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"Not slothful in business: fervent in spirit."

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Poetry.

Thoughts of heaven.

No sickness there—
No weary wasting of the frame away;
No fearful shrinking from the midnight air—
No dread of summer's bright and fervid ray!

Care has no home
Within the realms of ceaseless prayer and song;
Its billows break away and melt in foam,
Far from the mansions of the spirit throng!

The storm's black wing
Is never spread athwart celestial skies!
Its wailings blend not with the voice of spring,
As some poor tender flow'ret fades and dies!

No night distils
Its chilling dews upon the tender frame;
No moon is needed there! The light which fills
That land of glory, from its Maker came!

No parted friends
O'er mournful recollection have to weep!
No bed of death enduring love attends,
To watch the coming of a pulseless sleep!

No blasted flower
Or withered bud celestial gardens know!
No scorching blast or fierce descending shower
Scatters destruction like a ruthless foe!

No battle word
Startles the sacred host with fear and dread!
The Song of Peace Creation's morning heard,
Is rung wherever angel minstrels tread!

Let us depart,
If home like this await the weary soul!
Look up, thou stricken one! Thy wounded heart
Shall bleed no more at sorrow's stern control.

With faith our guide,
White-robed and innocent, to lead the way,
Why fear to plunge in Jordan's rolling tide,
And find the ocean of eternal day?

Religious.

Spurgeon and the Metropolitan Tabernacle.

The following graphic sketch of the inteior of Mr. Spurgeon's Tabernacle, is from the *British Standard*, a London peodobaptist paper. The Methodist *Recorder* also in a recent number gave a very fair view of Mr. Spurgeon and his labors.

It is gratifying to find that he is being more fairly dealt with than formerly.

There is no name in the ecclesiastical world in either hemisphere so popular as that of Charles Haddon Spurgeon, minister of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, Southwark, London. But there is necessarily a vagueness about the idea; the world at large cannot form anything like an accurate conception of all that is comprised in the expression. It simply means that he is the most acceptable preacher of the century to the million: this is all, but particulars are wanted to develope the true state of the case. To the stranger, then, we would say, you must not be satisfied to look on at a distance, but proceed to the Elephant and Castle, and there mark the immense and plain, but by no means unsightly structure. Under the roof sights are to be seen such are not elsewhere to be met with on this great globe. You arrive at a few minutes to six o'clock on a Sabbath evening. The streets around are crowded with respectable people. At length the gates open, and in a trice the whole of the vast area within is gorged; the noble flight of steps and the spacious portico are literally loaded with an expectant throng. At length the doors are opened, the bulk of the seatholders having been already accommodated, and in the visitors pour as a torrent, which very speedily covers every foot of space. Try now, good stranger, if you would form a proper estimate of the wondrous sight, by force or favour, to find your way to the back of the first gallery behind the pulpit, or rather the platform, from which Mr. Spurgeon speaks. It is large enough to accommodate a score of persons, each sitting on a separate chair. There is a table on castors, and on it a small desk with the Bible, and beside it a sofa for the use of Mr. Spurgeon. But, before the service commences, just look about you, and make the most of your time. Look below at that sea of heads; in that area you gaze on more people than would fill Exeter Hall in every part. Is it not a grand sight? What a mass of animated dust! What an aggregate of immortal spirit! Is it not awful to reflect upon it? Is there not something in it to awe and to furnish matter for meditation of the most elevating character? Lift up your eyes now and look at the first gallery, which you observe goes round the house. See, there is even there alone a very large congregation, quite as large as average assemblies ought to be for the average of pastors and preachers. Look again, up to the second gallery; even that is a beautiful, although somewhat distant spectacle: that also presents a fine constellation of countenances. That gallery also, you see, goes entirely round the house. There is nothing angular anywhere, and hence every accent of Mr. Spurgeon is heard with perfect ease in every part. Look at the light, too, and you will see that the distribution is perfect, and the supply most abundant. Just glance at the top; you observe there is ample provision made for the most perfect ventilation. When the mighty assembly has sat there a couple of hours, it will be found that the air is but little vitiated; a great matter this, where the numbers are so vast, and where the meetings are so frequent. But, more fully to understand your position, you ought to be apprised of several facts: first, then, you have here, in this by no means unsightly building, in effect six chapels, erected at an expense of 5,000*l.* each; the entire structure cost 30,000*l.* Examine every part of the building, and you will find that there is neither defect not superfluity; everything is plain, strong, grand, and most commodious, and so compactly, indeed, is the whole put together, that you are not greatly oppressed with its magnitude; you would scarcely credit the statement of its immense capacity and accommodation. It certainly appears large, but by no means monstrous. The pitch of the galleries—a difficult point in such an erection—is perfect: the speaker is everywhere seen as well as heard. In fact, there does not appear to have been a single oversight.

Secondly, as we have six chapels, so have we six large churches, far larger than the average of those of any denomination throughout the metropolis, and all equally brought under the action of one powerful mind and one magnificent voice. From the first day the edifice has been crammed. Scowling envy and green-eyed jealousy felt assured that the thing could not continue, although it might be propped a little by the coming Exhibition, the visitors of which could not, of course, leave without hearing Spurgeon. Well, the season passed, and the Exhibition closed. But the visitors found the Metropolitan Tabernacle overflowing when they came, and they could only, to a very small extent, get even a foot within its lofty portals, and at the close they left it as they found it, still overflowing. It was never more crowded than at present.

But to descend to particulars: it is important to inquire, what is the number of the church members? and what is the condition of the fellowship? Well, as we have six large chapels and six large congregations, so have we six large churches! The following figures will show the facts:—

Number on books end of 1861		1,854
Increase:		
By Baptism	347	
By letter	106	
By profession	10	
	—	463
		2,317
Decrease:		
By death	27	
By dismission	65	
By exclusion	4	
By non-attendance	15	
	—	111
		2,206
Clear increase during 1862		352

You stare stranger; you well may. Such an aggregate of professed believers is nowhere to be found in Christendom. There are several things in this table remarkable, First, for so vast a multitude, the number of deaths is greatly below the average of London churches, which, we presume, arises from the fact, that the mass of the members are in their youth and prime. Again, the number of exclusions for misconduct is a thing of nought; we remember nothing to be compared with it. You may probably question the expediency of such an aggregate of professors under one pastorate, but the truth is that we have a number of pastorates. The whole city is divided into districts, in each of which is placed an active, vigilant, discreet, and zealous man, whose business it is to look after the members, and periodically, at the special meetings appointed for that purpose, to report. It may be doubted whether Mr. Spurgeon's flock is not as well seen to as most flocks—comprising not more than one or two hundred members — better, perhaps, than many of them. These are, in fact, the presbyters, and Charles Haddon Spurgeon is the bishop. This is in keeping with his own notions of ecclesiastical polity. He repudiates the idea of isolated Independency, holding by something which may be designated Baptist Presbyterianism.

You see the clock; Mr. Spurgeon will be here in a moment. Mark him as he softly glides down those steps, and drops upon the sofa. Note his lustrous and beaming eye. The countenance is not so much sallow as blood less. His whole face, you will see, is radiant with benevolence; he seems the happiest man in the assembly. You see these gentlemen that sit in those enclosed seats. That is the sanhedrim; those are the deacons. Do they not present a really aldermanic appearance? What a fine-looking body of men! How hale and hearty they are! They certainly adorn their position, and speak well for their profession. Their presence is a standing proclamation of the fact, that "godliness has the life that now is, as well as that which is to come." They seem to say with Moses to Hobab, "Come with us, and we will do you good, for the Lord hath spoken good concerning us." The introductory prayer, you will think, is a somewhat strange affair. Men from a distance, more especially from the systematic and orderly kingdom beyond the Tweed, are often startled at its seeming irreverence. They doubt if the good man be praying at all; or they think he is still but a learner. Well, he certainly *talks* to God as if he *meant it*. He does talk, and he does mean it; it is perfect nature, and hence its power on the hearts of the people. Those, however, who have been accustomed to the artificial utterances of mechanical devotion are, at first, a good deal scandalized. They almost resent it as an approach to irreverence. Like the Scottish preachers of an earlier and a better day, Mr. Spurgeon delivers what may be called both a lecture and a sermon every morning. The reading is the subject of a running comment, free and popular. Mr. Spurgeon has more sense than to spend time in the presence of thousands in anything so unproductive as exegesis and minute criticism. His object is instruction, impression, and edification; and this he seeks by remarks on successive portions, full of light, life, force, and fervour. These devout thoughts form a popular commentary of the best description, closely allied to the "Readings" of that great preacher Dr. Cumming. Compared with this, mere reading is an easy and an uninteresting task. It is matter of surprise that in this inventive and busy age whole volumes of these readings of Spurgeon's have not been taken down from his lips, and published after the manner of the admirable volumes of Dr. Cumming. Such a series of readings assuredly would be popular, nor could it fail of being very useful. Such volumes would form incomparable Sabbath evening reading at home, and be more acceptable to many than even Mr. Spurgeon's more extended and elaborate Sermons.

Slander.

Surgery may heal a bodily wound; but what balm can bind up the bite of a slanderous tongue? Robbery may be recompensed by restitution, but how can you ever make amends to the man you have traduced? I tell you truly, not all the wealth you have in the world can wipe away the wrong you have done in such a case. Hear Shakspeare:

"Who steals my purse steals trash. 'Tis something, nothing.
'Twas mine, 'tis his, and has been slave to thousands.
But he who filches me of my good name,
Robs me of that which not enriches him,
And makes me poor indeed."

"A disposition to scandal," says Dr. Kitto, "is a compound of malignity and simulation. It never urges an opinion with the bold consciousness of truth, but deals in a monotonous jargon of half-sentences, conveying its ambiguities by emphasis. Its propagators lay a mighty stress upon the 'May be's' and 'I'll say no more,' 'Let us hope not,' 'They do say so,' and 'Time will show;' thus confirming the evil they affect to deplore, more under the semblance of pity and prudential caution, than they possibly could in any shape short of demonstration. Observe the greatest reserve with persons of this discription; they are the hyænas of society, perpetually prowling over reputation, which is their prey; lamenting, and at the same time enjoying the ruin they create." Hannah More fully endorses the preceding sentiments when she says:

"The artful inquiry, whose venomed dart
Scarce wounds the hearing, while it stabs the heart,
The guarded phrase whose meaning kills, yet told,
The listener wonders how you thought it cold;
These, and a thousand griefs minute as these,
Corrode our comfort and destroy our ease."

The man who attempts to rise in the world by pulling his neighbor down, is unfit to be elevated, and mankind will do well to keep him where he is, unless they wish to create a heartless tyrant. The woman who can go from house to house, and as she opens her budget of evil reports, begs you not to mention it on any account, it would so grieve her that it should get abroad, and the poor creature be injured, and repeats the same wherever she goes, is not only a very suspicious character, but she proclaims herself a very vixen. Pollock truly says of such an one:

"'Twas Slander filled her mouth with lying words,
Slander, the foulest whelp of Sin."

But it takes two to make slander—one to speak and the other to hear. They both deserve to be banished from the pale of virtuous and honorable society, until they reform their lives. Dr. South says: "The two deserve, if they continue in their sin, to be suspended in the flames of hell, the one by tongue nd the other by the ear, as the proper mode of expiating their sin."

A useful fault-finder.

In a certain town in Massachusetts there was a man, several years since, who seemed to be a bald leader of all opposition to religion, and always ready to publish abroad any delinquencies which might be discovered in any professor of religion. At length he made up his mind to remove from the place to another part of the country. Meeting the pastor of the Congregational church one day, he said, after passing the usual salutation:

"Well, I suppose you know that I am going to leave town soon, and *you* will probably be glad of it."

"Glad of it? Why, no," said the minister; "you are one of our most useful men, and I think I shall hardly know how to spare you."

Taken aback, somewhat, by such a reply, he immediately asks, "How is that?"

"Why," rejoined the minister, "There can't be a sheep that gets a foot out of this fold, but what you will always bark from one end of the town to the other. I think you have really been one of the most useful watch-dogs that I ever knew."

The remaining conversation we will not repeat; but there seemed to be an idea too good to be lost, in reference to the *usefulness* of some wicked men, who are always disposed to find fault with the church. They may often exert some restraining influence, and do good in that way, when they do not intend to. David recognized this kind of usefulness, when he said, "I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue; I will keep my mouth with a bridle, while the wicked is before me." (Ps. xxxix: 1.) If the Lord has bid them curse, why should they not finish their work. The reward of such a kind of usefulness may, indeed, differ from that of those who really love to honor God in what they do; but *that*, God will surely see to in the end, that no injustice shall be done them.—*Congregationalist.*