

Charles H. Spurgeon and His Work.

In the year 1873 Mr. Spurgeon preached from I Peter 2: 7: "Unto you therefore which believe He is precious," and he commenced his sermon by saying: "I remember well that, more than twenty-two years ago, the first sermon that I ever made was from this text. I had been asked to walk out to the village of Taversham, about four miles from Cambridge, where I then lived, to accompany a young man whom I supposed to be the preacher for the evening, and on the way I said to him that I hoped God would bless him in his labors. 'Oh dear,' said he, 'I never preached in my life; I never thought of such a thing. I was asked to walk with you, and I sincerely hope God will bless you in your preaching.' 'Nay,' said I, 'but I never preached, and I don't know that I could do anything of the sort. We walked, my inmost soul being all in a trouble as to what would happen. When we found the congregation assembled, and no one else there to speak of Jesus, though I was only sixteen years of age, as I found that I was expected to preach, I did preach, and the text was that just given.'

During the two years following this event, while preaching every Sunday, young Spurgeon worked assiduously as usher in a school at Newmarket. But supplying the pulpit on one occasion at the little church at Water-beach, in Cambridge-shire, the hearers were greatly impressed with the powers of "the boy preacher," as he was then called, and eventually invited him to be their pastor. This invitation was accepted, and for a period of two years Mr. Spurgeon labored there, during which time the number of communicants was more than doubled.

Towards the close of 1853 Mr. Spurgeon (then nineteen years of age) received an invitation to preach at New Park Street Chapel, London, a church which had at one time been a very important one, and had enjoyed the ministrations of Dr. Gill, Dr. Rippon and other eminent men, but from various causes had dwindled down to a very small boy, and even that torn by internal dissensions. Mr. Spurgeon went and ultimately received an invitation to become pastor of the church. To the mere stripling of nineteen the undertaking seemed too great, and he compromised with the church by an arrangement to take the duties for a period of six months, at the end of which time either pastor or people were at liberty to close the engagement.

Long before the of that six months the matter was settled by the distinct and emphatic voice of the London people. His fame spread rapidly through the metropolis, and one asked another, Have you heard the boy preach?

Those who went to hear confirmed the good report and came again, until the building, which contained less than 200 when he first preached in it, but which would hold 1200, was filled to its utmost.

In due course the "wall at the back" came down, and an enlargement took place, the young preacher meanwhile occupying Exeter Hall for about three months. But although enlarged, New Park Street "resembled," as Mr. Spurgeon remarks, "the attempt to put the sea into a teapot," and there was literally no room for the hundreds desirous of obtaining admission.

The chapel could not be further enlarged for the very sufficient reason that the building then covered every inch of the ground available. It was therefore resolved to purchase land elsewhere and build a new edifice. Until that could be built a large concert-hall in the Surrey Gardens was hired and filled with hearers at every service. In this building occurred the terrible catastrophe that shattered Mr. Spurgeon's nervous system and left a permanent effect on his health. It was in October 19th, 1856, that just as the

pastor was engaged in praying and the hall was densely crowded, some mischievous person raised the alarm of Fire! A general panic ensued, which the pastor ineffectually endeavored to calm by assurance that there was no fire. A stampede followed, in which several people lost their lives and others severely injured.

The work connected with the New Tabernacle was pressed forward, and in May, 1861, Mr. Spurgeon had the satisfaction of preaching in the new building, which had cost \$156,661, and which had all been contributed.

During the year 1856 to 1861 Mr. Spurgeon's pulpit labors were almost incessant. He preached on an average twelve sermons a week. His health could not long endure so great a strain, and eventually he was induced to take a short period of repose. His brother (also a Baptist minister) came to his aid and became his co-pastor. Of late years he has been under the necessity of economizing his strength by curtailing his exertions, but even now he is admonished by frequent attacks of illness that he is overtasking his strength.

Mr. Spurgeon's labors are by no means confined to his pulpit. The Metropolitan Tabernacle is the center and nucleus of a wide circle of work, and the pastor's careful and minute attention is given to every detail. Prominent among the institutions which have sprung from the Tabernacle is the *Pastor's College*, in which a large number of young men are educated for the ministry. A second institution is the *Stockwell Orphanage*, in which over 260 orphans are boarded, clothed and educated. In connection with the Tabernacle is also a colportage association, an organization for home and foreign missions, and a variety of other societies for effecting spiritual and material good.

Malta.

Of all the famous islands of the Mediterranean, perhaps the one most worthy of extended notice is Malta, curious in structure, wonderful in fertility and renowned in history. This island, about sixty miles in circumference, was originally one immense mass of bare, limestone rocks. But so restless, so conquering is the force of man's ingenuity, that, in spite of its being apparently, by its very nature, made forever unfit for human habitation, it has been, from remote antiquity, one of the garden spots of the world. Its earliest colonists, undaunted by its frowning sterility, brought, with infinite labor, numberless cargoes of earth from Syracuse, and so formed upon the adamant surface a soil in which flourish, in luxuriance, the rose, the grape, the olive, the fig and the orange, while the grain and cotton reach here a perfection scarce surpassed elsewhere. It may thus be perceived that the victory over nature, gained by unexampled industry, has never been lost by any relaxation of vigilance. This is indeed the case, for every foot of land is cultivated with the most assiduous care, and, from the time of the first inhabitants, the custom has been to renew the soil every ten years, and remove the incrustations of lime, which, slowly and surely forming, would destroy its productive power if suffered to remain. And this warfare against barrenness has been assisted immeasurably by the climate; for, under a soft, genial sky, and the tempering influence of mild sea-breezes, cold, and frost, and heat and drought are alike unknown, and over all hangs the atmosphere of a perpetual spring.

Malta, as might be expected from its advantageous position in a commercial point of view, was first settled from Phœnicia, the earliest and greatest maritime nation of ancient times. Accordingly we find a record of such occupation, about 1400, B. C. Subsequently colonists from Greece established themselves in the island,

As time passed on, one other of Tyre's offshoots was increasing prodigiously in wealth and might. So, four hundred years before the Christian era, Melita, as it was then called, strongly fortified, was one of the chief bulwarks of Carthaginian power in the Mediterranean. So it remained until the end of the second Punic War, when it fell into the hands of the Romans, 216, B. C.

After this, for an interval, the history of Malta is merged in that of its imperial mistress, held in enforced peace by military despotism during her supremacy, and succumbing, at last, with other provinces, to the strength of ruthless invaders. First the Goths, and then the Saracens, were its masters. Of the effects of these conquests, those of the latter were the most lasting, for they put to the sword, or sold into slavery, the majority of the existing population, and re-colonized the island with Arabs. The present inhabitants are descendants of these, mingled with modern Italians and Greeks. Their dialect is a mixture of the language of the former with Arabic.

When Mussulman rule at length gave way, Malta continued subject to the crown of Sicily from 1190 to 1525, A. D., when the Emperor Charles V., gave it to the Knights of St. John. These knights had been driven by the Turks from their possession in Cyprus, Rhodes and Crete, and their acceptance of this territory was conditional upon their promise to wage perpetual war against the infidels, and exterminate the Arabian pirates from the Mediterranean. The name of the ancient city, *Il Borgo*, was changed to *La Valetta*, after the Grand Master, John de la Valette, who made it his abode. It, and every accessible point were fortified so highly, as to render the island wellnigh impregnable. So secured, the chivalrous possessors felt prepared to bid eternal defiance to all invaders.

But the upholders of the Crescent were not anxious to allow so formidable an opposer grow in power. Accordingly, Solyman the Magnificent made ready for an overwhelming onslaught, with a fleet of no less than two hundred sail, carrying a force of forty thousand men; and in the middle of May, 1565, the Turkish fleet appeared before La Valetta. So invincible they seemed, that many of the knights, brave as they were, professed themselves unable to sustain an attack. But, even when the Saracens had nearly broken through the mighty fortifications, never would the Grand Master allow his courage to be shaken. With such a degree of confidence did he inspire his men, that notwithstanding a series of severe, and on the part of the Christians, almost hopeless contests, continued until the beginning of September, the arms of the Moslems were completely shattered, and the Order remained secure in possession. This signal victory, after so long and fierce a conflict, was considered one of the most splendid achievements of the sixteenth century. Not only was it noteworthy for being gained by prodigies of valor, but it stayed the westward progress of Islamism, securing Christian nations against infidel disturbers.

From this time forward, Malta remained under the peaceful sway of the knights, the Christianized people living in prosperity under their administration, until the Fraternity, having done its work, began to decay, dying out finally in the latter part of the eighteenth century. Then followed a period of weakness, when the Turks were only prevented from reducing the inhabitants to starvation by the interposition of France. In 1798, the island was conquered by Napoleon, and in 1800, it was taken by England, to whom it was confirmed by the treaty of Paris, in 1814.

La Valetta now occupies the posi-

tion of one of the principal British ports in the Mediterranean. It is a handsome city, having wide streets paved with lava, and displaying a splendid collection of palaces, churches and picturesque houses, built in terraces, one above the other, up the rocky summit. It contains some very fine edifices, among them the Grand Master's Palace, now the residence of the British governor, the cathedral, the hospital and the immense admiralty. The town is defended by the mighty fortresses of St. Elmo, St. Angelo, Manuel and Tigne, with intermediate connecting works of massive proportions. Dark war-ships, and the vessels of all nations; a fair and smiling country; and spread round the deep, blue waters of the midland sea, all form a fitting frame to a most attractive picture.—*Arthur's Magazine*.

Salutations.

A well bred person instinctively bows the moment he recognizes an acquaintance, at the instant of the first meeting of the eyes. According to the rule of courts, and of good society everywhere, anyone who had been introduced to you, or anyone to whom you have been introduced, is entitled to this mark of respect.

A bow does not entail a calling acquaintance, and to neglect it shows neglect in early education, as well as a deficiency in cultivation and in the instincts of refinement; so that the truth of St. Loup's assertion, that the bow is the touchstone of good breeding, is made good.

Its entire neglect reveals character and training of the person; the manner of its observance reveals the very shades of breeding that exist between the ill-bred and the well-bred.

In thoroughfares where persons are constantly passing, gentlemen keep to the left of a lady, without regard of the wall, in order to protect her from the jostling elbows of the unmanly; unless a lady prefers to walk on the gentleman's left for his protection.

A gentleman walking with a lady returns a bow made to her (lifting his hat not too far from his head), although the one bowing is an entire stranger to him.

It is a civility to return a bow although you do not know the one who is bowing to you. The more cultivated a person is the more prompt he will be found in such civilities. Either the one who bows knows you, or he has mistaken you for some one else. In either case you should return the bow, and probably the mistake will be discovered to have occurred from a want of quick recognition on your own part, or from some resemblance that you bear to another. The bow costs you nothing; and the withholding of it shows you to be either *qauche* or rude.—*Banner*.

The *Independent* says: A man who forgets that he may die at any moment is very foolish. A man's business ought to be kept so closely in hand that he will be able to leave it at any moment in such condition that it can be settled up. His will ought to be made and his property safe. He should know whose those things be which he has provided. Much more is that man most foolish who does not live with his soul prepared to meet God. It is wealth toward God that will avail when a man comes to die. Death may be very sudden and very unexpected. The most certain of all future events is that we must die. The most uncertain of all is the time when we shall die. When it comes what a change! We work hard to make our lives here comfortable. Do we work equally hard to make our eternity happy?

When alone, we have our thoughts to watch; in the family, our temper; in society, our tongue. We should endeavor to illustrate our devotions in the morning by our conduct through the day.—*Hannah Moore*.

Assyrian Names for the Seas.

An interesting point of comparison between the cuneiform records and the sacred Scriptures is found in the Assyrian names of the seas and larger lakes; between which two divisions of bodies of water they seem to have made no distinction. The following list, compiled from the monuments, shows some coincidence with the Bible names, and gives, moreover, some further help to the student. In comparing, it is to be remembered that the name that appears in our Authorized Version is not always an exact representative of the Hebrew name. For instance, the "Red Sea" of our version is the "Sea of Weeds" or "Sea of Rushes" of the Hebrew and the Egyptian monuments; and the "Red Sea" of the Greek geographers of antiquity was the Persian Gulf.

The following is the Assyrian list: For the Mediterranean Sea:

1. The Great Sea toward the setting sun.
2. The Great Sea of the land Acharri.
3. The Great Sea.
4. The Sea toward the setting sun.
4. The Upper Sea; and the Lower Sea.

For the Persian Gulf:

1. The Great Sea toward the sun-rising.
2. The Lower Sea toward the sun-rising.
3. The Lower Sea.
4. The Sea toward the sun-rising.
5. The Sea-stream of *Bit-Jakin* (probably, House of U; rightness).
6. The Sea of the land Kaldi.
7. The Sea.

(To which is to be added the Babylonish name:

8. The Sea-stream, — probably equivalent to the Greek mythologic stream of Ocean, that "encompassed the earth with ceaseless flow.")

For Lake Van:

1. The Upper Sea of the land Nairi.
2. The Upper Sea of the West.
3. The Upper Sea.
4. The West Sea.

For Lake Ooroomiah:

1. The Lower Sea of the land Nairi.
2. The Sea of the land Nairi.

For some undetermined bodies of water:

1. The Red Sea.
2. An Unknown Sea.

The name of "Gilead" was applied to the country east of the Jordan, from the head of the Dead Sea to the foot of Lake Genesareth. It was here, along the Jordan and about Jericho, that the balsam or balm, once so highly prized, was procured from an aromatic tree, supposed still to be found in this region, and known as *Spina Christi*, or tree from which the Savior's crown of thorns was woven. This most precious gum was obtained by making an incision in the bark of the tree; it also oozed from the leaves, and sometimes hung in drops like honey from the branches. The tree, which originally was found in Palestine, was transplanted to Egypt by Cleopatra, to whom the groves near Jericho were presented by Marc Antony. The shrub was afterwards taken to Arabia and grown in the neighborhood of Mecca, whence the balsam is now exported to Europe and America, not as balm from Gilead, but balsam of Mecca. The gardens round Heliopolis and the "Fountain of the Sun," in Egypt, no longer produce this rare plant, and it has long since ceased to be an article of export from the ancient Gilead.

We can easily manage, if we only take each day, the burden appointed for it. But the load will be too heavy for us if we add to its weight the burden of to-morrow, before we're called to bear it.—*John Newton*.

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