight into the condition of the men. He finds many have had a religious training in their younger days; and it is interesting to notice from most of the reports how often soldiers refer to the lessons learnt in the Sabbath school. These men have, however, fallen into the sins peculiarly attractive to soldiers. "It is uphill-work both for readers and chaplains, and the common expression on visiting prisoners, either in cell or guardroom, is 'drink was the cause of my being here.'" Other causes, however, operate as powerfully. In some cases plots of garden ground are allotted to deserving soldiers; and it appears they cultivate them with great taste, and find it agreeable relaxation. They are thus kept in leisure hours from the canteen or barrack tavern, and other de-moralising places. The various reports before us go to prove that sin is everywhere the same in character; that temptations, though under diverse forms, are equally fascinating and destructive; that infidelity is to be found in all ranks of men, and is everywhere dull, stupid, and impenetrable, or vain, frivolous, and vicious; that much ignorance prevails among men as to the terrible

heinousness of sin, and even greater misconception as to the way of salvation. Indeed, all missionary work is the same in kind. Men are beguiled by the same tempter, allured by the same evils, victimised by the same lusts, deceived by the same indifference, deluded by the same snares. Man needs the gospel. The true truth of God — the one Christ — the one faith in the Savior's merits is needed by all alike. Good Christian people sometimes think that sin peculiarly belongs to certain professions and castes, and that different efforts are required for one class to those demanded by others. The truth is, the heart of man is everywhere the same; the one remedy is everywhere needed. If there be anything specially striking about the experience of Christian soldiers it is (1) that they are exceedingly simple-hearted, and without affectation or the conceit of self-important nobodies; (2) that they are eminently manly and straightforward — bending neither to the right hand nor to the left, bearing patiently and bravely the reproach of the enemies of the cross; (3) that they are tender-hearted and affectionate — thankful to anyone who will “come down” to them and address them as brothers; and (4) that they learn more readily often than civilians the lesson of witness-bearing for Jesus Christ.

A Scripture-reader at Gravesend gives us a case not without its interest. A young soldier enquired in a rather roundabout, simple, stammering, manner of the reader, “Whether he could tell him of any place he could go to, as his mother had been writing to him, and sending him little papers in the letters.” The reader seemed to understand at once the man and his case, and asked him whether or no he wished to hear something about a Savior. “He brightened up, and answered, ‘ That is it, sir; that is it!’ I invited him to my house, and he came. He, through drink, had left a good home and a praying mother; but he could not get rid of her prayers, and lately he did not know what was wrong with him. We had a long conversation, read, and prayed. He attended the closes, and came to me while he stayed here.” Hopes were entertained of his being a sincere believer. This case is illustrative of many others that might be given, all of which have many lessons for those who seek to bring their children to Christ, and for such as, amidst great discourage-merits labor assiduously in instilling into the minds of lads these truths of the gospel.

The Chaplain-General has a remarkably good story to tell, worthy of being repeated again and again. Some years ago a young soldier, a recruit, called upon him. Entering into conversation with him, the Chaplain-General asked the recruit how he liked his profession. He replied, “O sir, I like it very

much, but there is one great drawback. I never can find an opportunity to pray." He was naturally asked how that was. He replied, "O sir, if you only knew what takes place in the barrack-room. When I first joined I tried to pray. I knelt down at my bedside as I had been used to do at home, but there were *such* yells, such abuse, such throwing of boots at me, that I don't know how I was able to stand it." The Chaplain-General said, "My poor lad, I do know it; but don't expose yourself to such treatment; wait till the lights are out, and then commit yourself to your heavenly Father." The young recruit seemed to have followed the advice given, but at the end of the fortnight confessed, "It won't do." "Why?" asked the Chaplain-General. "Because, sir," was the manly reply, "it seems like being ashamed of my Savior." The Chaplain, an old man, felt ashamed, as he confesses, in the presence of this young lad of nineteen, and urged him to perseverance in his brave conduct, since God would most certainly bless it. What was the result? The soldiers, one after another, were ashamed of their conduct, admired the lad's holy bravery; then one began to kneel down with him, then another, until each of the sixteen men did so regularly. Would that all soldiers of the cross were as persistent and faithful. Then might we expect larger accessions to the Christian service.

The work of the Army Scripture Readers' Society abroad has this defect common to most societies — it is unable to do all that it wishes to perform. It is ambitious of increasing its usefulness until no garrison or camp is without its Scripture-reader, and no library without its Bible. The readers' reports as to the work done by them in visiting the sick, teaching the Scriptures, and conversing with the soldiers generally in the various military stations abroad, are of the usual character of mission reports. They illustrate the difficulties of Christian labor, its undying pleasures, and its glorious successes. Of one thing we are convinced: the Government must ultimately turn its most serious attention to the social condition of our soldiers. There are many blots on the present system of enforced celibacy which properly to expose and denounce would need vigorous boldness and outspokenness. When Mr. Arthur Mursell revealed before the men of Manchester the revolting but truthful details of the horrors which arise from drunkenness, prudery and affected virtue raised a shriek of indignation. For men are apt to denounce those who lift the curtain of concealment from prominent vices, although they sit the while complacently under the shadow of greaser sins than could possibly, from their obnoxious nature, be denounced or hinted at in public. There is no

need to parade vices before the world, but there is a “needs-be” for a recognition of glaring evils that are more potent for mischief than easy-going people imagine. Fortunately we have a Government that is not afraid of meeting and dealing with difficulties. There is, too, a more healthy feeling among military authorities as to the social condition of soldiers. The distress and misery from which the wives of soldiers suffer are enough to prevent marriage, even when permitted. An attempt has been made in Woolwich to meet some of the acknowledged miseries which have been looked upon as inseparable from a soldier’s home. But the whole question of the marriage of soldiers is a complicated one. A newspaper has recently pointed out; that it is open to discussion whether private soldiers ought not to be enlisted for such terms of active service as would render unnecessary a permission to marry. “A man,” the writer goes on to say, “enlisted for three or four years could scarcely regard it as a hardship if, during this period, he were required to remain a bachelor, and in many ways the service would derive advantages from his so remaining.” The subject, however, is one hardly suited to the pages of a religious magazine. We only refer to it as bearing upon the work and the difficulties of evangelisation among the troops. It is sheer folly to condemn the inclination of soldiers for marriage. But we see no great relief for the inevitable evils the [the soldier’s marriage brings, and for the social vices that thrive upon enforced celibacy, save in limiting the period of service, and not regarding the profession of arms as a life-long condition. However, even that system may have its difficulties. Meanwhile, we are thankful for an honest attempt made to improve the social and sanitary condition of soldiers, believing that if so raised they will be the more accessible to Christian influence. Thank God for the large number of soldiers of the Queen who are also soldiers of the cross! May every society and every individual effort that seeks to enlist new recruits for Emmanuel’s service be crowned with success by the Great Captain of our salvation!

SPECULATIONS

WHILE a minister of my acquaintance was riding in a railway carriage, he was saluted by a member of an exceedingly litigious and speculative sect “Pray, sir,” said the sectary, “what is your opinion of the seven trumpets?” “I am not sure,” said the preacher, “that I understand your question, but I hope you will comprehend mine: What think you of the fact that your

seven children are growing up without God and without hope? You have a Bible-reading in your house for your neighbors, but no family prayer for your children.” The nail was fastened in a sure place, enough candour of mind remained in the professor to enable him to profit by the timely rebuke. It were greatly to be desired that Christians who are given to speculate upon the prophecies, would, turn [heir thoughts and leisure to the perishing myriads by whom we are surrounded, and sow in the fields of evangelisation rather than in the cloudland of guesswork interpretation. — From “*Feathers For Arrows,*” ready April 1.

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL

APRIL 1, 1870.

CONCERNING THE COLLEGE

BY C. H. SPURGEON.

HE Pasting' College has now entered on its fourteenth year, and during this long period has unceasingly been remembered of the God of heaven, to whom all engaged in it offer reverent thanksgiving. When it was commenced I had not even a remote idea of whereunto it would grow. There were springing up around me, as my own spiritual children, many earnest young men who felt an irresistible impulse to preach the gospel, and yet with half an eye it could be seen that their want of education would be a sad hindrance to them. It was not in my heart to bid them cease their preaching; respect for the liberty of prophesying prevented that, neither would my advice to be silent, if I had felt it right to tender such an admonition, have availed with my zealous young brethren; they would respectfully but conscientiously have ignored my recommendation. As it seemed that preach they would, though their attainments were very slender, there appeared to be no other course open, but to give them an opportunity to educate themselves for the work.

The Holy Spirit very evidently had set his seal upon the work of one of them by certain conversions wrought under his open-air addresses, it seemed therefore to be a plain matter of duty to instruct this youthful Apollos still further, that he might be fitted for wider usefulness. No college at that time appeared to me to be suitable for the class of men that the providence and grace of God drew around me. They were mostly poor, and most of the colleges involved necessarily a considerable outlay to the student, for even where the education was free, books, clothes, and other incidental expenses required a considerable sum per annum. Want of money therefore was a barrier in that direction. Men with every other qualification would be deprived of an education for want of money. Moreover, it must be frankly admitted that my views of the gospel and of

the mode of training preachers were and are somewhat different from those which I believed to sway the then existing Dissenting colleges. I may have been uncharitable in my judgment, but I thought the Calvinism of the theology then taught to be very doubtful, and the fervor of the generality of students to be far behind their literary attainments. I pronounce no such verdict at this present, it is not mine to judge; but at that time it seemed to me 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 objects, and not degrees, and other insignia of human learning. Mine was a peculiar work, and I felt that without interfering with the laudable objects of other colleges, I could do good in my own way. By these and other considerations I felt led 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 all other knowledge helpful to the understanding 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, solved almost before it occurred.

Two friends, Mr. Winsor and Mr. W. Olney, both deacons of the church, promised aid, which with what I could give myself, enabled me to take one student, and I set about to find a tutor. My dear departed brother, Jonathan George, told me that I should find in Mr. George Rogers, then the pastor of the Independent Church, Albany Road, Camberwell, the very man I wanted. I saw him, and in the providence of God it had been so appointed that the work suggested was precisely what he had been preparing for for years, and was anxiously hoping would be assigned to him. This gentleman, who has remained during all this period our principal tutor, is a man of Puritanic stamp, deeply learned, orthodox in doctrine, judicious, witty, devout, earnest, liberal in spirit, and withal juvenile in heart to an extent most remarkable in one of his years. My connection with him has been one of uninterrupted comfort and delight. The most sincere affection exists between us, we are of one mind and one heart, and what is equally important, he has in every case secured not merely the respect but the filial love of every student. His capacity for work is all but boundless, for his love to his laborious occupation is intense. Into this beloved minister's house the first students were introduced, and for a considerable period they were domiciled as members of his family.

Encouraged by the readiness with which the young men found spheres of labor, and by their singular success in soul-winning, I enlarged the number,

but the whole means of sustaining them came from my own purse. The large sale of my sermons in America, together with my dear wife's economy, enabled me to spend from £ 600 to £800 in a year in my own favourite work, but on a sudden, owing to my denunciations of the then existing slavery in the States, my entire resources from that "brook Cherith" were dried up. I paid as large sums as I could from my own income, and resolved to spend all I had, and then take the cessation of my means as a voice from the Lord to stay the effort, as I am firmly persuaded that we ought on no pretense to go into debt. On one occasion I proposed the sale of my horse and carriage, although these were almost absolute necessities to me on account of my continual journeys in preaching the Word. This my friend Mr. Rogers would not hear of, and actually offered to be the loser rather than this should be done. Then it was that I told my difficulties to my people, and *the weekly offering* commenced, but the incomings from that source were so meagre as to be hardly worth calculating upon. I was brought to the last pound, when a letter came from a banker in the City, informing me that a lady whose name I have never been able to discover, had deposited a sum of £200, which I was to use for the education of young men for the ministry. How did my heart leap for joy! I threw myself then and henceforth upon the bounteous care of the Lord, whom I desired with my whole heart to glorify, by helping his laborers whom he should send out into his harvest. Some weeks after, another £ 100 came in from the same bank, as I was informed, from another hand. Soon after, a beloved brother, Sir. Phillips, of Newman's Court, Cornhill, a deacon of the church at the Tabernacle, began to give an annual supper to the friends of the College, at which considerable sums have from year to year been given. A dinner was also given by my liberal publishers, Messrs. Passmore and Alabaster, to celebrate the publishing of my five hundredth weekly sermon, at which £500 were raised and presented to the College, which grew every month, and rapidly advanced from its commencement with one up to forty students. Friends known and unknown, from far and near, were moved to give little or much to my work, and so the funds increased as the need enlarged. Then another earnest deacon of the church, Mr. Murrell, espoused as his special work the weekly offering, and by the unanimous voice of the church under my care the College was adopted as its own child. Since that hour the weekly offering has been a steady source of income, till in the year 1869 the amount reached exactly £1869.

There have been during this period times of great trial of my faith, but after a period of straitness, never amounting to absolute want, the Lord has always interposed and sent me large sums (on one occasion £1,000), from unknown donors. When the Orphanage was thrust upon me, it did appear likely that this second work would drain the resources of the first, and it is very apparent that it does attract to itself some of the visible sources of supply, but my faith is firm that the Lord can as readily keep both works in action as one, though the eye of reason fails to enable me to discover how. Moreover, my own present inability to do so much by way of preaching abroad, occasions naturally the failure of another great means of income; and as my increasing labors at home will in all probability diminish that stream in perpetuity, there is another trial for faith. Yet if the Lord wills the work to be con-tinned, he will send his servant a due portion of the gold and silver, which are all his own; and therefore as I wait upon him in prayer, the all-sufficient Provider will show me that he can supply all my needs. About £5,000 is annually required for he. College, and the same sum will be needed for the Orphanage when it is filled with boys, but God will move his people to liberality, and we shall yet see greater things than these.

While speaking of pecuniary matters, it may be well to add that as many of the young men trained in the College have raised new congregations, and gathered fresh churches, another need has arisen, namely, money for building chapels. It is ever so in Christ's work, one link draws on another, one effort makes another needed. For chapel-building, the College funds could do but little, though they have freely been used to support men while they were collecting congregations; but the Lord found for me one of his stewards, who on the condition that his name remains unknown, has hitherto as the Lord has prospered him, supplied very princely amounts for the erection of places of worship, of which up to this present hour, through help thus rendered, more than forty have been built, or so greatly renovated and enlarged, as to be virtually new structures. Truly may it be said, "What hath God wrought?"

Pecuniary needs however 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, for my aim has been to send

away none who might ultimately become qualified, and yet to retain none who would be a burden rather than a service to the churches. 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 have been 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 though we know it must be so in the nature of things, yet 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. Weakness in talent is sometimes so counterbalanced by deep earnestness, that one hesitates in forming an unfavourable judgment, especially when it is remembered that remarkable abilities often prove a snare, and in due time in frequent instances are attended by slender grace, the sure concomitant of the self-exaltation which great gifts so often create. While thus speaking of trials connected with the men themselves, it is most 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 four 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 the most flourishing Baptist churches in England and Scotland are presided over by pastors trained at the Tabernacle, and as years shall add ripeness of experience and stability of character, others will be found to stand in the front rank of the Lord's host.

The young brethren are boarded generally in twos and threes, in the houses of our friends around the Tabernacle, for which the College pays a moderate weekly amount. The class-rooms are under the Tabernacle, and during the winter are so dark that I am very anxious to build more suitable apartments, and am only waiting for the Lord to send the means. Two thousand pounds at least would be required. The plan of separate lodging we believe to be far preferable to having all under one roof, for by the latter mode men are isolated from general family habits, and are too apt to

fall into superabundant levity. The circumstances of the families who entertain our young friends are generally such that they are not elevated above the social position which in all probability they will have to occupy in future years, but are kept in connection with the struggles and conditions of everyday life.

Devotional habits are cultivated to the utmost, and the students are urged to do as much evangelistic work as they can. The severe pressure put upon them to make the short term as useful as possible leaves small leisure for such efforts, but this is in most instances faithfully economised. Although our usual period is two years, whenever it is thought right the term of study is lengthened to three or four years; indeed, there is no fixed rule, all arrangements being ordered by the circumstances and attainments of each individual.

As before hinted, our numbers have greatly grown, and now range from eighty to one hundred. Very promising men, who are suddenly thrown in our way are received at any time, and others who are selected from the main body of applicants come in at the commencement of terms. The church at the Tabernacle continues to furnish a large quota of men, and as these have usually been educated for two or more years in the evening classes of the College, they are more advanced and able to profit better by our two years of study. We have still no difficulty in finding spheres for men who are ready and fitted for them, though in one or two instances those who have left their former charges are now seeking fresh fields of service. There is no reason to believe that the supply of trained ministers is in advance of the demand. Even on the lowest ground of consideration, there is yet very much ground to be possessed; and when men break up fresh soil as ours are encouraged to do, the field is the world, and the prayer for more laborers is daily more urgent. If the Lord would but send us funds commensurate, there are hundreds of neighbourhoods needing the pure gospel, which we could by his grace change from deserts into gardens. How far this is a call upon the reader let him judge as in the sight of God. Shall there be the gifts and the graces of the Spirit given to the church, and shall there not also be sufficient bestowed of the earthly treasure? How much owest thou unto my Lord?

The College was for some little time aided by the zealous services of Mr. W. Cubitt, of Thrapstone, who died among us enjoying our highest esteem. Mr. Gracey, the classical tutor, a most able brother, is one of ourselves,

and was in former years a student, though from possessing a solid education, he needed little instruction from us except in theology. In him we have one of the most efficient tutors living, a man fitted for any post requiring thorough scholarship, and aptness in communicating knowledge. Mr. Fergusson in the English elementary classes, does the first work upon the rough stones of the quarry, and we have heard from the men whom he has taught in the evening classes, speeches and addresses which would have adorned any assembly, proving to a demonstration his ability to cope with the difficulties of uncultured and ignorant minds. Mr. Johnson who zealously aids in the evening, is also a brother precisely suited to the post which he occupies. These evening classes afford an opportunity to Christian men engaged during the day to obtain an education for nothing during their leisure time, and very many avail themselves of the opportunity. Nor must I forget to mention Mr. Selway, who takes the department of physical science, and by his interesting experiments and lucid descriptions, gives to his listeners an introduction to those departments of knowledge which most abound with illustrations.

Last, but far from least, I adore the goodness of God which sent me so dear and efficient a fellow helper as my brother in the flesh and in the Lord, J. A. Spurgeon. His work has greatly relieved me of anxiety, and his superior educational qualifications have much elevated the tone of the instruction given. All things considered, gratitude and hope are supreme in connection with the Pastors' College, and with praise to God and thanks to a thousand friends, the president and all his allies gird up the loins of their mind for yet more abundant labors in the future. To *every* land we hope yet to send forth the gospel in its fullness and purity. We pray the Lord to raise up missionaries among our students and pastors, and to make every one at least a home missionary. Brethren, remember this work in your prayers, and in your allotment of the Lord's portion of your substance.

LANDLORD AND TENANT.

BY C. H. SPURGEON.

“Set thine house in order for Thou shalt die, and not live.” —
Isaiah 38:1.

NOTWITHSTANDING that a thousand voices proclaim our mortality, we are all too apt to put aside the contemplation of it. Since we cannot escape from death, we endeavor to shut our eyes to it, although there is no subject whose consideration would be more beneficial to us. Altering one word of the poet's line, I may say—

“Tis greatly wise to talk with our last hours.”

To be familiar with the grave is prudence. To prepare for death it is well to commune with death. A thoughtful walk in the cemetery is good for our soups health. As Jeremy Taylor well observes: “Since a man stands perpetually at the door of eternity, and, as did John the Almoner, every day is building of his sepulcher, and every night one day of our life is gone and passed into the possession of death, it will concern us to take care that the door leading to hell do not open upon us, that we be not crushed to ruin by the stones of our grave, and that our death become not a consignment of us to a sad eternity.” The most of men prefer to cultivate less fruitful fields, and turn their thoughts and meditations to subjects trivial for the present, and useless for the future. “O that men were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end.”

Knowing this general aversion to my theme, I shall not treat it in a gloomy and heavy manner, but shall try to allure you to it by the use of similitudes pleasant and interesting. The subject shall supply the solemnity, and I hope the metaphor shall secure your interest. Forgive me, ye spiritual, if I seem too flippant, my words are not for you, but for a class whose souls I trust you love, who cannot as yet bear the more serious thoughts of wisdom, unless they be clothed in parable and picture.

OUR BODY, OUR PROPERTY, OUR FAMILY, THIS PRESENT LIFE, AND ALL ITS SURROUNDINGS, ARE IN THE TEXT DESCRIBED AS A HOUSE. This simile is not at all unusual either in the Old or the New Testament. Moses was faithful in all his *house*, namely, his lifelong charge and duty. Our Lord said of the Pharisees that they devoured widows' *houses*, meaning their estates; and Paul said, “We know that if our earthly *house* of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens,” here referring to his body. We will see what instruction we can find in this most simple but comprehensive comparison.

I. This mortal life and its surroundings are likened to a house, and the first point of the similitude will be seen if we enquire, who Is THE LANDLORD?

The first answer is, that certainly we are not. To all men it may be truthfully said, "Ye are not your own." We are tenants, but not freeholders. We are mere tenants at will without a lease. The earthly house of this tabernacle belongs to him who built it; he who sustains it keeps the title-deeds in his own possession. *Our house belongs to God.* Dear friend, do you ever think of this? Do you remember as a matter of fact that *you and yours are God's property?* He created you, and created you for his own glory. Your soul was spoken into existence by him. Your bodily powers were all bestowed by his hand. You are the creature of the Almighty. In every vein, and sinew, and nerve of your body there are traces of the Divine Embroiderer's skill. You are God's in all the most secret goings and issues of your life, for to him you every day owe the continued possession of existence. Your breath is in your nostrils; but HE keeps it there. He has but to will it and the atoms composing your body which HE now keeps apart from their fellows would return to the bosom of earth. You are but a walking heap of dust, and the cohesion of the various particles is maintained by the hand of Omnipotence. Let the sustaining power of God be withdrawn, and your bodily house would fall in the ruin of death and the utter dissolution of corruption. All that you have around you is in the same predicament, for food, and raiment, house and goods, are God's gifts to you. The strength of hand or the nimbleness of brain that has enabled you to accumulate wealth or to live in comfort has all come from him. Day by day you are a commoner at the table of Divine bounty, a pensioner hour by hour upon the infinite mercy of God. You have nothing, and are nothing but as God pleases. You owe all you have and all you are to him.

It is most useful for each of us to know what are the rights of God towards us. Even if we do not acknowledge them, yet candour demands that at least we hear them defined. Sad is the reflection, however, that when we learn these rights if we resist them we become wilful robbers, and so increase our guilt. If we will not have God to reign over us, if in our spirits we say, like Pharaoh, "Who is the Lord that we should obey his voice?" it will go harder with us at the last than if we had never heard the claims of God proclaimed. Men and women, how is it that God has made you, and yet so many of you never think of him? Shall I bring against you the accusation which the prophet of old brought against his people? "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken, i have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know,

my people doth not consider.” Who among you would retain in your house a tool or a piece of furniture which was of no use or value to you? Who among you would keep so much as an ox or an ass if it rendered you no service? How much less would you nurture it if, instead thereof, it did you harm, if it had a spite against you, and lifted up its heel against you? And yet, are there not some here who have been forgetful of their obligations to their Maker, who have never been of any service to him, have never praised him, have never desired to advance his glory, but who, on the contrary, have even spoken high and haughty things against him, and it may be words of profanity and blasphemy. O God! how art thou illtreated in the very world which is full of thy goodness? How do the creatures of thy hand render unto thee evil for good? Thy house which thou hadst let out to man is made into a castle for thy foes, a temple for idols, a den of thieves, a nest of unclean birds. Thou art ill requited at the hands of thy unworthy tenants! Thou best of Beings, thou Fountain of love and mercy, what dost thou receive from thy creatures but either forgetfulness or disdain?

Bear this in mind henceforth, that the house in which we dwell in this life, has God for the landlord, and that we are only tenants.

II. The simile runs farther. WHAT IS MAN’S LEASE?

One would imagine from the way in which some men talk that we were freeholders; or at least had a lease for nine hundred and ninety-nine years. The truth is, we *are but tenants at will*. We may possess the tenement in which our soul now finds a house for itself, together with its appurtenances and outhouses, for the term of seventy years; and the tenure may even be prolonged to fourscore years, or even to a longer term in rare cases, but at no one time is the tenure altered, we always occupy from moment to moment. Our lease is not for three, seven, fourteen, or twenty-one years, nor is it even from day to day, or from hour to hour; but from second to second we hold precarious possession. We are tenants at the absolute will of God. The commencement of a day never secures the ending of it to us alive, and the striking of the clock at the commencement of the hour is no guarantee that we shall hear it strike again. Every second we hold our lives, and goods, and chattels upon the sole tenure of the divine will. God has but to say, “Return, ye children of men,” and we return to the dust. Flowers are not more frail, moths more fragile, bubbles more unsubstantial, or meteors more fleeting than man’s life. What transient things we are. *We are/*

I mistake myself — we are not. We but begin to be, and ere we are, we are not. It is God alone who can say, "I AM." None of human race should dare to pronounce that word. Yet how many live as if their tenant right of 'this mortal life, and all its goods were a fixed tenure, and entail upon themselves, irrespective of assigns, or heirs, or superior lord of the manor or freeholder of the soil. "Their inward thought is, that their houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling-places to all generations; they call their lands after their own names." To these the words of the apostle James are very applicable, "Go to now, ye that say, To-day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away." Yet how often we fall into the same error. Have you not, my friends, been laying out your plans for months and even years to come? You have considered where you will spend the summer, and where you shall live when you retire from your business. Ah! boast not yourselves of to-morrow, much less of summer or of autumn, for you know not what a day, or even an hour, may bring forth. O man of dying woman born, ask of God to give thee day by day thy daily bread, and let thy living and thy planning be after the fashion of day by day, for when thou beginnest to reckon for far-off time, it looks as if thou hadst never prayed, "So teach me to number my days, that I may apply my heart unto wisdom." O ye young ones, say not, "We will give the first and best of our days to the flesh, and offer to God the rest." You may have no remaining years to offer; you may be consumed in the morning of your lives. Say not, ye men who are in the midst of the world's business, "We will retire anon, and in the cool of our age we will think upon the things of God." You may have no evening of old age, mayhap your sun will go down at noon. You may be called hence from the counting house while yet the ink upon the pages of the ledger is undried, and the Bible as yet unstudied. Set your house in order, for your great Landlord may serve an ejection upon you, and there will be no hope of resisting it, though the wisest of physicians should seek to bar the door. Here is the writ, and these are the express words, "Thou shalt die, and not live." Even the most aged presume that they shall live yet longer still, and the traditions of Jenkyns and of Old Parr, I doubt not, have tempted hundreds to imagine, even when they have been verging upon eighty or ninety, that they may still live a few years longer in quiet possession of their tottering tenement whose pillars are shaken, whose windows are darkened, and whose very foundations are decaying. We cling with

dreadful tenacity to this poor life, and the little which we foolishly call our all. It were well if we could cling with such fast hold to the life that is to come, for that alone is worth clinging to, since it is for ever, whereas this is to be but for a little time even at the longest. What a reflection it is that within a hundred years every one in our most crowded audiences (unless the Lord shall come) will be soundly sleeping amid the clods of the valley, and not one of all the present armies of men that populate our cities will be in possession of his house and lands, or will know aught of anything that is done under the sun. We shall have gone over to “the great majority;” we shall be perhaps remembered, perhaps forgotten, but at any rate, we ourselves shall mingle no more with our fellows in the mart, the street, the places, of worship, or the haunts of pleasure. We shall depart from sea and land, from city and village, from earth and all that is thereon. Where will our immortal natures be? Where will our spirits be? Shall we be communing among the blessed harpers whose every note is bliss, or shall we be for ever gnashing our teeth in remorse among the castaways who would not receive the mercy of God? We hold our house, then, on no firmer tenure than from minute to minute. Remember ye this, ye dwellers in these houses of clay!

There is this clause in the lease, which I am afraid some have never observed, namely, that *the landlord has at all times the right of ingress and egress over his own property*. I thank God that some of us have yielded to the Lord this right, and now our prayer often is that he would come into our house, and search us, and try us, and know our ways, and see if there be any evil way in us, and lead us in the way everlasting. Time was when the last thing we wished for was the presence of God, when we said to him, “Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways,” but now being renewed by his Spirit, we say to him, “Abide with us.” Beloved friend, are you always ready to open the doors of your heart to God’s inspection? Do you delight in heavenly communion? Do you constantly invite the Lord Jesus to come in and sup with you and you with him? If not, you are forgetting one great clause in your lease, and let me also say, you are forgetting the greatest privilege that men can enjoy beneath the stars.

It is well for me to recall to your memories that according to our tenure, *our great landlord permits us to call upon him to execute all repairs*. Our circumstances are apt to grow straitened, and he it is who giveth us power to get wealth, he daily loadeth us with benefits. When our bodily tabernacle is shaken, he it is who healeth all our diseases. When sorrows and wants

multiply he it is who satisfieth our mouth with good things, so that our youth is renewed like the eagle's. It is well, no doubt, when we are sick to seek direction from the physician, but it is a Christian action to resort first to Jehovah-Rophi, the Lord that healeth us. "Is any sick among you?" What saith the apostle? Does he say, "Let him use no medicine," as some "Peculiar People" believe? Nay. Does he say, "Use medicine and nothing else," as the most of professors do? No such thing. Does he say, Let him lie in bed and expect his minister to come and see him," as though ministers, and elders, and deacons were omniscient? No such thing. "Is any sick? Let him *send* " — *that is his duty* — " let him send for the elders of the church," and then, as the form of medicine then in vogue was that of anointing the body with oil, let them pray over him, and let them use the ordinary means, "anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." *Have* your medicine by all means, your homoeopathy or your allopathy, or which:-ever may seem best, but besides that, make prayer your main confidence, for it is the Lord that healeth us. Jesus is the beloved Physician. If we had more faith in God, and resorted more often to him by prayer and faith, the prescriptions of the medical man might be more often wise and his medicines more frequently useful. The Lord who made our house best knows how to repair the tenement, and he permits us to resort to him. When you are sick, my friend, remember this and practice it.

III. Thus, then, 'have we spoken of the lease. Now thirdly, we come to THE RENT THAT IS TO BE PAID.

We occupy a house, which is evidently not our own, and therefore there must be some rent to pay. What is it? The rent that God asks of his tenants is *that they should praise him as long as they live.* "Oh? say you, "that is but little." I grant you that it is; it is but a peppercorn, a mere acknowledgement, but yet there are millions who never pay even that. They offer the Lord no thanks, no love, no service. For the benefits they receive they make no return, or rather they make an evil recompense. The breath that he gives them is never turned to song; the food they eat is not sanctified with gratitude; the goods that he bestows are not tithed, nor are the first fruits of their increase offered to the Lord. Their hearts do not love him; their faith does not trust; in his dear Son; their lips do not speak of him and magnify his glorious name. This is most unrighteous and ungenerous. For us to praise God is not a costly or painful business. The heart that praises God finds a sweet return in the exercise itself. In heaven it is the heaven of perfect spirits to praise the Lord, and on earth we are

nearest heaven when we are fullest of the praises of Jehovah. But how ungrateful are those who are tenants in God's house, and yet refuse the little tribute which he asks of them!

The question is raised, *how often ought the rent to be paid?* You know, in law, the time when the rent of a house is due bears always a relation to the tenure upon which it is held. If a man takes a house by the year, he pays his rent by the year; if he takes it by the quarter, he pays by the quarter; and if we hold our house by the moment, we are hound to pay by the moment. So, then, it was but simple justice when David said, "I will bless the Lord at all times, his praise shall continually be in my mouth." To live in the perpetual exercise of praise to God is at once the Christian's duty and delight. "Nay," saith one, "but we cannot do that; we have other things to think of." But remember, when the praises of God are not on our lips they should be in our hearts. The incense was in the censer even when it was not smoking; our praise should abide with us till opportunity permits the holy fire to be applied. Besides, I believe that our God is best praised in common things. He who mends a shoe with a right motive is praising God as much as the seraph who pours forth his celestial sonnet. You in your workshops, you in your families, you on your sick beds, you anywhere according to your avocations, if you offer through Jesus the Mediator the love of your hearts, are paying the rent of praise unto God Most High. Oh, to be continually doing this!

But, brethren, *I am afraid that we are in arrears.* Those of us who have paid the most rent are still far behindhand. Yes, you were grumbling this morning: *that* was not rendering a worthy recompense for benefits received. Shall a living man complain? There are some who do little else but complain. They complain of the times, of the weather, of the government, of their families, of their trade; if for once they would complain of themselves, they might have a more deserving subject for fault-finding. The Lord is good, and doeth good, and let his name be blessed. Let us avow it as his people, that though he slay us yet will we trust in him; and if he make us groan under his heavy hand we will even weep out his praises, and our expiring sigh shall be but a note of our life's psalm, which we hope to exchange full soon for the song of the celestial host above. Praising and blessing God in life, practically by obedience, and heartily with gratitude — this is the rent which is due for the house in which we dwell.

Are there not some of you who have not even recognised that you belong to God at all, and who up till now have been paying rent and service to another master? I am often in my soul amazed at what men will do for that black master, the devil. Why, sirs, the devil will sometimes summon men to one of his conventicles at the street corner, where the gas is flaming, and they will cheerfully obey the summons. They will meet in such places with companions, rude, boisterous, selfish, vulgar, and everything else that is undesirable, and call them jolly good fellows. If the devil would pick out some fine brave spirits for them to meet, men of wit and genius, and information, one would not wonder so much at the readiness with which the dupes assemble; but the congregations of Satan are usually made up of men and women of the lowest, and most degraded kind, and these people know it; but when they are beckoned of[to the assembly of the scorners, they go with the greatest readiness. And what is done at this gathering of the foolish? Well, they commune together in stupidities at which it must be hard to laugh, and meanwhile they pass round the cup of liquid fire, out of which they cheerfully drink, and drink and drink again, though each successive goblet is filled with deeper damnation. These willing slaves drink at their master's bidding, though the cup makes their brain reel, sets their heart on flame, and makes them unable to keep their feet. Yes, and when he still eries, "Drink, yea, drink abundantly," these faithful servants swallow down the poison till they lie down like logs, or roar like demons. They will keep the death-cup to their lips, till delirium tremens comes upon them and possesses them as with hell itself. Thousands obediently render homage unto Satan by drinking away their lives, and ruining their souls. How much further they go in serving their master than we do in following ours! Into hell itself they follow their accursed leader. They pay him his revenues without arrears, and yet his taxes are heavy, and his exactions are most oppressive. Why, we have seen great lords hand all their estates over to Beelzebub, and when he has set up before them an image in the shape of a horse with a blue ribbon, they have bowed down and worshipped and offered their all at his shrine! I wish we could meet with some who would do as much for Christ as these have done for the devil. Any kind of fashion which may rule the hour draws a mad crowd after it; no matter how absurd or ridiculous the mania, the worshippers of fashion cry, "These be thy gods, O Israel." Yes, Satan is marvellously well obeyed by his servants. His rent is regularly paid, and yet he is not the rightful owner and has no title to the house of manhood. Yea, men will even run after him to offer their homage. They will throw down their lives before his Juggernaut car of

profligacy, and cast themselves beneath its wheels; while the golden chariot of Christ, paved with love for men, traverses their streets, and they have not a word of acclamation or or' praise for that Prince of Peace. O come, ye servants of Jesus, and be ashamed of this! Come and render to your Lord your Cull service. Throw your hearts' enthusiasm into your religion. Be at least as earnest for God as others are for the devil. Be at least as self-denying and self-sacrificing as they are who run the mad career of sin. Pay your rent to the great Landlord, and let the arrears be made up.

IV. But, I must not linger. The next thought is — MAN'S DUTY WITH REGARD TO THIS HOUSE OF WHICH HE IS THE TENANT.

The text says, "Set thine house in order." That shows that *we are not to destroy it nor even to injure it*. It should be the temple of the Holy Ghost. Nothing should be done by us that may injure our body, for in the case of the believer it is a precious thing, ordained to rise again at the last day, since Christ Jesus has bought it, as well as the soul which it contains, with his own blood. Nor are we to waste our substance, for this is the accusation which of old was brought against the unjust steward, that he had wasted his master's goods.

We are to set our house in order, that is, *our own house*. Some persons are very busy setting other people's houses in order, and oh! how their tongues will go when they are sweeping out their neighbor's kitchen, or dusting out his cupboard. Set *your own* house in order, sirs, before you attempt to arrange the affairs of other people.

Again, the *tenant himself must do it*. "Set thine house in order." You must not leave it to a priest; you must not ask your fellow man to become responsible. You must make personal application to him who ran set all in order for you, even to him who came into the world and died for this very purpose. If you need oil for your lamps, you must go to them that sell, and buy for yourselves, for your fellow virgins can give you none of their oil. Set thou thine own house in order. This is the chief business of every living man as a tenant under God.

What kind of order is my house to be set in? My conscience will help to tell me that. An enlightened conscience tells us in what kind of order our heart, our family, and our business should be; by its teachings we may learn how all the departments of the house should be ordered. It cannot be right that the body should be master over the soul; conscience tells us that. It cannot

be right that the memory should retain only that which is evil. It cannot be right that the affections should grovel in the mire. It cannot be right that the judgment should put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter. Conscience says that the heart is never right till the whole man is in Christ, till by a living faith we have embraced Jesus as our full salvation, and have received the Holy Spirit as our sanctifier. We are never right till we are right with conscience, and conscience tells us that we are never right till we are right with God. "Set thine house in order;" obey the inward monitor, listen to the still small voice, and prepare to meet thy God.

"What is God's order?" You can see what his thought of order was when he wrote the ten commands by reading the twentieth of Exodus. You can learn what his order is under the gospel, for we read that a new commandment has Christ given us, that we love one another; and yet again "this is the commandment, that ye believe in Jesus Christ whom he hath sent." Dear friend, is your house right with God? If at this moment you had to surrender possession, is everything ordered as you would wish? If the arrow of death should now fly through this sanctuary, and find a target in your heart at this moment, is it all right, is it all right, is it all right, as you would wish to have it when God's eye shall look upon you in the day of judgment? What if in a single moment we should see the heavens on a blaze, and the earth should rock beneath our feet, and the dead should rise from their sepulchres; what if instead of this tabernacle and its gathered crowd we should now suddenly see the King himself upon the great white throne, and hear the archangel's trumpet ringing out the notes, "Awake, ye dead, and come, ye quick, to judgment," is everything with us as we should like to have it for the blaze of that tremendous day and the inspection of that awful Judge? Happy is that man who can say, "I have committed all to Christ; my body, soul, and spirit, all my powers and all my affections; I have committed all to him by faith and prayer; yes, come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, for it is all right even now." "Set thine house in order," then, conscience and God's word will be your guide as to what is needed.

But I am afraid that in you, my friend, very many things need careful attention and re-arrangement. O that every day each of us lived a Christly life, for then we should not need to be told to set our house in order! I, as pastor of this church, though I trust I am not an idler, have never been able to look upon my own work with any sort of satisfaction. I am obliged to stand where the publican stood, with "God be merciful to me a sinner"

upon my lip, for my work is too vast, and I am too feeble! Is there any man here who can say that he fills his sphere to the full without an omission or transgression,? If you can say so, my brother, I envy you, for it is not long before you will be in heaven. If that be not a self righteous estimate, or a vainglorious opinion of yourself, inasmuch as you are so meet for heaven, you shall soon be there — depend upon that. But whatever there may be about us now, dear friends, which is not what we feel it ought to be, let the call come to us to-night — ” Set thine house in order.” The vain regrets in which we sometimes indulge we often mistake for true repentance, but, let us recollect that

*“Repentance is to leave,
The sins we loved before,
And show that we in earnest grieve
By doing so no more.”*

As believers in Jesus Christ, if there be anything deficient in us, if there be anything excessive in us, if there be aught that is contrary to the Lord’s mind and will, may the Holy Spirit come and correct it all, so that our house may be set in order.

Thus have I shown you in what manner our houses should be kept; but I am afraid that many of your houses want a great deal of setting in order. Some of your houses want sweeping. The dust and filth of sin are lying all over the floors. You want the precious blood to be sprinkled, or else if the Lord begins to sweep with the besom of the law it will happen, as Bunyan tells us, that the dust will be enough to choke your prayers or to blind the eyes of your faith. May the gospel come and sprinkle the water of grace, and then may Christ come in and sweep your house; but you want more than sweeping — your house wants washing. Every floor needs cleansing, and there is no one who can do this but the Lord Jesus Christ. Nothing can make you clean but his blood. In many of the houses the windows are very filthy, and the light of the glorious gospel cannot enter, so as to bring with it an intelligent conception of the things of God. O that this may be set right! The very drainage in some men’s houses is neglected. Many a foul thing stagnates, ferments, and pollutes their souls. Ah! what is there that is in order in the unregenerate man? To all in that state the text calls loudly, ” Set thine house in order.” But, sirs, unless Christ comes to help you it is a hopeless task; unless Christ and his Holy Spirit come to the rescue your houses will remain out of order still, everything filthy and everything

disarranged; and when the great King shall come and find it so, woe unto you, woe unto you, in the day of his appearing!

V. We shall close with the last thought, which is this — WE ARE BIDDEN TO SET OUR HOUSE IN ORDER, BECAUSE WE ARE SERVED WITH A NOTICE TO QUIT. “Set thine house in order; *for thou shall die, and not live.*”

This is not a reason for setting a house in order which bad tenants would care to consider; they wish to leave the house in as delapidated a state as possible. But a just tenant desires to restore to his landlord his property unhurt. So is it with the Jnan who is right with God. He wishes that when he dies he may leave here on earth no trace of injury done to God, but many memorials of service rendered. He does not wish to leave the house as Satan left the poor possessed demoniac, rending and tearing him because he was coming out of him, having great wrath because his time was short. No, the honest man who loves his God, desires to leave everything behind him that shall honor God, and nothing that shall dishonor him. Whitfield used to tell a story of a young man who could not live in the house where his old father had dwelt, because he said “eve,y chair in it smelt of piety.” He was a wicked, godless, rebellious, Christless man, and he could not stay where his father’s holiness would force itself upon his memory, and rebuke him. Oh! I would like to make every chair in my house like that, so that when my boy comes into possession of it, he will think, “Why, there my father sat to study God’s Word, and there he used to kneel in prayer, and now I have his house I must imitate his ways. A dear man of God, who has now gone to heaven, took me into his study one day, and said, “You see that spot?... Yes.” “Well, that, is the place where my dear wife used to kneel to pray, and that is where one morning when I came to look for her, as she did not come down to breakfast, I found her dead.” “Oh!” said he, “that is holy ground;” and so it was, for she was a very gracious woman. O that we may so live that everything we leave behind us may be like Abel’s blood that cried from the ground. May our habits and manners be such that after our death everything associated with us may be perfumed with holy memories. God make it so! God make it so! Are you sure it will be so? Some of you Christian people I must appeal to, are you not too negligent? Are there not with you, even with you, sins against the Lord our God? Might there not be much amiss with you if you were now called away? I beseech you set your house in order.

Beloved friend in Christ, do try that everything may be in order for your dying, and everything now prepared for your departure, if it should happen to-night. *Do it for the Church's sake.* So live that; when the church misses you there shall lie left, behind you your memory and your holy example to inspire those who shall mourn your departure. So live that *the world* may miss your zealous efforts for its good. May all be so ordered in your life that you may never lead others astray by your example, but bequeath it as a legacy of encouragement to your successors. Order all things well for your *children's sake.* They will be pretty much what their parents were. Sovereign grace may interpose, but ordinarily the mother shapes the child's life. May your life be such that it shall be a fair mould for your child's future existence.

Set your house in order, my dear brother, even though you are leaving it, *because you are going to a better one if you are a believer in Christ.* The old clay shed will be taken down, and you shall dwell in marble halls; y^e,u shall leave the hovel for the mansion; the traveler's tent shall be rolled up and put away in the tomb to be exchanged for a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. O let it not be said that you were so bad a tenant in the first house that you could not be trusted with a second, but may grace cause you so to set this house in order that you may quit it without reluctance, and enter into the next with alacrity; leaving your first house behind you without shame, in sure and certain hope of a blessed *resurrection.* May you cheerfully leave the first house, and joyfully surrender the key to the Great Landlord, because you know that, go where he will in all its rooms, he will see the remembrances of his own grace, the marks of his own workmanship, the beauties and adornments of his own Holy Spirit. Then conveyed by ministering spirits to a better country, you shall become possessors of a heritage undefiled, which fadeth not away.

I desire, in closing, that all of us may offer the key of our house to the great Landlord, and own that we live on sufferance as his tenants. A dear brother told us the other day, when he was speaking of his being over seventy years of age, that his lease had run out, and that he was now living by the day. Let us each, in all things, carry out his remark, and live by the day. Let us remember that "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." Let us not act as if we expected to remain long in these lowlands. It is a dreadful thing to see men who profess to be Christians unwilling to die. Should it be so, that when we feel ourselves ill, and likely to die, we should have a host of matters to arrange, and many regrets to

express. Dear brethren, begin your regrets earlier, while there is time to retrieve the past. Regret now, and ask for grace now to do all that is in you for him who loved you and bought you with his blood.

As for you who have no redeeming blood upon you, I do not marvel that you live to yourselves. O you who despise Christ, I do not wonder if you despise yourselves so much as to be the slaves of pleasure. But you who are the elect of God, who are bought by the blood of Jesus, who are called by his Spirit, who profess to be his people, you have nobler things to live for. I pray you make us not to be ashamed of you by living as if you were mere worldlings, who have their portion in this life. Live for eternity. Live for Christ's glory. Live to win souls. Behave as occupiers under a royal owner should behave. With such a Landlord, the best in the whole universe, be also the best of tenants, and evermore be mindful of the time of your removal to another land. Let my last words remain with you. and that they may, I will quote them from a book in which wisdom is set forth in goodly sentences.

*“Gird up thy mind to contemplation, trembling inhabitant of the earth;
Tenant of a hovel for a day, thou art heir of the universe for ever!
For, neither congealing of the grave, not’ gulphing waters of the firmament,
Nor expansive airs of heaven, nor dissipative fires of Gehenna,
Nor rust of rest, nor wear, nor waste, nor loss nor chance, nor change,
Shall avail to quench or overwhelm the spark of sou[within thee]!”*

*Look to thy soul, O man, for none can be surety for his brother:
Behold, for heaven — or for hell — thou canst not escape from Immortality!”*

HOW SHALL WE SING?

COULD we rule the service of song in the house of the Lord, we should, we fear, come into conflict with the prejudices and beliefs of many most excellent men, and bring a hornet's nest about our ears. Although we have neither the will nor the power to become reformer of sacred music, we should like to whisper a few things into the ear of some of our Jeduthuns or Asaphs, who happen to be “chief musicians” in country towns or rural villages. We will suppose the following words to be our private communication: —

O sweet singer of Israel, remember that the song is not for your glory, but for the honor of the Lord, who inhabiteth the praises of Israel; therefore, select not anthems and tunes in which your skilfulness will be manifest, but such as will aid the people to magnify the Lord with their thanksgivings. The people come together not to see you as a songster, but to praise the Lord in the beauty of holiness. Remember *also*, that you are not set to sing for yourself only, but to be a leader of others, many of whom know nothing of music; therefore, choose such tunes as can be learned and followed by all, that none in the assembly may be compelled to be silent while the Lord is extolled. Why should so much as one be defrauded of his part through you? Simple airs are the best, and the most sublime; very few of the more intricate tunes are really musical. Your twists, and fugues, and repetitions, and rattlings up and down the scale, are mostly barbarous noise-makings, fitter for Babel than Bethel. If you and your choir wish to show off your excellent voices, you can meet at home for that purpose, but the Sabbath and the church of God must not be desecrated to so poor an end.

True praise is heart work. Like smoking incense, it rises from the glowing coals of devout affection. Essentially, it is not a thing of sound: sound is associated with it very properly for most weighty reasons, but still the essence and life of praise lie not in the voice, but in the soul. Your business in the congregation is to give to spiritual praise a suitable embodiment in harmonious notes. Take care that you do not depress what you should labor to express. Select a tune in accordance with the spirit of the psalm or hymn, and make your style of singing suitable to the words before you. Flip-pantly to lead all tunes to the same time, tone, and emphasis, is an abomination; and to pick tunes at random is little less than criminal. You mock God and injure the devotions of his people if you carelessly offer to the Lord that which has cost you no thought, no care, no exercise of judgment. You can help the pious heart to wing its way to heaven upon a well-selected harmony! and you can, on the other hand, vex the godly ear by inappropriate or unmelodious airs, adapted rather to distract and dishearten, than to encourage intelligent praise.

The Time is a very primary consideration, but it is too often treated as a matter of no consequence. Large bodies move slowly, and hence the tendency to drawl out tunes in numerous assemblies. We have heard the notes prolonged till the music has been literally swamped, drenched, drowned in long sweeps and waves of monotonous sound. On the other hand, we cannot endure to hear psalms and solemn hymns treated as jigs,

and dashed, through at a gallop. Solemnity often calls for long-drawn harmony, and joy as frequently demands leaping notes of bounding, delight. Be wise enough to strike the fitting pace each time, and by your vigorous leadership inspire the congregation to follow *en masse*

May we in the very gentlest whisper beg you to think very much of God, much of the singing, and extremely little of yourself. The best sermon is that in which the theme absorbs the preacher and hearers, and leaves no one either time or desire to think about the speaker; so in the best congregational singing, the leader is forgotten because he is too *successful* in his leadership to be noticed as a solitary person. The head leads the body, but it is not parted from it, nor is it spoken of separately; the best leadership stands in the same position. If your voice becomes too noticeable, rest assured that you are but a beginner in your art.

One of your great objects should be to induce all the congregation to join in the singing. Your minister should help you in this, and his exhortations and example will be a great assistance to you; but still as the Lord's servant in the department of sacred song you must not rely on others, but put forth your own exertions. Not only ought all the worshippers to sing, but each one should sing praises with understanding, and as David *says*, "play *skilfully*" unto the Lord. his cannot be effected except by instructing the people in public psalmody. Is it not your duty to institute classes for young and old? Might you not thus most effectually serve the church, and please the Lord? The method of Mr. Curwen, and the use of his Sol-fa Notation, will much aid you in breaking ground, and you can in after years either keep to the new method, or turn to the old notation as may seem best to you. Thousands have learned to sing who were hopelessly silent until the sol-fa system was set on foot. The institution of *singers*, as a separate order is an evil, a growing evil, and ought to be abated and abolished; and the instruction of the entire congregation is the readiest, surest, and most scriptural mode of curing it. A band of godless men and women will often install themselves in a conspicuous part of the chapel, and monopolise the singing to the grief of the pastor, the injury of the church, and the scandal of public worship; or else one man, with a miserable voice, will drag a miserable few after him in a successful attempt to make psalms and hymns hideous, or dolorous. Teach the lads and lasses, and their seniors, to run up and down the Sol-fa Modulator, and drill them in a few good, solid, thoroughly musical. tunes, and you, O sons of Asaph, shall earn to yourself a good degree. C. H. SPURGEON

JOHN PLOUGHMAN AS A DUTCHMAN

C. H. SPURGEON.

WHEN I was a small boy, I remember being told by some wag or other that *the Dutch* had taken Holland. That wonderful bit of history did not open my eyes one-half so wide as when I saw that the Dutch had taken John Ploughman. Yes, Mr. Editor, we sometimes say, "that's the fact, or I'm a Dutchman," but John Ploughman can say so no more, for, like the Bishop of Oxford, he has been translated, and his see is the Zuyder Zee. Mr. Adama van *Scheltema* has turned John Ploughman's Talk into PRAATGES VAN JAN PLOEGER, and on the cover of the book an Amsterdam artist has given John Ploughman, *alias* Jan Ploeger, a cap and a jacket, instead of a smock flock — "a very great improvement," says John's wife. Best of all, seals and keys are visible below Jan Ploeger's waistcoat, which, it is to be hoped, show that there is a watch snugly hidden away somewhere; though that is not quite certain, for nowadays we see chains and no watches, whips and no horses, sermons and no gospel, churches and no piety, wigs and no wisdom, degrees and no learning, and fine dress and no lady. As John Ploughman has never had such seals to his ministry before, he supposes it is a clear proof that he is rising in the world, or else that Dutch laborers are better off than English ones, certainly they had need be, as Tom Skinner says, who has to keep thirteen children and a wife on fourteen shillings a week, and pay rent into the bargain. By the way, his landlord is a squire, and Tom's cottage is about a tenth as good as the squire's piggeries. Pray don't let a Dutchman or any other foreigner hear that.

When you are in Turkey, you must do as the Turkies do, and being now made a Dutchman, Jan Ploeger must talk as if he lived in Holland. Not a very easy thing this for a thorough-bred Englishman, but John has once been in Holland on his Master's business, and so has picked up a Netherland proverb or two; and besides he has eaten a Dutch cheese, and walked through a field of Dutch clover, and so he feels wound up like a Dutch clock. So let us try it, as the boy said, when he ate all the pie. If we do not succeed no harm will come of trying.

Our talk is about prosperity, and some other things beside. Some cool evening or other, a certain burgomaster will sit in his summer-house and

smoke his pipe and read these lines; to him Jan Ploeger wishes good health, a clear conscience, and rest in heaven at the end.

It is not given to every man to prosper, but, as a rule, perseverance brings success. Keep the windmills going, and the mere will yet grow good corn. Though every shot does not bring down a bird, a careful marksman will carry home the crow. Step by step goes far; every day a thread makes a skein in a year; industry, by plodding on, gains the prize at last. Bit by bit the stalk builds her nest. Wide-awake and Waste-not will keep the sea from coming through the dyke, while Always-at-it and Work-hard will drag the net ashore with plenty of fish in it. He who follows the trade of thick-headed Michael, eating, drinking, and idling, says he was born on St. Galpert's night, three days before luck, but diligence and thrift are the darlings of fortune.

It is easier to prosper than to bear prosperity well, easier to get upon a tight rope than to walk on it, easier to fill a cup than to keep from spilling it when you carry it. When prosperity smiles, beware of its guiles. You may escape the smoke of poverty and fall into the fire of sin. Many a man can bear anything but good days. A man is not known till he comes to honor, but honors change manners. It may be true that clothes make the mart, but some clothes make very queer men. When men grow rich on a sudden, pride breeds in their purses, like mites in a Gouda cheese, and so it comes to pass the more silver the less sense. When Hendrick had climbed to the top of the ladder he looked down on his brothers. A dog with a bone knows no friend. *Jan*, when he is made a gentleman, does not remember his grandmother. The mouse in the meal-tub thinks he is the miller himself. The man who is full of God's meat often makes a god of himself, even as the fat ox kicks a; the master who fed him. Yet why should a man boast of his riches? Money does not make a man more honorable. Gold-water cannot wash a blackamoor white. An ape's an ape though he wear a gold ring. A cat with a silver collar is not a lion. A pig is but a pig however full his trough may be. The ass in the arms of Bruges sits in an arm-chair, but he is all the more an ass for that. The king of tomtits is only a tom-tit after all. True honor belongs to the worth of men, not to what men are worth. He is noble who performs noble deeds. Better poor with honor than rich with shame. None but very bad Jews worship a golden calf. Yet many a Mynheer Money lords it like an eel in a tub, and flies his flag as proudly as if he were Van Tromp himself. If wealth brought wit it would make our upstarts hide their empty heads, and pray for brains more than for gains.

Some men grow the more greedy, the less they are needy. They are of the race of Johnny Van Cleeve, who would always much rather have than give. Their alms flow like a fountain from a broomstick. They would not even throw their bones to their dogs if they could gnaw them themselves. The more meal they eat the greater their hunger. You will never satisfy them till you put the Rhine into a flask, and put it into their pockets. Like the gapers outside the apothecaries' shops, they are always opening their mouths for more. The bigger the snowball grows the more snow it tries to gather as it rolls, and the more dirt it draws up. *Have is father to want.* Covetous men would drink the sea and swallow the fish. It is bad drinking that makes a man thirsty, beware then of drinking at the fountain of greed. Ill worms breed in full meal bags; set not your heart on what so soon grows stale and sour.

We have seen men become great fools when they have become great owners. When the ass was too happy he must needs dance on the ice. Owls are blind if they get too much light. The boat with the great sail and little ballast was soon upset by the breeze. With too large a fire, many a, house has been burnt down. Men have been smothered in their own clothes, choked with their own fat, and ruined by their own riches. It is not every man who can keep a cool head when he gets to the top of the mast. Good servants often make bad masters. A cow on a throne never milks well. Poor and respectable has grown into rich and abominable. When they put the cock on the steeple he left off calling the maids in the morning. The mastiff was a fine watchman, but when they made him butler he bit his master. The eagle did the tortoise no kindness, when he began teaching him to fly. A horse who is good before a plough would prove a sorry hack if he were put into Baron Van Wyck's carriage. Let none of us court high places, for they are dangerous. He that abideth low falleth not.

*Rejoice in little, shun what is extreme,
The ship rides safest in a little stream.*

I do not believe that success in life is to be measured by the quantity of pelf a man loads himself with: as well count that horse to be happy which has most to draw. Riches are very uncertain blessings. It is said that the rich devour the poor, and the devil devours the rich, so I do not see much to choose between them; there is small choice for frogs, if they must be swallowed alive; one throat is very like another. Low places are damp, but if high places are cold I would choose to be in neither. If the ship is

swallowed up in the sand, and wrecked on the rock, God give me to keep on shore. Better once in heaven, and poor on the road, than ten times near the gate and yet miss it to make money. Better be Delft ware and unbroken, than china and be smashed. Better at Amsterdam safe in the canal, than in the spice groves of Java in fear of your life. Better a happy ploughman, than a miserable burgomaster. The Hague is well when you are well, but even palaces are dark to heavy hearts. If the Prince of Orange is tripped up he falls as heavily as any of us. Misfortunes happen everywhere, and very great ones to great people. If deep swimmers and high climbers seldom die in their beds, then *give* me shallow creeks and low trees. If I cannot sleep in the church at Haarlem because of the great organ, then make my bed in the cupboard.

After all, riches are such bubbles, and honors are such baubles, that wise men will not fret for them. I would not find fault with money because I have not got it, lest you should tell me of the fox who called the grapes sour because he could not get at them; but I know they are sour, for those who have them often make very wry faces. A crown is no cure for the headache. Riches and troubles, ditches and frogs, go together. No one knows where another's shoe pinches, but he can see it does pinch by the way the wearer hobbles.

*The richest man, whatever his lot,
Is he who's content with what he has got.*

After honor and state follow envy and hate. After the sweet comes the sour. Night treads on the heels of day. Moreover, all these things perish in the using, and often fly away before you can use them. The finest tulips fade. Worldly good is ebb and flood. No man knoweth all his fortune till his time comes to die. Fortune and glass break soon, alas! It is good steering with wind and tide, but both change in due time. He that is at sea hath not the wind in his hands. He who rode in a carriage may yet sleep under a bush' with rags for his coverlet. Where once was water for a whale may soon be scarce enough for a herring. It is bad building your house of butter in a world where the sun shines.

Moreover if money rules this world, it has no power in the world to come. Where the streets are paved with pure gold like unto transparent glass, our poor dull muddy gold is of no value. Give me an inch of heaven sooner than a league of earth. That is good wisdom which is wisdom in the end. Treasure laid up in heaven for me. Reader, what say you? Remember no

dyke can keep out the waters of death. The end of time's mirth is the beginning of eternity's sorrow. Time goes, death comes. A worldling works hard, and death is his wages. Is his portion your choice? If so, John Ploughman must needs say, "Farewell," but is sure; you will fare ill.

REASONS FOR SEEKING GOD

BY C. H. SPURGEON.

"Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion. and turneth the, shadow of death into the morning. and maketh the day dark with night: that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: the Lord is his name." — Amos 5:8

IDOLATRY has been in every age the besetting sin of mankind. In some form or another the unregenerate are all given to it, and even in God's people there remains, in their old nature, a tendency towards it.

In its grosser manifestations idolatry is the desire of man to see God with his eyes, to have some outward representation of him who cannot be represented; who is too great, too spiritual, ever to be described by human language, much less to be set forth by images of wood, and stone, however elaborately carved and cunningly overlaid with gold. There is a great God who filleth all space and yet is greater than space, whose existence is without beginning and without end, who is everywhere present, and universally self-existent; but man is so un-spiritual that he will not worship this great invisible One in spirit and in truth, but craves after outward similitudes, symbols and signs. If Aaron makes a calf Israel forgets the divine Jehovah's glory, and says unto the image of an ox that eateth grass: "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of Egypt."

We are apt to imagine that it is a very strange freak of human depravity when men are led to worship visible objects and signs, but it is not at all unusual or singular; it is the general sin of all mankind. I suppose no man has been entirely free from it, and every believer has to contend against it in its subtler forms; for idolatry takes insinuating shapes, less gross in appearance but quite as sinful as the worship of Dagon or Ashtaroth. Take, for instance, the common religious idolatry of our own country, which consists in part of reverence to holy places, as if under the Christian

dispensation, which is not one of type but of fact, holiness could inhere in stone, lime, wood, slate, iron, and brass, when architecturally arranged. English idolatry further reveals itself in reverence to an order of men, not; because of their superior character, but because of certain mystic rites performed upon them, by virtue of which they are supposed to become the representatives of heaven, and the reservoirs of grace. How trustful are our English idolaters in these men when they behold them apparelled in vestments which the tailor has cut into fashions remarkably helpful to devotion. Without these priests and their sumptuous adornings, and grotesque disfigurements, our modern idolaters cannot publicly worship, but in these they have as much trust as the Ephesians in their great Diana. They can only worship their God by objects which appeal to the senses. An outward altar, an outward priest, an outward ritual, outward rites — all these are nothing but another form of the old idolatry of Babel and of Bethel. Man still turns from the unseen God; the unseen priest who has passed within the veil, man still ignores. The spiritual feast upon the body: and blood of Jesus Christ which is the joy of the saints, they know not; but the outward emblems are adored by some and held in great reverence by others. Bread and wine, which are but created and common things, even when placed on the table to assist us in communion, are made into deities by the blind idolaters of this age. Could Egypt or Assyria do worse? Bread used at the ordinance is but bread, and no other than ordinary bread; its emblematic use imparts to it no measure or degree of sanctity, much less of divinity. It is idolatry — flat, grovelling, idolatry — and nothing less, which on all sides is spreading its mantle of darkness over this land under the pretense of profoundly reverent piety.

Where Ritualism does not reign, how easy it is for men to be idolaters of themselves! What is self-reliance, understood as too many understand it, but idolatry of self? It is the opposite of dependence upon the living God, the great source of power and wisdom. Reliance upon my own wisdom, upon my own resolution, upon my own strength of mind — these are idolatries in a subtle and attractive shape. What is much of our overweening affection to our children and to our relatives? What is our unsubmissive repining but idolatry? How is it that we rebel against God if our friends are suddenly taken from us? O man, why is it that thy God has so little of thy love and the creature so much? There is a lawful affection; up to that point thou shouldst go. There is an unlawful affection, when by any means the creature comes before the Creator, to this thou inayst not

descend. Unlawful love, love which idolises its object, is to be avoided with all our might. Then, again, perhaps a less excusable form of idolatry, though no excuse is to be offered for any, is that in which men idolise their estates, and put their confidence in their accumulations, living only to acquire wealth and position, struggling in the race not to win the crown which is immortal, but that poor wreath with which men crown the wealthy merchant, the diligent student, the eloquent barrister, the valiant man of arms. This is idolatry again, for it is setting up an earthly object in the place of the Creator. To God is due all my love, my trust, my fear. He made me, I am bound to serve him, and whenever I lay down at the feet of any person or object, dominion over my powers, apart from God, I am at once guilty of idolatry.

I cannot stay to tell you all the various forms which this idolatry assumes, but may God give us grace to strive against them, and those who still are dead in the idolatries may he deliver. May he save you from leaning upon an arm of flesh, from trusting in what maybe seen and handled, and bring you to rely upon the invisible God, to whom alone belongeth power and strength, and who has a right to our confidence and our service.

The text is addressed to those who have been guilty, either in word, or thought, or deed, of idolatry against God. It gives arguments to persuade them to turn away from everything else, and to seek the true God. We shall read the text, first, in *its natural sense*, and then diving into its meaning a little more deeply, *we shall find spiritual reasons in it for seeking to Jehovah, and to Jehovah alone.*

I. First, then, IN THE NATURAL SENSE OF THE TEXT, We find a truth which is plain enough, but which we need constantly to be reminded of, namely, that *Jehovah is real!!! God.* If Jehovah were not really the Creator of the world, if he did not in very deed make the seven*stars and Orion, if he did not actually work in the operations of Providence, changing the night into day and day again into night, we might be excusable for not rendering him service, since homage might be safely withheld from an imaginary deity. But, as *God is real* and exist as truly as we do, as our existence is dependent upon his sovereign will, and he is all in all, it is due to him that we should “seek his face.” And simple as that utterance is, I have need to push it home to you. I am afraid, dear friends, that many of you think of religion in its jgearing towards God as being a very proper , but at the same time imaginative, matter. You do not practically grasp the thought that God is,

and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him. You do not lay hold upon this fact that as surely as there are fellow creatures round about you, there is a God close to you, in whom you live, and move, and have your being. The worldly man puts his foot down on the earth, and he says, "Ah! I believe in this! Here is something solid and I feel it." He takes up certain fragments of that earth, yellow and glittering, and he says, "This is the main chance, I believe in this." Just so, the created earth is real to him, and God who created all things, is to him but a shadowy being. He may not rudely deny his existence, but practically he reduces his thought of God to a mere fancy, and says in his heart. "No God." My attentive hearer, I trust that thou art not so unwise. Thou knowest that God is, that he is even if we *are not*, that he filleth all things, and that he dwelleth everywhere; and since he is the Creator, the First and Chief of all things, I trust thou art anxious to seek him and yield him thy obedience.

Note from the text, that God is not only the true God, but he is the *glorious God*. I cannot understand how the heathen, supposing their gods had been gods, could worship such little, mean, base, and contemptible beings. Think of Jove, for instance, the great god of Rome and Greece, what a disgusting animal he was! What a monster of sensuality, selfishness, and folly! I should feel it hard as a creature, to worship such a god as that, if god he could be. But when I think of him who made the stars and Orion, who stretched out the heavens like a curtain, and made the sky as a molten looking'-glass, who is magnificent in the acts of creation, marvellous in the wonders of grace, and unsearchable in all the attributes of his nature, my soul feels it to be her honor and delight to adore him. It is an elevation to the soul to stoop to the dust before such a one. The more we reverence him, and the less we become in our own sight, the more sublime are our emotions. Well did even a heathen say, "To serve God is to reign." To serve such a God as ours is to be made kings and priests. Oh, were not our hearts perverted and depraved, it would be our greatest happiness, our highest rapture to sound forth the praises of a God so glorious, and our hearts would be evermore enquiring of him, "Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do? Thy will is wiser and better than mine own will. I ask no greater liberty than to be bound with thy bands of love; I ask no greater ease than to bear thy blessed yoke.' Since then the Lord is real, and moreover so glorious as to be infinitely worthy of worship, we should seek him and live.

Again, Jehovah the true God is *most powerful*, for “he made the seven stars and Orion; he calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth. Jehovah is his name.” Think reverently of him, for he is not like the gods of the heathen, of whom the prophet said in satire, “Eyes have they, but they see not; mouths have they, but they speak not; noses have they, but they smell not; hands have they, but they handle not.” Contempt and ridicule are poured upon these wooden gods by the prophet, when he tells of the workman who takes one end of a log and makes a god of it, and then with the remainder kindles a fire, and warms his hands, and boils his pot. Such a god as this it is indeed a degradation for the human mind to worship, but the true God, who has displayed his power in the glittering firmament, and in the foaming sea, who is revealed with power to the eye of the astronomer in the innumerable worlds revolving in boundless space, such a God we must reverence. Oh! in the hour of storm and tempest, when the Lord is abroad riding in his chariot of thunder-cloud upon the wings of the wind, casting forth his hailstones and coals of fire, making the earth to shake at the sound of his voice, and breaking the cedars of Lebanon with the flash of his spear, we feel we must adore him, and as we bow before him reason endorses the worship which grace suggests. Is not his power a cogent reason for seeking him? Will not you who have lived without him now adore him? A real God, so glorious and so powerful, should surely command your reverent adoration.

Further, *he is a God who work great marvels*, achieving wonders every moment which would astonish us if we were not so used to beholding them. They tell the story — ’tis but a legend of the days of Solomon the wise, that the King astonished all beholders by taking a seed and producing from it in a few moments a full grown plant. They cried, “How wonderful! How astonishing!” But the wise man said, “This is only what the Lord doeth every day; this is what he is performing everywhere in his own time, and you see it, and yet, you never say, ‘How wonderful!’ “When we have watched those who practice sleight-of-hand perform their feats, we have marvelled greatly, but what are a few poor conjuring tricks when compared with the ordinary, but yet matchless processes of nature? Our fields and hedgerows team with marvels never equalled by all the wisdom and skill of man. Walk into the grass field, and you tread on miracles. Listen to the birds as they sing in the trees, and you hear marvellous speech. If one little mechanical bird, with a few clockwork movements, were warbling out something like music in an exhibition, everybody would gather round it,

and some would even pay to hear it sing, and yet thousands of birds sing infinitely more sweetly than anything that man can make, and men had rather kill them than admire them. Men fail to see the miracle which God is working in each living thing. Turn your eyes above you to the starry firmament, and watch the Pleiades and Arcturus with his sons; for though we know but little of them, they have won from many an observer an awestruck acknowledgment of the greatness of God, insomuch that it has been said—

“An undevout astronomer is mad.”

The order, the regularity, the manifest calculation and design which appear in every part of the constellations, in every single planet, in every fixed star, and in every part and parcel of the great multitude of words which God has created, are such decisive evidences that if men do not see something of God in them, they must be weak in their minds or wicked in their hearts. Surely what is seen of God in this way has tended to make us worship him. Many of you may know but little of astronomy, but still you see every day that God is working everywhere around us, and that heaven, and earth, and land, and sea, are teeming with the products of his marvellous skill. The revolutions of day and night, and the formation and fall of rain are indisputable proofs of the presence of eternal power and Godhead. Let us, therefore, seek the Lord! How is it that a man can go up and down in God’s world, and yet forget the God who made the whole? I do not suppose that a man could have walked through the exhibition at Paris without thinking of the emperor whose influence gathered all those treasures together, and who attracted the kings and princes of the earth to visit it; and yet men will go through this world, compared with which the Exposition was a box of children’s *toys*, and will not recognize God therein! Oh! strange blindness, mad infatuation, that with God everywhere present, and such a God, the God whom to know is life eternal, whom to delight in is present happiness and future bliss — man is willingly ignorant, blind to his own best interests, senseless to the sweetest and the most ennobling emotions, and an enemy to his best friend! The surface of the text supplies us with motives for seeking God.

O that the Holy Spirit might supply us with grace that we might *feel* the motives, and be obedient to them!

II. We will now regard the text WITH A MORE SPIRITUAL EYE.

We speak to those who are sensible of their departure from the living God, and are anxious to be reconciled to him, by the forgiveness of their sins for Jesus' sake, but our text has also a word for the obdurate and unawakened. The Lord has been pleased to invite the penitent to come to him in many places of Scripture, but in this passage, in order that the invitation may miss of none, it is made exceedingly wide in its character. Our text will appear to be very wonderful if we notice the connection. "Ye who turn judgment to wormwood, and leave off righteousness in the earth, seek ye him." There is no mention of those who thirst for him, who are humbled, and confess their faults, but this exhortation is given to those who have no good points about them, but many of the most pernicious traits of character. Those who turn judgment into wormwood, and leave off righteousness in the earth, even those are bidden to seek God. Marvellous mercy! Who after this shall dare despair? If my hearer has up to this day lived a stranger to God, the text does not exclude him from seeking God, but as with an angel's voice it whispers, "Seek him." If sin has perverted your judgment, yet seek the great Creator and Preserver; seek him, for you shall find him; you are not bidden to seek his face in vain; the command to seek him implies the certainty of his being found of you.

The reasons given for seeking the Lord are, spiritually, these. The Lord "maketh the seven stars" — that is to say, the Pleiades, and he also "maketh Orion." Now, the Pleiades were regarded as being the constellation of the spring, harbingers of the coming summer. We read of "the sweet influences of the Pleiades." They are most conspicuous at the vernal period of the year. On the other hand, the Oriental herdsman, such as Amos was when he saw Orion flaming aloft, knew the wintry sign right well. Both the Pleiades and Orion are ordained of the Lord, *he makes our joys and our troubles*. See, then, the reason why we should seek God, because if Orion should just now be in the ascendant, and we should be visited with a winter of despondency, chilled by howling winds of fear and sharp frosts of dismay, if we seek to God he can withdraw Orion, and place us under the gentle sway of the Pleiades of promise, so that a springtime of hope and comfort shall cheer our souls, to be succeeded by a summer of rare delights and fruitful joys. Hearest thou this, poor troubled one? Whatever thy sorrow may be, the God who made heaven and earth can suddenly change it into the brightest joy. By providence he can do it. Thy circumstances which are now so desperate can be changed by a touch of his hand Within an hour. To whom canst thou better apply for succor? And

if thy heart be sick and sad with a sense of sin, and thou art pining with remorse, his grace can find a balm and cordial for thy wounded conscience, which shall give thee peace at once. Before the clock ticks again God can grant thee perfect salvation, blot out thy sins like a cloud, and like a thick cloud thine iniquities. Seek thou the pardoning God. Seek him, I say, for to whom else shouldst thou go? Where else shouldst thou look for strength but to the Strong? Where else for mercy but to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Lord, moreover, turns grief into joy. In the text it is added, “he turneth the shadow of death into the morning.” The long dark night of sorrow, blacker than darkness itself because it presages everlasting wrath, the night created by the grim shadow of death. cold, chill, terrible, may have fallen upon your soul, but the living God can at once transform this darkness into the brightness of the morning. When the sun arises with healing beneath his wings, the whole earth is made to smile, and even thus at once can the Lord make your whole nature glad with the light of his countenance. Though you are ready to lie down in despair; though you suppose that hell yawns for you, and will soon receive your guilty soul — he can turn this shadow of death into the morning of peace and joy. To whom, then, should you go but to this God? He has already given his dear Son to be the way of life for us sinners. Have you ever heard of another who gave his son to die for his enemies? Gad not about after other helpers, but come at once to your heavenly Father’s arms, and with the prodigal say — ” I will arise and go to my Father!” If you are willing to come, the way is open, for Jesus died. You must not come arrayed in the supposed fitness of good works or good feelings, but you must come resting on the finished work of the appointed Savior. If you look to him you shall be lightened. If you come with his name upon your lips, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you. Should not this be a reason for coming, that he can turn your night into day, your winter into summer?

But the text bears another aspect, namely, that *God can also turn your present joy into grief*, and therefore you should seek him. Hemakes the seven stars give way to Orion. “He maketh the day darkwith night.” At this moment, it may be, that you are at ease; but how long will you be so? Though you have no God, you are contentwith what you possess in this world, satisfied with your daily earnings, or with your yearly income, charmed with your wife, your children, your estate; but remember how soon your joys may be taken from you! Have you not heard how often God’s providence has

stripped the house, stripped the family, stripped the man's very soul of every com-fort? Remember ye not the story of Job, who in one day descended from riches to poverty? Know ye not that if the wicked spread them-selves abroad like a green bay tree, they shall suddenly wither, and though they be exceeding proud and strong, like the ox fatted for the slaughter they shall come to their end? All our joys on earth are dependent upon the sovereign will of heaven. Some of you know this by bitter experience, for you have seen the delight of your eyes taken away at a stroke, and the comfort of your heart carried to the grave. Now, to whom should you fly for succor, but to him upon whom all your present comfort depends, and who can so soon take it all away? How prudent to be at peace with him! How wise, above all wisdom, to be reconciled to the mighty God! But, alas, for those who have often been warned! They have hardened their necks, and will be suddenly destroyed. Their day will blacken into everlasting night. The proud sinner will die as others do, his we will pale, and his brow grow cold, for he must face inexorable Death, and then when he comes into the land to which the wicked are banished, he will enter into the outer darkness, darkness which shall be felt, in the land of confusion, where there is no beginning of hope, or end of misery; who would then desire to stand in his soul's stead? Escape then before the darkness gathers. Seek him, O man, who maketh the day dark with night.

*“Ye sinners, seek his face,
Whose wrath you cannot bear;
Fly to the shelter of the cross,
And find salvation there.”*

The last clause of the text suggests a third reason for seeking the Lord, namely, *God may make that which is a blessing to some a curse to others.* Did you observe it? Seek him that “calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth.” This may allude to the deluge, when the waters of the ocean covered the very tops of the mountains; but it may be equally well explained by reference to the clouds which yield refreshing rain. The sun draws up the waters of the sea, leaving the salt behind; and, when these exhalations have floated their appointed time in the air, they descend upon the thirsty earth to make glad the soil. Now, since the clause bears two readings, it were well to note how the actions of God oftentimes bear two renderings. There is, for instance, the gift of his dear Son, an unexampled act of love, and yet to some of you it will prove a saviour of death unto death. To the unbeliever it will prove a terrible thing that Jesus

ever came into the world. He is a precious corner-stone to those who build upon him, but those who stumble upon him shall be broken, and if fids stone shall fall upon any man it shall grind him to powder. That which is heaven's greatest joy is hell's greatest horror. When Christ shall come, the sight of him shall draw forth the acclamations of his people, but it will also cause anguish to his enemies. They shall weep and wail because of him. They shall call upon the rocks to cover them, and upon the mountains to hide them from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne. Since you who' so constantly hear the gospel cannot escape from it, but must have it made to you either a savor of death unto death or of life unto life, I pray that the Eternal Spirit may show you the wisdom of seeking God by Jesus Christ, and of seeking him now. It will be a dreadful tiling at the last great day to find the gentle Lamb become a Lion to you, to tear you in pieces when there shall be none to deliver! Why should that which is the meat of humble souls become yore' poison? Why should the blood of that Savior, in which so many have washed their robes and made them white, be your condemnation? Remember, Jesus' blood will be either upon you to cleanse you or upon you to condemn you. That dreadful cry of the Jews in the streets of Jerusalem — " His blood be on us, and on our children," what a curse it brought upon their race in the massacres within the city walls and, in the bitter exile and suffering which they have so long endured. Take care that the same curse do not bring upon you an eternal exile from God! Seek you his face, I beseech you! You may not long have opportunity to seek it. The day of his mercy may close as closes this day with the setting sun. You may not survive to enjoy another day of gospel invitation. May God the blessed Spirit, who alone can do it, make you seekers, and then make you finders, and his shall be the praise!

Thus much to the unconverted. The people of God can think over the text in relation to themselves. It is rich in priceless instruction to them, but time forbids me to direct their meditations. Farewell.

JOHN PLOUGHMAN'S LETTER ON THE WAR.

TO NAPOLEON, EMPEROR OF THE FRENCH, AND WILLIAM, KING OF PRUSSIA.

THIS comes hoping that you are getting better, at least better tempered with one another, though I am much afraid, as the saying is, that you will be worse before you will be better. I beg to send my most disrespectful compliments. Scripture says, "Honour to whom honor is due;" but kings who go to war about nothing at all have no honor due to them. So I don't send you so much as would lay on your thumb nails. Perhaps you are not both alike, and only one of you is to blame for beginning this dreadful fight; but I do not know your secret tricks, for kings are as deep as foxes, and it is safest to lay it on to you both, for then the right one will be sure to get it. I should like to give you both a month at our workhouse, and a taste of the cank, to bring your proud spirits down a bit, for I expect it is *your* high living that has made you so hot blooded.

Whatever do you see in fighting that you should be so fierce for it? One would think you were a couple of game cocks, and did not know any better. When two dogs fight, one of them is pretty sure to come home lame, and neither of them will look the better for it. One or other of you will get a thrashing; I only wish it would come, on your bare backs, and not on your poor soldiers. What are you at? Have you got so much money that you want to blow it away in powder? If so, come and let off some fireworks down by Dorking, and please our boys. Or have you too many people, and therefore want to clear them off by cutting their throats? Why don't you do this in a quiet way, and not make them murderers as well as murdered? I don't think you know yourselves what it is you want; but, like boys with new knives, you must be cutting something. One of you has the gout, and that does not sugar the temper much, and the other is proud about having beaten his neighbor; and so you must needs let off your steam by beginning a murderous war. You are as daft as you are days old if you think any good can come of it. If you think you will get ribands and flags by fighting, you had better buy them at first hand of the drapers; they will come a deal cheaper, and there will be no ugly blood stains on them. If you are such great babies you should come to our fair, and buy yourselves lots of stars and garters, and blue ribands, and the stall-keepers would be glad to serve you.

If you must have a fight, why don't you strip and go at it yourselves as our Tom Rowdy and Big Ben did on the green; it's cowardly of you to send a lot of other fellows to be shot on your account. I don't like fighting at all, it's too low-lived for me; but really if it would save the lives of the millions I would not mind taking care of your jackets while you had a set-to with fisticuffs, and I would encourage you both to hit his hardest at the gentleman opposite. I dare say if you came over to Surrey the police would manage to keep out of your way and let you have a fair chance of having it out; they have done so for other gentlemen, and I feel sure they would do it to oblige you. It might spoil your best shirts to have your noses bleed, and I dare say you would not like to strip at it, but there are plenty of ploughmen who would lend you their smock frocks for an hour or two, especially if you would be on your honor not to go off with them. Just let me know, and I'll have some sticking plaster ready, and a bason of water, and a sponge, and perhaps our governors will let Madame Rachel out of jail, to enamel your eyes, if they get a little blackened. I've just thought of a capital idea, and that is, if you will both drop a line to the keepers of the Agricultural Hall, where they have those Cumberland wrestling matches, they would let you have the place for a day, and give you half the takings, and I'll be bound there would be a crowd, and no mistake. So you see you could get glory and ready-money too, and nobody would be kille. I like this idea, for then I can get out of my first offer, and can wash my hands of you, and I can truly say, the less I see of two such kicking horses as you are the better I shall be pleased. My good old grandfather set me against the Bonyparts when I was a boy, but I did think that you, Lewis, were a quieter sort than your uncle; however, what is bred in the bone will come out in the flesh, and as the old cock crows the young cock learns. Why you, the king of the Germans, want to go into the butchering line I don't know; but if you are at the bottom of this it shows that you are a very bad disposed man, or you would be ashamed of killing your fellow creatures. When war begins hell opens, and it is a bad office for either of you to be gate-opener to the devil; yet that's what one of you is, if not both.

Did either of you ever think of what war means? Did you ever see a man's head smashed, or his bowels ripped open? Why, if you are made of flesh and blood, the sight of one poor wounded man, with the blood oozing out of him, will make you feel sick. I don't like to drown a kitten; I can't bear even to see a rat die, or any animal in pain. But a man! where's your hearts if you can think of broken legs, splintered bones, heads smashed in, brains

blown out, bowels torn, hearts gushing with gore, ditches full of blood, and heaps of limbs and carcasses of mangled men? Do you say my language is disgusting? How much more disgusting must the things themselves be? And you make them! How would you like to get a man into your palace-garden, and run a carving-knife into his bowels, or cut his throat? If you did that you would deserve to be hanged; but it would not be half so bad as killing tens of thousands, and you know very well that this is just what you are going to do. Do you fancy that your drums and fifes, and feathers and fineries, and pomp, make your wholesale murder one whit the less abominable in the sight of God? Do not deceive yourselves, you are no better than the cut-throats whom your own laws condemn; better, why you are worse, for your murders are so many. Think, I pray you, for your poor people will have to think whether you do or no. Is there so little want in the world that you must go trampling on the harvest with your horses and your men? Is there so little sorrow that you must make widows by the thousand? Is death so old and feeble that you must hunt his game for him, as jackals do for the lion? Do you imagine that God made men for you to play soldiers with? Are they only meant for toys for you to break? O kings, a ploughman tells you that their souls are as precious in God's sight as yours, they suffer as much pain when bullets pierce them as ever you can do; they have homes, and mothers and sisters, and their deaths will be as much wept over as yours, perhaps more. How can you sit down to eat when you have caused war? Does not the blood rise in your throats and choke you? Or are you only devils with crowns on? Creatures who were never suckled at a woman's breast, and therefore have no human feeling. It will be hard for you to think of the blood you have shed when you lie dying, and harder still to bear the heavy hand of God when he shall cast all murderers into hell. Whichever it is of you that has been the wicked cause of this war, I say you smell of blood; you ought to be more hated than the common hangman, and instead of being called "his majesty" you ought to be hooted as a demon.

You have both made mighty fine speeches, laying all the blame off of yourselves, but the worst cause generally gets the best pleading, for men who cannot walk take to horseback; but all the world knows that wranglers never will own that they are in the wrong, and your words will only go for what they are worth, which is not much. Emperor and king, who are you? Though the great folk flatter you, you are only men. Have pity upon your fellow men. Do not cut them with swords, tear them with bayonets, blow

them to pieces with cannon, and riddle them with shots. What good will it do you? What have the poor men done to deserve it of you? You fight for glory, do you? Don't be such fools. I am a plain talking Englishman, and I tell you the English for glory is DAMNATION, and it will be *your* lot, O kings, if you go on cutting and hacking your fellow men. Stop this war if you can, at once, and turn to some better business than killing men. Set up shambles and kill bullocks for your nations; you can then eat what you slay, and there will be some reason in what you do. Before the deep curses of widows and orphans fall on you from the throne of God, put up your butcher knives and patent men-killers, and repent. From one who is no servant of yours, but A Fighter for Peace, JOHN PLOUGHMAN.

READER! GIVE EAR!

THIS moment, while preparing the magazine for August, I have experienced a shock which I shall not soon forget. I opened a letter, and it commenced thus: —

“REV. SIR,

I feel it right, as a friend of Mr. H. E. Elliott's, to apprise you of the sad fact that he *died* last evening.”

I have known him and respected him for many years. Only a day or two ago, I saw him and talked with him, and *only* yesterday I had from him the manuscript of Thursday evening's Sermon. He was the reporter of my Sabhath evening and week evening sermons; and a most able reporter too, and kind, and courteous, and all that I could wish in his own sphere. He made no profession of religion, but he always spoke as if he had a share in it, and was ready at all times to serve the cause as only they are who love it. Can it be that he is gone? Are the nimble fingers still for ever? Is the pen of the ready writer fallen to be used no more? It is not a fact which I can realize all at once. How can Elliott be dead? I must sit down and try to grasp the sad truth.

How soon will the same record be made of me, *and of thee, reader*; yes, of thee? is everything in fit order for the departure so certain, and it may be so near? It ought to be the first concern of life to be ready for the life to come. Reason tells us that. Are we acting like rational beings with such a prospect before us, or are we rushing blindly on like the mad swine of the

Gergesenes? It is well to lay these things to heart before we ourselves are laid in our sepulchres.

Reader, repentance of sin and faith in the *Lord Jesus* are the marks of a saved man. Are these signs seen in you or no? If not, take warning by the sudden calling away of others, and obey the gospel call at once. Trust now thy soul with him who died to bear the curse of heaven due for sin. Commit now thy spirit into the hands which were nailed to the tree. Here in this silent place, where no eye sees thee bow the knee, lift up your heart, and yield thyself to the Christ of God. Is it done; then it is well. In Christ all is well for time and for eternity. Be persuaded to yield thy heart now. When these words were written thou wast prayed for by thy friend, and he asked that thou might-est be lead to pray for thyself. C. H. SPURGEON.

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL

SEPTEMBER 1, 1870.

GADDING ABOUT

A SHORT SERMON'. BY C. H. SPURGEON.

“Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? “ —
Jeremiah 2:36.

GOD’S ancient people were very prone to forget him, and to worship the false deities of the neighboring heathen. Other nations were faithful to their blocks of wood and of stone, and adhered as closely to their graven images as though they really had helped them, or could in future deliver them. Only the nation which avowed the true God forsook its God, and left the fountain of living waters to hew out for itself broken cisterns which could hold no water. There seems to have been, speaking after the manner of men, astonishment in the divine mind concerning this, for the Lord says, “*Pass over the isles of Chittim, and see; and send unto Kedar, and consider diligently, and see if there be such a thing. Hath a nation changed their gods, which are yet no gods? but my people have changed their glory for that which doth not profit. Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate.*” In this same chapter the Lord addresses his people with the question, “*Can a maid forget her ornaments? or a bride her attire? Yet my people have forgotten me days without number.*” And here, in this text, the same astonishment appears, “*Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way?*” It most certainly was a most unreasonable thing that a people with such a God, who had dealt out to them so graciously the riches of his love, and had wrought such wonders on their behalf, should turn from him to the worship of Baal or Ashtaroth, mimic gods which had ears but heard not, eyes but saw not, and did but mock the worshippers who were deluded by them. As in a glass I see myself in these people. The spiritual people of God are well imaged in the typical nation; for, alas! waywardness and wandering of heart are the diseases not only of the Israelites of old, but also of the true Israel now.

The same expostulations may be addressed to us as to that erring nation of old, for we as perpetually backslide, and as constantly forget the Almighty One, to put our trust in an arm of flesh, He saith to us also, "Why gaddest thou about so much?" For we are, alas! too often false to hi, forgetting him, and wandering hither and thither, rather than abiding in close and constant fellowship with God our exceeding joy.

I desire to put this question to believers, and then to the unconverted. May the Holy Spirit bless it to each class.

If you read this question, taking it in its connection, you will see, in t h? first place, that there is *a relationship mentioneed*. The question is asked, "Why gaddest thou about so much?" The enquiry is not made of a traveler, nor of one whose business it is to journey from cole to pole, and to investigate distant lands. It is not asked of a wayfarer lodging' for a night, nor of a homeless vagrant who finds a poor shelter beneath every bush; but it is asked by God of his people Israel, describing them under the character of a married wife. He represents the nation of Israel as being married unto himself, himself the husband of Israel, and Israel his bride. To persons bearing that character the question comes with great force, "Why gaddest thou about so much?" Let others wander who have no central object of attraction, who have no house, and no "house-band," to bind them to the spot; but thou, a married wife, how canst thou wander? What hast thou to do in traversing strange ways? How canst thou excuse thyself? If thou weft not false to thy relationship thou couldst not do so!.No, beloved, we strain no metaphor when we say that there exists between the soul of every believer and Jusus Christ, a relationship admirably imaged in the conjugal tie. We are married unto Christ. He has betrothed our souls unto himself. He paid our dowry on the cross. He espoused himself unto us in righteousness, in the covenant of grace. We have accepted him as our Lord and husband. We have given ourselves up to him, and under the sweet law of his love we ought to dwell evermore in his house. He is the bridegroom of our souls, and he has arrayed us in the wedding dress of his own righteousness. Now it is to us who own this marriage union, and who are allied to the Lord Jesus by ties so tender, that the Wellbeloved says, "Why gaddest thou about so much?"

Observe, that the wife's place may be described as a threefold one. In the first place, *she should abide in dependence upon her husbandd's care*.It would be looked upon as a very strange thing if a wife should be overheard to speak

to another man, and say, "Come and assist in providing for me." If she should cross the street to another's house and say to a stranger, "I have a difficulty and a trouble; will you relieve me from it? I feel myself in great need, but I shall not ask my husband to help me, though he is rich enough to give me anything I require, and wise enough to direct me, but I come to you a stranger, in whom I have no right to confide, and from whom I have no right to look for love, and I trust myself with you, and confide in you rather than in my husband." This would be a very wicked violation of the chastity of the wife's heart: her *dependence* as a married woman with a worthy husband, must be solely fixed on him to whom she is bound in wedlock. Transfer the figure, for it is even so with us and [he Lord Jesus. It is a tender topic; let it tenderly touch your heart and mine. What right have I, when I am in trouble, to seek' an arm of flesh to lean upon, or to pour my grief into an earthborn ear in preference to casting my care on God, and telling Jesus all my sorrows? If a human friend hath the best intentions, yet he is not like my Lord, he never died for me, he never shed his blood for me, and if he loves me he cannot love me as the husband of my soul can love! My Lord's love is ancient as eternity, deeper than the sea, firmer than the hills, changeless as his own Deity; how can I seek another friend in preference to him? What a slight I put upon the affection of my Savior! What a slur upon his condescending sympathy towards me! How I impugn his generosity and mistrust his power if, in my hour of need, I cry out, "Alas! I have no friend." No friend while Jesus lives! Dare I say I have no helper? No helper while the Mighty One upon whom God has laid help still exists with arm unparalysed and heart unchanged? Can I murmur and lament that there is no escape for me from my tribulations? No escape while my Almighty Savior lives, and feels my every grief? Do you see my point? Put it in that shape, and the question, "Why gaddest thou about so much to look after creatures as grounds of dependence?" becomes a very deep and searching one. Why, O believer, dost thou look after things which are seen, and heard, and handled, and recognised by the senses, instead of trusting in thine unseen but not unknown Redeemer? Oh! why, why, thou spouse of the Lord Jesus, why gaddest thou about so much? Have we not even fallen into this evil with regard to our own salvation? After a time of enjoyment it sometimes happens that our graces decline, and we lose our spiritual enjoyment, and as we are very' apt to depend upon our own experience, our faith also droops. Is not this unfaithfulness to the finished work and perfect merit of our great Substitute? We knew at the first, when we were under conviction of sin, that we could not rest on anything within

ourselves, and yet that truth is always slipping away from our memories, and we try to build upon past experiences, or to rely upon present enjoyments, or some form or other of personal attainment. Do we really wish to exchange the sure rock of our salvation for the unstable sand of our own feelings? Can it be that having once walked by faith we now choose to walk by sight? Are graces, and frames, and enjoyments, to be preferred to the tried foundation of the Redeemer's atonement? Be it remembered that even the work of the Holy Spirit, if it be depended upon as a ground of acceptance with God, becomes as much an antichrist as though it were not the work of the Holy Spirit at all. Dare we so blaspheme the Holy Ghost as to make his work in us a rival to the Savior's work for us? Shame on us that we should thus doubly sin! The best things are mischievous when put in the wrong place. Good works have "necessary uses," but they must not be joined to the work of Christ as the groundwork of our hope. Even precious gold may be made into an idol-calf, and that which the Lord himself bestows may be made to be a polluted thing, like that brazen serpent which once availed to heal, but when it was idolised came to be styled by no better name than "a piece of brass," and was broken and put away. Do not continually harp upon what thou art, and what thou art not; thy salvation does not rest in these things, but in thy Lord. Go thou and stand at the foot of the cross, still an empty-handed sinner to be filled with the riches of Christ; a sinner black as the tents of Kedar in thyself, and comely only through thy Lord.

Again, the wife's position is not only one of sole dependence upon her husband's care, but it should be, and is, a *position of sole delight in, her husband's love*. To be suspected of desiring aught of man's affection beyond that, would be the most serious imputation that could be cast upon a wife's character. We are again upon very tender ground, and I beseech each of you who are now thinking of your Lord, consider yourselves to be on very tender ground too, for you know what our God has said "The Lord thy God is a jealous God." That is a very wonderful and suggestive expression — "a jealous God." See that it be engraven on your hearts. Jesus will not endure it that those of us who love him should divide our hearts between him and something else. The love which is strong as death is linked with a jealousy cruel as the grave, "the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame." The royal word to the spouse is, "Forget also thine own kindred, and thy father's house; so shall the King greatly desire thy beauty: for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him." Of course, beloved, the

Master never condemns that proper natural affection which we are bound to give, and which it is a part of our sanctification to give in its due and proper proportion to those who are related to us. Besides, we are bound to love all the saints, and all mankind in their proper place and measure. But there is a love which is for the Master alone. Inside the heart there must be a *sanctum sanctorum*, within the veil, where he himself alone must shine like the Shechinah, and reign on the mercy-seat. There must be a glorious high throne within our spirits, where the true Solomon alone must sit; the lions of watchful zeal must guard each step of it. There must he, the King in his beauty, sit enthroned, sole monarch of the heart's affections. But, alas! alas! how often have we gone far to provoke his anger! We have set up the altars of strange gods hard by the holy place. Sometimes a favorite child has been idolised; another time, perhaps our own persons have been admired and pampered. We have been unwilling to suffer though we knew it to be the Lord's will: we were determined to make provision for the flesh. We have not been willing to hazard our substance for Christ, thus making our worldly comfort our chief delight, instead of feeling that wealth to be well lost which is lost as the result of Jehovah's will. Oh, how soon we make idols! Idol-making was not only the trade of Ephesus, but it is a trade all the world over. Making shrines for Diana, nay, shrines for self, we are all master craftsmen at this in some form or another. Images of jealousy, which become abominations of desolation, we have set up. We may even exalt some good pursuit into an idol, even work for the Master may sometimes take *his* place; as was the case with Martha, we are cumbered with much serving, and often think more about the serving than of *him* who is to be served; the secret being that we are too mindful of how *we* may look in the serving, and not enough considerate of *him*, and of how he may be honored by our service. It is so very easy for our busy spirits to gad about, and so very difficult to sit at the Master's feet. Now, Christian, if thou hast been looking after this and after that secondary matter, if thy mind has been set too much upon worldly business, or upon any form of earthly love, the Master says to thee, "My spouse, my beloved, why gaddest thou about, so much?" Let us confess our fault, and return unto our rest. Let each one sing plaintively in the chamber of his heart some such song as this—

*“Why should my foolish passions rove?
Where can such sweetness be
As I have tasted in thy love,
As I have found in thee?”*

*Wretch that I am, to wander thus
In chase of false delight;
Let me be fasten’d to thy cross,
Rather than lose thy sight.”*

But a third position, which I think will be recognised by every wife as being correct, is not simply dependence upon her husband’s care and delight in her husband’s love, but also *diligence in her husband’s house*. The good housewife, as Solomon tells us, “looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness.” She is not a servant, her position is very different from that, but for that very reason she uses the more diligence. A servant’s work may sometimes be finished, but a wife’s never. “She riseth also while it is yet night, and giveth meat to her household, and a portion to her maidens.” She rejoices willingly to labor as no servant could be expected to do. “She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands.” “She girdeth her loins with strength, and strentheneth her arms. She perceiveth that her merchandise is good: her candle goeth not out by night. She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff.” All through the live-long night she watches her sick child, and then through the weary day as well the child is still tended, and the household cares are still heavy upon her. She relaxes never. She counts that her house is her kingdom, and she cares for it with incessant care. The making of her husband happy, and the training up of her children in the fear of God, that is her business. The good housewife is like Sarah, of whom it is written, that when the angel asked Abraham, “Where is Sarah thy wife?” he answered, “Behold, she is in the tent.” It would have been well for some of her descendents had they been “in the tent,” too, for Dinah’s going forth to see the daughters of the land cost her dear. Now, this is the position, the exact position of the chaste lover of Jesus, he dwells at home with Jesus, among his own people. The Christian’s place with regard to Christ is to be diligently engaged in Christ’s house. Some of us can say, I trust, that we do naturally care for the souls of men. We were born, by God’s grace, to care for them, and could not be happy, any more than some nurses can be happy without the care of children, unless we have converts to look after, and weaklings to cherish. It is well for the church

when there are many of her members, beside her pastors and deacons, who *care* for the souls of those who are born in the church. The church is Christ's family mansion. It should be the home of new-born souls, where they are fed with food convenient for them, nourished, comforted, and educated for the better land. You have all something to do; you who are married to Christ have all a part assigned you in the household of God. He has given you each a happy task. It may be that you have to suffer in secret for him, or you have to talk to two or three, or perhaps in a little village station, or at the corner of a street you have to preach, or possibly it is the distribution of a handful of tracts, or it is looking after the souls of a few women in your district, or teaching a class of children. Whatever it is, if we have been growing at all negligent, if we have not thrown our full strength into his work, and have been expending our vigor somewhere else, may not the question come very pertinently home to us, "Why gaddest thou about so much?" Why that party of pleasure, that political meeting, that late rising, that waste of time? Hast thou nothing better to do? Thou hast enough to do for thy husband and his church, if thou doest it well. Thou hast not a minute to spare, the King's business requireth haste. Our charge is too weighty and too dear to our hearts to admit of sloth. The Lord has given us as much to do as we shall have strength and time to accomplish by his grace, and we have no energies to spare, no talents to wrap up in napkins, no hours to idle in the market-place. One thing we do: that one thing should absorb all our powers. To neglect our holy life-work is to wrong our heavenly Bridegroom. Put this matter in a clear light, my brethren, and do not shut your eyes to it. Have you any right to mind earthly things? Can you serve two masters? What, think you, would any kind husband here think, if when he came home the children had been neglected all day, if there was no meal for him after his day's work, and no care taken of his house whatever? Might he not well give a gentle rebuke, or turn away with a tear in his eye? And if it were long continued, might he not almost be justified if he should say "*My house yields me no comfort! This woman acts not as a wife to me !*" And yet, bethink thee, soul, is not this what thou hast done with thy Lord? When he has come into his house has he not found it in sad disorder, the morning prayer neglected, the evening supplication but poorly offered, those little children but badly taught, and many other works of love forgotten. It is thy business as well as his, for thou art one with him, and yet thou hast failed in it. Might he not justly say to thee, "I have little comfort in thy fellowship! I will get me gone until thou treatest me better, and when thou longest for me, and art

willing to treat me as I should be treated, then I will return to thee, but thou shalt see my face no more till thou hast a truer heart towards me”)? Thus in personal sadness have I put this question; the Lord give us tender hearts while answering it.

Painful as the enquiry is, let us turn to the question again. A reason is requested, what shall we give? “Why gaddest thou about so much?” I am at a loss to give any answer. I can suppose that without beating about the bush, an honest heart convinced, of its ingratitude to Christ would say, “My Lord, all I can say for myself is to make a confession of the wrong, and if I might make any excuse, which after all is no excuse, it is this, I find myself so fickle at heart, so frail, so changeable; I am like Reuben, unstable as water, and therefore I do not excel.” But I can well conceive that the Master, without being severe, would not allow even of such an extenuation as that, because there are many of us who could not fairly urge it. We are not fickle in other things. We are not unstable in minor matters. Where we love we love most firmly, and a resolve once taken by us is determinedly carried out. We know what it is, some of us, to put our foot down, and declare that having taking a right step we will not retrace it; and then no mortal power can move us. Now, if we possess this resolute character in other things, it can never be allowable for us to use the excuse of instability. Resolved elsewhere, how canst thou be fickle here? Firm everywhere else, and yet frail here! O soul, what art thou at? This is gratuitous sin, wanton fickleness. Surely thou hast wrought folly in Israel if thou givest the world thy best, and Christ thy worst! The world thy decision, and Christ thy wavering! This is but to make thy sin the worse. The excuse becomes an aggravation. It is not true that thou art thus unavoidably fickle. Thou art not a feather blown with every’ wind, but a man of purpose and will. O why then so soon removed from thy best Beloved One?

I will ask thee a few questions, not so much by way of answering the enquiry, as to show how difficult it is to answer it. “Why gaddest thou about so much?” Has thy Lord given thee any offense? Has he been unkind to thee? Has the Lord Jesus spoken to thee like a tyrant, and played the despot over thee? Must thou not confess that in all his dealings with thee in the past, love, unmingled lore has, been his rule? He has borne patiently with thine ill-manners; when thou hast been foolish he has given thee wisdom, and he has not upbraided thee, though he might have availed himself of the opportunity of that gift, as men so often do, to give a word

of upbraiding at the same time. He has not turned against thee or been thine enemy, why then be so cold to him? Is this [he way to deal with one so tender and so good? Let me ask thee, has thy Saylout changed? Wilt thou dare to think he is untrue to thee? Is he not “the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever”? That cannot, then, be an apology for thine unfaithfulness. ‘Has he been unmindful of his promise? He has told thee to call upon him in the day of trouble, and he will deliver thee; has he failed to do so? It is written, “No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.” Has he withheld a really good thing from thee when thou hast walked uprightly? If, indeed, he had played thee false, thine excuse for deserting him might claim a hearing, but thou darest not say this. Thou knowest that he is faithful and true.

“Why gaddest thou about so much?” Hast thou found any happiness in gadding about? I confess, sorrowfully, to wandering often and wandering much, but I am ready enough to acknowledge that I get no peace, no comfort by my wanderings, but like a forlorn spirit I traverse dry places, seeking rest and finding none. If for a day, or a part of a day, my thoughts are not upon my Lord, the hour is dreary, and my time hangs heavily; and if my thought is spent upon other topics even connected with my work in the church of God, if I do not soon come back to him, if I have no dealings with him in prayer and praise, I find the wheels of my chariot taken off, and I drag along right heavily.

*“The day is dark, the night is long,
Unblest with thoughts of thee,
And dull to me the sweetest song,
Unless its theme thou be.”*

The soul that has once learned to swim in the river of Christ will, when his presence is withdrawn, be like a fish laid by the fisherman on the sandy shore, it begins to palpitate in dire distress, and ere long it will die, if not again restored to its vital element. You cannot get the flavour of the bread of heaven in your mouth, and afterwards contentedly feed on ashes. He who has never tasted anything but the brown, gritty cakes of this world, may be very well satisfied with them; but he who has once tasted the pure white bread of heaven can never be content with the old diet. It spoils a man for satisfaction with this world to have had heart-ravishing dealings with the world to come. I mean not that it spoils him for practical activity in it, for the heavenly life is the truest life even for earth, but it spoils him for the sinful pleasures of this world; it prevents his feeding his soul upon

anything save the Lord Jesus Christ's sweet love. Jesus is the chief ingredient of all his joy, and he finds that no other enjoyment beneath the sky is worth a moment's comparison with the King's wines on the fees, well refined. "Why then gaddest thou about so much?" For what, oh! for what reason dost thou wander? When a child runs away from its home, because it has a brutal parent, it is excused; but when the child leaves a tender mother and an affectionate father, what shall we say? If the sheep quits a barren field to seek after needed pasturage, who shall blame it? But if it leaves the green pastures, and forsakes the still waters to roam over the and sand, or to go bleating in the forest among the wolves, in the midst of danger, how foolish a creature it proves itself! Such has been our folly. We have left gold for dross! We have forsaken a throne for a dunghill! We have quitted scarlet and fine linen for rags and beggary! We have left a palace for a hovel! We have turned from sunlight into darkness! We have forsaken the shining of the Sun of Righteousness, the sweet summer weather of communion, the singing of the birds of promise, and the turtle voice of the divine Spirit, and the blossoming of the roses and the fair lilies of divine love, to shiver in frozen regions among the ice caves and snow of absence from the Lord's presence. God forgive us, for we have no excuse for this folly.

"Why gaddest thou about so much?" Hast thou not always had to pay for thy gaddings, aforetime? O pilgrim, it is hard getting back again to the right road. Every believer knows how wise John Bunyan was when he depicted Christian as bemoaning himself bitterly when he had to go back to the harbour where he had slept and lost his roll. He had to do a triple journey; first to go on, and then to go back, and then to go on again. The back step is weary marching. Remember, also, Bypath Meadow, and Doubting Castle, and Giant Despair. 'Twas an ill day when the pilgrims left the narrow way. No gain, but untold loss comes of forsaking the way of holiness and fellowship. What is there in such a prospect to attract you from the happy way of communion with Christ. Perhaps the last time you wandered you fell into sin, or you met with a grief which overwhelmed you: ought not these mishaps to teach you? Being burned will you not dread the fire? Having afore time been assaulted when in forbidden paths, will you not now keep to the king's highway, wherein no lion or any other ravenous beast shall be found?

"Why gaddest thou about so much?" Dost thou not even now feel the drawings of his love attracting thee to himself? This heavenly impulse

should make the question altogether unanswerable. You feel sometimes a holy impulse to pray, and yet do not pray; you feel, even now, as if you wished to behold the face of your Beloved, and yet you will go forth into the world without him; is this as it should be? The Holy Spirit is saying in your soul, "Arise from the bed of thy sloth, and seek him whom thy soul loveth." If your sloth prevents your rising, how will you excuse yourself? Even now I hear the Beloved knocking at your door. Will you not hasten to admit him? Are you too idle. Dare you say to him, "I have put off my coat, how can I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?" If you keep him without in the cold and darkness while his head is wet with dew, and his locks with the drops of the night, what cruelty is this? Is this thy kindness to thy friend? Can you hear him say, "Open to me, my love, my dove, my undefiled;" and can you be deaf to his appeals? O that he may gently make for himself an entrance. May he put in his hand by the hole of the door, and may your bowels be moved for him! May you rise up and open to him, and then your hands will drop with myrrh, and your fingers with sweet-smelling myrrh upon the handles of the lock. But remember if you neglect him now, it will cost you much to find him when you do arise, for he will make you traverse the streets after him, and the watchmen will smite you, and take away your reft. Rise and admit him now.

***"Behold! your Bridegroom's at the door!
He gently knocks, has knock'd before:
Has waited long; is waiting still:
You treat no other friend so ill.***

***Oh lovely attitude! he stands
With melting heart and laden hands;
Delay no more, lest he depart,
Admit him to your inmost heart."***

Yet again, even now, he calls you. Run after him, for he draws you. Approach him, for he invites you. God grant it may be so!

I wish I had the power to handle a topic like this as Rutherford, or Herbert, or Hawker would have done, so as to touch all your hearts, if you are at this hour without enjoyment of fellowship with Jesus. But, indeed, I am so much one of yourselves, so much one who has to seek the Master's face myself, that I can scarcely press the question upon you, but must rather press it upon myself. "Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way?" Blessed shall be the time when our wanderings shall cease, when we

shall see him face to face, and rest in his bosom! Till then, if we are to know anything of heaven here below, it must be by living close to Jesus, abiding at the foot of the cross, depending on his atonement, looking for his coming — that glorious hope, preparing to meet him with Jamps well trimmed, watching for the midnight cry, “Behold, the Bridegroom cometh;” standing ever in his presence; looking up to him as we see him pleading before the throne, and betjeying that he is ever with us, even unto the end of the world. O may we be in future so fixed in heart that the question need not again be asked of us, “Why, gaddest thou about so much?”

And now I have to use the text for a few minutes, in addressing those who are not converted.

I trust that some of you who are not yet saved, nevertheless have a deuce of desire towards Christ. It is well when, like the climbing plant, the heart throws out tendrils, trying to grasp something by the help of which it may mount higher. I hope that desire of yours after better things, and after Jesus, is something more than nature could have imparted. Grace is the source of gracious desires. But that is not the point. Your desires may be right, and yet your methods of action mistaken. You have been trying after peace, but you have been gadding about to find it. The context says that the Israelites would soon be as weary of Egypt as they had been of Assyria. Read the whole passage, “Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way? thou also shalt be ashamed of Egypt, as thou wast ashamed of Assyria. Yea, thou shalt go forth from him, and thine hands upon thine head: for the Lord hath rejected thy confidences, and thou shalt not prosper in them.” Jeremiah 2:36, 37. Their gadding about would end in their being confounded at last as they were at first. Once they trusted in Assyria, and the Assyrians carried them away captive; that was the end of their former false confidence. Then they trusted in Egypt, and met with equal disappointment. When a man is at first alarmed about his soul, he wilt do anything rather than come to Christ. Christ is a harbour that no ship ever enters except under stress of weather. Mariners on the sea of life steer for any port except the fair haven of free grace. When a man first finds comfort in his own good works, he thinks he has done well. “Why,” says he, “this must be the way of salvation; I am not a drunkard now, I have taken the pledge; I am not a Sabbath-breaker now, I have taken a seat at a place of worship. Go in, and look at my house, sir; you will see it as different as possible from what it was before; there is a moral change in me

of a most wonderful kind, and surely this will suffice. Now, if God be dealing with that man in a way of grace, he will soon be ashamed of his false confidence. He will be thankful, of course, that he has been led to morality, but he will find that bed too short to stretch himself on it. He will discover that the past still lives; that his old sins are buried only in imagination—the ghosts of them will haunt him, they will alarm his conscience. He will be compelled to feel that sin is a scarlet stain, not to be so readily washed out as he fondly dreamed. His self-righteous refuge will prove to be a bowing wall and a tottering fence. Driven to extremities by the fall of his tower of Babel, the top of which was to reach to heaven, he grows weary of his former hopes. He finds that all the outward religion he can muster will not suffice, that even the purest morality is not enough; for over and above the thunderings of conscience there comes clear and shrill as the voice of a trumpet, “Ye must be born again;” “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God;” “Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye can in nowise enter into the kingdom of heaven.” Well, then, what does he do? He resolves to find another shelter, to exchange Assyria for Egypt. That is to say, as work will not do, he ‘will try feeling; and the poor soul will labor to pump up repent-ance out of a rocky heart, and, failing to do so, will mistake despair for contrition. He will try as much as possible to feel legal convictions. He will sit down and read the books of Job and Jeremiah, till he half hopes that by becoming a companion of dragons, and an associate of owls, he may find rest. He seeks the living among the dead, comfort from the law, healing from a sword. He conceives that if he can feel up to a certain point, he can be saved; if he can repent to a certain degree, if he can be alarmed with fears of hell up to fever heat, then he may be saved. But ere long, if God is dealing with him, he gets to be as much ashamed of his feelings as of his works. He is thankful for them as far as they are good, but he feels that he could not depend upon them, and he recollects that if feeling were the way of salvation he deserves to feel hell itself, and that to feel anything short of eternal wrath would not meet the law’s demands. The question may fitly be put to one who thus goes the round of works, and feelings, and perhaps of ceremonies, and mortifications, “Why gaddest thou about so much?” It will all end in nothing. You may gad about as long as you will, but you will never gain peace, except by simple faith in Jesus. All the while you are roaming so far the gospel is nigh you, where you now are, in your present state, available to you in your present condition now, for “now is the accepted time; now is the day of salvation.” O sinner, thou art thinking to

bring something to the Most High God, and yet he bids thee come without money and without price. Thy Father saith to thee, "Come now, and let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow; though they, be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." He declares to you the way of salvation, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." He calls' to you in his gracious word, and says, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." He bids you trust in his Son, who is the appointed Savior, for he hath laid help upon one that is mighty. He thus addresses you, "Incline your ear unto me, and come unto me: hear and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." You want pardon, and he cries from the cross, "Look unto me and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth." You want justification, the Father points you to his Son, and says, "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities." You want salvation, he directs you to him who is exalted on high to give repentance and remission of sins. The God of heaven bids you look to his dear Son, and trust him. Though I preach this gospel every day of the week, scarcely a day passes without my telling the old, old story, yet it is ever new. If you who hear me so often grow weary of it, it is the fault of my style of putting it, for to myself it seems fresher every day! To think that the tender Father should say to the prodigal son, "I ask nothing of thee; I am willing to receive thee, sinful, guilty, vile as thou art; though thou hast injured me, and spent my substance with harlots; though thou hast fed swine; though thou art fit to be nothing but a swine-feeder all thy days; yet come thou as thou art to my loving bosom; I will rejoice over thee, and kiss thee, and say, 'Bring forth the best robe and put it on him, put a ring on his hands, and shoes on his feet!'" "Sinner, God grant thee grace to end all thy roamings in thy Father's bosom. "Why gaddest thou about so much?" Renounce all other hopes and fly away to the wounds of Jesus. "Why gaddest thou about so much to change thy way?" Listen and obey these closing lines: —

*“Weary souls who wander wide
From the central point of bliss,
Turn to Jesus crucified,
Fly to those dear wounds of his:
Sink into the purple flood,
Rise into the life of God.*

*Find in Christ the way of peace,
Peace, unspeakable, unknown;
By his pain he gives you ease,
Life by his expiring groan:
Rise, exalted by his fall;
Find in Christ your all in all.”*

A LETTER ABOUT HIS OTHER LETTER BY JOHN PLOUGHMAN.

MR. EDITOR, My letter on the war has brought me into the wars. I expected to be scratched when I went among the brambles, so I am not disappointed. All sorts of letters have come to hand about it, and if I'm not enlightened it is not for want of candles. One Irish gentleman tells me the French Emperor is coming to blow down our Protestant places of worship, settle Old England off altogether, and turn no end of Irish bulls loose into our crockery shops. As for me, if I am not very quiet, some of his friends have their eye on me, and will find a bullet for my head. I suppose I ought to choose a spot for a grave, and order a coffin at once; but I have done nothing of the sort. Threatened folks live long, and though the shooting season is near, I am not a partridge, though this fiery gentleman tries to make game of me. I'm sorry that the Emerald Isle is plagued with scribblers so very emerald as to think that Ireland's cause can be helped on by bullying letters. What offense I can have given I am sure I don't know; and what connection there call be between Ireland and my letter I cannot make out. I cannot see through it, as Simon *said* when he stared at a grindstone. I suppose a Fenian never feels right except when he feels his wrongs, and is never at peace except when he is at war. Perhaps the Fenians think themselves Frenchmen born out of their native country. Sure I am the cause of the Fenians and the welfare of Ireland are two things quite as different as the appetite of a cat and the life of a mouse.

A very friendly writer, who signs himself "Another John," thinks that I treated the King of Prussia badly, because I did not praise him. Will this German friend be so good as to read the letter again, and he will see that John Ploughman was very careful to say, "*Perhaps* you are not both alike, and only one of you is to blame for beginning this dreadful right." Somebody asked John the other day, "On which side are your sympathies?" and John replied, "My sympathies are on the side of the wounded, and the widows and orphans." "*But,*" said the other, "which side do you take — the German or the French?" and John answered, "*Her* Majesty has' commanded her subjects to be neutral." "Yes;" said Mr. Inquisitive, "but which side do you take in your heart?" John answered, "*The* right side," and said no more. Every one with half-an-eye can see which that side is, and it is to be hoped the right side will speedily win, with as little bloodshed as possible. The rhinoceros at the Zoological Gardens has broken his horn off through trying to break down his cage and get at harmless people, and there is another wild beast that would be quite as well if his horn were off too.

A Quaker writes to scold me for thinking that my letter could have any weight with two furious men, who have both tucked up their sleeves to fight. Now this is too bad era Quaker, he ought to see that I am, as he ought to be, on the side of peace. I hope the mad dog of war has not bitten him as it has so many. The war-fever is very catching, but fighting-Quakers are as out of character as cherubim burning brimstone. John never thought that either of the sovereigns would read his letter, though more unlikely things than that have happened; but all he meant was to throw his pailful of water on any sparks which might blow over from the big fire across the water, and begin to smoke among Old England's thatch. When the hunt comes round our way, my master's old nag always pricks up his *ears*, and wants to be off across country — for he used to be a hunter in his young days; so if I am driving him, [rein him pretty tight till the hounds are gone. Our country is much in the same way, and all peace-men should do their best to keep people from catching the scarlet fever. With all this soldiering about, one is apt to get in a fighting humor, and forget that war is a great crime — murder on a huge scale — and little less than hell let loose among men. "*Thou* shalt not kill" is as much a divine commandment as "*Thou* shalt not commit adultery." No one *supposes* that adultery on a great scale would be right; then why should killing be? War pays the papers well, no doubt, but it is a wretched business, and may God soon send an end of it. Some

men seem ready to cry, “*Fight dog, fight bear;*” but such fellows ought to be put down between the two, to let them have a taste of it.

As for those who write to blow up John Ploughman for his coarse style, he is very much obliged to them indeed, and will take as much notice of what they say as the mastiff did of the gentleman in the yard at night, when he told him to lie still, for his voice was not musical, and his teeth were ugly. the old man lost his ass by trying to please everybody. Some improvements in style are improvements for the worse, as the fox said when his tail was cut off in a trap. You may pay much for your schooling and be all the worse for your learning. On a gravestone in the country it is said, “I was well; would be better; took physic, and died.” I mean to let that physic alone; my smock frock suits me very well, and my homely talk suits a good many thousands; and as for grumblers, I would say to them as the editor did to his readers—

*“We donor belong to our patrons,
Our paper is wholly our own;
Whoever may lika it may take it,
Who don’t can just let it alone.”*

The Ploughman is not above taking advice, only some advice is such poor stuff that if you gave a groat for it, it would be fcurpence too dear. You cannot cut down a wood with a penknife, or dig a ditch with a toothpick. Pretty little speches have very little effect except on little people. Soft speaking for soft heads,, and good, plain speech for the hard-handed many..Mincing words and pretty sentences are for those who wear kid gloves and eve-glasses; a ploughman had better be called manly than lady-like. At the same time, I hope to live and improve, and wishing the same to all my friends.

I am, yours truly,
JOHN PLOUGHMAN,

P.S. — It is not *everybody* that knows everything. Mighty fine as the critical *gentlemen* are, some of ore’ country people can tease them. Some of your London folk can’t even read our country spelling, though it’s plain enough to those who wrote it. I saw a man who thinks a good deal of himself much puzzled with this notice, taken from a chandler’s shop-window—

*Hear Lifs won woo Cuers a Goes,
Gud. Bare. Bako sole Hare.”*

BELIEVER NOT AN ORPHAN

AN ADDRESS FOR THE LORD'S TABLE. BY C. H. SPURGEON.

“I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.” — John 14:18.

YOU will notice that the margin reads, “I will not leave you orphans: I will come unto you.” In the absence of our Lord Jesus Christ the disciples were like children deprived of their parents. During the three years in which he had been with them he had solved all their difficulties, borne all their burdens, and supplied all their needs. Whenever a case was too hard or heavy for them, they took it to him. When their enemies well nigh overcame them, Jesus came to the rescue and turned the tide of battle. They were all happy and safe enough whilst the Master was with them; he walked in their midst like a father amid a large family of children, making all the household glad. But now he was about to be taken from them by an ignominious death, and they might well feel that they would be like little children deprived of their natural and beloved protector. Our Savior knew the fear that was in their hearts, and before they could express it, he removed it by saying, “I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you; world, but though you shall not be left alone in this wild and desert be absent in the flesh, yet I will be present with you in a more efficacious manner; I will come to you spiritually, and you shall derive from my spiritual presence even more good than you could have had from my bodily presence, had I still continued in your midst.”

Observe, that here is *an evil averted*. “I will not leave you orphans;” and in the second place, here is *a consolation provided*, “I will come to you.”

I. First, here is AN EVIL AVERTED.

Without their Lord, believers would, apart from the Holy Spirit, be like other orphans, unhappy and desolate. Give them what you might their loss could not have been recompensed. No number of lamps can make up for the sun's absence, blaze as they may it is still night. No circle of friends can supply to a bereaved woman the loss of her husband, without him she is still a widow. Even thus without Jesus it is inevitable that the saints should be as orphans, but Jesus has promised in the text that we shall not be so;

the one only filing that can remove the danger he declares shall be ours, “I will come unto you.”

Now remember, that an *orphan is one whose parent is dead*. This in itself is a great sorrow, if there were no other. The dear father so well-beloved was suddenly smitten down with sickness; they watched him with anxiety; they nursed him with sedulous care; but he expired. The loving eye is closed in darkness for them. That active hand will no longer toil for the family. That heart and brain will no longer feel and think for them. Beneath the green grass the father sleeps, and every time the child surveys that hallowed hillock his heart swells with grief. Beloved, we are not orphans in that sense, for our Lord Jesus is not dead. It is true he died, for one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came thereout blood and water, a sure evidence that the pericardium had been pierced, and that the four. rain of life had been broken up. He died, 'tis certain, but he is not dead now. Go not to the grave to seek him. Angel voices say, “He is not here, for he is risen.” He could not be holden by the bands of death. We do not worship a dead Christ, nor do we even think of him new as a corpse. That picture on the wall which the Romanists paint and worship represents Christ as dead; but oh! it is so good to think of Christ as living, remaining in an existence real and true, none the less living because he died, but all the more truly full of life because he has passed through the portals of the grave and is now reigning for ever. See then, dear friends, the bitter root of the orphan's sorrow is gone from us, for our Jesus is not dead now. No mausoleum enshrines his ashes, no pyramid entombs his body, no monument records the place of his sepulcher.

***“He lives, the great Redeemer lives,
What joy the blest assurance gives!”***

We are not orphans, for “the Lord is risen indeed.”

The orphan has a sharp sorrow springing out of the death of his parent, namely, *thai he is left alone*. He cannot now make appeals to the wisdom of the parent who could direct him. He cannot run, as once he did, when he was weary, to climb the paternal knee. He cannot lean his aching head upon the parental bosom. “Father,” he may say, but no voice gives an answer: “Mother,” he may cry, but that fond name which would awaken the mother if she slept, cannot arouse her from the bed of death. The child is alone, alone as to those two hearts which were its best companions. The parent and lover are gone. The little ones know what it is to be deserted

and forsaken. But we are not so; we are not orphans. It is true Jesus is not here in body, but his spiritual presence is quite as blessed as his bodily presence would have been. Nay, it is better, for supposing Jesus Christ to be here in person, you could not all come and touch the hem of his garment — not' all at once, at any rate. There might be thousands waiting all the world over to speak with him, but how could they all reach him, if he were merely here in body? You might all be wanting to tell him something, but in the body he could only receive some one or two of you at a time. But in spirit there is no need for you to stir from the pew, no need to say a word; Jesus hears your thoughts talk, and attends to all your needs at the same moment. No need to press to get at him because the throng is great, for he is as near to me as he is to you, and as near to you as to saints in America or the islands of the Southern Sea. he is everywhere present, and all his beloved may talk with him. You can tell him at this moment the sorrows which you dare not open up to any one else. You will feel that in declaring them to him you have not breathed them to the air, but that a real person has heard you, one as real as though you could grip his hand, and could see the loving flash of his eye, and mark the sympathetic change of his countenance. Is it not so with you, ye children of a living Savior? You know it is. You have a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother. You have a near and dear one, who in the dead of the night is in the chamber, and in the heat and burden of the day is in the field of labor. You are not orphans, “the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the Everlasting Father is with you;” your Lord is here, and as one whom his mother comforteth Jesus comforts you.

The orphan, too, has *lost the kind hand which took care always that food and raiment should be provided, that the table should be well stored, and that the house should be kept in comfort.* Poor feeble our, who will provide for his wants? His father is dead, his mother is gone; who will take care of the little wanderer now? But it is not so with us. Jesus has not left us orphans, his care for his people is no less now than it was when he sat at the table with Mary, and Martha, and Lazarus, whom Jesus loved. Instead of the provisions being less, they are even greater, for since the Holy Spirit has been given to us, we have richer fare and are more indulged with spiritual comforts than believers were before the bodily presence of the Master had departed. Do your souls hunger to-night? Jesus gives you the bread of heaven. Do you thirst to-night? The waters from the rock cease not to flow.

“Come, make your wants, your burdens known.”

You have but to make known your needs to have them all supplied, Christ waits to be gracious in the midst of this assembly. He is here with his golden hand, opening that hand to supply the wants of every living soul. "Oh!" saith one, "I am poor and needy." Go on with the quotation. "Yet the Lord thinketh upon me." "Ah!" saith another, "I have besought the Lord thrice to take away a thorn in the flesh from me." Remember what he said to Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee." You are not left without the strength you want. The Lord is your shepherd still. He will provide for you till he leads you through death's dark valley and brings you to the shining pastures upon the hill-tops of glory. You are not destitute, you need not beg an asylum from an ungodly world by bowing to its demands, or trusting its vain promises, for Jesus will never leave you nor forsake you.

The orphan, too, is *left without the instruction which is most suitable for a child*. We may say what we will, but there is none so fit to form a child's character as the parent. It is a very sad loss for a child to have lost either father or mother in its early days; for the most skillful preceptor, though he may do much, by the blessing of God very much, is but a stop-gap and but half makes up for the original ordinance of providence, that the parent's love should fashion the child's mind. But, dear friends, we are not orphans, we who believe in Jesus are not left without an education. Jesus is not here himself it is true. I dare say some of you wish you could come on Lord's-days and listen to him! Would it not be sweet to look up to this pulpit and see the Crucified One, and to hear him preach? Ah! so you think, but the apostle says, "Though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now after the flesh know we even him no more." It is most for your profit that you should receive the Spirit of truth, not through the golden vessel of Christ in his actual presence here, but through the poor earthen vessels of a humble servant of God like ourselves. At any rate, whether we speak, or an angel from heaven, the speaker matters not; it is the Spirit of God alone that is the power of the word, and makes that word to become vital and quickening to you. Now you have the Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit is so given, that there is not a truth which you may not understand. You may be led into the deepest mysteries by his teaching. You may be made to know and to comprehend those knotty points in the word of God which have hitherto puzzled you. You have but humbly to look up to Jesus, and his Spirit, will still teach you. I tell you, you who are poor and ignorant, and perhaps can scarcely read a word in the Bible, for all that, you may be better instructed in the things of God than doctors of divinity, if you go to

the Holy Spirit and are taught of him. Those who go only to books and to the letter, and are taught of men, may be fools in the sight of God; but those who go to Jesus, and sit at his feet, and ask to be taught of his Spirit, shall be wise unto salvation. Blessed be God, there are not a few amongst us of this sort. We are not left orphans; we have an instructor with us still.

There is one point in which the orphan is often sorrowfully reminded of his orphanhood, namely, *in lacking a defender*. It is so natural in little children, when some big boy molests them, to say, "I'll tell my father!" How often did we use to say so, and how often have we heard from the little ones since — "I'll tell mother!" Soreclimes the not being able to do this is a much severer loss than we can guess. Unkind and cruel men have snatched away from orphans the little which a father's love had left behind; and in the court of law there has been no defender to protect the orphan's goods. Had the father been there, the child would have had its rights — scarce would any have dared to infringe them; but in the absence of the father the orphan is eaten up like bread, and the wicked of the earth devour his estate. In this sense the saints are not orphans. The devil would rob us of our heritage if he could, but there is an advocate with the Father who pleads for us. Satan would snatch from us every promise, and tear from us all the comforts of the covenant; but we are not orphans, and when he brings a suit-in-law against us, and thinks that we are the only defendants in the case, he is mistaken, for we have an advocate on high, Christ comes in and pleads, as the Sinners' friend, for us; and when he pleads at the bar of justice, there is no fear but that his plea will be of effect, and our inheritance shall be safe. He has not left us orphans.

Now I want, without saying many words, to get you who love the Master to feel what a very precious thought this is — that you are not alone in this world; that if you have no earthly friends, if you have none to whom you can take your cares, if you are quite lonely so far as outward friends are concerned, yet Jesus is with you, is really with you, practically with you — able to help *you*, and ready to do so, and that you have a good and kind protector at your hand at this present moment, for Christ has said it: "*I will not leave you orphans.*"

II. And now, for two or three words about THE REMEDY by which this evil is averted — "*I will come unto you.*"

What does this mean? Does it not mean from the connection, this — "*I will come unto you by my Spirit*"? Beloved, we must not confuse the persons

of the Godhead. the Holy Spirit is not the Son of God; Jesus, the Son of God, is not the Holy Spirit. They are two distinct persons of the one God. But yet there is such a wonderful unity, and the blessed Spirit acts so marvellously as the Vicar of Christ, that it is quite correct to say that when the Spirit comes Jesus comes too, and “I will come unto *you*,” means — ” I, by my Spirit; who shall take my place, and represent me — I will come to be with you.” See then, Christian, you have the Holy Spirit in you and with you to be the representative of Christ. Christ is with you now, not in person, but by his representative — an efficient, almighty, divine, everlasting representative, who stands for Christ, and is as Christ to you in his presence in your souls. Because you thus have Christ by his Spirit, you cannot be orphans, for the Spirit of God is always with you. It is a delightful truth that the Spirit of God always dwells in believers — not sometimes, but always. He is not always active in believers, and he may be grieved until his sensible presence is altogether withdrawn, but his secret presence is always there. At no single moment is the Spirit of God wholly gone from a believer. The believer would die spiritually if this could happen, but that cannot be, for Jesus has said, “Because I live ye shall live also.” Even when the believer sins, the Holy Spirit does not utterly depart from him, but is still in him to make him smart for the sin into which he has fallen. The believer’s prayers prove that the Holy Spirit is still within him; — “Take not thy Holy Spirit from *me*,” was the prayer of a saint who had fallen very foully, but in whom the Spirit of God still kept his residence, notwithstanding all the foulness of his sin.

But, beloved, in addition to this, Jesus Christ by his Holy Spirit *wakes visits to his people of a peculiar kind*. The Holy Ghost becomes wonderfully active and potent at certain times of refreshing. We are then especially and joyfully sensible of his divine power. His influence streams through every chamber of our nature,, and floods our dark soul with his glorious rays, as the sun shining in its strength. Oh, how delightful this is! Sometimes we have felt this at the Lord’s table. My soul pants to sit with you at that table, because I do remember many a happy time when the emblems of bread and wine have assisted my faith, and kindled the passions of my soul into a heavenly flame. I am equally sure that at the prayer meeting, under the preaching of the word, in private meditation, and in searching the Scriptures, we can say that Jesus Christ has come to us. What! have you no hill Mizar to remember? —

*“No Tabor-visits to recount,
When with him in the Holy Mount”?*

Oh, yes! some of these blessed seasons have left their impress upon our memories, so that amongst our dying thoughts wilt mingle the remembrance of those blessed seasons when Jesus Christ manifested himself unto us as he doth not unto the world. Oh, to be wrapped in that crimson vest, closely pressed to his open side: Oh, to put our finger into the print of nails, and thrust our hand into his side! We know what this means by past experience—

*“Dear Shepherd of thy chosen few,
Thy former mercies here renew.”*

Permit us once again to feel the truth of the promise — ” I will not leave you orphans; I will come unto you.” And now gathering up the few thoughts I have uttered, let me remind you, dear friends, that every word of the text is instructive. “I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.” Observe the “I” there twice over. “/will not leave you orphans; father and mother may, but I will not; friends once beloved may turn stony-hearted, but I will not; Judas may play the traitor, and Ahithophel may betray his David, but I will not leave you comfortless. You have had many disappointments, great heart-breaking sorrows, but I have never caused you any; if — the faithful and the true witness, the immutable, the unchangeable Jesus, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you.” Catch at that word, “I,” and let your souls say — ” Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof; if thou hadst said — ‘I will send an angel to thee,’ it would have been a great mercy, but what sayest thou — ’ I will come unto thee’? If thou hadst bidden some of my brethren come and speak a word of comfort to me I had been thankful, but thou hast put it thus in the first person — I will come unto you.’ O my Lord, what shall I say, what shall I do, but feel a hungering and a thirsting after thee, which nothing shall satisfy till thou shalt fulfill thine own word? I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you.”

And then notice the person to whom it is addressed — ”I will not leave *you* comfortless — you, Peter, who will deny me; *you*, Thomas, who will doubt me; I will not leave *you* comfortless.” O you who are so little in Israel that you sometimes think it is a pity that your name is in the church-book at all, because you feel yourselves to be so worthless, so unworthy — I will not

leave *you* comfortless, not even *you*. “O Lord,” thou sayest, “if thou wouldst look after the rest of thy sheep I would bless thee for thy tenderness to them, but I — I deserve to be left; if I were forsaken of thee I could not blame thee, for! have played the harlot against thy love, but yet thou sayest, ‘ I will not leave *you*.’” Heir of heaven, do not lose your part in this promise. I pray you say, “Lord, come unto me, and though thou refresh all my brethren, yet, Lord, refresh me with some of the droppings of thy love; O Lord, fill the cup for *me*; *my* thirsty spirit pants for it.

*“I thirst, I faint, I die to prove
The fullness of redeeming love,
The love of Christ to me.”*

Now, Lord, fulfill thy word to thine unworthy handmaid, as I stand like Hannah in thy presence. Come unto me, thy servant, unworthy to lift so much as his eyes towards heaven, and only daring to say, “God be merciful to me a sinner.” Fulfil thy promise even to me, “I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you.”

Take whichever of the words you will, and they each one sparkle and flash after this sort. Observe, too, *the richness and sufficiency of the text*: “I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you.” He does not promise, “I will send you sanctifying grace, or sustaining mercy, or precious mercy,” but he says, what is the only thing that will prevent your being orphans. “I will Come unto you.” Ah! Lord, thy grace is sweet, but thou art better. The vine is good, but the clusters are better. It is well enough to have a gift from thy hand, but oh! to touch the hand itself. It is well enough to hear the words of thy lips, but oh! to kiss those lips as the spouse did in the song, this is better still. You know if there be an orphan child you cannot prevent its continuing an orphan. You may feel great kindness towards it, supply its wants, and do all you possibly can towards it, but it is an orphan still. It must get its father and its mother back, or else it will still be an orphan. So, our blessed Lord knowing this, does not say, “I will do this and that for you,” but, “I will come to you.” Do you not see, dear friends, here is not only all you can want, but all you think you can want, wrapped up in one word, “I will come to you.” “It pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell;” so that when Christ comes, in him “all fullness” comes. ““ In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,” so that when Jesus comes the very Godhead comes to the believer.

***“All my capacious powers can wish
In thee doth richly meet;”***

and if thou shalt come to me, it is better than all the gifts of thy covenant. If I get thee I get all, and more than all, at once. Observe, then, the language and the sufficiency of the promise.

But I want you to notice, further, *the continued freshness and force of the promise*. Somebody here owes another person fifty pounds, and he gives him a note of hand, “I promise to pay you fifty pounds.” Very well; the man calls with that note of hand to-morrow, and gets fifty pounds. And what is the good of the note of hand now? Why, it is of no further value, it is discharged. How would you like to have a note of hand which would always stand good? That would be a right royal present. “I promise to pay evermore, and this bond, though paid a thousand times, shall still hold good.” Who would not like to have a cheque of that sort? Yet this is the promise which Christ gives you, “I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.” The first time a sinner looks to Christ, Christ comes to him. And what then? Why, the next minute it is still, “I will come to you.” But here is one who has known Christ for fifty years, and he has had this promise fulfilled a thousand times a year: is it not done with? Oh, no! there it stands, just as fresh as when Jesus first spoke it, — -” I will come unto you.” Then we will treat our Lord in his own fashion and take him at his word. We will go to him as often as ever we can, for we shall never weary him; and when he has kept his promise most, then is it that we will go to him, and ask him to keep it more still; and after ten proofs of the truth of it, we will only have a greater hungering and thirsting to get it fulfilled again. This is fit provision for life, and for death,” I will come unto you.” In the last moment, when your pulse beats faintly, and you are just about to pass the curtain, and enter into the invisible world, you may have this upon your lips, and say to your Lord, “My blaster, still fulfill the word on which thou hast caused me to hope, ‘ I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you.’”

Let me remind you *that the text is at this moment valid*, and for this I delight in it. “I will not leave you comfortless.” That means now, “I will fret leave you comfortless *now*.” Are you comfortless at this hour? It is your own fault. Jesus Christ does not leave you so, nor make you so. There are rich and precious things in this word, “I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you, come unto you now.” It may be a very dull time with you,

and you are pining to come nearer to Christ. Very well, then, plead the promise before the Lord. Plead the promise as you sit where you are: "Lord, thou hast said thou wilt come unto me; come unto me to-night." There are many reasons, believer, why you should plead thus. You want him; you need him; you require him; therefore plead the promise and expect its fulfillment. And oh! when he comeht, what a joy it is; he is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber with his garments perfumed with aloes and cassia! How well the oil of joy will perfume your hearty How soon will your sackcloth be put away and the garments of gladness adorn you! With what joy of heart will your heavy soul begin to sing when Jesus Christ shall whisper that you are his, and that he is yours! Come, my beloved, make no tarrying; be thou like a roe or a young hart upon the mountain of separation, and prove to me thy promise true — "I will not leave you orphans; I will come unto you."

And now, dear friends, in conclusion, *let me remind you that there are many who have no share in the text.* What can I say to such? From my soul I pity you who do not know what the love of Christ means. Oh! if you could but tell the joy of God's people, you would not rest an hour without it!

***"His worth, if all the nations knew,
Sure the whole world would love him too."***

Remember, if you would find Christ, he is to be found in the way of faith. Trust him, and he is yours. Depend upon the merit of his sacrifice; cast yourselves entirely upon that, and you are saved, and Christ is yours.

God grant that we may all break bread in the kingdom above, and feast with Jesus, and share his glory . We are expecting his second coming. He is coming personally and gloriously. This is the brightest hope of his people. This will be the fullness of their redemption, the time of their resurrection. Anticipate it, beloved, and may God make your souls to sing for joy.

THE SWORD AND THE TROWEL

DECEMBER 1, 1870.

VERY SINGULAR

A SERMON, BY C. H. SPURGEON.

“He put his household in order and hanged himself.” — 2 Samuel 17:18:23.

AHITHOPHEL was a man of keen perception, and those who consulted him followed his advice with as much confidence as if he had been an oracle from heaven. He was a great master of diplomacy, versed in the arts of cunning, farseeing, cautious deep. He was for years the friend and counsellor of David, but thinking it politic to be on the popular side he left his old master that he might, like many other courtiers, worship the rising sun, and hold an eminent position under Absalom. This, to use diplomatic language, was not only a crime but a mistake; Absalom was not the man to follow the warnings of sagacity, and Ahithophel found himself supplanted by another councillor; whereat he was so incensed that he left Absalom, hurried home, arranged his personal affairs, and hanged himself in sheer vexation.

His case teaches us that the greatest worldly wisdom will not preserve a man from the utmost folly. Here was a man worthy to be called the Nestor of debate, who yet had not wit enough to keep his neck from the fatal noose. Many a man supremely wise for a time fails in the long run. The renowned monarch, sagacious for the hour, has ere long proved his whole system to be a fatal mistake. Instances there are near to hand where a brilliant career has ended in shame, a life of wealth closed in poverty, an empire collapsed in ruin. The wisdom which contemplates only this life fails even in its own sphere. Its tricks are too shallow, its devices too temporary, and the whole comes down with a crash when least expected to fall. What sad cases have we seen of men who have been wise in policy who have utterly failed from lack of principle! For want of the spirit of honor and truth to establish them they have built palaces of ice which have

melted before they were complete. "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." The wisdom which cometh from above is the only wisdom; the secular is folly until the sacred blends its golden stream therewith.

I desire to call your attention to the text on account of its very remarkable character. "He *put his house in order and hanged himself.*" To put his house in order showed that he was a prudent man: to hang himself proved that he was a fool. Herein is a strange mixture of discretion and desperation, mind and madness. Shall a man have wisdom enough to arrange his worldly affairs with care, and yet shall he be so sapless as to take his own life afterwards? As Bishop Hall pithily says, "Could it be possible that he should be careful to order his house who regarded not to order his impetuous passions? That he should care for his house who cared not for either body or soul?" Strange incongruity, he makes his will, and then because he cannot have his will, he wills to die. 'Tis another proof that madness is in the heart of the sons of men. Marvel not at this one display of folly, for I shall have to show you that the case of Ahithophel is in the spirit of it almost universal; and as I shall describe sundry similar individuals, many of you will perceive that I speak of you. Thousands set their houses in order but destroy their souls, they look well to their flocks and their herds, but not to their hearts' best interests. They gather broken shells with continuous industry, but they throw away priceless diamonds. They exercise forethought, prudence, care, everywhere but where they are most required. They save their money but squander their happiness; they are guardians of their estates but suicides of their souls. Many forms this folly takes, but it is seen on all hands, and the sight should make the Christian weep over the madness of his fellow men. May the series of portraits which will now pass before us, while they hold the mirror up to nature, also point us in the way of grace.

See before you, then, the portrait of AN ATTENTIVE SERVANT. He is faithful to his employers, and fulfils well the office to which he is appointed. He is up with the lark, he toils all day, he rests not till his task is done; he neglects nothing which he undertakes. I see him among the throng, I will single him out, and talk with him. You have been engaged for years in farming. You have ploughed, and sown, and reaped, and gathered into the barn, and no one has done the work better than you, and yet, though you have been so careful in your labor, you have never sown to the Spirit, nor cared to reap life everlasting. You have never asked to have your heart ploughed with the gospel plough, nor sewn with the living seed,

and the consequence will be that at the last you will have no harvest but weeds and thistles, and you will be given over to eternal destruction. What nils you to care for the clover and the turnips, the cows and the sheep, but never for yourself, your truest self, your ever-existing soul? What! all this care about the field and no care about your heart? All this toil for a harvest which the hungry shall eat up, and no care whatever about the harvest that shall last eternally!

Or you have been occupied all your life in a garden, and there what diligence you have shown, what taste in the training of the plants and flowers, what diligence in digging, planting, weeding, and watering! Often has your employer congratulated himself that he has so careful a servant. You take a delight in }our work, and well you may, for some relics of Eden's memories linger around a garden still; but how is it that you are so choice with yonder tulip and so indifferent about your own spirit? What, care for a poor rose, which so soon is withered, and have no thought about your immortal nature! Is this like a reasonable man? You were very careful in the winter to keep up the heat of the greenhouse lest those feeble plants should suffer from the frost, have you, then, no care to be protected from temptation, and from the dread storms of almighty wrath which are so soon to come? Can it be that you are diligent in ordering the walks, and beds, and shrubberies of your master's grounds, and yet are utterly careless about the garden of your heart in which fairer flowers would bloom, and yield you a far richer reward? I marvel at you. It seems so strange that you should be so good a worker for others and so bad a caver about yourself. I fear your lament will have to be "They made me keeper of the vineyard, but my own vineyard have I not kept."

It would be too long a task to dwell particularly on each of your employments, but I will hope that in each case you are anxious to do your work thoroughly, so as to secure approval. The horse is not badly fed, nor the carriage recklessly driven, nor the wall carelessly built, nor the wood ill planed — you would be ashamed to be called a negligent workman. Put it then to yourself, will you watch over another man's goods and be unmindful of your own highest good? What, do you mind the horse and the wagon, the parcels, and the errands, and all sorts of little matters, and shall that soul of yours, which will outlast the sun and live when stars grow dim, shall that be left without a thought.? What, do you love others so much and yourself so little? Are minor matters to absorb all your thoughts while your own eternal concerns are left, in utter neglect?

Some of you act as domestic servants, and endeavor to discharge your duties well; you have much to do from morning till night, and you would be ashamed for any one to say, "*The room is unswept, cobwebs are on the walls, the floors are filthy, the meals are badly cooked, because you are a bad servant.*":No, you feel rather proud that when you have a situation you can keep it, and that the mistress is content with you. Suffer me, then, to ask you in the gentlest manner, Is your heart never to be cleansed? Are your sins always to defile it? Have you no thought about "the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens"? Do you think God made you to be a mere sweeper and cleaner of rooms, a cooker of meat, and so on, and that this is all you were designed for? There must be a higher and a better life for you, and do you altogether disregard it? Will you weary yourself, day by day, about another person's house, and have you no interest in your own soul? Have you so much care to please (as you should do) your master and mistress, and no care about being reconciled to God? I will not think that you are so bereft of reason.

I address a still larger class probably, if I say there are many here who will go off to the city in the morning to fulfill the duties of confidential accountants. You never suffer the books to be inaccurate, they balance to a farthing; it would distress you if, through your inadvertence, the firm lost even a sixpence. You have perhaps been many years with the same employers, and have their unbounded respect; from your boyhood to this day you have been connected with the house. I have known several admirable men, of high integrity and thorough faithfulness, whom their employers could never sufficiently value, for they laid themselves out with intense zeal to promote their commercial interests, and worked far harder than the heads of the house ever did. Had the whole concern been their own they could not have been more assiduous, and yet these very men gave no heed to their own personal interests for another world; it was grievous to observe that God was not in all their thoughts, nor heaven, nor hell, nor their own precious souls. You good and faithful servants of men, will you perish as unfaithful servants of God? What, will you never look onward to the last great reckoning? Is it nothing to you that the debts due to divine justice are undischarged? Are you willing to be called before the Lord of all, and to hear him say, "Thou wicked and slothful servant, I gave thee a talent, but thou hast wrapped it in a napkin"? God forbid I should diminish one grain of your diligence from your secular avocations, but from the very zeal you throw into these, I charge you frye he reasonable men see

to it,;bat ye destroy not your own souls. Be not like Ahithophel, who set his house in order and hanged himself. Set not your master's concerns in order and then destro;' your souls, for how shall you escape if you neglect the great salvation?

Look ye now to another picture—THE PRUDENT MERCHANT. I must briefly sketch him. He knows the ways of trade, studies the state of the market, is quick to perceive the opportunity of gain, has been cautious in his speculations, has secured what he has obtained, and is now in possession of a competency, or on the road to it. He prides himself in a quiet way upon the prudence with which he conducts all his worldly transactions — and, my dear friend, I am sure I am glad to see you prudent in business, for much misery would be caused to others as well as to yourself by recklessness and folly. But I want to ask you if you are thoughtless about religion how it is that you can be so inconsistent? Do you study how to buy, and buy well, but will you never buy the truth? Do you put all that you get into a safe bank, but will you never lay up treasure in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt? You are wary in your speculations, but will you play so deep at hazard as to jeopardise your soul? You have been for years accustomed to rise up early and sit up late, and eat the bread of carefulness: will you never rise early to seek the Lord? Will you never prevent the night watches to find a Savior? Is the body everything? Is gold your god? Why, You are a man of intelligence and reading, and you know that there are higher considerations than these of business and the state of trade. You do not believe yourself to be of the same generation as the brute that perisheth; you expect to live in another state; you have a book here which tells you what that life will be, and how it may be shaped for joy, or left to be drifted into endless sorrow. Am I a fanatic, my dear sir, if I respectfully put my hand on yours and say, "I beseech you think not all of the less and nothing of the greater, lest haply when' you come to die, the same may be said of you as of a rich man of old, who had been as cautious and as careful as you: 'thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose will these things be which thou hast prepared?' I charge you, if you be prudent, prove it by being prudent about the weightttest of all concerns. If you be not after all a mere bragger as to prudence, a mere child enraptured with silly toys, then show your wisdom by following the wisest course." I have heard of one, the stewardess of an American vessel, who when the ship was sinking, saw heaps of gold coin scattered upon the cabin floor by those who had thrown it there in the confusion of their

escape: she gathered up large quantities of it, wrapped it round her waist, and leaped into the water; she sank like a millstone, as though she had studiously prepared herself for destruction. I fear that many of you traders are diligently collecting guarantees for your surer ruin, planning to bury yourselves beneath your glittering hoards. Be wise in time. My voice, nay, my heart pleads with you for your soul's sake and for Christ's sake, be not like Ahithophel, who set his house in order and hanged himself. Take sure bond for enduring happiness, invest in indisputable securities, have done with infinite risks, and be assured for life everlasting.

A third photograph shall now be exhibited. This will describe a smaller, but a very valuable class of men, and if they were blessed of God how glad should I be — THE DILIGENT STUDENT. He seeks out the best of books to assist him in the pursuit of his branch of knowledge; he burns the midnight oil, he is not afraid of toil, he cares not for throbbing brain and weary eye, but he presses on, he trains his memory, he schools his judgment, and all with the hope that he may be numbered with the learned. The examinations of his university are to him the most important periods in the calendar; his degree is the prize of his high calling. Knowledge is sweet, and the honor of being associated with the learned is coveted. My young friend, I would not for a moment abate your zeal, but I would beg space for one consideration worthy of immediate attention. Ought the best of sciences to be left to the last? Should self-knowledge and acquaintance with God be treated as of secondary importance? Should not the word of God be the chief volume in the wise man's library? Should you not burn the midnight oil to peruse the page infallible, written by the divine finger? With all your gettings, should you not get the understanding which cometh from above, and the knowledge which is the gift of God, and which will introduce you, if not among the learned, yet among the gracious; if not into the academy of *sarans*, yet into the general assembly and church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven? Should there not be with you the wish to train your complete manhood, and to educate yourself to the fullness of the stature of what a man should be? Should not the noblest part have the chief care? I speak to a wise man; I would have him be truly wise; I would not have him set his study in order, and tutor himself, and then forget the eternal life, and the destiny that awaits him. O student, seek thou first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and then shall thy temple of wisdom be built upon a rock.

I will take another character, a character which is very common in great cities — I am not sure but what it is common enough — THE REFORMING POLITICIAN. I value our politicians highly, but we scarcely need to be overstocked with those who brawl in public houses and discussion rooms while their families are starving at home. Some men who spend a great deal of time in considering politics, are hardly benefitting the commonwealth to the extent they imagine. I will suppose I am addressing a man who feels the home and foreign affairs of the nation to be his particular department. Well, my respected friend, I trust you occupy a useful place in the general economy, but I want to ask you one or two questions well worthy of a reformer's or a conservative's consideration. You have been looking up abuses, have you no abuses in your own life which need correcting? There is no doubt about the Reform Bill having been needed, but do you not think a Reform Bill is needed by some of us, at home, in reference to our own characters, and especially in reference to our relation towards our God and our Saviour? I think only he who is ignorant of himself will deny that; and would it not be a fine thing to begin at home, and let the politics of our house and our heart be set quite right, and that immediately! You have in your brain a complete scheme for paying off the National Debt, elevating the nation, remodelling the navy, improving the army, managing the colonies, delivering France, and establishing the best form of government in Europe; I am afraid your schemes may not be carried out so soon as you desire; but may I not suggest to you that your own heart needs renewing by the Spirit of God, your many sins need removing by the atonement of Jesus, and your whole life requires a deep and radical change, and this is a practical measure which no aristocracy will oppose, which no vested interests will defeat, and which need not be delayed for another election or a new premier. I dare say you have faced much opposition, and expect to face much more in agitating the important question which you have taken up; but ah! my friend will you not sometimes agitate questions with your conscience? Will you not discuss with your inner nature the great truths which God has revealed? Would it not be worth your While at least to spend some time in your private council chamber with you, self thinking of the now, and of the past, and of the to come — considering God, Christ, heaven, hell, and yourself as connected with all these? I press it on you, it seems to me to be the greatest of all inconsistencies that a man should think himself able to guide a nation and yet should lose his own soul; that he should have schemes by which to turn this world into a paradise, and yet lose paradise for himself; that he should declaim violently against war, and

all sorts of evils, and yet himself should be at war with God, himself a slave to sin. Shall he talk of freedom while he is manacled by his lusts and appetites? Shall he be enslaved by drink, and yet be the champion of liberty? He that teaches freedom should himself be free. It is ill to see a man contending for others, and a captive himself. To arrange the nation's affairs, and to destroy yourself is as foolish as Ahithophel, who ordered his house and hanged himself.

We will pass to another character, and how much of what I am now to utter may concern myself I pray God to teach me — THE ZEALOUS PREACHER. The character is no imaginary one, it is not suggested by bitterness, or coloured by fanaticism, there have been such and will be such to the end; men who study the Scriptures, and are masters of theology, versed in doctrine, conversant with law; men who teach the lessons they have gathered, and teach them, eloquently and forcibly, warning their hearers of their sins, pointing out their danger, and pleading with them to lay hold on Christ, and life eternal, and yet — for all this they are themselves unconverted! They preach what they never felt, they teach what they never knew by experience. Brother ministers, I allude not to you any more than to myself, but of all men that live we are most called upon to watch lest our very office help us to be hypocrites; lest our position as teachers should bring upon us a double curse. Do not let us seek the salvation of others and lose ourselves. To preach Christ and not to have him; to tell of the fountain and not to be washed in it; to speak of hell, and warn men to escape it, and yet go there ourselves! God grant it may never be so with any of us! But, mark you, the point of this warning comes to many here who are not altogether ministers. You are not preachers, but you are Sunday-school teachers, tract distributors, Bible women, or city missionaries. Then hear ye the same warning. Will you go round with those tracts from house to house, and yet have no religion in your own houses? Oh, miserable souls! who hath required it at your hands to teach others of God when you are not reconciled to God yourselves? What can you teach those children in the Sabbath-school? I say, what can you teach those children, when you yourselves are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity? May not the very words *you* spoke to your classes to-day rise up against you in the day of judgment and condemn you? Do not be content to have it so. Do not point the way to others and run in another road yourself. Do not set others in order and slay your own selves.

I have another picture to look upon — it represents A CAREFUL PARENT. Many who may not have been included under other descriptions will be mentioned here. You love your children well and wisely; so far as this world is concerned, you are careful and prudent parents. You were very watchful over them in their childhood, you were afraid that those infant sicknesses would take them to the grave. How glad you were, dear mother, when once again you could lift the little one from the bed and press it to your bosom, and thank God that it was recovering its health and strength. You have denied yourself a great deal for your children. When you were out of work, and struggling with poverty, you did not so much grieve for yourselves as for them, it was so hard to see your children wanting bread. You have been so pleased to clothe them, so glad to notice their opening intellect, and you have many of you selected with great care places where they will receive a good education, and if you thought that any bad influence would come across their path, you would be on your guard at once. You wish your children to grow up patterns of virtue and good citizens, and you are right in all this. I wish that all felt as *you* do about their families, and that none were allowed to run loose in the streets, which are the devil's school. Now as you have been so very careful about your children, may I ask you ought not your own soul to have some thought bestowed on it, some anxiety exercised about it? It is a child too, to be educated for the skies, to be nurtured for the Father's house above. Look in the babe's face and think of the care you give to it, and then turn your eyes inwardly upon your soul and say, "What care have I given to thee, my soul? I have left thee unwashed, unclothed, un-housed. No blood of Christ hath fallen on thee, my soul; no righteousness of Christ hath wrapped thee. For thee, my soul, my poor, poor soul, there is no heaven when thou must leave this body; for thee there is no hope but a fearful looking for of judgment and of fiery indignation. My soul forgive me that I have treated thee so ill, I will now think of thee and bow my knee and ask the Lord to be gracious to thee." I wish I could call upon you personally and press this matter upon you. Think that I am doing so; when you reach home think that I am following you there and saying to you, "If you care for your children care for your souls." Look at the boys and girls sleeping in their cots tonight, and if you are unconverted, say to yourself, "There they lie, the dear ones, they are little sermons to me; I will remember what the preacher said when I look at them. My God, my Father, I will turn to thee, do thou turn me and I shall be turned."

The last of my crayon sketches is one which may concern many, it is that of THE OUTWARD RELIGIONIST who yet is regardless of his own soul: it is oddest and strangest of all that there should be such people. I have met with Protestants, flaming Protestants, I might add, raving Protestants, who nevertheless know no more about Protestantism than about the Theogony of Hesiod, and were they questioned as to what it is that was protested against by the Reformers, they would guess wide of the mark. Yet are they very concerned that our glorious constitution in church and state should be “thoroughly Protestant” — though I cannot for the life of me see what difference it would make to them. If they have no faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, what matters it to them how a man is justified? There are others, again, who are “Dissenters to the backbone,” but yet sinners to their-marrow. To ungodly men I say solemnly, What matters it what you are in these matters? The side which has the honor of your patronage is a loser by it in all probability. If you are leading bad lives, I am very sorry that you are Dissenters, you injure a good cause. What fools you must be to be so earnest about religions in which you have no concern! Many, again, are very orthodox, even to being strait-laced, and yet are unbelievers. If the preacher does not *come* up to their weight and measure, they denounce him at once, and have no word bad enough for him. But now, my friend, though I cannot say that I am altogether sorry that you think about doctrines and churches, let me ask *you* is it wise that you should set up for a judge upon a matter in which you have no share? You are vociferous for setting the church in order, but you are destroying your soul? If these things belonged to you, I could understand your zeal about them, but since you have nothing to do with them (and you have not if you have no faith), why do you look after other people, and let your own salvation go by default? It may be a very important thing to somebody how the Duke of Devonshire may lay out his estate at Chatsworth, but I am sure it is not to me, for I am in no degree a part proprietor with His Grace. So it may be very important to some people how such-and-such a doctrine is taught; but how should you be so zealous about it, when you are in no degree a part proprietor in it unless you have believed in Jesus Christ? What startles me with some of you is, that you will cheerfully contribute for the support of a gospel in which you have never believed. There are those of you here to whom I am thankful for help in Christ’s service; you put your hand into)/our pocket, and are generous to the Lord’s cause, how is it that you do this and yet refuse to give Jesus your heart? I know you do not think you are purchasing his favor by your money, you know better than that, but

what do you do it for? Are you like those builders who helped Noah to build the ark, and then were drowned? Do you help to build a lifeboat, and being yourself shipwrecked, do you refuse the assistance of the lifeboat? You are strangely inconsistent. You keep God's Sabbath, and yet you will not enter into his rest. You sing Christ's praises, and yet you will not trust him. You bow your heads in prayer, and yet you do not pray. You are anxious, too, sometimes, and yet that which would end all your anxiety, namely, submission to the gospel of Christ, you will not yield. Why is this? Wherefore this strange behavior? Will you bless others and curse yourselves?

I speak to the whole of you who as yet have not believed in Jesus — what is it that you are destroying your souls with? Every unbeliever is an eternal suicide, he is destroying his souls' hopes. What is your motive? Perhaps some of you are indulging a pleasurable sin, which you cannot give up. I conjure you cast it from you; though it be dear as the right eye, pluck it out, or useful as the right arm, cut it off and cast it from you. Suffer no temporary pleasures to lead you into eternal destruction. Escape for your life. Sweet sin will bring bitter death; God give you grace to cast it away. Or is it some deadly error with which you are destroying your soul? Have you a notion that it is a small thing to die unsaved? Do you imagine that by-and-by it will all be over, and you can bear the temporary punishment? Dream not so! Not thus speaks the infallible word of God, though men would thus buoy up your spirits, and make your forehead brazen against the Most High. It is an awful thing to fail into the hands of the living God. God grant you may not run that risk, and meet that fate. Or perhaps some self-righteous trust holds you back from Christ. You can destroy yourself with that as well as with sin. To trust to ourselves is deadly; only to trust to Jesus is safe. I will explain that to you and have done. Inasmuch as we had sinned against God, God must punish us; it is necessary that sin should be punished, or there could be no moral government. Now in order to meet that case, to have mercy upon men in conformity with justice, Jesus Christ the Son of God, came into the world, and became man, and as man, he took upon himself the sins of all his people, and was punished for them; and whosoever trusts Jesus is one of those for whom Jesus bore the smart, for whom he paid the debt. If thou believest that Jesus is the Christ, if thou dost trust thy soul with the Christ of Nazareth, thy sins which are many are forgiven thee: go in peace — thy soul is saved. But if thou puttest away from thee the Christ, who says, "Look unto me and be ye saved all ye ends

of the earth," you may be very wise, and you may arrange your business cleverly, but, for all that, you are no wiser than the great fool of my text, who set his house in order and hanged himself. God teach hearers and readers to be wise ere yet this year is gone. Amen.

EARNEST WORK NOT EXTINCT.

MANY circumstances make us fear that in general the earnest revival spirit which blazed up a few years ago is not now quite so vigorous, but on the other hand there are laborers in London and elsewhere in whom zeal for the Lord retains all its force. All that is done may not be wisely done, but that it is done at all is encouraging. Besides the unrelaxing efforts of hundreds of faithful ministers, Mr. Edward Wright, Mr. Orsman, Mr. Carter, Mr. Booth, and others, are the centres of holy activities which are stirring the masses of London, and we have agencies at the Tabernacle equally energetic and successful. In looking over the "Christian Mission Magazine," which is probably unknown to most of our readers, we are glad to see that open-air efforts are not forgotten, and that those who conduct them are not to be put down by opposition. Some, like timid hares, run off the moment a little disturbance occurs, but the heroic preacher looks for opposition and is not alarmed when he meets it. Two brethren give their adventures at t/arrogate.

"On Monday, October 17th, we went to our usual stand on the Stray, and found that Sanger's Circus company were just commencing their evening's performance. We began our service by singing—

'I'm a pilgrim bound for glory,' etc.

While singing this hymn, some of the people employed in the circus begun pelting us with clods of mud and grass tufts. Failing to drive us away, they brought out their brass band, with which they made the most hideous discord, but finding we were brass-band proof, they moved back to their tent. The next move was to send out a large bass and a side drum, and forcing their way into our midst, they stood drumming away in front of the speaker, whilst behind him stood a man who clashed in his ears a pair of cymbals. Praise God, we were able to stand against drums and cymbals.

"They then brought out an elephant and two dromedaries, which they walked up and down among the people. This caused great excitement, for

there were hundreds of people present. The roughs shouted, women and children shrieked, and we praised God because his unseen hand was with us, and not a single accident occurred. The police now came and ordered them to take the beasts away, which they reluctantly did, but renewed their annoyance with the drums and cymbals, and collected together hundreds of roughs with tin kettles.

“At this juncture, a man in the crowd sympathising with us, commenced to help them to thump the drum; in a little while, finding it sound very fiat and dead, they discovered the man had been striking it with his penknife, and so the drummer with his friends were only too glad to beat a hasty retreat. How easily sometimes is Satan outwitted!

“This persecution lasted just an hour and a-half, when we gave out —

‘Praise God from whom all blessings flow,’

which the people joined us in singing, after which we formed into procession, and sang on the way to the hall, whilst hundreds followed.

“In the meeting God was with us, and we received evidence that good had been done.”

What would some of our brethren have done in such a case? If a baby cries they are utterly disconcerted, and a little noise from the Sabbath-school children makes them drop the thread of their discourse. Puling evangelists would do well to try Whitechapel in the open air, and they would probably say with a certain brother, “I find the work very trying to the voice; the rumbling of the ‘busses and carts in the Mile End Road drowns the voice unless backed by a strong pair of lungs.” We are afraid they would hardly have grace to add, “The Lord strengthen us for this great work.”

Great has been our delight at ‘the self-denying efforts of some of our very poor members. They have opened their rooms for prayer-meetings, and then in some cases nearly starved themselves to pay the rent of a larger room, made necessary by the numbers attending. They have tried themselves to preach to the best of their slender ability, but have with true humility always desired to give way to more able laborers, and in some cases from efforts in little rooms, many souls have been converted, and ultimately larger mission-halls have been taken. Out’ firm conviction is that many of the poor would sooner go to a little service in a private room than attend larger gatherings. Forties and fifties can be gathered, and a

considerable number of such assemblies would be better than one great building three-fourths empty. This moreover would afford trading-space for the one-talent brethren, and cause the burning of many an old napkin which is now rotting in the sluggard's garden. Any and every form of bringing the gospel home to the people must be tried, and we must all have a hand in the blessed crusade. Time is flying, we cannot afford to delay . Brother, sister, in Christ, up and be doing. Ere this year rolls into eternity inaugurate some fresh work for Jesus. C. H. S.

FOOTNOTES

^{Ft1} Would it be possible to refrain from laughing at this new version of Balaam's very proper desire? To complete the picture, we ought to have had the funeral ceremonial, as a most desirable "last end." Something in the following style would be heavenly:—

*“And see the portals opening wide,
 From the abbey flows the living tide;
 Forth from the doors
 The torrent pours,
 Acolytes, monks, and friars in scores,
 This with his chasuble, that with his rosary,
 This from his incense-pot turning his noseawry,
 Holy father and holy mother,
 holy sister and holy brother,
 Holy son and holy daughter,
 Holy wafer and holy water;
 Every one drest, like a guest, in his best,
 In the smartest of clothes they're permitted to wear,
 Serge, sackcloth, and shirts of the same sort of hair
 As now we make use of to stuff an arm-chair,
 Or weave into gloves at three shillings pair,
 And employ for shampooing in cases rheumatic — a
 Special specific, I'm told, for sciatica.
 Through groined arch, and by cloister'd stone,
 With mosses and ivy long o'vergrown,
 Slowly the throng come passing along,
 With many a chant and holy song,
 Adapted for holidays, high days and Sundays:
 Dies irae and de profundis,
 Miserere and domine dirige nos —
 Such as I hear, to a very slow tune are all
 Slowly chanted by monks at a funeral,
 To secure the defunct's repose.”*

^{Ft2} The idea of holy oil shops is amusing. We think we see sisters of mercy serving out bottles of the marvelous unguents to their clerical customers at the usual 1s. 1 1/2d., and gently reminding them that there is a great saving in the taking the larger sizes. It is to be hoped in the

interests of immortal souls, that no base imitations will be palmed upon the public, the bishop's signature in red letters upon a green ground (to imitate which is forgery), should be placed immediate superintendence of the sacred vestals.

^{Ft3} The burying of the ashes is consecrated ground *looks* rather childish, but may be a very weighty part of the business; beware, ye who smile, lest ye mock at holy things!

^{Ft4} Ryland's Life of Kitto is largely made up of extracts from this marvelous diary.

^{Ft5} "Daily Bible Illustrations," by John Kitto, D.D., F.S.A. New Editions, revised and enlarged J.L. porter, D.D., LL.D., author of "The Giant Cities of Bashan," "The Pentateuch and the Gospel," etc. In eight volumes. Edinburgh: W. Olphant and Co.

^{ft6} See "Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit," No. 504.

^{Ft7} Baptist History: from the foundation of the Christian Church to the close of the Eighteenth Century. By J.M. CRAMP, D.D., author of "A Text Book on Popery," etc., etc. London: Elliot Stock.

^{Ft8} Memior and Remains of the Rev. Robert Murray M'Cheyne, page 61. This is one of the best and most profitable volumes ever published. Every minister should read it often.

^{Ft9} Joseph Alleine: His companions and Times. By CHARLES STANFORD. An admirable biograghy.

^{Ft10} The life of the Rev. David Brainerd, Missionary to the Indians. By JOHATHAN EDWARDS, A.M., President of the College of New Jersey. London, 1818.

^{Ft11} A Memoir of the Rev. Henry Martyn B.D., Chaplain to the Hon. East India Company. By Rev. JOHN SARGENT, M.A., Rector of Lavington. 1855.

^{Ft12} Flecknoe.

^{Ft13} Ecclus. 40:1,2,3,4,5,8

^{ft14} Thomas Washbourne.

^{Ft15} We are not responsible for the affectionate prejudices of our contributor. We think he over-estimates his brother, but the error is too inveterate with him for us to hope to reason him out of it. —*Editor*.

^{ft16} The City Arabs. By W. BURNS THOMSON, Medical Missionary.

London: James Nisbet & Co., 21, Berners Street.

ft17 A fashionable part of the city.

ft18 Life of the Rev. John Milne, of Perth. By Horatius Bonar, D.D.
London: James Nisbet & co., Berners-street.

ft19 The Triumph of the Cross, by JEROME SAVONAROLA. Translated from the Latin, with Notes and a Biographical Sketch. By O'DELL Travers Hill, F.R.G.S London; Hodder and Stoughton.

ft20 From "The Religious Tendencies of the Times." By James Grant. W. Macintosh.

ft21 This party differs as much from the Darbyites as the day from the night. We do not admire their peculiarities, but they are usually a fraternal, evangelistic race, with whom communion is not difficult, for their spirit is far removed from the ferocity of Darbyism.

ft22 "The Seven Curses of London," by James Greenwood, the Amateur Casual. London, Stanley Rivers and Co.

ft23 It has pleased God to remove from us our most generous and indefatigable senior deacon, of whom we gave our readers a portrait some months since. The loss to us is gain to him. Never minister had better deacon; never church a better servant. We shall miss him in a hundred ways, and cannot but beseech the Lord to raise up others to fill the gaps which he, and such as he are making, as one by one they leave us. The biographical notes here given are printed very nearly as we received them.

ft24 This meditation was suggested by a hint in Stiers' "Words of the Lord Jesus."