

CHAPTER XCIII.

Appreciative Correspondents, 1855-1890.



ALTHOUGH Mr. Spurgeon often found certain portions of his correspondence very burdensome, it was by no means all of that character, and it was frequently the medium by which he was greatly cheered and encouraged. For many years, not a week passed, and scarcely a day, without tidings reaching him that his sermons or other printed works had been blessed to the salvation of sinners and the edification and strengthening of believers; and he was also constantly reminded, from all quarters of the globe, that prayer for yet larger blessing was continually being presented on his behalf. This assurance was most gratefully received by him, and on many occasions he was quite bowed down under the weight of loving sympathy thus sent to him from far and near. A selection of these letters was given in Vol. III., in the chapter entitled "Blessing on the Printed Sermons;" so communications of that special character are not inserted in the following pages.

Among the thousands of letters which have had to be read in order to decide which should be used, there are very many that, for various reasons, cannot be included in this work. Some are private documents, never intended to be published; and, of these, a considerable number came from the Archbishops and Bishops of the Church of England, and most of them were written concerning individuals who had formerly been Baptists, and who were seeking admission into the Establishment, or they related to ex-clergymen who were wishing to enter the Baptist ministry. While some of each class appeared to be acting conscientiously in the steps they were taking, the history of others proved that they were mere adventurers, equally worthless to either Church or Dissent.

Some of Mr. Spurgeon's correspondents completely changed the tone of their letters in consequence of his earnest contention for the faith; but, instead of giving specimens of the two kinds of epistles, they are omitted altogether. Controversial matters have been, to a large extent, excluded; otherwise, a chapter or two might have been devoted to the correspondence which, at various times, caused considerable excitement, if nothing more. The details of Mr. Spurgeon's career were so constantly proclaimed, with more or less accuracy, to the whole world, that

there is the less need, in this work, to refer to certain topics which are already matters of public knowledge.

The letters to and from Mr. Spurgeon would have been sufficient to fill several volumes the size of the present one, and readers will hardly need the assurance that it has been no light task to select those which would be fairly representative of the Pastor's busy life. Among the numerous interesting communications which he preserved, but which are not included in this work, are very hearty invitations to visit Victoria, and Canada, and South Africa,—at least partly for rest; and earnest requests to him to take part in various Conferences of Baptists or other bodies of believers in Sweden, Norway, Holland, Switzerland, and India; all of which had to be declined with regret. Space could not be spared for two lengthy letters from Dr. R. W. Dale, of Birmingham, and Dr. Leonard Bacon, of New Haven, Connecticut, making preliminary enquiries as to the possibility of Mr. Spurgeon delivering the Lyman Beecher lectures at Yale College; nor was there room for the long explanatory epistle in which Dr. J. H. Vincent, of Plainfield, New Jersey, very earnestly entreated the Pastor to accept the office of "Dean of the Department of Biblical Theology to the Chautauqua School." In these cases also, only a negative reply could be returned.

Applications for articles in American and other religious and secular papers and magazines were constantly being received; they often contained the offer of an honorarium, or a draft for the amount which the Editors judged to be adequate; but, almost invariably, they had to be refused, because Mr. Spurgeon's literary labours demanded every spare moment which he could devote to them. Most of the requests for interviews met with a similar fate, though exceptions were occasionally made, and the publication of the conversations which then took place usually involved further heavy additions to the Pastor's correspondence.

For the purpose of making some sort of classification, "Letters from Ministerial Brethren" are inserted first. These will show how widespread and intense was the esteem in which Mr. Spurgeon was held by ministers of the gospel, both in the Church of England and among the various Nonconformist denominations. They will also help to cast side lights upon the Pastor's character and work, and so further reveal their far-reaching influence and usefulness. "Letters from American and Canadian Friends" seemed to be sufficiently numerous and important to be placed in a section by themselves. "Miscellaneous Letters" could scarcely be classified, so they are simply arranged in chronological order. The illustrations, on pages 185 and 189, are specimens of the many instances in which Mr. Spurgeon's portrait appeared with those of the principal representative men of the day.

LETTERS FROM MINISTERIAL BRETHREN

cannot be better commenced than by the insertion of a loving epistle, written by Dr. Alexander Fletcher, before Mr. Spurgeon's marriage. He added this postscript, and sent it on to the lady mentioned in it, who has carefully treasured it until the present time :—"Sweet love, will this please you? Yes, it will. Every blessing on you!—C. H. S."

"Cromer,

"Norfolk,

"Nov. 16, 1855.

"Dear Young Brother,

"What a delightful, exciting, encouraging meeting we had last Thursday week in your hallowed sanctuary! The smile of God abundantly rested upon us. It was a little Heaven below. Truly, it *was* good to be there!

"I am looking forward, with great interest, to the evening when we hope you will preach in Finsbury Chapel. When we travelled together from Writtle, I mentioned the evening of the first day of the New Year, namely, Tuesday, January 1. If nothing comes in the way, I anticipate an august assembly, God's gracious presence, and much good. Due notice will be given, and we hope to witness a gathering and showers of blessing *never to be forgotten*. Favour me with a few lines. I return home to-morrow.

"I need not say how much I was pleased with a certain lady, to whom you kindly introduced me. I hope, like yourself, she will acknowledge me as *her father*. She is everything I could wish. May your fellowship on earth be of *long duration*, and be the sweet prelude of your eternal fellowship beyond the skies! Amen!

"Always yours affectionately,

"Rev. C. H. Spurgeon."

"ALEXR. FLETCHER."

In those early days, Mr. Spurgeon did not preserve so many of the letters he received as he did in later years, so there is a long interval between the one printed above and the following. It appears that the Pastor, and his friend, Rev. Samuel Martin, of Westminster Chapel, had both been blessed to a certain individual concerning whom a correspondent wrote to Mr. Spurgeon. He passed on the good news to Mr. Martin, who wrote in reply :—

"19, Belgrave Road,

"Belgravia, S.W.,

"Dec. 17, 1870.

"My Dear Friend,

"Your welcome letter, and the letter of your friend, are in my hand. I thank you for your own loving epistle, and I thank you also for permitting me to

read the other letter, and for thus making me a sharer of your joy. What is our hope, and joy, and crown of rejoicing, if not found in such facts as that which 'W. J. S.' narrates? Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost!

"Whenever you feel moved to cast your net in our waters, know and remember that our ship, or shore, or whatever may be needful to carry out the figure perfectly, is at your service. A prayerful and praiseful welcome will always be given you.

"I have requested one of my deacons to leave at your door a volume which I beg you to accept.

"As you read this, ask our Heavenly Father to give me back my power of voice, if it be His will, that I may continue to preach His Son, Christ Jesus, with whom I feel more closely united by means of every affliction which I suffer.

"What a large letter I have inflicted upon you! Forgive the infliction. The Lord keep you!

"Always yours,

"Rev. C. H. Spurgeon."

"SAMUEL MARTIN."

Mr. Spurgeon was very grieved whenever illness prevented him from fulfilling his engagements to preach at the Tabernacle or elsewhere. On one such occasion, he received from Mr. Chown the following loving brotherly letter:—

"24, Marlborough Hill,

"St. John's Wood, N.W.,

"May 10, 1876.

"My Very Dear Friend,

"I received your secretary's letter, last night, announcing your inability to be with us on the 23rd inst. It will be a great disappointment to our friends, but we will turn our anticipations into sympathy and prayer. May He, whose love and wisdom have permitted the stroke, give the blessing proportioned to the blow! As the chastening hand is laid upon you, may the supporting arm be underneath and round about you! Many have never felt the Lord so near and precious as in the furnace; may this be your happy lot, and the flames be powerless except to keep off the enemy, and burn off all bonds! There are times when our very tears become wellsprings of peace and comfort; may it be thus, beloved friend, with yours! We are all with you in spirit. May God bless you!

"Forgive this line or two before leaving for Montacute, where two services await me to-day. Again, and evermore, the Lord bless you!

"Yours very heartily,

"Rev. C. H. Spurgeon."

"J. P. CHOWN."

When the *Princess Alice* steamer sank in the Thames, on September 3, 1878,

and hundreds of lives were lost, Mr. Spurgeon preached two sermons upon the calamity. The following letter refers to the one entitled "Divine Interpositions":—

"Camden House, Dulwich, S.E.,

"Sept. 26, 1878.

"Reverend and Dear Sir,

"This is not the first time that we have exchanged friendly greetings. I am now moved to write to you to ask if your sermon on the Thames collision, as reported in *The Daily News* of the 9th inst., is published *in extenso*; if so, where can I get it? I am quoting, of course with approval, a passage from it in my next Sunday's sermon, and would like to have your exact words, if possible.

"One sentence, however, of your discourse leads me to offer for your kind acceptance my last new volume on *The Mystery of Pain, Death, and Sin*. You are reported to have said:—'I do not attempt to justify the ways of God to men, but I believe they are all for the best.' Well, I, too, devoutly believe *they are all for the best*, but I have attempted to justify them.

"If you read my book, you must not mind a page here and there sadly jarring on your own feelings; but bravely read straight on, and it is possible you may find much to cheer and strengthen your belief in God's great and unfaltering goodness.

"I sympathized with you very much in your late illness, and am very glad you are at work again, and hope many years of noble activity are still before you.

"Believe me,

"Most sincerely yours,

"CHARLES VOYSEY."

In Vol. II., Chapter L., mention was made of one of Mr. Spurgeon's sermons which Dr. Livingstone had carried with him through a great part of the African Continent. The following letter, from Dr. W. Garden Blaikie, tells how the discourse ultimately came into the Pastor's possession:—

"9, Palmerston Road,

"Edinburgh,

"April 22, 1879.

"Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

"I hope the publishers of *The Catholic Presbyterian* send it to you, as I requested them to do. I am Editor, and wish to be even more Catholic than Presbyterian. I have a proposal to make, and hope you will excuse me. Without introduction, it is this. The first vol. of the *Life of Dr. Duff* will be out next month. I am going to ask you to write for the said *Catholic Presbyterian* a notice thereof; particulars not needed,—but just *your view* of such a man as Duff, and of foreign mission work. I would get you an early copy, you would run over it at a sitting,

you would write your first thoughts as they came, you would, in our Journal, secure thousands of readers not without influence, you would exemplify and promote union, and I think, with God's blessing, you would give a real impulse to foreign missions. In the first number of the Journal, I had a noble paper, by David Livingstone, on 'Missionary Sacrifices.' I wish now to follow it up with a word from you. Do not deny this, if you can grant my request. I am trying, with all my might, to combine and impel Christian effort in the wisest ways of working for our Lord.

"Apropos of Livingstone, I may tell you that I am doing something about a 'Life' intended to bring out the more spiritual, missionary, and domestic qualities of the man. I had in my hands, the other day, one of your sermons,—*very yellow*,—it lay embedded in one of his journals, had probably been all over Africa, and had, in Livingstone's neat hand, the simple words written, 'Very good.—D. L.' Would you like it ?

"If you do not take to the idea of Duff (although it is the best I can think of), tell me, please, if any other presents itself. Your views of our Church organization generally would be very valuable. With great respect,

"Yours very truly,

"W. G. BLAIKIE."

At Mr. Spurgeon's pastoral silver wedding, the celebration of which was delayed through his long and serious illness, he was very strongly urged to abstain, as far as possible, at least for a year, from all services away from the Tabernacle. One of the ministerial brethren, who took an active part in the proceedings on that memorable occasion, was Dr. Charles Stanford, and it happened that the Pastor was under promise to preach for him at Denmark Place Chapel, Camberwell, a few days later. Mr. Spurgeon thought it was extremely kind on his friend's part voluntarily to release him from the engagement; and the way in which he did so added to the value of the action, which was probably unique in Mr. Spurgeon's history; for people were always so anxious to obtain his help, whatever the cost to him might be, that we are not aware that anyone else ever wrote to him another such letter as this:—

"8, North Terrace,

"Camberwell,

"May 22, 1879.

"My Dear Friend,

"Delighted and most grateful as I should have been to have your service in average circumstances, my judgment has always been against allowing you to come on the 28th. I only stated the case, and accepted your generous offer because my folk were so anxious that I should do so.

"Although the bills are out, I have ordered slips, with 'Postponed,' printed in red letters, to be pasted over them. It is entirely *my* act and deed, not yours; and if any remarks are made, they will be made about me. It is not likely that *I* should be a party to risk doing *you* harm! Now this will be a conspicuous fact, which can easily be quoted, and which will, I hope, make you able to decline all applications from outside the Tabernacle for the next twelve months.

"May God bless and prosper you richly, still more and more, in all manner of ways!

"Affectionately yours,

"CHARLES STANFORD."

In a later letter, Dr. Stanford wrote:—"Purely out of love to you, and at a great loss and self-denial to myself, have I resigned the privilege of your sermon for us to-morrow night. I hardly recollect anything that has cost me so much, or that I have been so very, very sorry to give up. When I saw how far from perfect recovery you are, and how miraculous your home work is, I felt shocked with a fear that I had selfishly taken advantage of your generosity in allowing you to preach for me, especially at the beginning of your new campaign, so setting an example, and more especially as, in the circumstances, it looked as if I had some idea of a *quid pro quo*! I have, however, taken care to make public the fact that it is all my own doing, and that you were ready to come to us.

"An engagement in a little place takes up as much time as in a greater building, and if you had preached for us, no doubt you would have been pestered by many similar applications, which, if you had even partially accepted, might have worn away your working power, all of which is wanted for your own enormous apparatus of service."

Mr. Spurgeon, on his part, did all he could to compensate for the disappointment by sending a contribution for the fund in aid of which he was to have preached, and also by presenting some of his books to Dr. Stanford, who wrote, in acknowledgment:—

"My Dear Friend,

"You stun me. I can only say, in a short sum total,—thank you! Our school people are also much surprised and obliged by the ten pounds. . . . Your sermons always quicken me, because they are so full of God's truth, put in your own way, and are so all-alive. Nothing ought to have the very soul and essence of a man in it so much as a volume of his sermons; that is another reason why I am glad to have some of yours. I have had many sheaves of them, but they are all about in the world now, and many have been preached from church pulpits by old friends. I have looked into *The Treasury*, just to see its plan, and form some idea of its materials, and I am sure it is a mine. As to the sermons, I pray that they

may help me to a knowledge of the secret I so long to find out. I want to win souls, and if it please God, to win them *now*. I think your list of subjects would alone help me. You remind me in your titles of old Thomas Adams. I have nearly 4,000 books; but, till yours came, I think not twenty-five volumes of modern sermons were in my library.

“Affectionately yours,

“CHARLES STANFORD.”

The following letter from Dr. W. Morley Punshon is interesting as showing how such an eloquent preacher and lecturer shrank from occupying the pulpit at the Metropolitan Tabernacle, although deeply attached to the Pastor. He did, however, preach there during the time when the Wesleyans were making a special effort to clear off the debts from their chapels, and the building was lent to them.

“Tranby,

“Brixton Rise, S.W.,

“Oct. 3, 1879.

“My Dear Sir,

“My only reason for declining the great honour conveyed to me by Mr. Higgs is really my physical inefficiency. I eschew all large places, even in my own denomination, of set purpose. I cannot bear the excitement; and the three months' anticipation of a service in the Tabernacle would make me thoroughly ill.

“I would do much, both to further your holiday, which I trust may tend to lengthen a life so precious to all of us who love the Lord,—and to manifest the Catholicity, nay, the oneness of our spirit in Christ; but pray excuse me in this.

“With much esteem,

“Believe me,

“Yours very sincerely,

“W. MORLEY PUNSHON.”

The following letter, from Dr. Culross, needs no explanation:—

“22, Lynedoch Street,

“Glasgow,

“18 June, 1880.

“My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“Either you have received, or you will immediately receive, a letter from D. Anderson, Esq., of Kingillie, near Nairn, and another from Mr. Lee, Free Church minister there, aiming to secure a conditional promise from you to preach in Nairn, next year, in connection with their new place of worship. I have great pleasure in seconding their application. They would endeavour to make your visit

as agreeable as possible ; and, if you could spare the time, a week or ten days spent there might invigorate you greatly in health. Knowing Mr. Anderson, I am confident he would lay himself out for this purpose. Your sermons are circulated in great numbers throughout the surrounding district, and a visit from you would be welcomed by thousands. I do not think you have ever preached within many miles of the place.

"If it were not that I think a visit to Nairn might refresh and strengthen you, I would not write as I do ; but it would be a very different thing from coming to Glasgow. We remember your visit here with gratitude. A young man, who unexpectedly was idle on the afternoon you preached, and who 'accidentally' was offered a ticket by a friend who was prevented from attending, went out of curiosity to hear you, and was led to the Saviour. I have since baptized him, and received him into church-fellowship. Doubtless there are many similar cases of which we do not know. I trust you are again restored after your recent attack.

"With much esteem,

"Faithfully yours,

"JAMES CULROSS."

Dr. Henry Allon wrote this hearty and cheering letter to Mr. Spurgeon in reply to an invitation to speak at the Orphanage Festival :—

"10, St. Mary's Road,

"Canonbury, N.,

"May 31, 1881.

"My Dear John Ploughman,

"You do not say at what hour your meeting is,—whether at the first watch, or the second watch, or at cockcrowing,—not the last, I hope. I have promised the Lord Mayor and my wife,—who is only a woman, though a good one,—to dine at the Mansion House at half-past six, on June 22. Now, if your meeting is in the afternoon,—as I think it sometimes is,—I shall deem it a privilege to be at it, and with you.

"I can scarcely admit to myself that your kind and valuable service to us, at the opening of our new building, enhances the feeling of obligation to serve you, or do anything you may think proper to ask. Your great service to the Master,—your simple and unimpaired fidelity to Him, to His truth, and to your brethren,—lay us all under obligations to help you in every way that is possible.

"One could not say this to a young man ; but the years have gone by when it can do any injury to say it, or anything but good, to you. For my part, I am very covetous of the real love and esteem of my brethren. I think it makes me tender and humble more than anything, save the 'Well done' of the Master. Sometimes

we see men injured by a great success, such as your ministry has been ; but God has mercifully kept you from this, and I think all your brethren feel that every year has wrought an added sanctity and grace, so that their love abounds yet more and more to you. There is no service, in my power, that you can ask, that I shall not feel it a great gratification to give. I want to take your Sunday service some day when you are unable to preach.

“Cordially yours,

“HENRY ALLON.”

Dr. Allon's wish to take a service at the Tabernacle was duly realized, and when he had been once, he had to go again, and Mr. Spurgeon on more than one occasion preached for him at Islington.

Another of the speakers, invited by Mr. Spurgeon to the Orphanage Festival of 1881, wrote to him thus heartily accepting the invitation :—

“11, Clarendon Villas,

“Barry Road,

“Peckham Rye, S.E.,

“June 6, 1881.

“My Dear Sir,

“I am greatly astonished that you should be aware of my existence ; and as to the idea of your catching any flame from me,—I am irresistibly reminded of the words, ‘I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me?’ Would to God that *I* could catch something of that flame which has kindled so many hearts !

“I have an engagement on the 22nd inst., but I must manage to make some arrangement by which I can have the happiness of accepting your kind invitation to Stockwell.

“As you are good enough to send me some advertisements of your invaluable publications, the principle of Reciprocity (now so strangely popular) requires that I should send you the only advertisements I have in hand just now. Of course, I do not expect that one, so overwhelmed as you are with gigantic labours, can pay us a visit.*

“With most earnest prayers that God may grant you health and vigour, and may make you, for many years to come, a yet more abundant blessing to the Universal Church,

“I am, dear sir,

“Yours most sincerely,

“HUGH PRICE HUGHES.”

* Mr. Spurgeon did pay his Wesleyan friend a visit at the opening of the West London Mission, when he preached a sermon which is remembered by many, with gratitude, to this day.

Mr. Spurgeon was very gratified by the receipt of the following letter from one of the fathers of the Free Church of Scotland:—

“St. Bernard's Crescent,
“Edinburgh,

“June 20, 1881.

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“I am a ‘retired’ minister. In June, 1821 (60 years ago), I began my ministerial work. In August, 1876, I ceased to be in charge of a congregation. I then became colleague and minister *emeritus* of the Free North Church, Stirling. I am the oldest minister, in point of ordination, in the Free Church of Scotland. I am the oldest surviving ex-Moderator of the General Assembly of the Free Church.

“As to my relation to yourself, I have read, I think, everything you have published, down to your latest sermon and the latest number of *The Sword and the Trowel*. I love your writings for their true Puritan ring, for their soundness, their liveliness, and thoroughly Evangelical character. I do what I can to commend you and your great work, believing that, in doing so, I am serving our Lord. I am not a Baptist (I have written a little on the other side in my day), but I am a lover of all who love the Lord. On this ground, I claim you as a brother; and I will ever pray that the Master may more and more honour you by making you an instrument of good.

“With Christian affection, and sincere goodwill, I remain,

“Very faithfully yours,

“ALEX. BEITH, aged 83.”

For several years, when arrangements for the autumnal session of the Baptist Union were being made, Mr. Spurgeon was asked, both by the local friends, and by the secretary of the Union, to preach in connection with the week's proceedings. He fully appreciated the honour thus conferred upon him; he also felt the responsibility of addressing the assembled representatives of the denomination, and the hundreds or thousands of other persons who constituted his congregation on those occasions; and the messages he then delivered in various parts of the kingdom were among the most powerful utterances that ever fell from his lips. Yet, long before he was compelled to withdraw from the Union for reasons stated in a later chapter, he strongly urged the responsible officials to ask someone else to take the position which had so often been occupied by him. It was in reply to one of his letters, to this effect, that the loving epistle, printed on the following page, was penned by Rev. W. Sampson, who was then secretary of the Union.

"Baptist Union,

"19, Castle Street,

"Holborn, E.C.,

"May 24, 1881.

"My Dear Friend,

"To say all that I should like to say, and, indeed, what merely ought to be said, would sound so much like flattery,—which you would be as sorry to read as I should be to write,—that I scarcely know how to reply to yours of the 20th inst. The fact is, your position is unique. We all acknowledge and rejoice in it, and are thankful to our Father in Heaven that He has raised up such an one as you are amongst us. That is simply a fact to be recognized.

"How you have stood the work, and borne what everyone must feel to be far more difficult than the work, the temptation that a position like yours involves, has always been to me a wonder. God's grace has indeed been magnified in you. To Him be all the praise.

"You say, 'Do you, yourself, think it right that one man should so perpetually have the honour of preaching to the Union?' My only reply is,—Were you other than you are, you would not have been so asked; being what you are, we all feel grateful to God when He helps you to speak to us. Depend upon it, as long as God gives you strength, the people will feel these great gatherings incomplete without you. But the tax on your strength I feel to be so great that, after what you have said, I dare not say another word. I wish I could have held out some ray of hope to the friends at Portsmouth. Any inconvenience that I might be put to in the event of your being unable to attend, when the time came, is not to be thought of. When we feared, last autumn, that you might not be able to be with us, I wrote to Stowell Brown, asking him if he would come prepared to speak,—and willing to speak or be silent, as you were able or not. By return of post, came back the kindest letter consenting most gladly. Any of your brethren would do the same for you, such is the position you have secured in their esteem and love.

"May the Lord's richest blessing be with you and yours!

"Believe me,

"Yours most sincerely,

"WM. SAMPSON."

1881 was the year in which the Baptist Union autumnal session was held at Portsmouth and Southampton, and the local committees in both places so energetically supported Mr. Sampson's plea that, ultimately, Mr. Spurgeon promised to preach in each of the towns. On October 26 and 27, he was graciously helped to fulfil the engagements, and none who were present are likely to forget the discourses

he then delivered. At Southampton, Mr. Spurgeon was the guest of Canon Wilberforce, and he and many other Church of England dignitaries were present at the service, and they also privately enjoyed much true Christian communion with the Pastor, though part of the time they devoted to a very vigorous controversy upon Baptismal Regeneration, in which Lord Radstock proved himself to be a most doughty champion on the Evangelical side. Early in 1882, Canon Wilberforce asked for tickets of admission to the Tabernacle, and, shortly afterwards, wrote to Mr. Spurgeon as follows :—

“The Deanery,
“Southampton,
“Feb. 24, 1882.

“My Dear Friend,

“Don't get canonical; I would not have you anything but what you are!!

“We were prevented, at the last moment, from enjoying the privilege of the Tabernacle service; but sent some friends, who very greatly appreciated it.

“WILL you come and see us one day again? Would it be *possible* for you to run down on *Monday, March 6*, and read the Bible to us at our quiet *home* Bible-reading? How delighted we should be, and we would take such care of you for the night; or, if absolutely necessary, you could return to London the same evening, though this would be most disappointing to us. *Do* come; it will be no exertion to you, as there will not be above twenty persons, and you can *help* us, and speak to us of HIM who has so blessedly used you. My wife sends her most kind regards, and *begs* you to come.

“Ever most sincerely yours,
“BASIL WILBERFORCE.”

When arrangements were being made for the Baptist Union autumnal session to be held in Liverpool, in 1882, Rev. Hugh Stowell Brown wrote :—

“29, Falkner Square,
“Liverpool,
“June 12, '82.

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“In the name of our churches here, I write to entreat the favour of your being with us to preach at the autumnal meetings of the Baptist Union to be held in Liverpool in the first week of October. Hoping you are well, I am, with best wishes, and with the very earnest desire that you will comply with our request,

“Yours faithfully,
“H. STOWELL BROWN.”

Mr. Spurgeon once more stated the various reasons why he should not always be the preacher on these special occasions, and, in reply, Mr. Brown wrote :—

“ My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“ We are all as desirous as ever that you should preach at the autumnal meeting. I fully appreciate your hesitancy to take so prominent a place, and to do so arduous a work, year after year ; but no one else can do it, and upon your advent very much depends. I hope that, should you come, we can make a handsome collection for your Orphanage. I say this, not as a bribe,—for your resources for the needs of your Orphanage are in far better hands than ours, and the Lord will not suffer them to fail ;—but I say it as expressive of the love in which we hold you, and of our wish to do what we think would be gratifying to you.

“ I must now leave the decision to your own judgment, earnestly hoping that you will come, yet very unwilling to impose upon you a work which, for various reasons, must be a heavy addition to your many other burdens.

“ Yours faithfully,

“ H. STOWELL BROWN.”

Again, and for the last time, Mr. Spurgeon yielded to the entreaties of his brethren ; the service was another truly memorable one, and the net proceeds for the Orphanage amounted to £131 5s. 6d.

Rev. Robert Taylor, the Presbyterian minister of Upper Norwood, was one of Mr. Spurgeon's very special personal friends. He lived so close to “ Westwood ” that he did not often write to the Pastor, but one of his letters to Mrs. Spurgeon has been preserved ; it was written shortly after he had taken part in the Annual Festival at the Stockwell Orphanage, June 21, 1882 :—

“ Birchwood,

“ Beulah Hill,

“ Thursday morning.

“ Dear Mrs. Spurgeon,

“ I take the liberty of sending, with this, *The Outlook*, of this week, which has a little article which I wrote on the Orphanage Fête. I don't send it because it deserves your attention, or is worthy of the subject ; but just as the heart tribute of a neighbour who greatly admires and loves your distinguished husband, and who highly prizes the privilege which you and he, in your great kindness, allow him of sometimes visiting ‘ Westwood.’

“ With affectionate greeting to Mr. Spurgeon, I remain,

“ Dear Mrs. Spurgeon,

“ Very faithfully yours,

“ ROBERT TAYLOR.”

In the autumn of 1882, when arranging the supplies for the Tabernacle pulpit during his absence at Mentone, Mr. Spurgeon sought to secure the services of Rev. Charles Garrett, of Liverpool. Though this proved to be impossible, the Pastor was greatly cheered by the receipt of the following reply from his eminent Wesleyan friend :—

“Leeds,

“Oct. 10, 1882.

“My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“Many thanks for your welcome letter, and its kind enclosure. I shall treasure both while I live. The fact is, I have long been about the most devoted admirer that you have. I have thanked God for giving you to the Church, over and over again; and I always say that the whole Church ought to pray that God may preserve and help you. Hence you may imagine how I prize your kind gift.

“As to occupying the pulpit for you, I would do anything in my power to relieve you from either work or anxiety; but this year I am very heavily taxed. Everybody wants me, and all seem to think that, as I am President, they have a claim to me. I am here at our Foreign Missionary meetings, and then I go for a series of meetings in Scotland.

“Have you ever preached on the Witness of the Spirit? If not, *I wish you would*. It is a subject on which many are greatly perplexed. Send it to me when it is published. God bless and keep you!

“Yours truly,

“CHARLES GARRETT.”

The following letter is a specimen of the correspondence between Mr. Spurgeon and Canon Harford, when the latter was one of the Canons Residentiary at Westminster Abbey; he had met the Pastor some time before, and had promised him a medallion executed by himself :—

“Dean's Yard,

“Westminster,

“March 6, 1883.

“My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“But for an inhuman amount of work which has kept me chained to this Abbey Rock of Westminster, I should be prevented by shame from writing this letter, for the little medallion of the Good Shepherd has been waiting more than a year in the hope of being sent to you! My young page-boy, who will take it to ‘Westwood’ this morning, knows how earnestly I have been hoping to find a free day, in which I could carry it to you myself, and how, day after day, I have been hampered with things immediately around me. An hour ago, all was arranged

for our joint pilgrimage *to-day*, but the receipt of the enclosed note from an excellent Christian woman (who, for some months past, has been anxious about the health of her old mother to whom she has for years devoted—I ought to say, sacrificed herself,) tells me that, whilst inclination would carry me off to your beautiful Beulah, duty directs me to go at once to Bond Street.

“You must, assuredly, have written some little book, or pamphlet, confirming the hope and comforting the heart of a believer at such a moment ; and if you would kindly give me the name of it, or the numbers or texts of any of your beautiful sermons wherein you have dwelt upon the life of the world to come, I shall feel greatly obliged, and will get them from Paternoster Row this afternoon. Your sojourn on the Mediterranean shore has, I trust, inspired you with new poetry as well as a fresh stock of health.

“Praying that you may long be preserved to benefit and delight the world, I remain, always,

“Revered and loved Pastor,

“Your sincere admirer and fellow-labourer,

“FREDERICK K. HARFORD.”

Mr. Spurgeon sent two sermons which he hoped might prove suitable ; one of them was the discourse delivered shortly after his return from Mentone, and entitled, “Supposing Him to be the Gardener.” It is one of the choicest of his sermons, and has been greatly blessed to mourners and others who have read it. Canon Harford's second letter shows how highly he prized it :—

“Dean's Yard,

“Westminster,

“March 7, 1883.

“My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“But little did I guess, on entering my house last night at 10.30, that such a rare and precious feast was prepared for me. Both of those sermons are valuable treasures, but the inspired dream at Mentone is one that exceeds in *usefulness* as well as in *superb cleverness* all the memorable sermons I have read from English or from American sources during the last twenty-five years. I have ordered fifty copies to-day, purposing to send the first to the poor mourner whom your message is certain to comfort, and another to your genuine admirer, Louisa, Lady Ashburton. Some shall go to France, where I hope a translation will be made into the language of the country ; and some will go to certain weak brethren whom I have been lately called to ‘work at’ and endeavour to draw away from Agnosticism and so-called Spiritualism.

“I rejoice to think that you like the general tone of the Good Shepherd medallion. There is a proper angle of light for it, which, as you have discovered,

ought to come rather from above than from below, and as you so temptingly mention Saturday, and 3 p.m., as your general free day and free hour, I will arrange (D.V.) to run down to 'Westwood,' on Saturday next, by a train which will arrive soon after 3; in order to enjoy a half-hour's refreshing converse with the master-poet and philosopher whose genius has been such a joy and benefit to England.

"I must not forget to tell you how one of the most excellent women I ever knew—and whose loss I shall ever mourn,—always read your sermons from the year 1856, when I was ordained at Croydon, until the year 1868, when she was taken away. Meanwhile, before setting out for a round of work chiefly connected with some thirty letters received this morning from India, I send off this scribble as a token of affectionate homage from—

"Yours ever most joyfully and loyally,

"FREDERICK K. HARFORD."

About a fortnight later, Canon Wilberforce wrote to Mr. Spurgeon:—

"The Deanery,

"Southampton,

"March 20, 1883.

"My Dear Friend,

"You *MUST*—imagine my saying *must* to an Archbishop like you! but you *must* come, if only for ten minutes, to the Anti-opium meeting in Exeter Hall on May 2. I know you have a horrid 'Liberation' meeting at the Tabernacle that night. Come and say a word about liberation from the dominion of a *drug*; or expect me at the Tabernacle with an amendment tied up in blue ribbon!

"Seriously, in order that this meeting shall be a success, your presence is *essential*, and mine comparatively immaterial. With most kind remembrances,

"I am, affectionately yours,

"BASIL WILBERFORCE."

The following letter shows that a Nonconformist friend wrote to Mr. Spurgeon, in quite a different strain, concerning the same Liberation meeting:—

"8, Russell Road,

"Kensington, W.,

"April 25, 1883.

"My Dear Friend,

"I heard to-day, with deep regret, from Newman Hall, that you are again in great suffering. I was intending to write and ask if you meant to dine at Mr. Allcroft's, on Wednesday next, after the Bible Society meeting, at which you and I both have to speak. I was going to say that, although I wanted to attend the

Liberation Society meeting in the evening, yet, if you had decided to dine with the Primate of all England, I would go, too, just to guard your Nonconformity from the perverse suasions of an Archbishop and a Bishop. Imagine their success,—bringing you over to Mother Church,—surpliced choirs, processions, and incense in the Tabernacle, and yourself invested with cope and chasuble!! To avert such a catastrophe, I thought that I had better go with you!!

“But I am afraid, from what I hear, that you will not be strong enough even to speak at Exeter Hall, to say nothing of the dinner afterwards, so I shall go to the Liberation Society meeting.

“But, dear friend, I am half afraid that this nonsense is like vinegar upon nitre to you if you are suffering so much. You have one cause for great thankfulness, viz., that you, in your gout, do more good than we ordinary creatures can do in our very best health. May you find the old promise to Israel fulfilled in your experience, ‘I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her.’

“Ever your faithful friend,

“COLMER B. SYMES.”

In another letter to Mr. Spurgeon, Mr. Colmer Symes wrote :—“I am personally greatly indebted to you, and I specially want to thank you for all the comfort and help which you have given to my late beloved mother during the last fifteen years of her suffering, helpless life at Torquay. Although she never saw or heard you, she always used to call you her minister. May God still continue to you the grace of a simple, consecrated purpose, and the gifts of such a manifold ministry!”

The following letter from Dr. J. Guinness Rogers shows what he felt concerning the enormous strain involved in Mr. Spurgeon's preaching at the Tabernacle for so many years :—

“1, Princes Gardens,

“Clapham Common, S.W.,

“July 14, 1883.

“My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“I have been longing to get across to see you to-day, but am baffled in my endeavours, and so write a line to say how pleased I am to see that you have so far recovered from the attack of last Sunday.

“It was a pleasure to be able to help you, and so I faced any dissatisfaction with my absence from my own pulpit, which Mr. Charlesworth occupied very efficiently. However, all Christian people have such sympathy with you that I have no doubt I shall be forgiven even by those most disposed to complain if they do not see their own pastor. Your great congregation is an inspiration, but it is also an overwhelming responsibility. I do not wonder that continuous labour in the

Tabernacle tells on you, and in ways you may not suspect. I do not envy the man who can preach there without having his whole nature strained to the utmost; and that means nervous exhaustion, of all others the most difficult to contend against.

"May the Lord spare you many years to do a work to which not one in ten thousand would be equal!

"Yours very faithfully,

"J. GUINNESS ROGERS."

In the "Westwood" chapter, mention is made of the Saturday afternoon visitors to the Pastor at his home. One friend who was always welcome was Mr. John M. Cook, a near neighbour of Mr. Spurgeon's, who constantly urged the Pastor to allow him the pleasure of "personally conducting" him and Mrs. Spurgeon (or his secretary) up the Nile, free of expense, just as his father, Mr. Thomas Cook, had desired the privilege of being Mr. Spurgeon's guide through the Holy Land. It never seemed possible to arrange for either trip, so both father and son had to be content with an occasional call at "Westwood," sometimes accompanied by special friends whose acquaintance the Pastor might wish to make. The following letter explains the circumstances under which a meeting was arranged between Mr. Spurgeon and Dr. Welldon, the present Bishop of Calcutta:—

"Ludgate Circus,

"Oct. 30, 1883.

"My Dear Sir,

"Last night, I was dining at Dulwich, with Mr. Welldon, the newly-appointed head-master of Dulwich College. I met, at his table, my old friend, ex-Judge Saunders, from India, who, in conversation, told me that he had the pleasure of introducing to you at the Tabernacle an Indian Nawab, who was travelling under our arrangements, and that the Nawab stayed through one of your services. Mr. Welldon spoke out very strongly in praise of your work, stated that he had been at the Tabernacle several times to hear you, and longed very much for an introduction to you. I took upon myself to say that there was nothing easier, and that I was quite sure you would be glad to see him. Judge Saunders then suggested that I should arrange to have the pleasure of introducing Mr. Welldon to you. I explained that Saturday was your general day for receiving friends, and that next Saturday would be the only one on which I shall be at home until near Christmas. I shall be obliged by a line from you saying whether it will be quite convenient for you to see these gentlemen any time after 3 o'clock next Saturday afternoon. With kind regards,

"Yours sincerely,

"JOHN M. COOK."

The appointment was confirmed, and duly kept, and so began a peculiarly intimate friendship. Mr. Welldon, in the course of the interview, told Mr. Spurgeon how greatly his grandmother prized the sermons, so the Pastor wrote a note to her, and sent it to her grandson, who then gave the following additional particulars concerning her :—

“Dulwich College, S.E.,

“Nov. 5, 1883.

“My Dear Sir,

“I am deeply grateful for your kind thought of my grandmother. Nothing, I think, could cheer her so much in her last days as this word from you. It will perhaps be a little interesting to you to know that, some years ago, when I was about to live in Germany, she put into my hands several volumes of your sermons, and made me promise to read one every Sunday morning until I came home, as she thought, poor dear! that Senior Classics were sure to be sceptical, and ever since then I have been a student of your writings, so that I suppose there are few members of the English Church who know them better, or owe more to them than I do.

“I shall be at home on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday in the present week, and shall be delighted if you can come then, or at any other time, and see the College.

“Believe me,

“Ever faithfully yours,

“J. E. C. WELLDON.”

Mr. Spurgeon early foretold the elevation of his friend to the episcopate, and playfully expressed the hope that, when Mr. Welldon became a Bishop, he would not forsake his Baptist brother. But when the expected promotion came, he had himself been “promoted to glory.”

Singularly enough, the very day that Mr. John M. Cook's letter reached Mr. Spurgeon, he received this note from another neighbour, Dr. William Wright, Editorial Superintendent of the British and Foreign Bible Society :—

“The Avenue,

“Beulah Hill,

“Upper Norwood,

“Oct. 30, 1883.

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“Sir William Muir and his daughters expressed a strong wish, last night, to see you. They are residing for a few weeks on Beulah Hill. I am exceedingly unwilling to bore you, but I promised, if an opportunity offered, to

introduce them to you. Sir William's wish to see you is no vain curiosity, and I think you receive visitors on Saturdays. As you know everything, you know the excellent work Sir William did in India in putting down infanticide, and especially as a Christian student of Islamic literature.

"If you could see us next Saturday, or the following, I should take it as a great favour. With kindest regards to Mrs. Spurgeon,

"Yours very truly,

"WM. WRIGHT."

Possibly, because arrangements had been made for the other visitors to call that week, Dr. Wright's party was asked to come on the following Saturday, and he therefore wrote, on November 9:—"I hope to call to-morrow, about three o'clock, with Sir William Muir, Lady Muir, and perhaps their daughters and my wife. I hope you will not consider our visit a visitation."

Having once found his way to "Westwood," Dr. Wright often came; and, as the result, he was able to write the remarkable testimony to Mr. Spurgeon's literary ability which is given in a later chapter. He was "called home" while the present volume was being compiled; and only a few days before he received the Master's message, "Come up higher," he was noticed to be standing at the gate of "Westwood," and gazing with peculiar wistfulness down the drive which he had so many times traversed on those memorable Saturday afternoons that he had spent with his friend in the garden, or among the books which they both so greatly loved.

This chatty note from a very venerable clergyman is interesting because of his reminiscences of the young Pastor at New Park Street Chapel, and some of his clerical critics; the service at Finsbury Chapel, mentioned by the writer, is probably the one to which Dr. Fletcher was looking forward when he wrote the letter on page 141:—

"62, Torrington Square, W.C.,

"Feb. 22, 1884.

"My Dear Brother,

"Blessed as you are, in common with all believers, with Divine teaching, and with good temper (which all saints are not), I hope you will pardon me, who preached the gospel before you were born, if I ask you, in one of your valuable sermons, to say something about Shakespeare,—perhaps the greatest genius in his way, who ever lived,—but, certainly, a deadly enemy to gospel truth. His plays are getting more and more popular. It is sad to see that even good men are praising him in the pulpit. You have talent and taste enough to appreciate his wonderful power, and have some gifts in common with him; but, of course, you know that

reading his plays, and, much more, attending public performances of them, can but pollute the minds of such as do so.

"In a pastorate of half a century, I have thought it wise to *consider* suggestions made to me (even anonymously), though I do not always agree with them.

"I often hear you, *always* with pleasure. I hope, too, with profit. I have for years given away your sound and Scriptural sermons every week; and I tell you, what I have told scores and scores of folk, that you are doing more good than any man in England except Lord Shaftesbury.

"I said to two clerical brethren (both since Bishops), in 1855 (I think), 'I am going to hear young Spurgeon to-night.' One of them said, 'What! that mountebank?' I heard you in Finsbury Chapel. Before you had got half through your prayer, I said to myself, 'This lad is no mountebank.' I heard your sermon, not agreeing with *all* of it, but I said, next day, when I saw my brethren at a large clerical meeting, 'Spurgeon is no mountebank; I wish I could preach half as well, and I wish as much for most of my brethren.' They were both very popular men; one is sleeping in Jesus, the other is one of our few Evangelical Bishops, and a dear friend.

"I never pass a week without hearing of the good your sermons are doing. A dear old friend of mine told me, the other day, that his pious aunt (aged 90) said she 'lived upon those blessed sermons.' One of my working people said to me, yesterday, 'I like that Spurgeon, I can *understand* him.' This is one of your best features; you are always intelligible;—let me add, always good-tempered; and, *best of all*, always Scriptural.

"Yours affectionately,

"R. W. DIBDIN."

This note came to Mr. Spurgeon, in March, 1884, from Mrs. Weitbrecht:—

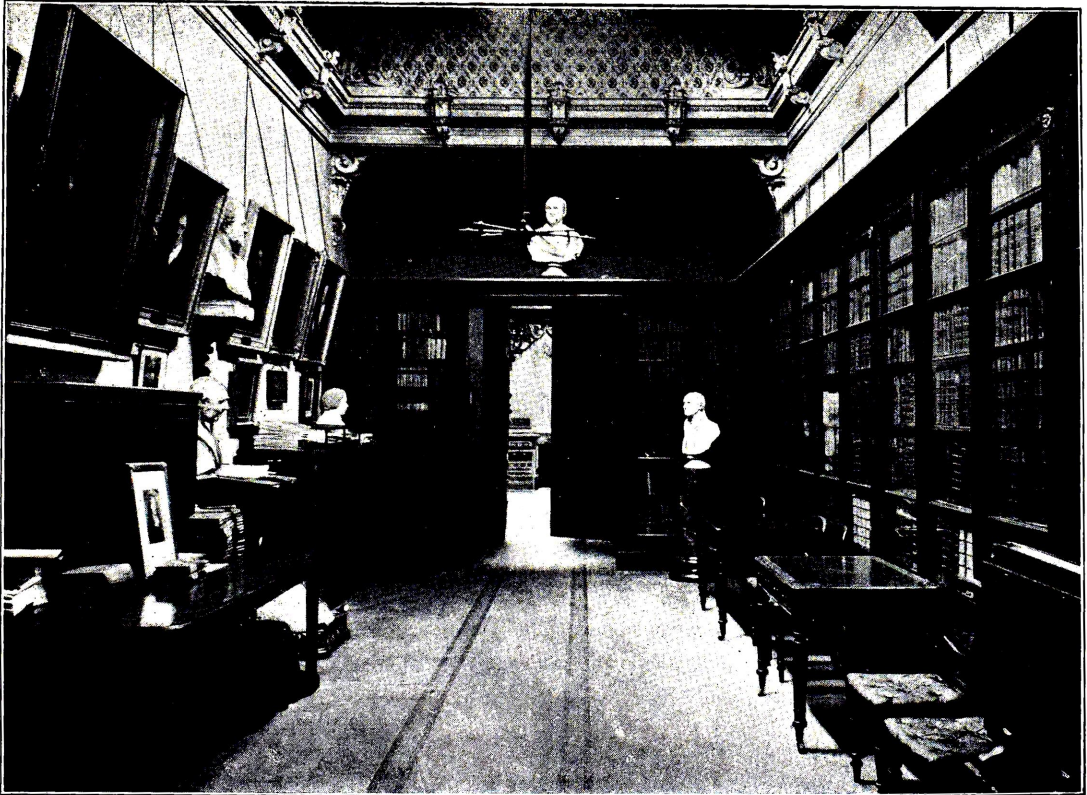
"My son-in-law, Professor Christlieb, of Bonn, is coming to England to hear and see Mr. Moody. He is trying to form an evangelistic centre at Bonn, to prepare evangelists to go through Germany, to proclaim Christ and His salvation.

"Professor Christlieb enquires of me *if he can also see his brother Spurgeon*, and I have ventured to tell him that I will write and ask you, and have added that I hoped, if your state of health permitted, you would spare him an hour of your time. Christlieb ('*Christ's love*') is full of fire, zeal, and Christian love. He has often been fed by you, dear sir, and has fed others, through your sermons, though he is no common preacher himself. I am sure you will give him a shake of the hand, if possible. His time is very short. He brings his eldest son with him; *he*, like your sons, but younger, is a preacher of the gospel."

When the appointment was made, Dr. Christlieb wrote:—"It is so kind of you

to give me a few minutes next Wednesday at 11 o'clock. Having to write a history of preaching in all ages and Churches, I want to put some questions to you on books written on eminent Baptist preachers."

Dr. Angus sent to Mr. Spurgeon the accompanying view of the library of Regent's Park College, with the following note :—



THE LIBRARY, REGENT'S PARK COLLEGE.

"C. R. P.,

"Dec. 3, 1884.

"My Dear Friend,

"I hope you are not ashamed of your company; as I am sure they are not of you. Marshman, Carey, Ward, Fuller, and Booth are over you; Kinghorn is opposite,—a blessed fellowship.

"Ask Mrs. Spurgeon if she can find you: with all sympathy and regard,

"Yours very truly,

"JOSEPH ANGUS."

For a time, Mr. Spurgeon, and Mr. Lewis, of Westbourne Grove Chapel, were

joint-editors of *The Baptist Magazine*, and they were always very intimate and devoted personal friends. This appears to have been the last letter received by the Pastor from Mr. Lewis :—

“ Victoria Street,
“ St. Albans,
“ Nov. 3, 1884.

“ My Very Dear Friend,

“ I cannot sufficiently thank you for the loving words you sent me on Saturday ; and, best of all, for the assurance of your prayers. I am in a sorry plight, so far as the poor frame is concerned ; but blessed with much peace.

“ I need hardly tell you that I have no complacency in anything I have *done*. The faculty of introspection is wonderfully quickened in such circumstances as mine ; but ‘ grace reigns.’ I only deplore that every pulse of mine has not beaten in accord with the Saviour’s will, and every breath exhaled for His glory. May He continue to honour and bless and comfort you !

“ With pleasant memories of past associations,—*au revoir* ! Pray for me still !

“ Yours lovingly,
“ W. G. LEWIS.”

When Mr. Spurgeon was arranging for the supplies at the Tabernacle, during his holiday in the early part of 1885, he wrote to ask Rev. Mark Guy Pearse to be one of the preachers. In reply, he received the following loving letter :—

“ Grosvenor Villa,
“ Southfield Road,
“ Cotham,
“ Bristol,
“ Dec. 26, 1884.

“ My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“ I shall count it an honour and a great pleasure to serve you. On Feb. 15, I have promised to preach the Sunday-school sermons for our people here, and cannot put them off ; but I can give you Feb. 1. This is the only day I can conveniently find in Feb. ; but I can offer you either March 8, 15, or 22.

“ I should much like to comply with your request without any of these ungracious buts and ifs. You have made me your debtor long since. There is no man living to whom I am more indebted. God bless you, dear Mr. Spurgeon, and yours, yet more and more !

“ Believe me,
“ Always heartily yours,
“ M. GUY PEARSE.”

After the Pastor's home-going, Mr. Pearse related this touching incident concerning Mr. Spurgeon and himself, and thus explained the indebtedness mentioned in his letter :—

"Some years ago, I sat with him on the platform at the Tabernacle; and, in an interval during the meeting, I whispered to him, 'When I was a young fellow in London, I used to sit right over there, and hear you preach, and you will never know how much good you did me.' I cannot forget the bright light that came into his face as he turned to me, and said, 'You did?' 'Yes,' I replied, 'and I am so glad to have this chance of telling you of it. You used to wind me up like an eight-day clock; I was bound to go right for a week after hearing you.' He put out his hand, and took mine in it, and the tears brimmed to his eyes as he said, 'God bless you! I never knew that.'"

Mr. Spurgeon's letter on page 130, concerning Disestablishment, will give some idea of the nature of his reply to the following communication from Principal Rainy :—

"Edinburgh,

"May 18, 1885.

"My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

"We are going to have a public Conference on Disestablishment on the evening of Thursday next. It is the opening day of our Assembly; but this Conference is not exclusively Free Church. It is called by a District Association which looks at the question fully as much on the religious as on the political side.

"Could you send a letter, however brief, to be read at the meeting? It would help us much,—especially with those good people who are afraid of moving anything that exists.

"I was glad to get hold of a *good* report of your recent speech on the subject. If we should feel drawn to make a tract of it, would you license the theft?

"One does not want to spend too much time on these movements, yet they are apt to usurp a great deal. But we have other work in hand as well. There has been a good deal of promising religious impression over the country, and especially in our University. Even this, however, seems to share a little in the strange tendency of our day to cut loose from definite Theology.

"Yours ever truly,

"ROBERT RAINY."

Even such a simple matter as an application for tickets for a Tabernacle service gave Rev. Henry Simon, of Westminster Chapel, the opportunity of writing the brotherly epistle printed on the next page.

" Mervan House,
" Brixton, S.W.,

" May 28, 1885.

" My Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

" I have a missionary friend, from Peking, who is very anxious to sit at the royal repast which will be spread at the Tabernacle *next Sunday night*. Being rather overgrown, as heights go, he does not care for the abundant entrance at the front doors, but would, for once, like to enter with the elect saints to whom a less abundant entrance is granted. He looked in such a way that I said I would try to get him a ticket, but where to apply I do not know except it be at headquarters.

" I should have been glad of this, or any other excuse, for calling on you, having a very pleasant and vivid recollection of a walk and talk with you in your garden some years ago ; but I have conscience enough left to be satisfied to look at you in the far distance, and to thank God that you are strong enough again to speak to the great congregation. With Christian love,

" I am, dear Mr. Spurgeon,

" Yours in the best of bonds,

" HENRY SIMON."

While staying at Mr. Duncan's, at " Benmore," in the summer of 1885, Mr. Spurgeon received the following intimation concerning a notable sermon which he had delivered not long before ; he gladly gave the desired permission :—

" 19, Ardbeg Road,

" Rothesay,

" 30th July, 1885.

" My Dear Rev. Sir,

" For many years, I have perused your weekly sermons with great benefit to body and soul. I now trouble you to say that I purpose delivering your admirable discourse on ' Coming Judgment of the Secrets of Men,' with your permission, in the oldest Episcopal Church in Scotland. If you veto this, I will hold fire. I mean to give it *verbatim* ; the only lack will be the voice of the living author.

" Were it in my power, you should have the first vacant mitre in honour and appreciation of your singular gifts. Pardon this obtrusion on the rest which you so much need for your unwearied tax of strength, and believe me to be,

" Yours most truly in Christ,

" J. F. S. GORDON, D.D.,

" St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, Glasgow."

In 1886, Mr. Spurgeon preached, in Great Queen Street Chapel, the annual

sermon for the Wesleyan Missionary Society. It was one of the most remarkable discourses that he ever delivered, and it has been rendered specially memorable because of the large number of missionaries who have gone out to the foreign field in response to the powerful pleas he then urged upon all professing Christians. The text was Matthew xxviii. 18—20, and the title, "Our Omnipotent Leader." This letter, from a Wesleyan minister in Paris, expresses what many felt concerning it:—

" 11, Avenue Flachat,
" Asnières,
" Seine,
" France,
" June 17, 1886.

" Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

" I purpose taking you for the subject of my monthly lecture at the 'Salle des Conférences,' Boulevard des Capucines. I feel that I cannot take this liberty with your name, person, and ministry, without at least informing you of what I purpose doing. You will understand at once that my object is to speak of Christ to a Parisian audience that will be attracted by the subject of the lecture.

" Wesley says; in his 'Notes to a Helper,' that a Methodist preacher must have all his wits about him. Methodist preachers have not the monopoly of shrewdness; but I venture to think that, if I am equal to the occasion, I shall have followed out Mr. Wesley's injunction.

" I thanked you, from a very full heart, in the vestry of Great Queen Street Chapel, for your sermon on behalf of our Missionary Society; I thanked you for it in Exeter Hall, and it would have done your heart good to have heard the response of our people to what I said; and now I seize this opportunity of thanking you again. I shall never have done thanking you for words of cheer that have helped me in the fight. I feel more than thankful; I am grateful. Precious spices become incense when set on fire; so thanks, kindled by love, become gratitude.

" May I ask you to present my most respectful salutations to dear Mrs. Spurgeon?

" Thankfully and sincerely yours,

" D. A. DE MOUILPIED."

Such letters as the following always gave Mr. Spurgeon real pleasure:—

" Chaplain's House,
" Tower of London,

" 20th January, 1888.

" Dear Sir,

" May I ask you to be so kind as to let me have two seats in the

Metropolitan Tabernacle on Sunday evening next, for myself and sister? It is a good many years since I was there,—at one time regularly, with my mother, whom you well knew. Although now a clergyman of the Church of England, and therefore quite out of sympathy with your views of that body, I must express, what I have always felt, the deepest respect for your transparent sincerity, and a hearty admiration of your splendid God-given powers of clear convicting and also comforting gospel preaching. I am what would be termed a *High Churchman*; but, believe me, I am not alone in, above all, loving and uttering God's simple gospel, only believing in ceremony and externals as relative goods, means to an end.

"I have often, as a boy, shaken you by the hand, and should feel honoured by a chance of meeting you again. May God preserve you many years, though you rhetorically tear my Church to ribbons!

" Ever yours faithfully,

" E. C. AYLWIN FOSTER."

On March 6, 1888, Mr. Spurgeon preached at Wimbledon; and, the following morning, he received this loving letter from Rev. E. W. Moore, M.A., the vicar of Emmanuel Church:—

" Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

" At the risk of being troublesome, I must write just a few lines to thank you for the faithful testimony to a faithful Christ you gave us this afternoon. I hastened back to the vestry (after seeing a friend—Mrs. Seton-Karr, sister to your friend the late Mrs. Dudgeon, of Mentone, out of the crowd,) to have the pleasure of a shake of the hand, but you had gone. I should have liked to tell you, though you need no telling from me, how great and general is the sympathy felt for you here as everywhere by all who cleave to Christ the Head, for your brave and fearless stand for our Lord and Master. Thank you for preaching to-day a risen, glorious, triumphant, unchangeable Saviour. He is the same as ever. He still baptizes with the Holy Ghost and with fire; and if He be for us, who can be against us?

" Thank you for all the help you have often given me by the printed page. If it can be said of any man that he does not know what a great work he is doing, it may be said in a special sense of yourself. You will never know here how many souls you have gathered, and how many preachers you have strengthened. God bless and preserve you to us all for many years!

" Affectionately yours,

" E. W. MOORE."

The following note, from a clergyman of quite another school, was received in August, 1888:—

“Queen’s House,
 “Cheyne Walk,
 “Chelsea.

“Dear Mr. Spurgeon,

“I and two of my children hope for the privilege of hearing you next Sunday night, if there is any chance of getting seats. It is very seldom, in London, I am out of my own pulpit; and when I am, I do not like to miss the opportunity of hearing the greatest living preacher.

“Yours faithfully,
 “H. R. HAWEIS.”

This letter was written by one of the Evangelical clergymen who resented Mr. Spurgeon’s “Baptismal Regeneration” sermon, but who afterwards became one of the Pastor’s heartiest admirers; the receipt of the letter gave great joy to Mr. Spurgeon:—

“Christ Church Vicarage,
 “Worthing,
 “27th Feb., 1890.

“My Dear Brother,

“I don’t know how it is, but I feel prompted to ask your acceptance of the enclosed New Year address, which, I rather think, will find an echo in your own heart.

“I remember once, when I was in Southwark, feeling constrained to differ from you as to the interpretation of our Baptismal Services. Since that time, the progress of error in the Church visible has been so alarming and continuous, that all who really love the Truth seem to be under a very special obligation to manifest substantial and brotherly unity; and I cannot deny myself the pleasure of saying how much I thank God for the firmness and consistency with which you have maintained and propagated the precious doctrines of the grace of God in a Rationalistic and Ritualistic age.

“Believe me,
 “Yours very faithfully,
 “FRANCIS CRUSE.”

When Mr. Spurgeon learned that the Jews of the present day substitute a dry shank-bone for the Paschal lamb, he was so struck with the spiritual significance of the fact, that he delivered a discourse upon the subject, and entitled it, “The Shank-bone Sermon; or, True Believers and their Helpers.” On the following page is one of the many letters he received concerning it.

" 164, Richmond Road,
 " Dalston, N.E.,
 " 5¹/₄/90.

" Dear Mr Spurgeon,

" I enclose a cutting from to-day's *Star*, which corroborates in a remarkable manner the '*shank-bone*' illustration you so happily used at Victoria Park the other day. It is indeed a pity that Jews and half-Christians are content with a bone when they are offered the Lamb.

" You are making a noble stand for the truth, and there are thousands of ministers and others who heartily and daily say, 'God bless Mr. Spurgeon!'

" Personally, I may say that I owe you more than I can ever tell. If you only knew half, *you* would never sit 'under the juniper tree,' for your life and words are an *inspiration* to the faithful in every land.

" Wishing you continued Divine favours, I remain,

" Yours very heartily,
 " W. JUSTIN EVANS."

These appreciative letters from ministerial brethren may be fitly closed with the following fraternal epistle from Prebendary Stephenson:—

" Lympsham Manor,
 " Weston-super-Mare,
 " July 8, 1890.

" My Dear Brother Spurgeon,

" I quite agree with you that occasional pain and sickness are good for us preachers of Christ's gospel. I thought sympathetically of you, yesterday, when I ached all over, after four services on the Lord's-day before.

" My heart has been drawn towards you in admiring love for many years, and never more so than when I heard you on the Bible Society platform last May, when you gave abundant evidence that the bough, pruned by the hand of 'the Husband-man,' had not been 'purged in vain.'

" We may not belong to the same regiment of the great army, but our Captain is the same! Go on, my beloved brother, as you have done for so many years past, to proclaim the magnificent glory of grace, and thus to gather trophies for the cross. 'Tabernacles' shift and vanish, but 'Temples not made with hands' are 'eternal in the Heavens'!

" God bless you, mine honoured friend! This is *Cardiphonia*, from—

" Your loving brother and servant in Christ,

" J. H. STEPHENSON,
 " Treasurer of Wells Cathedral."