

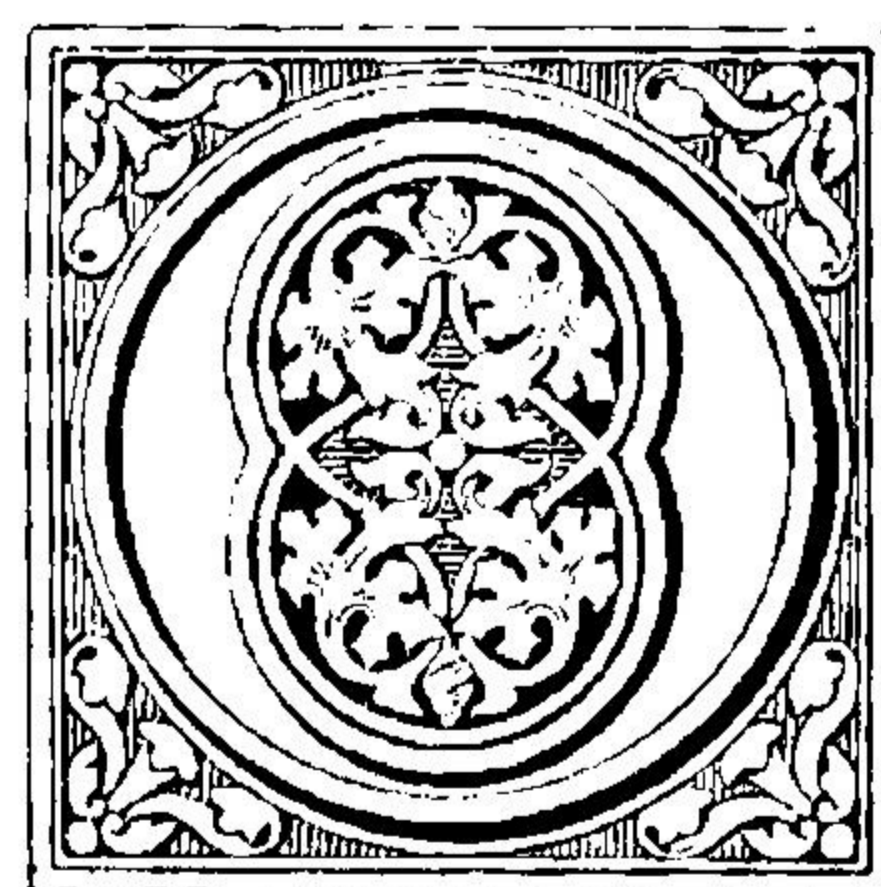
## CHAPTER LXIV.

### Notable Lectures and Addresses, 1857—1878 (Continued).



"A GORILLA LECTURING ON MR. SPURGEON."

"We are now to be entertained by Mr. Spurgeon's lecture on the gorilla; but, in after ages,—according to the development theory,—we shall doubtless have a gorilla lecturing on Mr. Spurgeon."—*Extract from the speech of the Rt. Hon. A. H. Layard, M.P., at Mr. Spurgeon's lecture on "The Gorilla and the Land he Inhabits."*



ON October 1, 1861, Mr. Spurgeon gave, in the Tabernacle, a lecture which was destined to attract more public attention than any which he had previously delivered. It was entitled, "The Gorilla and the Land he Inhabits," and was largely concerned with the volume, then recently published, and severely criticised,—*Explorations and Adventures in Equatorial Africa*, by Paul B. Du Chaillu (John Murray). A. H. Layard, Esq., M.P., presided, and by his side sat M. Du Chaillu. In introducing his subject, Mr. Spurgeon said:—

"Mr. Chairman, and my very good friends, I am very glad to see you here, though you have taken me very much by surprise. I was reckoning upon a quiet

evening with a moderate audience, but you have crowded this vast house, and I regret to say there have been great multitudes turned away from the doors. We are doomed to disappointments, but such as these one can afford to endure with equanimity. Perhaps the question will be asked, Why do you deliver a secular lecture? I answer that the question itself is rather late, since it is a time-honoured custom for our ministers occasionally to offer instruction to their congregations in this pleasant and friendly form, and the present is very far from my first attempt in this direction. Casting aside all priestly pretences as mere superstition, I meet you as my friends and fellow-labourers every Sabbath-day, and I then endeavour to stir you up to holy labour; and now to-night, on a common week-evening, we meet by way of recreation to talk cheerfully upon an entertaining subject. We want common things treated religiously, and there may be almost as much good achieved by books and lectures on ordinary topics, thoroughly imbued with a religious spirit, as by sermons or theological treatises. All my Heavenly Father's works are my text-books, and, as a preacher, I have a right to select my subject from either of the great books of Creation or Revelation. But more; it is the growing conviction of my mind that the human animal will have some sort of amusement or other; and that, if we do not give him the right sort, he will certainly seek the wrong. God has made nature not only for our necessities, but for our pleasures. He has not only made fields of corn, but He has created the violet and the cowslip. Air alone would be sufficient for us to breathe, but see how He has loaded it with perfumes; bread alone might sustain life, but mark the sweet fruits with which nature's lap is brimming. The colours of flowers, the beauties of scenery, the music of birds, the sparkling of gems, and the glories of the rainbow and aurora, all show how the great Creator has cared for the lawful gratification of every sense of man. Nor is it a sin to enjoy these gifts of Heaven; but it would be folly to close one's soul to their charms. Now, in matters of truth, there is an analogy with nature. Those glorious doctrines which we daily preach are as the bread of Heaven, the needful and delicious food of our souls; but other truths, great facts of nature, are as the flowers and the birds, they may not *feed* the spirit, but they are not therefore to be neglected, since they gratify and gladden the mind. Certain is it that the masses will have amusement of some sort; everyone can see that. It is of no use for me to stand up in the pulpit constantly, and say to men who have no fear of God before their eyes, 'You must not frequent the public-house and the theatre,' for their reply will be, 'We want something to excite us, some recreation after our hard day's work,'—a speech not quite so unreasonable as the censorious may imagine. Well, what have I sought to do in that matter, and what has that to do with the present gathering?

"My esteemed friend, Mr. Haynes, a member of our congregation, has a considerable number of dissolving-views which he has had painted, and by the aid

of which he lectures to young people upon different interesting subjects. There is a College in connection with this Church, in which young men are trained for the ministry, and others are enabled to get a gratuitous education to fit them for the battle of life. In connection with this College is a weekly popular lecture, and every Friday night we allow the public the liberty of coming in at the small fee of twopence each; and month after month we have our lecture-hall full of people, who are willing to come and listen to lectures upon history, science, and nature, all of them having an eye to spiritual good as well as to secular education. I have been pleased to see the man in a fustian jacket giving us his company, and to see men, who do not come into the Tabernacle to hear a sermon, yet listening to my lecture upon 'bats, moles, and hedgehogs,' or whatever else may have been the theme. My audience can bear witness that I always give them some weighty gospel matter; yes, even when 'on a bat's back I do fly.' I know that some of them have found their way up from the lecture-hall into the Tabernacle, there to hear that which is necessary for the conversion of men. Mr. Haynes always lends me his views whenever I want them, and I, out of gratitude to him, said, 'I will do anything I can to repay you.' He said, 'Let me paint a set of slides on the gorilla, and you give us a lecture.' 'Very well,' I replied, 'I will do it, and then, afterwards, I shall have the gorilla slides, and lecture to my own good people upon them at a small charge.' 'Certainly,' said he, 'anything I have is not only for the benefit of the Band of Hope, but for the general good of the cause; help me to pay for my slides, then you can use any of them.' For my own part, I have a good conscience towards God in this matter, for my only object in life is to benefit my fellow-men. I feel that the best way to lift up the lost and degraded from the horrible pit and the miry clay, in a spiritual sense, is to preach to them Jesus Christ and Him crucified; but this need not prevent me from using all measures possible to promote social reform; and I firmly believe that lectures upon useful and scientific subjects, in which a lecturer is able to throw out hints about dress, cookery, children, cleanliness, economy, temperance, and the duties of the household, or to exclaim against the tally system, the pot-house, begging, and puffery, may be very useful."

After carefully examining the volume written by the traveller, and considering the evidence *pro* and *con*, Mr. Spurgeon thus announced his decision concerning it:—"I do verily believe, in spite of all that has been said, that M. Du Chaillu's book is matter of fact. It is not written so carefully as a scientific man might write it, nor so orderly and regularly as the author might re-write it, if he had another seven years to do it in; yet I believe that it is true, and that he himself is worthy of our praise as one of the greatest modern discoverers,—a man who has done and dared more for science, and, I think I may add, more for the future spread of religion, than most men of his time."

Coming to the gorilla,—a stuffed specimen of which was on the platform,—the lecturer said:—“He is an enormous ape, which claims to approach the nearest to man of any other creature. How nearly he approaches, I leave you to judge. True, his claim to be our first cousin is disputed, on behalf of the koolo-kamba, by several very learned men. If we should, therefore, admit you (addressing the gorilla) to be man's first cousin, we fear that the koolo-kamba might institute a suit at law to claim equal rights, and so many cousins would be far from convenient. Besides, I have heard that, if we should admit this gentleman to be our cousin, there is Mr. Darwin, who at once is prepared to prove that our great-grandfather's grandfather's father—keep on for about a millennium or two,—was a guinea-pig, and that we were ourselves originally descended from oysters, or seaweeds, or starfishes. Now, I demur to that on my own account. Any bearded gentleman here, who chooses to do so, may claim relationship with the oyster; and others may imagine that they are only developed gorillas; but I, for my own part, believe there is a great gulf fixed between us, so that they who would pass from us to you (again turning to the gorilla) cannot; neither can they come to us who would pass from thence. At the same time, I do not wish to hold an argument with the philosopher who thinks himself related to a gorilla; I do not care to claim the honour for myself, but anyone else is perfectly welcome to it.

“Seriously, let us see to what depths men will descend in order to cast a slur upon the Book of God. It is too hard a thing to believe that God made man in His own image; but, forsooth, it is philosophical to hold that man is made in the image of a brute, and is the offspring of ‘laws of development.’ O infidelity! thou art a hard master, and thy taxes on our faith are far more burdensome than those which Revelation has ever made. When we have more incredulity than superstition can employ, we may leap into infidel speculation, and find a fitting sphere for the largest powers of belief. But who can deny that there is a likeness between this animal and our own race? . . . There is, we must confess, a wonderful resemblance,—so near that it is humiliating to us, and therefore, I hope, beneficial. But while there is such a humiliating likeness, what a difference there is! If there should ever be discovered an animal even more like man than this gorilla is; in fact, if there should be found the exact *facsimile* of man, but destitute of the living soul, the immortal spirit, we must still say that the distance between them is immeasurable.”

After giving an account of the country which the gorilla inhabits, and of the manners and customs of the natives of that region, Mr. Spurgeon concluded:—“As for sending missionaries among them, they are ripe and ready for them. They received M. Du Chaillu with the greatest kindness and courtesy, and they even prayed the traveller to tell the white men to send missionaries to them; and where they have teachers, they gladly receive them. If missionaries can be sent

to Africa in sufficient numbers, there are happy days in store for that land. What will be the effect upon the world when Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands to Christ? . . . I am pleased to say that my friend, M. Du Chaillu,—if he will allow me to call him so,—wherever he has been, has sought to open the way for missionary efforts, and has been the missionaries' friend everywhere; and there is this to be said of him, he has always regarded the day of rest even in his most toilsome journeys, insomuch that the natives could not make it out, and when they had some very difficult tasks to be performed, and found that M. Du Chaillu *would* rest, they proposed that he should put it off for three weeks, and then rest three days instead of one, so that they might get over their work while there was a necessity for it. He opened his Bible on Sunday, and read to them, selecting the simple words of Christ, and seeking to instil into their ears, if he could not into their hearts, that Divine teaching which has made glad the world."

At the time of the delivery of the "gorilla" lecture, M. Blondin was performing at the Crystal Palace, and some wag wrote to him a letter purporting to come from Mr. Spurgeon. He sent it on to the Pastor, who endorsed it thus,—“This was received by M. Blondin, and is a specimen of the genus ‘hoax’,”—and then put it away for future reference. The envelope contained the following epistle:—

“Metropolitan Tabernacle,  
“Newington,  
“Oct. 5, 1861.

“M. Blondin,  
“Sir,

“In consequence of the overflowing attendance at my Tabernacle, on Tuesday evening last, when I gave a lecture on the gorilla, it has occurred to myself, and to my brethren the Managers of the Tabernacle, that to engage your services for an evening (say, next Wednesday) for the following programme, would result in mutual benefit. *You must meet me at the Tabernacle, on Tuesday next, at 12 o'clock, to confirm or to alter the proposed order of entertainment, which I flatter myself will be highly gratifying to all concerned.*

“Programme.

“At 6 o'clock on Wednesday evening, Oct. 9th, M. Blondin to ascend from the platform in the Tabernacle, by an easy spiral ascent, five times round the interior, to one of the upper windows, opposite to ‘The Elephant and Castle,’ thence by an easy incline in at the first-floor window of that inn, and return the same way to the platform. The admission to be, as at the ‘gorilla’ lecture, 6d., 1s., and 2s. 6d.

“Yours sincerely,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”

The lecturer could well afford to laugh at this clumsy attempt to hoax M. Blondin; but some of the newspaper attacks upon him, with reference to the "gorilla" and other lectures, were of such a character that they could not be reproduced here. One friend was sufficiently influenced by them to write an expostulatory letter to Mr. Spurgeon, and thus evoked the following reply:—

"Clapham,

"October 22nd, 1861.

"My Dear Sir,

"I have been dumb under the cruel rebukes of my enemies, and the ungenerous reproofs of pretended friends. I have proved hitherto the power of silence, and although most bitterly tempted, I shall not change my custom, or venture a syllable in order to stay these mad ravings. But your brotherly note deserves one or two words of answer.

"(1.) Have I well weighed what I have done in the matter of these lectures? Aye,—and so weighed it that neither earth nor hell can now move me from my course. I have a life-work to perform, and towards its completion, through evil report and good report, I speed my way.

"(2.) You imagine that my aim is merely to amuse, and you then speak very properly of 'stooping.' Indeed, if it were so, if I had no higher or nobler aim in view, it would be *stooping* with sorrowful emphasis; but, *then*, think you that the devil would care to roar at me? Why, surely, it would be his best policy to encourage me in forsaking my calling, and degrading my ministry!

"(3.) 'Is the Master's eye regarding His servant with pleasure?' Yes, I solemnly feel that it is; nor am I conscious of any act, or motive,—the common infirmity of man excepted,—which could cause me to incur Divine displeasure in connection with that which is, to me, *the* work of my life.

"(4.) With regard to *laughter*,—you and I may differ upon this matter, and neither of us be quite infallible in our judgment. To me, a smile is no sin, and a laugh no crime. The Saviour, the Man of sorrows, is our example of morality, but not of misery, for He bore our griefs that we might not bear them; and I am not John the Baptist, nor a monk, nor hermit, nor an ascetic, either in theory or practice. Unhallowed mirth I hate, but I can and do enjoy my Father's works, and the wonders of Creation, none the less, but all the more, because I am a Christian. At any rate, I hold my own views upon this point; and, during eleven years of ministry, I have seen no ill effect, but very much good from my preaching, although the charge has always been laid at my door that I sometimes provoke the risible faculties.

"(5.) Concerning 'sowing to the flesh,' I have *not* done so in these lectures, but have rendered honest and hearty service to my Lord, and believe that spiritual fruit has already been reaped.

“(6.) As to the grief of friends, let them, as well as myself, be ready to bear the cross ; and let them not attempt to evade reproach by weeping where no tears are needed. I have given no cause to the enemy to blaspheme, or only such blessed cause as shall be renewed with greater vigour than ever.

“And now for my explanation ;—I have, in connection with my Church, a College for young ministers, which is a work of faith as to temporals, and a labour of love on my part in the highest sense of the term. There are about 150 young men, who are getting an education with a view, in most cases, to preaching the Word in the streets, villages, and towns of this land. Their studies are such as their capacities can receive, and the ministering brethren are mainly given to the searching of the Word ; while reading it in the original is the ambition of each. In the course of instruction there are lectures, delivered by myself, a regular lecturer, and other gentlemen. We have had about twenty lectures on English History. I have given lectures on Sabbath-school teaching, Preaching, Church Discipline, Ethnology, &c., &c. The Rev. George Rogers has lectured on Books and Reading, Habit and Instinct, on Ministerial Prerequisites, and on other matters. Various brethren have taken up other topics ; and, having attended all the lectures, I can testify that the best spirit has pervaded all, and each lecturer has laboured, not merely to instruct, but to do spiritual good.

“My present course is upon Natural History. For the lectures already delivered, especially the abused ones, I have had the thanks of the members passed spontaneously and unanimously ; and I believe the lectures have been as acceptable to the audience as any which were ever delivered. We who have seen the wonders of wisdom in anatomy, providential adaptation, and creating perfection, have gone home praising and blessing God. We have laughed, doubtless ; and we have wept, too ; but, with an audience of 150 young men, and a considerable company of men and women of the working-class, what would be the use of dull, drowsy formality ? Last Friday week, the ‘shrews’ lecture came in due course, and I thought it might be useful to give a few words as to the value of love and kindness in Christian families, for which words I have had grateful acknowledgment. We went home, and I have not heard of one of the audience who did not feel that it was an evening well and profitably spent. Many Christian people gave me a hearty shake of the hand and glowing thanks.

“But, lo ! to our utter amazement, one morning we discovered that the lecture was considered vulgar, coarse, and I know not what. The gentlemen of the press had nothing else just then to do, so they said, ‘Let us abuse Spurgeon, no matter whether he deserves it or not.’ Since this abuse, I have asked scores who were there if anything had been said for which one might be sorry, and all have answered, ‘No, nothing was said at all deserving censure, or anything but

approval.' Think you that my hearers are all so degraded as to tolerate conduct such as a lying press imputes to me? O my brother, you do ill to judge a servant of the Lord from the lips of his foes, and one, too, who has had abuse enough on former occasions without having given cause of offence, which renders it inexcusable that brethren should readily believe reports concerning him!

"This work of my Institution is of God; lectures are a part of the necessary plan, they do good, I have a call to this work, so all this opposition is a spur to increased zeal. I would the Lord's people cared more than they do for these young preachers, for I feel sure that God the Holy Spirit will raise up from our midst many who shall do exploits in His Name. To this work am I called, and the Lord is with me in it. Void of offence towards God and man, trusting for acceptance to Him who has washed away my sin, shall I flee because my conduct is misunderstood and my words are misconstrued? Nay, verily, Jehovah-nissi! And now let hell roar, and saints themselves forsake. Time and eternity will clear the character of one who has given up even his good name to his Master, without reserve.

"Yours wearily,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

"P.S.—Get the 'gorilla' lecture; read it, and see if there be any evil in it; yet *it is the least religious* of them all.—C. H. S."

The vote of thanks and sympathy, referred to in the above letter, together with the Pastor's grateful acknowledgment of it, are thus recorded in the Tabernacle church-book:—

"At the church-meeting, held October 14, 1861, from which the Pastor was absent through illness, the following resolution was proposed, seconded, and carried unanimously:—'That the members of this church, constantly refreshed by the gospel ministry of their beloved Pastor, and deeply obliged to him for the lectures he gives upon secular and social subjects, have noticed, with sincere regret, and heartfelt sympathy with him, the scandals heaped upon his name by the public press, and beg to express to him their most loving confidence, their strong desire to endure with him a full share of his reproach, and their full determination, by God's help, to bear him constantly on their heart in prayer.'

"Church-meeting, October 28, 1861.—Our Pastor expressed his thanks to the church for the vote of sympathy with him passed at the church-meeting on October 14, and rejoiced in the fact that all the members had remained steadfast notwithstanding the virulent attacks made upon him."

In November, 1861, Mr. Spurgeon lectured on "Illustrious Lord Mayors." After pointing out that history had usually been written "from the terrace of the



palace, or in the shadow of parliament," he said :—" It strikes me that the Guildhall of London is, perhaps, the best spot in the world from which to look down upon the history of former times. Here, kings have banqueted, councils have assembled, bishops have held their courts, and the crowds have rioted, and each of these has left behind tracings upon the historic roll. Indeed, London of old was England in miniature, just as Paris is France. The Lord Mayor's office may well typify the king in the constitution ; the aldermen and common-councillors are not unlike a parliament ; at the same time, London, as a city, has always had so strong an element of democracy, that the masses are fairly in the picture ; and our ancient City has been so connected with religion, that even a bishop might be content to view the history of England from the windows of the Guildhall."

All lovers of London should read the complete lecture if they can, for it contains a most interesting account of the City and its chief magistrates from the year 1189, when Henry Fitz-Alwyne began his mayoralty, which lasted twenty-four years, down to John Wilkes, and his notorious *North Briton* newspaper, the publication of which the Government of the day vainly sought to stop. Considerable notice is taken of Sir William Walworth, who was Lord Mayor in 1374, and whose act in killing Wat Tyler is said (though the authority is doubtful,) to be the origin of the dagger in the City arms. Of the so-called "rebel"—whose real name was Walter Hilliard, a brick and tile maker at Dartford, Mr. Spurgeon says :—" I believe that Wat Tyler has never had sufficient honour done to his memory. He was a patriot, and is only infamous because he was unsuccessful. The Kentish men rallied at his call, they marched to Maidstone, and opened the prison doors in order to set free their friend, John Ball, a priest, fanatical and enthusiastic enough, but not half so bad as some paint him. History will yet have more to say about John Ball. This man had been excommunicated for holding the doctrine that all men are equal, which was a very horrible heresy in the judgment of the Church of Rome. He was elected chaplain to the Kentish host, and a warlike chaplain I have no doubt he made. Taking for his text the couplet,—

"When Adam delv'd, and Eve span,  
Who was then a gentleman?"—

he inveighed with all his might against the oppressions of the lords, and the haughtiness of the high and mighty ones who taxed and insulted the people. His teaching, you will remember, is described by his enemies ; and, therefore, although it may have been rather extreme in its Radicalism, we have no ground to suppose that he preached anarchy. He believed that the king was put down by the council as much as the people were ; and if they could but deal with him alone, they would no doubt find him a noble-hearted prince. This was the opinion of Tyler's host, who, being armed with mattocks, spades, forks, and scythes, made up in courage for

the absence of better weapons. Bishops and lazy clergy were to be put down, and the hard-working mendicant friars were to be the only religious class. Lawyers were their chief abomination, and a vow was made to cut them up root and branch. So, with John Ball as their chaplain, and Wat Tyler at their head, these people marched away to London. They made a league with one another,—first, that they would be free, come whatever might; that they would make their landlords charge them reasonable rents for their land after they were free; and, lastly, they swore never to obey a king whose name was John, by which they meant that John of Gaunt, whom they thought to be really king, should never have power over them. There is nothing so very dangerous in that compact, nothing so desperately wicked as some of our history books would make us believe."

Dick Whittington, of course, came in for a good share of the lecturer's attention. He had to assure his audience that the nursery tale about the poor boy coming to London, hoping to see the streets paved with gold, was a fiction,—for Dick was the son of Sir William Whittington, a wealthy citizen,—and it was very doubtful if his wonderful cat ever existed; but it was a fact that he was thrice Lord Mayor, and on the last occasion, "he invited King Henry V., to a banquet of the most marvellous kind; indeed, the description given, reads more like a fairy tale than a reality. Vessels of gold and silver were heaped upon the tables, and precious stones reflected the light of the chandeliers. The fires were fed with rich spices, so that the most delicious perfume was shed over the banqueting chamber. The choicest meats, the most exquisite birds, and dainties of the rarest kind were served in superabundance upon the table. Music gladdened the royal ears, so that every sense was provided for; while rich wine flowed from a conduit in the hall. As they were sitting, the queen observed that 'even the fires were filled with perfume.' 'Ah!' said Whittington, 'by your leave, your Majesty, I will make these fires still more agreeable;' and, taking out a packet of bonds, to the amount of £60,000, which the king had given to the different Companies for loans, he threw them on the fire, and the ruddy blaze shone into the face of the astonished monarch."

The lecture included several references to religious matters with which Lord Mayors had been more or less associated; two who came close together were thus strikingly contrasted:—"In the year 1547, that glorious martyr for Christ, Anne Askew, was tried in the Guildhall, and there witnessed a good confession for her Lord. Perhaps you will remember the verse of brave poetry in which she expressed her courage, and refused the offer of pardon, preferring to hold fast her integrity,—

"I am not she that lyst  
My anker to let fall  
For every dryslynge myst;  
My shippe's substancyal."

She was burned in Smithfield, and the Mayor shouted, '*Fiat justitia!*' as the

signal for lighting the fire. Let his name perish,—we will not even mention it;—for the memory of the wicked shall rot.

“In 1549, occurs the honoured name of Sir Rowland Hill. This Rowland Hill was the first Protestant Lord Mayor. He sat upon the civic throne in the reign of Edward VI., just when the light of gospel day began to prevail in this land. He was an ancestor of that great and venerable man of God who, in the lifetime of many here present, was a mighty leader to the hosts of God. Good Rowland Hill was another proof that the promise is unto us and to our descendants, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call; for the God who had loved Sir Rowland Hill the ancestor, continued His goodness and His mercy even unto these later generations.

“During the Commonwealth, the Puritan Government was once entertained at a banquet by the City at Merchant Taylors' Hall. The record is curious, and I therefore give it at length :—‘The first business of the day was to hear a sermon at Christ Church, Newgate Street. From thence the procession walked to the hall, through the streets lined by the trained bands, marshalled in the following order,—First, the court of Lord Mayor and Aldermen in their scarlet robes, followed by the Common Council; then the Earl of Essex, the General; the Earl of Warwick, Lord Admiral; the Earl of Manchester; with many of the nobility, attended by several colonels and other officers of the army; then the members of the House of Commons, the Scottish Commissioners, and the Assembly of Divines, who closed the procession.’ It will not be expected that Cheapside exhibited any pageantry on this occasion; but, in its place, we are told that the visitors were diverted by a great bonfire of Popish trumpery and superstitious stuff. It were worth while to have been a dog in Cheapside to have seen that noble army of divines, the glory of their own day, and the wonder of ours. To my mind, London never had so high an honour, before or since, as that which she received when that host of learned, eloquent, holy, and earnest men sat at her table as respected guests.”

On December 6, 1861, Mr. Spurgeon gave a lecture, in the Tabernacle lecture-hall, on “The Two Wesleys.” As it has been recently published by Messrs. Passmore & Alabaster, it need not be referred to at length. Nor is a detailed description required concerning other notable lectures which have appeared in print from time to time. The subjects treated comprised “Counterfeits,” delivered to the Young Men's Christian Association at Exeter Hall, and printed by Messrs. Nisbet and Co. in the series for 1861—2;—Miracles of Modern Times;—Poland;—and George Fox;—all published by Messrs. Passmore & Alabaster. The lecture on Fox was given in Devonshire House, Bishopsgate Street, by request of the Society of Friends, on November 6, 1866.

Among the auditors at the Friends' Meeting-house was Matthew Arnold, who

afterwards wrote to his mother :—“ Last night, Lord Houghton went with me and William Forster to Spurgeon's lecture. . . . It was well worth hearing, though from William's getting us places of honour on the bench close behind Spurgeon we did not see or hear him to such advantage as the less-forward public in the body of the hall. It was a study in the way of speaking and management of the voice ; though his voice is not beautiful as some people call it, nor is his pronunciation quite pure. Still, it was a most striking performance, and reminded me very much of Bright's. Occasionally, there were bits in which he showed unctious and real feeling ; sometimes, he was the mere Dissenting Philistine ; but he kept up one's interest and attention for more than an hour and a-half, and that is the great thing. I am very glad I have heard him.”

The mention of the title, “ Sermons in Candles,” will bring to the recollection of hearers in various parts of the country the delight they experienced in listening to Mr. Spurgeon's lecture upon that subject. After having allowed it to be repeated, with more or less of alteration, for a quarter of a century, he thought the time had come for its publication in a volume ; and, accordingly, it was issued in 1890, the front cover of the popular edition bearing a reproduction of several of the illustrations described inside.



The origin of the lecture is thus explained by Mr. Spurgeon :—“ In addressing my students in the College, long ago, I was urging upon them the duty and necessity of using plenty of illustrations in their preaching, that they might be both interesting and instructive. I reminded them that the Saviour had many *likes* in His discourses. He said, over and over again, ‘ The Kingdom of Heaven is LIKE ; ’ ‘ The Kingdom of

Heaven is LIKE.' 'Without a parable spake He not unto them.' The common people heard Him gladly, because He was full of emblem and simile. A sermon without illustrations is like a room without windows. One student remarked that the difficulty was to get illustrations in any great abundance. 'Yes,' I said, 'if you do not wake up, but go through the world asleep, you cannot see illustrations; but if your minds were thoroughly aroused, and yet you could see nothing else in the world but a single tallow candle, you might find enough illustrations in that luminary to last you for six months.' Now, the young brethren in the College are too well behaved to say 'Oh!' or give a groan of unbelief, should I perchance say a strong thing; but they *look*, and they draw their breath, and they wait for an explanation. I understand what they mean, and do not make too heavy a draft upon their faith by long delays in explaining myself. The men who were around me at that particular moment thought that I had made rather a sweeping assertion, and their countenances showed it. 'Well,' I said, 'I will prove my words;' and my attempt to prove them produced the rudiments of this lecture."

"Spurgeon's Shilling Series" contains a volume entitled, *Eccentric Preachers*. In the Preface, the author thus relates how his lecture grew into a book:—"I have published this little volume very much in self-defence. Some years ago, I delivered a lecture on 'Eccentric Preachers,' and a reporter's notes of it were published in one of the newspapers. These, like all such things, were mere pickings and cuttings, and by no means the lecture itself. Gentlemen of the press have an eye to the amusement of their readers, and make selections of all the remarkable anecdotes, or odd sayings, used by a speaker; and when these are separated from their surroundings, the result is anything but satisfactory. No man's speeches or lectures should be judged of by an ordinary newspaper summary; which, in any case, is a mere sketch; and, in many instances, is a vile caricature.

"I thought no more of my lecture till, the other day, I found the mere rags and bones of the reporter set forth in America as an address by myself, worthy to be bound up with my book upon 'Commenting and Commentaries.' Those notes were all very well for a newspaper, but I altogether disown them as my production. It amazes me that the American editor should not have corrected the more obvious mistakes of the reporter, such as calling Peter Cartwright, Peter *Garrett*; and Lady Anne Askew, Lady *Askayne*. Peter Cartwright was an American backwoods preacher, and his name should have been familiar to the American editor; but some publishers are so intent upon getting out their books that they cannot afford time for correction.

"Finding that I had by me the whole of the mutilated lecture, I thought of printing it, to show what I had really spoken; but, upon looking it over, I judged it

to be better to expand it and make it into a small book. I hope the reader will not be a loser by my resolution."

The notes used by Mr. Spurgeon in delivering the lecture were written on the two sides of a single half-sheet of notepaper; the *facsimile*, here reproduced, will show how small was the seed from which the volume grew.

### Eccentric Preachers.

From the earliest periods the ministers of the gospel have been unable to please men, Jews & the Baptist, were alike objected to. Against certain men the charge has been that they are eccentric. To substantiate this, falsehoods are uttered - Rowland Hill & his wife with chest of drawers.

But what is the charge? Their circle has not the usual centre; or, to square the circle, - they are off the square. Who is to fix the centre? The gentlemen who buy sermons at 9<sup>d</sup> each; the high-flyers whom few can understand, the sublimely dignified, the ritualistic, - or the dull? The centre is not fixed.

Time changes it - Wesley's open air preaching.  
Preaching in halls & theatres,  
Fashion changes it - Wearing your own hair.  
Toleration becomes larger - Moody uncondemned  
John Poole &c allowed more

It is a great pity it sh<sup>d</sup> lie as to manner.

Various modes reach various men - Owen & Binney,  
Robert Hall & Robinson affect persons of differing conditions.  
Homely similes strike certain minds best - the  
figs & Rowland Hill

Who then are these out-of-centre men?

There have been some who have tried to win attention by oddity, buffoonery, vulgarity & absurdity; & where this is the case, there has been no real desire to do good, the centre is indeed missed. We allow that their eccentricity is fatal. If any man did give out that he wd tell the quickest way to make sh<sup>s</sup> &c

Wordsworth For eccentric twisting of Scripture we have also nothing to say. Nor for eccentric drefs, & tone, & mannerism.

But, still, who are the out-of-centre men who have been so naturally mentioned?

In the Reformation Period, Latimer.

In the Methodist Revival, Berridge.

Later on, Rowland Hill, Dawson, Matthew Wilks, &c.

In America, Cartwright, Father Taylor, &c. —

Of these we may ask — There a more useful body of men  
Story of Matt. Wilks.

Some were simply natural, & ad not have spoken without being  
griant — Berridge. Shall not a bird sing? South's question to  
Shallock. Sammy Hicks, & "you can neither walk folk laugh  
nor cry." Ermas Evansolin hat & the horse.

Others are boldly truthful — Father Taylor & the rich man from  
down town: "Is there any other old sinners from down town, he?"  
Erasmus interrupting Whitfield at Harworth.

Others manly, not to be hampered. Not putting the plague  
forth because it was in the sermon.

Earnest, therefore vivacious, self-forgetting. Riding on  
the back of order & decorum,  
Pulling off his gloves

Practical, resolute — minding only the main thing  
Row Hill & Lady Ann Erskine

Methodist breaking pulpit. Reading a well.

Things ought not to be separated from their surroundings.

The battledore — The pack of cards — birds on wall.  
The preacher & the labourer.

Dramatic element Dawson. Sam Hicks "off wi' his ye?"

Is not all this better than halfhearted doubting? Karger of Union  
Chapel, Cambridge.

Is not the main thing to get good to ye own souls?

The lecture on "Sermons in Stones," given at the Tabernacle in 1870, was published in 1894 by Mr. J. L. Keys, under the title, "What the Stones Say." The four volumes of *Lectures to my Students* are so well known and so highly appreciated that no details as to their contents need be inserted here. Few works in the whole range of theological literature have been so helpful to aspirants for the ministry or to those who have already begun evangelistic, pastoral, or missionary work.

Among the many unpublished lectures by Mr. Spurgeon are three very memorable utterances;—one delivered in 1862 in connection with the celebration of

the Bi-centenary of the ejection of the two thousand ministers in 1662 ;—another, on “ Bells and Bell-ringing,” given at the Tabernacle, in 1869, with musical illustrations ;—and a third, on “ Ignatius Loyola and the Jesuits.”

If all Mr. Spurgeon's notable public addresses could be collected, they would fill several substantial volumes, and would furnish a large constituency with a mass of interesting reading on a great variety of subjects. In 1878, eighteen “ Speeches at Home and Abroad ” were published by Messrs. Passmore & Alabaster ; and, although they had not the benefit of the speaker's revision, they afford a fairly accurate idea of his utterances at various public gatherings between the years 1861 and 1878. He had begun revising his own copy of the book, and the accompanying *facsimile* will show the extent of his alterations, and also his loyalty to Baptist principles. At the close of his speech at Plymouth, on October 6, 1875, in seconding the vote of thanks to Dr. McLaren, who had been pleading for additional help for needy Baptist ministers, Mr. Spurgeon said :—

“ While we, as a denomination, are poor, the Baptists in England who are not true to their name are, I suppose, among the richest people in the world. I believe the best Wesleyans, certainly the best Congregationalists, very many of the best Church of England people, and all the best Plymouth Brethren, have been baptized. We simply stand out, while the other Baptists, for reasons best known to themselves, slink every man to his tent in the rear, and thus escape the reproach which we have to bear. Baptists who are members of ‘ respectable ’ churches, I do not respect you for having left your brethren and deserted your colours for the sake of being respectable ! We are not ‘ respectable ’ at all because we put faith and baptism into their right places. A man says, ‘ I do not like to be called a Baptist. ’ Sir, there is no Baptist who wants you to be so called ; he does not feel so proud of you as to think it an honour to have his name coupled with yours. The oldest name of all the denominations now extant is certainly that of *Baptist*, which was borne by him who heralded our Master. A Baptist existed, as our Welsh friend said, a long time before there was any Wesleyan, or Episcopalian. Names are small matters, but the principle we contend for is precious. We speak with no bated breath when we maintain the Divine ordinance of believer's baptism : a rite they call it, but that rite involves a thousand other matters, for the view you take of that rite will affect your view of almost every other truth. A gentleman once told me he did not care twopence for baptism. My reply was, ‘ Why don't you give up your twopenny baptism, and have a view of our Lord's teaching which it would be worth while caring for ? ’ Let others do as they will, but be it ours to be faithful to our Lord, and obedient to His commands, for ‘ to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. ’ May the best of blessings attend you ! ”



Put up new page.

LOVE IN ACTION.

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Let others do as they will, but be it ours to be faithful to our Lord, to be obedient to his commands, for "to obey is better than sacrifice, to hearken than the fat of rams," May the best of blessings attend you!

One more extract from this volume may be given, for it illustrates Mr. Spurgeon's readiness to turn everything to account; and he himself, in relating the incident to his students, bade them learn from it never to give out a hymn at any public gathering without being sure of its suitability to the occasion. At the annual meeting of the Congregational Home Missionary Society, held at the Memorial Hall, on May 7, 1878, at which Samuel Morley, Esq., M.P., presided, Mr. Spurgeon was one of the speakers. Apparently, the hymn sung at the commencement of the proceedings had been hurriedly chosen, for it was one of those in the Congregational Hymn Book intended to be used in connection with the "baptism" of infants! The third verse was as follows,—

"Help Thou our weak endeavour  
To make Thy gospel known,  
*And seal, O Lord, for ever,*  
*These little ones Thine own!*  
Thy Church's nurslings gather  
Beneath Thy sheltring wing;  
Be Thou their Friend and Father,  
Their Saviour, Guide, and King."

Many persons in the audience noticed the inappropriateness of the hymn, and doubtless wondered what their Baptist visitor would have to say concerning it. Mr. Spurgeon privately asked Mr. Morley if there was to be a "christening" that evening; and when he was called upon to speak,—after the cheers which greeted his rising had subsided,—he thus referred to the *contretemps*:—

"I am not conscious of having done anything to deserve your cheers, but I thank you for them all the same. I must confess, however, to a good deal of disappointment. When you were singing that hymn, I thought that somebody here had had an increase in his family, and that a ceremony in which you are all deeply interested was about to be performed, and I have been musing and meditating to discover why that hymn was given out. I concluded that you had some naughty children, perhaps, in your denomination, who had been crying a good deal, and that we were offering prayer for them. I am sure I sincerely join in the supplication concerning them,—

"Be Thou their Friend and Father,  
Their Saviour, Guide, and King,'—

and I recommend any one of them who may be present to sing the third verse of the next hymn,—

"Make an unguarded youth  
The object of Thy care;  
Help me to choose the way of truth,  
And fly from every snare."

"I see that all these hymns are 'for the young.' I remember that Cruden, whenever he met with a young minister who did not believe in the doctrines of

grace, made him a present of a Westminster Confession or Catechism, which had on the outside of it, 'For the young and ignorant;' and the next time you want to discuss the subject, I would recommend you to sing the verse I just quoted. I really think, brethren, you will then do very well if, as Mr. Hebditch says, you are so thoroughly Evangelical. I am happy to believe that you are,—though I did not believe it till to-day. I have grown sorrowfully suspicious of a great many of you, and not without good cause, as I think. I am an impartial onlooker from the outside,—although I am wonderfully partial to Evangelical doctrine;—and, therefore, inasmuch as you are Evangelical, and are able truthfully to say so, I ask you to say it whenever you have the opportunity. I always like to act according to Cobbett's rule; he said, 'I speak not only so that I can be understood, but so that I cannot be misunderstood;' and I think that, if ever there was a crisis in your history when you should boldly declare your faith, it has now arrived; and I, for one, shall heartily rejoice if your declaration is so clear that nobody in this world can misunderstand you, but all shall know that you stand by the grand old truths of the gospel as your forefathers stood before you.

"Well, still trying to find some mystical, spiritual reason for this hymn having been sung, I afterwards discovered that Mr. Wilson wished us to sing it on behalf of the new Committee. The light dawned upon me that they were new-comers, just taking charge of the new Society; and I felt that it was a very delightful thing that we should ask the Lord to 'seal for ever' 'these little ones' as His own. I hope that the new-born Society will grow up, and become very strong. The organization is, as Mr. Morley says, perfect and complete, and I wish it success exceeding abundantly above what you ask or even think."

After this playful introduction, Mr. Spurgeon delivered a powerful plea on behalf of our country churches, and the means to be employed to maintain their efficiency.

Mention must be made here of Mr. Spurgeon's visit to the costermongers of Golden Lane, on Tuesday evening, March 12, 1867, although his message to them was neither a lecture nor an address, but was distinctly a sermon. The leader of the Mission, Mr. W. J. Orsman, and his co-workers, were greatly cheered by this memorable service; and one friend who was present thus recorded his impressions concerning the gathering:—"On the previous Sunday morning, tickets of admission were distributed among the street-dealers of Whitecross Street; and the result was, that by far the majority of those who attended were of this class. A goodly number of the regular attendants at the mission-hall were absent, as they denied themselves for the sake of others. Some of the dealers came with unwashed faces and uncombed hair, but most of the congregation were dressed in their best clothes;

and those who could not recognize them, would hardly think that some were costermongers' wives. . . . At seven o'clock, Mr. Spurgeon ascended the platform, and opened the service with prayer. Then a hymn was heartily sung, and a chapter read and expounded. The preacher's prayer was frequently responded to; and when reference was made to the bodily aches and pains which so many suffered, and the poverty experienced by others, there were many deep sighs. Of course, Mr. Spurgeon arrested their attention, nor did he find any difficulty in making his audience understand what he had to tell them. Street-vendors are very much like other people, only they are more acute than most persons give them credit for. Our honoured friend's easy delivery, rapid flow of words, masculine thought, and earnestness and directness, were thoroughly appreciated; and the little anecdotes, homely illustrations, and forcible 'hits', were much enjoyed. The text was, John iv. 15: 'The woman saith unto Him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw;' and having briefly and plainly stated what the gospel was, the preacher showed how it might be compared to water. Water satisfied the thirst of man; often saved his life; took away filth; put out fire,—the fire of temper, and lust; it softened things, &c. He then encouraged them to believe that, if they desired this grace, they could have it; and, lastly, concluded by showing how he himself had found this 'living water.' . . . After the sermon was ended, over two hundred remained for prayer. For an hour and a-quarter, earnest supplications were offered. Some begged that the brethren would pray especially for them; others, who had never made supplication in their lives before, expressed their wants in deep sighs, or in gentle solemn responses. It is believed that several were convinced of sin during the services; and, certainly, Mr. Spurgeon's appeals will never be forgotten by many who had been unaccustomed to sympathetic, earnest entreaty.

"One curious bit of criticism we heard from several costermongers. A coster's living depends largely upon his 'woice.' He, therefore, knows the value of good lungs, and is a connoisseur in voices. The preacher's voice was eulogized as 'wonderful'—'stunning'—'I never'—and other equally significant phrases. One coster had lost his voice, and probably he envied the preacher's gift."

On several occasions, Mr. Spurgeon addressed large companies of City men by request of those who were interested in their spiritual welfare. On December 4, 1876, about a thousand gentlemen assembled at Cannon Street Hotel, under the auspices of the Stock Exchange Christian Association, and Mr. Spurgeon spoke to them upon the words in 2 Cor. xii. 2: "a man in Christ." On January 11, 1877, he met the clerks of Messrs. Peck, Frean, & Co., at the Drummond Road Biscuit Works, Bermondsey, when the subject of his address was, "Our Relationship to the

Kingdom of God ;" but he had an earnest longing to be the means of blessing to others, and therefore wrote the following letter :—

" Nightingale Lane,  
" Clapham,  
" 13/1/77.

" To the members of The Society of Friends meeting at Devonshire House,  
" Brethren in Christ,

" I have for some years felt a desire to hold, at times, in our great City, *meetings for business men where I might address them upon the things of God.* Convenient places are few, and the hire of those available would be beyond my personal means.

" It therefore occurred to me that you might perhaps allow me to speak in your Meeting-house, for I know your liberality of mind ; and, although personally I am not agreed with you in all points, yet in the greater truths we are one, and even in all things one in the desire to be led of the Spirit, and to live to the glory of God.

" Several Friends have encouraged me in the hope that you would freely lend me your Meeting-house, but I earnestly entreat that those who are in favour of so doing will not imagine that I could or would wish for this favour if it would wound the minds of any Friends.

" I, your brother in the Lord, ask you the loan of your Meeting-house for one hour about mid-day on four days in April or May which may be mutually convenient. If it seem good to you to decline, I shall not need to be assured that your reasons will be kind, for I shall be sure of it ; but if you are moved to grant me my desire, I can assure you that I seek not to make converts to a sect, or to a school of thought, much less to any form of outward ordinance ; but I desire to bear testimony, as the Spirit enables me, for the gospel of Jesus, with the one aim of leading souls to the Saviour.

" As, through great weariness, I am obliged to rest for a while in the South of France, I must ask your patience if there should be delay in replying to any enquiries which may arise out of this request. May the Spirit of God be over all in your assembly, even as I trust He moveth me in this act !

" Yours in Christ Jesus, in brotherly love,  
" C. H. SPURGEON."

The request was granted, meetings were held on May 2 and 7, the subjects being "The Claims of God" and "Faith in Christ." These addresses, like all those previously mentioned, were published by Messrs. Passmore & Alabaster ; but a great many others were only printed in contemporary newspapers, or are preserved in manuscript ready for use when required.

The overwhelming national calamity, announced to the citizens of London, at midnight, by the solemn tolling of the great bell of St Paul's, was unknown to most of us until we entered this sanctuary. It was therefore impossible to drape the building with the tokens of our sorrow, nor can the preacher adapt his discourse to this most melancholy occasion. We have already prayed most earnestly for our beloved Sovereign, the widowed Queen of England; may the God of all consolation cheer her lonely heart with that divine comfort w<sup>ch</sup> He alone can give! With reverent sympathy, we all mourn in her mourning, & weep in her weeping. We are all here averted in her bereavement & we wish that, by some means, she could really know how intense & how universal is the grief of her loyal & loving subjects, who view her in this hour more as their Mother than as their Queen. To God again we commend the royal widow & household. O Lord, be Thou a present help in this their time of need!