

Mr. Spurgeon's Manner.

Dr. Youdell, an eminent surgeon and Prof. in the Louisville (Ky.) Medical University, made a tour to London, and wrote letters to the journal of which he was and is an editor. The following extract will be read with interest:

"I asked him if he could tell me how I could get to hear Mr. Spurgeon, whose church happened to be near, at the time, without having to wait at the doors so long, as I understood one had to do on Sunday morning. He replied that he was a pewholder in the Tabernacle, and should be very happy to send me a couple of cards, on presenting which, to an usher, I would be shown to a comfortable seat, near to the pulpit, where he would be glad to see me on the next or any other Sunday of my stay in London. "Do not surrender the cards to the usher," he added, "but retain them, and when you are through with them return them to me."

I gave him my address, and the next morning the cards came, accompanied by a very kind note. The following Sunday, our friend, Prof. Noble Butler, and myself were shown to the pew of my pleasant acquaintance, which, as I had been told, was near the pulpit, fortunately near enough to enable me to see Mr. Spurgeon and the multitude who had assembled to hear him. It was indeed a multitude, a multitude of well dressed men and women, with a sprinkle of young people and children, all in their Sunday attire, quiet, decorous; a congregation of six thousand, filling every seat, and occupying chairs in the aisles. Our seats were in the gallery, but a little above the head of the preacher as he stood at his desk. Presently a stout, short man, dressed in a suit of plain black, frock coat, ascended the steps leading to the pulpit. His face was covered with short cropped whiskers and moustache. His hair which was brown, was also worn short. His shoulders were broad and his girth considerable. His arms were not long, nor were his movements graceful.

Seating himself, and resting his round and somewhat massive head on his hands, he seemingly engaged for a moment in prayer. He then rose and Mr. Spurgeon stood before the people. He opened the exercises by a prayer, which was short, and heard in every part of the vast building.

His voice is clear and sonorous, his enunciation singularly distinct, while his intonations are neither monotonous or conventional.

He next took up the hymn book, which was the signal for a similar act on the part of almost every one present. I never saw such an opening of hymn-books. I never saw so many hymn-books in hand at one time. The movement was contagious. Mr. Butler took one, I took another. The hymn being read—and wonderfully well read—the precursor led off in a familiar and very beautiful tune, which was caught up by six thousand voices and sung with a spirit which alone constituted a most feeling worship. It was hardly to be expected that so many voices would keep time together. In one or two lines the discord was so plain that when the verse was concluded Mr. Spurgeon said, "it seems there are some persons singing who are determined not to keep time with the rest of us, if such is their purpose, and they will make it known we will endeavor to keep time with them." With the next verse his own voice, which is a very full one, rose above all others, and the harmony became almost complete.

His remarks reminded me of the preacher in the "Georgia Scenes," who administrated a similar rebuke to Ned Brace, when he attempted to join in the music.

Mr. Spurgeon next turned to the

146th Psalm, and commented upon the subjects as he went along. Thousands of Bibles were opened, his hearers following him as he read. He reads better than one preacher in a thousand.

His second prayer was of a regulation length, earnest, simple and homely. His text was from the third verse of the 146th Psalm, "Put not your trust in Princes," etc. He preached from notes, to which, however, he seldom referred. His delivery was very straight-forward, his gestures few and not notable for their grace; and when he concluded a discourse which had held that vast audience for fully fifty minutes, I was forced to ask myself in what does the power of this great man consist? It cannot be in his presence, for that is in nowise striking; nor his voice, which is neither clarion-toned nor tender; nor in his attitudes, nor in his gestures; for the first are not classic, nor are the latter in curved lines. Yet there is no man in all London with its hosts of prelates, bishops, and the like, who can attract such audiences, or hold them as he does.

Dean Stanley, the bishop of Westminster, who, I see, is soon to visit our country, and who besides being one of the best, is also one of the most learned men and ripest scholars in the English church, addresses but a handful of people compared to the thousands who crowd the Tabernacle.

I must believe the principle element of Mr. Spurgeon's power is that which David Copperfield said was the ground work of his success, namely, earnestness. Add to this quality, great simplicity of language, unquestioned piety and the genius of common sense and as far as I can see this is all.

REMARKS ON THE ABOVE.

If Mr. Spurgeon can do so much with Calvinism and other errors on his shoulders, what could he do without them? If he runs so good a race while in so much darkness, what kind of a race would he run in the light of the Gospel?

I am not aware that Mr. Spurgeon claims to be a Baptist. Certainly he is not in accord with American Baptists. He has weekly communion, as we do; and what Baptists call open communion. A man of less note, with his practice, would hardly be recognized here as a Baptist. Our people are recognized by him, and take part in the worship and communion.

Mr. Spurgeon reads and comments on the Scriptures; and all visitors, I believe, agree that this is the most interesting and profitable part of his work in the stand. And his discourses are conversational in style, plain and directly to the point. He always has a point to reach—a landing to make; and he goes right for it—unloads his burden, and leaves for another point. It does not appear that he ever seeks to be eloquent, in the common sense of that word. Nor is he very sympathetic. He is simply in earnest, as is well stated by Prof. Youdell. This was the secret of J. T. Johnson's success.

To say that the Holy Spirit does more for Mr. Spurgeon than he is willing to do for other good men, would be to say he is partial—ungodlike. Perhaps we may recognize the fact that Mr. Spurgeon is a better, or stronger magnetic battery than most men are. This fact, added to his earnestness, tells all.

And Mr. Spurgeon has congregational singing—six to eight thousand singers at once. No organ or other instrument. And he pauses to correct errors in singing. That is, the preacher teaching how to sing. He sings himself, raising his voice above the masses, and leading them in the right way! He is for harmony. And he will sing as others sing, if they will not sing as he sings. He is not heady. He is respectful, courteous, while urging order and harmony.

Let no one say then, any more, that

a vast assembly cannot sing in harmony. They can with such men as Spurgeon to teach and lead them.

With some preachers singing is too small a business. So with the Sunday school, prayer meetings, visiting and exhorting. Not so with Paul. What a pity we have not more such men! What a difference between the case here presented and the popular, fashionable—eloquent and learned style! But I only meant to call attention to these points—not to labor them. Let us compare Spurgeon's style with Paul's, with Nehemiah's, &c. C. K.

Some Results of the International S. S. Lessons.

The International Lessons have now been in general use since 1872—long enough to decide upon their worth. As we are now in the last year of the seven years' course, it may not be amiss to look back and see what they have accomplished. Like everything human, they have their faults and their merits. I have no more sympathy for that kind of criticism that smooths over and pronounces everything so perfect as to leave no room for improvement, that I have for which persistently asserts everything to be so faulty as to find nothing worthy of commendation. One leads to hypocrisy; the other to uncharitable fault-finding.

While these lessons have some faults of their own, yet where they have been used in accordance with their design, they have proved to be a decided improvement upon any plan of studying the Bible heretofore used. Before they were adopted, there was very little systematic study of the Scriptures. In all those county schools which suspend work during the winter months, they almost invariably began the spring work with the study of Matthew, commencing with the second chapter in order to avoid the hard names in the first. And by the end of the season they would get about through Matthew, but would commence the same way next spring, and the next. And in this way—and also on account of those good-intentioned people who commence to read through the New Testament and grow tired when they have finished the first book—I dare say that Matthew is a book more familiar to the Christian world than any other in the Bible. Perhaps Prof. McGarvey had this in mind when he wrote in the introduction to his commentary on Matthew and Mark, that Matthew is "the most attractive and the most frequently read of all the books in the New Testament."

In some of those old-fashioned Sunday schools, the Bible class so called, would break through the usual order and begin a summer course in Acts. The purpose, the real animus of this class, soon showed itself. The first time a "sectarian" could be unsuspectingly entrapped into the class, there was a Pentecostal shower of conversions hurled at him. Faith, repentance and baptism for remission of sins were made to tingle about his ears as never before. That class never got further than through the conversions. It paid special attention to all the mint, anise and cummin, and neglected the weightier matters of the law. In this way, there would be several different books studied in the same school at the same time.

In this confused state did the International Lessons find the Sunday schools; and gathering up these honest efforts to study God's word, crystallized them into a system. They at once gave a definite plan to Sunday school study, and in this is found one point of their excellence. Besides this, they have brought the various denominations to the study of the Bible just as it is. And it is actually wonderful, when it is read and studied without theological spectacles, how it brings them to the position for which we as a people have contended

for over half a century. For us who have so long preached that division in the church of God is sinful, and that sects are a foul blot upon a pure Christianity, to see these lessons breaking down denominational barriers, and paving the way for a better understanding, ought to be hailed as the most auspicious event during the latter part of the present century. Our preaching on the subject of union has never been more favorably received. We have been opposed by the saying that if two clocks cannot be made run together, much less can be made to agree the complicated machinery of human thinking. But if two millions of people in the United States can be united enough to be Methodists; two million, Baptists, seven hundred thousand, Presbyterians; why may not all these lose their denominational peculiarities and be nothing more or less than Christians? Why may they not be one?

Thus we have taught; but while we have preached union, we have acted division. Our plea for union is divine, but our practice gave it a very narrow interpretation. What was needed was some liberal catholic movement that would enlist the best energies and sympathies of those whom we most wished to reach. The International Lessons have proved to be precisely what was needed. Lifted above denominational limits, permeating and stimulating church life as the blood does the body; selected by scholars chosen from several different churches; who were liberal in their views and pious in their lives; and adopted into nearly all the Sunday schools of the country, these lessons have exerted a powerful influence to unite the churches in a common work with a common desire to implant God's word in the hearts of the young and to follow one divine Leader to one glorious home.

The Young Men's Christian Association springing up among young Christians, showing not only the possibility of cooperative work, but actually demanding it; the Evangelical Alliance, deploring the divisions among the professed followers of our Lord; enlisting the energies of the best scholarship of both hemispheres to introduce a state of better feeling among the churches; and the study of the International Lessons gradually wiping out ecclesiastical lines and weakening the power of human creeds; have all been powerful agencies in the providence of God in directing the various churches into a more intimate union.

It would not be at all strange if the direct tendency of these Bible lessons to destroy sectarianism were seen and should excite opposition from certain quarters. And such is the case. In a pastoral address by the Bishops of the Methodist church in 1874, pointing out the tendency of these lessons, they say: "Important as they are, yet there is a liability that the time and attention of the school may be too much given to these lessons. Why, suppose ye? They explain because 'there is a temptation to depart from the doctrine of our church.'" About the same time the Central Baptist opposed these International Lessons because of "their tendency to lessen denominational training," and declared that already from a lack of catechism teaching "rarely can a Baptist be found who is able to defend his faith." The South-western Presbyterian declared it "would not give the shorter catechism for the seven thousand volumes into which this seven years' curriculum may possibly expand," and at the same time expressed its fear that "this time-honored text book of the Presbyterian Church may be set aside."

The Congregational Publishing Society sends forth a piteous wail, that "somehow, in the doctrine of chance, it rarely happens that a Congregational Church is the result of union labors." A leading member among the

Quakers, recently admitted that the "tendency of this Bible school work is to undenominationalize a man." Not long ago Dr. Boardman, of Philadelphia, complained that these lessons "gave no room for denominational training in the Sunday schools," and the Atlanta Convention of 1878, with a keen-play of wit, answered as follows: "It is urged that the lessons leave no room for teaching the doctrines of the denominations. To this we answer: a course of lessons which covers the whole Bible, must include the essential doctrines of most denominations. We have aimed not to omit any vital truth from Genesis to Revelations. We have gone over the ground from which most of the denominations draw their peculiarities; and if their teachers have not found their systems of belief it must be because those systems came from some other text-book." From these quotations it will be seen, that this Bible study will be the ruin of denominationalism yet; and may this greatest result be hastened.

I can only indicate some other points.

1. They have led to the study of the Old Testament, the ignorance of which was woeful.

2. They have brought within the reach of the common people a wealth of learning not before accessible.

3. These lessons have led not only to the systematic study of the Bible, but they have also engendered a spirit of orderly business management of religious affairs.

4. They have opened to us the real spirit of the Bible, and made it easier to lodge more of it in the heart.

The lessons have exhibited scripture biography in a new light. Who that studied the life and character of Paul but that gained a higher conception of his worth, and had excited a livelier admiration of his ability to be master of the situation than ever possessed before? One of the chief excellencies of the Bible is, that it exhibits great truth in the lives of men, and then presents these lives to us to imitate their virtues and shun their vices. Never so successfully has this been done as in the lives of the kings of Judah and of Israel. I venture to say, that during no period of Sunday school instructions have so many powerful motives been drawn from eminent examples to do the right and shun the wrong.—W. H. WOOLERY in *Teacher's Mentor*.

Unsuccessful Workers.

Desponding Christians do not make successful workers or valiant soldiers. "Feeble hearts," and "ready-to-halts," and "little-faiths," win no battles and wear no crowns. They are so occupied with themselves, with their own experiences, their own evidences, their changing moods and feelings, that they have no time for manly, noble service. They are so busy in trying to perform "acts of faith," and having performed them, they are so intent on analyzing them, in order to ascertain whether they be all of the exact quality or quantity which will recommend them to God, that they have no space for "joy in believing," and no room for the free, large-hearted labor, which such joy can not fail to lead to. To sed up and down on the waves of unbelief, like Paul's ship in Adria, they are in fear of perpetual shipwreck, and have no heart to work. Shutting eyes against the light, they grope their way uncertainly; and can not run the race. Afraid to believe, but not afraid to doubt; afraid to trust, but not afraid to distrust; doubting themselves, and making that a reason for doubting God; putting away peace, but giving full scope to gloom; refusing light, but letting darkness reign within them; they are not in condition to do hard work—nay to do any work. Strength comes from joy, and of that joy they have none. They refuse both food and medicine, and they become lean and sickly. They are fitter for the hospital than the battle-field. They seem, too, to get more and more emaciated, though the food provided is abundant. Laboring under what the physicians call atrophy, the more they eat the less they seem to be fed.—*Horatius Bonar*.

—Early and provident fear is the mother of safety.—*Edmund Burke*.