

CHAPTER XC.

Letters on Private and Public Affairs, 1856—1890.

In reviewing the *Letters of William Cowper*, Mr. Spurgeon wrote:—"We cannot write *letters* nowadays, but must be content to send mere notes and memoranda. When letters were reasonably few, and cost a shilling each, men had the time to write well, and thought it worth their while to do so. Now that the penny post is a public man's sorest trial, the shorter we can make our epistles, the better. How we wish some of our correspondents would believe this, especially those young ladies who cross their letters! We never waste a moment in trying to read what people think to be unworthy of a fresh sheet of paper; crossed letters make us cross, and we drop them into the waste-paper basket. By the way, what right has a man to expect an answer to a letter if he does not enclose a stamp? It is a dead robbery to make some of us spend scores of pounds in a year on postage."



THE preceding chapter contains so many references to Mr. Spurgeon's correspondence that it may appropriately be followed by some specimens of the letters which he wrote at various periods during his long ministry. Many have already been published in the previous volumes of this work, where they seemed needful to the consecutiveness of the narrative, and others must be reserved for later portions of this volume. The present selection is intended to give some idea of the extent and variety of the subjects upon which the beloved Pastor's correspondents wrote to him, and of the replies which he sent to their communications. Some of the letters have already appeared in print; but most of them have been copied from the originals which have been kindly forwarded by their possessors specially with a view to their inclusion in the *Autobiography*, while others are reproduced from the copies of replies which Mr. Spurgeon had himself preserved. In classifying the correspondence, a beginning is made with—

LETTERS TO PERSONAL FRIENDS.

A gentleman in Glasgow greatly values the original of this note, which was written by Mr. Spurgeon the day following that on which he had preached at the Surrey Gardens Music Hall for the first time after the great catastrophe; it was addressed to Rev. John Anderson, of Helensburgh, who had sent a generous contribution to the Tabernacle Building Fund from himself and his friends:—

"3, Bengal Place,

"New Kent Road,

"Monday, 24th Nov. (1856.)

"My Very Dear Friend,

"I have received your munificent donation, and return you very hearty thanks, and beg you to express my gratitude to all those who have contributed.

"Yesterday, the Lord was with me mightily ; not a dog moved his tongue. But, oh, the griefs I have endured ! God has borne me up, or I had been overwhelmed.

"How *hell* has howled, but how *Heaven* will triumph ! How is the work in Helensburgh ? I hope the shout of a King is with you.

"Dear wife and I very often talk of our dear Anderson. You are very near to our hearts.

"Our boys are well, so is 'beloved Apphia.' Give our kind regards to all friends, and accept our true love yourself.

"I am,

"Yours ever,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

The following note, and reply, will serve as specimens of the correspondence between Mr. Ruskin and Mr. Spurgeon in the days long past :—

"Denmark Hill,

"Camberwell,

"25th Nov., 1862.

"My Dear Friend,

"I want a chat with you. Is it possible to get it,—quietly,—and how, and where, and when ? I'll come to you,—or you shall come here,—or whatever you like. I am in England only for ten days,—being too much disgusted with your goings on—*yours* as much as everybody else's—to be able to exist among you any longer. But I want to say 'Good-bye' before going to my den in the Alps.

"Ever with sincerest remembrances to Mrs. Spurgeon,

"Affectionately yours,

"J. RUSKIN."

"Clapham,

"Nov. 26, 1862.

"My Dear Mr. Ruskin,

"I thought you had cast me off ; but I perceive that you let me alone when all is right, and only look me up when you are getting disgusted with me. May that disgust increase if it shall bring me oftener into your company !

"I shall be delighted to see you to-morrow, *here*, at any time from 10 to 12 if this will suit you.

"I wish *I* had a den in the Alps to go to ; but it is of no use for me to grow surly, for I am compelled to live amongst you sinners, and however disgusted I may

get with you all, I must put up with you, for neither Nature nor Providence will afford a den for me.

“Yours ever most truly and affectionately,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”

Nothing ever gave Mr. Spurgeon greater delight than the glad tidings that his message had been blessed to the salvation of souls, or the strengthening of saints. To a friend in Dublin, who sent him such good news, he replied on February 18, 1868 :—

“It cheers me very greatly to know that my sermons are the food of any of God's people. For such a joy, I would cheerfully have suffered much ; and, lo ! it comes without it. I can bear my willing testimony to the faithfulness of the Lord. My sermons are a great drain upon me mentally, but still the springs are not dried. In times of great exhaustion, fresh streams bubble up. In pecuniary matters, we are often tried ; but never come to want, and we never shall while Jehovah lives.”

Just at that time, the Pastor had the further trial of the very serious illness of Mrs. Spurgeon. In answer to a letter informing him that a special prayer-meeting had been held at the Baptist Chapel, Thetford, to plead for her recovery, he wrote :—

“Clapham,

“Feb. 29, 1868.

“My Dear Mr. Welton,

“Thanks a thousand times ! Prayers are enriching things ; you make me wealthy. May you and your people long enjoy prosperity !

“Yours ever truly,

“C. H. SPURGEON.”

To an afflicted lady in Bristol, Mr. Spurgeon thus revealed an interesting circumstance in connection with the origin of his sermon entitled “Faith's Ultimatum” :—

“Nightingale Lane,

“Clapham,

“July 23, 1875.

“My Dear Friend,

“Your kind gift has been unacknowledged because I wanted to write to you myself, and my hand has been bad with rheumatic gout so as to make me quite an invalid these last two weeks, and keeping me from my preaching most of the time. I thank you most heartily, and the more because of your very kind words.

May you have daily strength for your great affliction, and may your heart exult more and more in the Lord ! Pray for my poor wife, who suffers ever.

"I think my sermon upon 'Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him,' will be to your mind. It was squeezed out of me by great pain.

"Yours in much sympathy,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

When arrangements were being made for the sale of the old Devonshire Square Chapel, which was so close to Petticoat Lane that "Babel-like sounds, and perfumes not at all ambrosial, mingled with the worship, and even other things appeared on the scene," Mr. Spurgeon wrote :—

"Clapham,

"Jan. 8.

"My Dear Sir,

"I congratulate you on the prospect of an emigration from the worse than Egypt of Devonshire Square. Whatever your chapel may have been in ages past, it has become of late atmospherically and entomologically horrible ; the din outside, on the Lord's-day, in which Jews and Gentiles emulate each other in row-making, fits your house to be a den in Babylon rather than a temple upon Zion. That a church and congregation should have gathered so long, in such a spot, is a miracle of grace on God's part, and of inertness on the part of man. May you get away from the rags and the racket, and may you and your friends enjoy prosperity abundantly !

"Yours very truly,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

The following note was written to the late Henry Richard, Esq., M.P., secretary of the Peace Society, in reply to an invitation to speak at the annual meeting of that body :—

"Nightingale Lane,

"Clapham,

"April 24.

"Dear Sir,

"I really cannot do more. I am sick and sorry and jaded. Let me alone. 'A merciful man, etc.,—.' I would be at *peace*.

"Yours truly,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

In December, 1879, when Mr. Spurgeon was very ill at Mentone, he was greatly cheered by the receipt of a cablegram, from the New York Baptist Ministers'

Conference, containing the following message :—"Prayers. Sympathy. 2 Corinthians i. 2, 7. Potter, Secretary." The telegram was followed by a long loving letter ; but, before it arrived, Mr. Spurgeon had already replied thus :—

"To Rev. D. C. Potter,

"Secretary, New York Baptist Ministers' Conference,

"Dear Sir,

"I thank the Conference very heartily and humbly. I am honoured by such a kind deed, and I am not the less comforted. What greater joy can I have from my fellow-men than to be remembered by them in the hour of affliction with prayers and sympathies? God bless you, my brethren, and reward you a thousandfold for this loving remembrance of one who has no other right to it but that which arises out of oneness of heart in our one Lord, one faith, and one baptism! By such brotherly kindness, may all American and English baptized churches be welded into a more complete unity, so that fraternal love may abound! May the Lord bless and prosper you among the nation to which you belong, and may the truth more and more abundantly prevail with you and with us! I am recovering slowly from a very severe illness, and your telegram has acted both as a tonic and as a cordial to me. Again I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

"Yours most gratefully,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

On April 5, 1881, the annual butchers' festival was held at the Tabernacle. Mr. Spurgeon was unable to be present, but he wrote the following letter to Mr. Henry Varley, to be read at the meeting :—

"Westwood,

"April 5, 1881.

"Dear Friend,

"A month ago I was just recovering, and I took five services in the week with great delight. The immediate result was another illness. This time I am weaker, and I have the same work before me. The friends beg me not to attempt so much, and my own judgment tells me that they are right. I must therefore be away from the butchers' festival, though with great regret. I never promised to be there. Someone did for me, and I don't believe in those proxy promises. You are a host in yourself. Tell the true blues to be true blue, and follow the best of leaders,—namely, the Lord Jesus. May they all be pure and upright, so as to be Christians indeed! They will do well to be moderate in all things; better if they become total abstainers from strong drink; and best of all if they have new hearts and are believers in Jesus. I am sure we shall always be glad to find house-room for them so long as you and the master-butchers find the solids

for filling up the empties. I wish every man would get a day's march nearer Heaven on this occasion. May God's blessing be with you and all your hearers this night !

"Yours heartily,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

After Rev. Joseph Cook, of Boston, U.S.A., had been lecturing in the United Kingdom for about six months, questions were raised in various quarters concerning his orthodoxy. The Earl of Shaftesbury was one of those who were in doubt with regard to his theological teaching, but Mr. Spurgeon very earnestly pleaded the cause of the eminent lecturer from across the Atlantic. The following is one of two letters which he wrote to the venerable Earl upon this matter :—

"Westwood,

"Beulah Hill,

"Upper Norwood,

"May 11, 1881.

"My Dear Friend,

"I agree with you in heart, and soul, and faith ; and so also does Joseph Cook. His expressions may not be clear, but his meaning is identical with our own. There is, however, little hope of my leading you to think so, now that Mr. — has cast his lurid light upon the lecturer's words ; and therefore I will not enter into a discussion.

"Your action is wise, namely, to refrain from endorsing that which you do not approve of. But, I pray you, believe that, as I know Mr. Cook, and am as sure of his orthodoxy as I am of my own, I cannot desert him, or retract the commendations which I am sure that he deserves ; but I am none the less one with you. If you would only see Mr. Cook, you would form a different estimate of him ; but, anyhow, I shall not love or admire you one atom the less whatever you do.

"I am, perhaps, more lenient than you are because I never was able to be quite so guarded a speaker as you are. I think no man speaks so much as you do with so few blunders, but impetuous people get into muddles. I quite agree with Mr. Foster's estimate of you as certain to have been Premier had you been ambitious in that direction, for you very seldom allow your speech to get cloudy, or to run over to the other side when emphasizing *this* ;—but pray do not expect such accuracy of us all.

"Here is a man who, with tears, denies the slightest complicity with heterodoxy, and says that he lives and feeds on the old-fashioned truth so dear to us ;—well,—I believe what he says, and wish that half the 'orthodox' were as orthodox as he is.

"The Lord ever bless and sustain you, my dear friend, and spare you to us many years to come! I wish, when these meetings are over, you would come and see—

"Your Lordship's most hearty friend,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

To this letter, Lord Shaftesbury replied as follows :—

"24, Grosvenor Square, W.,

"May 14, 1881.

"My Dear Friend,

"If Joseph Cook stands high in your esteem, it is, I am confident, because you decidedly, and conscientiously believe that he holds, in all truth and earnestness, the great vital doctrines of the Christian Faith,—those doctrines indispensably necessary to salvation, and which have been the life and rule of your ministerial services. In these have been your joy, and your strength. Signal as are the talents that God has bestowed upon you, they would, without preaching Christ in all His majestic simplicity, have availed you nothing to comfort and instruct the hearts of thousands.

"Such being the case, who would expect you to recede, by one hair's breadth, unless you carried your convictions with you? Certainly not I.

"I am deeply gratified by your kind letter, and all its candid and friendly expressions. You must not admit any abatement of your regard and love for me. Mine towards you can never be lessened, while you stand up so vigorously, so devotedly, so exclusively for our blessed Lord.

"Ever yours most truly,

"SHAFTESBURY."

"P.S.—I will pay you a visit as soon as possible."

Mr. Cook was intensely grateful to Mr. Spurgeon for his powerful advocacy, even if it did not convince the venerable Earl. It is somewhat singular that, just as this chapter is being compiled, it is reported that, in answer to a statement that Mr. (now Dr.) Joseph Cook had joined the Spiritualists, he wrote, "Spiritualism is Potiphar's wife; my name is Joseph." His reply seems to indicate that efforts had been made to entangle him, but that he had resisted them as successfully as his ancient namesake repelled his tempter.

Mr. Spurgeon was always on very friendly terms with his neighbour, Rev. Burman Cassin, M.A., rector of St. George-the-Martyr, Southwark. On the twenty-fifth anniversary of Mr. Cassin's ordination, a testimonial was presented to him; and the Pastor, although away from home, wrote concerning it :—

"Mentone,

"Dec. 17, 1883.

"Dear Mr. Olney,

"I had no idea that the presentation to the Rev. Burman Cassin was coming off so soon. Had I been at home, I was to have attended the meeting, for he is a brother for whom my heart always has a warm place. I wish him every blessing, and, above all things, abundant grace to win multitudes of souls for Christ out of his immense parish. His true piety, his loving manners, and his catholic spirit, make me esteem him most highly. Had I been able to attend, I should have added £5 to the testimonial, as a very inadequate but very honest token of my affection for him. As I am so far away, please be my substitute, and give the amount on my behalf. You can trust me till I return.

"Yours ever heartily,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

The following letter greatly interested Mr. Spurgeon:—

"Christ Church Vicarage,

"Rotherhithe,

"August 16, 1884.

"Mr. Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

"I have, for many years, been an admiring reader of your sermons, and have often felt that I would write and tell you how useful I have found them personally and ministerially. I am specially urged to write to-day for the following reason. My mother, a clergyman's widow, died on May 19, this year, at Boston, Lincolnshire, aged 87. She used to take your sermons weekly, read them carefully, have them bound handsomely at the end of the year, and present the bound volume to me, year by year, on my birthday, Aug. 16.

"The Vol. for 1883—her last gift—was ready bound, and *I* have to-day written my name in it, as she cannot. Praying that the Lord may give you health and strength, continued usefulness, and increasing holiness, and asking your pardon, if intrusive,

"Yours very sincerely,

"H. C. MITCHINSON,

"Vicar of Christ Church, Rotherhithe."

To this letter, Mr. Spurgeon replied thus:—

"Westwood,

"Aug. 19, 1884.

"Dear Friend,

"It is a great pleasure to be enabled to give seed to the sower. The

Lord accept my thanks for many such sweet messages as yours to cheer me ! The Lord also be with you in all your ministry, and give you an abundant harvest !

"I congratulate you upon having a mother in Heaven. Mine still lingers in much suffering ; yours is promoted to felicity. We will follow on. I have paused to pray for you. Please do the like for me, for I need it every day.

"Yours most heartily,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

Several letters of condolence are given in the latter part of the next chapter, so one of congratulation may be inserted here. The following cheery note was sent to Rev. E. W. Matthews, secretary of the British and Foreign Sailors' Society, in May, 1885, in reply to a communication from him announcing the arrival of a little daughter, and sending contributions for the Orphanage from all his children :—

"Dear Friend,

"Matthews are so good that there can hardly be too many of them if they all turn out to be evangelists. God bless the parents more and more, and cause the children to be real blessings to them in later years ! That you should bid your children send me a crown each, suggests that I hold a fourfold monarchy in your esteem ; but, alas ! I need a Priest and a King more than ever. I rejoice that our Lord Jesus is growing more precious to me in that capacity. May these four Matthews all be crowned with lovingkindness and tender mercies !

"Yours very heartily,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

For many years, on his summer visits to Scotland, Mr. Spurgeon was the guest of Mr. James Duncan, at "Benmore," the beautiful mansion depicted in Vol. III., page 362. The following letter was written to Mr. Duncan's sister, in reply to one from her, mentioning various places and persons known to the Pastor, and saying that, as she had heard that he was overworking himself, she advised him to study what the sixth commandment required, "all lawful endeavours to preserve our own life":—

"Westwood,

"Aug. 26, 1885.

"Dear Mrs. Moubray,

"I heartily thank you for the proverbs, some of which I have used. I think I am well acquainted with the book you have culled from ; indeed, I would go far to see a proverb-book which I do not know.

"Happy woman to be sailing over the fair seas, and gazing upon those glorious hills ! I find abundance to do all day, and every day ; but, as the Lord blesses the work, I am not able to weary of it.

"I saw Mr. Duncan on Sunday, much to my joy. He is, indeed, a kind and tender friend, and his sister is like unto him. God bless both!

"I trust Mr. McKercher will get better, and be restored to you. Truly good men are scarcer than they used to be. The world has gone after the idols of modern thought, and those of us who do not thus wander are esteemed to be 'old fogies.'

"A woman rose in the Tabernacle, last Sunday, just as I entered, and began to talk about *the sixth commandment*! Of course, I pricked up my ears, and wondered whether it was a lady from Strone House! She did not get far before the attendants carried her off. I have not asked her name, but it looks very suspicious. Were *you* up in London last Sunday?

"I am studying that commandment, and I begin to think that I must work much harder, for fear somebody should be killed, spiritually, by my failure to preach in season and out of season.

"My very kindest regards and heartiest thanks to you.

"Yours ever gratefully,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

Correspondents often asked Mr. Spurgeon to tell them the meaning of difficult passages of Scripture. In reply to the enquiry of a generous helper, in Scotland, concerning Hebrews vi. 4—6, the Pastor wrote:—

"Westwood,

"March 15, 1887.

"Dear Friend,

"I have always taught that, if the Divine life could entirely *die out*, there would be no second quickening. We can be born again, but not again and again. If the salt could lose its savour, it would be a hopeless case. From which I argue that, as no believer in Christ is in a hopeless case, no man has utterly lost the life of God after once receiving it.

"The wilful return to sin would be fatal.

"In each passage quoted, the evil supposed is also denied. (See Hebrews vi. 9, and x. 39.)

"One great means of securing final perseverance is the knowledge that we cannot go in and out of Christ at pleasure; if we could utterly quit Him, there could be no possibility of renewal. (Hebrews vi. 4.) Therefore we are bound to hold on even to the end.

"My wonder is how, in the teeth of these texts, Arminians believe that men can lose the Divine life and receive it again. No words can be clearer than those which describe this as 'impossible.'

"I have sent a catalogue with sermons marked which may help you. Write me whenever you like, only excuse me if I am brief.

"Yours heartily,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

For several years, Mr. Spurgeon preached the anniversary sermon at Christ Church, Westminster Bridge Road, more than once going there for the purpose after conducting his own Monday evening prayer-meeting. In 1888, he was too unwell to go, so he wrote the following letter to Mr. Newman Hall, who read it at the public meeting :—

"Westwood,

"July 4, 1888.

"My Dear Friend,

"I have only just heard that to-day is your anniversary. I congratulate you, and I pray that you may have a right good day. If I had been well enough, I would have accepted your invitation, you may be quite sure. I thank you and your friends for many kindnesses received by way of help in my hour of sickness. The Lord bless *you* who preached, and the people who spared you! In these days, we are two of the old school. Our experience has taught us that, both for conversion and edification, the doctrine of Christ crucified is all-sufficient. A childlike faith in the atoning sacrifice is the foundation for the purest and noblest of characters. As the hammer comes down on the anvil ever with the same ring, so will we preach Christ, *Christ*, CHRIST, and nothing else but Christ.

"Our friends leave us for the suburbs, but I trust the Lord will raise up around us another generation of faithful men. God bless those attached brethren who stick to us, and bear the brunt of the battle with us! I feel a deep gratitude to all such, both at the Tabernacle and at Christ Church. To you I desire continued health and joyous communion with God.

"Yours very heartily,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

Dr. H. L. Wayland, of Philadelphia, was frequently in correspondence with Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon. On more than one occasion, he sent contributions for the Lord's work under their care. In reply to one of these communications, the Pastor wrote :—

"Westwood,

"June, 1889.

"My Dear Friend,

Your letter to Mrs. Spurgeon has greatly cheered her. . . . She is to

write to the kind donor of the draft, and I am to thank you. Wisdom ordains division of labour. My dear wife does not improve in health. I don't think she could improve in any other way.

"I hold on, and stand fast. Despite what your correspondents may tell you, I know of a surety that there is an awful twist in the thoughts of the many, and error bears the bell. Yet I am not doubtful of the ultimate result.

"I see that the Lord loves you and yours greatly, for He tries you. These are His love-tokens. I have many, and I prize them. Your love is sweet to me.

"Yours most heartily,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

In August, 1889, Mr. S. G. Richardson, the Sheffield Master Cutler-elect, sent to Mr. Spurgeon, through a mutual friend, a very cordial invitation to attend his banquet. This elicited the following answer :—

"Westwood,

"August 23, 1889.

"My Dear Friend,

"You are most kind, and so is the Master Cutler, but I am so taken up with work that I must not leave home. I rejoice in the kindness and courtesy of Mr. Richardson, and I beg you to thank him heartily. Really, I am not a man for a feast, even if I could come. Our Lord Mayor pressed me to meet the Archbishops and Bishops at a banquet, but I could not bring my soul to it,—I mean, the banquet. I had no objection to the Bishops. Last week, I had tea at the Archbishop's, and luncheon with the Bishop of Rochester; but the banquet was out of my line. I am best at work,—my own work. Still, God bless you, and the Master Cutler, and all the good folk!

"Yours heartily,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

The invitation to tea at the Archbishop's was written by Mrs. Benson, and was as follows :—

"Addington Park,

"Croydon,

"Aug. 10, '89.

"My Dear Sir,

"We have just come back to Addington, where we shall be for a few days before going abroad; and I am writing to claim your kind promise to come and see us here. Might we hope that you will come to afternoon tea on Thursday next at 5 o'clock? It will be a great pleasure to see you. I fear Mrs. Spurgeon is not

strong enough for so long a drive ; otherwise, it would have given us great pleasure if she would accompany you.

“ Believe me,

“ My dear sir,

“ Yours very truly,

“ MARY BENSON.”

“ The Rev. C. H. Spurgeon.”

The day mentioned not being convenient to Mr. Spurgeon, because of the Tabernacle service, another afternoon was fixed, and that happened to be in the same week in which he had promised to take luncheon with the Bishop of Rochester, who wrote, a few days afterwards :—

“ Selsdon Park,

“ Croydon,

“ August 23, 1889.

“ My Dear Friend,

“ I thank you exceedingly for your valued gift. *The Salt-cellars* shall have an opportunity of sparkling in my sermons, and I shall begin to read *The Cheque Book of the Bank of Faith* to-day.

“ You may like to see a very friendly though not a gushing criticism on your sermons in *The Guardian* of last Wednesday,—the leading High Church journal.

“ We all have a most charming impression of your visit. Next time you come, I shall try to pick your brains about preaching.

“ Most truly yours,

“ A. W. ROFFEN.”

The following letter—the last one written by Mr. Spurgeon to his old friend, Mr. J. S. Watts, of Cambridge, has a specially pathetic interest now :—

“ Westwood,

“ May 29, 1890.

“ Dear Friend,

“ How are you ? I am myself below par in health ; but exceeding full of the Lord's goodness. I have seen sixty-nine candidates for church-fellowship this month. Long hours it has cost me to converse with the many, and select these ; but it is glorious harvest work. Everything prospers more and more. But I get faint at times in body. I must rest more. On June 19, I shall be fifty-six, and my years have been such as produce great wear and tear. Yet I shall soon pick up again.

“ I shall send you my College Reports for the last two years, that you may see how, in temporal supplies, we know no lack. My liberation from questionable

associations has brought around me a host of the Lord's own who have a like love to His inspired Word and immutable truth. Divinely has He sustained me, and *He will*. Peace be unto you!

"Yours ever lovingly,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

One of the many loving notes preserved by a former member of the Tabernacle Church is interesting because of the Biblical names borne by himself and several of his relatives who are mentioned in it:—

"Westwood,

"Aug. 30, 1890.

"Dear Mr. Keevil,

"What a patriarchal family you are! Here is Joshua sending me a letter from Noah, containing news about Enoch, and Job and his girls! It makes me feel proud to be in such ancient company. God bless you all!

"I will send Noah a receipt. Like his namesake, he seems to have had enough rain. Well, we shall get home. You are a good soul. May the Lord give you the double portion, as he did Job!

"Yours heartily ever,

"C. H. SPURGEON."

While Mr. Spurgeon was ill at Mentone, in December, 1890, he received a letter from his old and faithful friend, Dr. D. A. Doudney, Editor of *The Gospel Magazine*, who said:—"I had such a spirit of holy wrestling at the footstool of mercy, on your behalf, in the wakefulness of the past night, that I could but cherish the hope that the Lord was giving you relief." In reply, Mr. Spurgeon wrote:—

"Mentone,

"Dec. 5, '90.

"Venerated Friend,

"It made my heart leap for joy when I read in your note that you had liberty in prayer for me. I am recovering. I can hold the pen, as you see. My hand was puffed up, and, in consequence, like all puffed up things, useless; but it is coming to its true form, and I am rallying from the weakness which follows great pain.

"Of a surety, it is well. I praise God with all my heart for the furnace, the hammer, and the file. May He bless to you the infirmities of years, and carry you ever in His bosom!

"Your loving, grateful friend,

"C. H. SPURGEON."