CHARLES HADDON SPURGEON.

IN MEMORIAM.

BY HENRY FRANCIS ADAMS (OF CLASS '80), HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA.

Sabbath morning, Jan. 31st, at the close of the service, I was putting on my overcoat in the vestry of the Prince street Baptist church, Truro, when I espied on the wall hanging, the portrait of the great Tabernacle preacher. Turning to a gentleman I exclaimed: "There is the beloved face of my great teacher." Next day while visiting dear old Mrs. King, I learned that Mr. Spurgeon was dead.

Having read the *Sword and Trowel* regularly, I was kept well informed as to the condition of the invalid at Mentone; so that the news was not a complete surprise, nevertheless, when I received it, the sensation I experienced was so unusual that I can describe it in no other language than as "a blow." Without intending to forget that I was a visitor, I paused and became very pensive. Then there arose before my mind's eye the magnificent man, at whose feet I sat for two and a half years. I recalled that genial face as it looked into ours on those precious Friday afternoons, when from 3 till 5 every week, when well, he handed us the treasures of his own experience on "How to Study and How to Preach." And how happy we "boys" were in those golden days, when he sat, like a glad father, in the midst of adoring children. Memory also flashed up the unique scene of a solitary man preaching with wonderful power the blessed Gospel of Christ to a congregation of from six to seven thousand souls. And I said to myself can it be possible that that matchless voice will never fill the vast Tabernacle again? I had been cherishing the hope that not many years hence I would visit my native land, and once more clasp the hand that welcomed me to college; and hear the voice from which I learned so much of the Word and the work of God. But this sad news dashed all my hopes to the ground. For the chief attraction of a contemplated visit is gone.

But quickly these selfish thoughts forsook me, and another dear face was brought vividly before my mind. It was that of the noble woman who, for thirty-six years, the first day of last month, had been the light of his eyes and the joy of his home. The last time I gazed on her benignant countenance was in the fall of 1879. Mr. Spurgeon had invited the students to spend the afternoon at his then residence, on his lawn in Nightingale Lane, Clapham. Before we dispersed to enjoy the games provided for our pleasure he called us together for a little talk; when to our astonishment there was wheeled out in an invalid's chair his beloved wife, to form one of the audience. I shall never forget the pale face, yet so expressive of sweetness of spirit and intellectual culture, as our president introduced us boys to Mrs. Spurgeon. It was my last glimpse of the good and gracious woman. How well do I remember her little speech to us at the close of her husband's introduction. She said, "I am so glad when you come to our home, because it is the only occasion that I hear my dear husband speak in public." For thirty-five years she has been a great sufferer, though somewhat relieved by an operation performed by that noble Christian physician and surgeon—the late Sir James Y. Simpson; who loved Mr. Spurgeon so much, that when asked to come from Edinburgh to London to undertake the operation, he replied: "I will come, not as a doctor, but as a FRIEND." I heard afterwards that his doctor's fee would have been from five hundred to one thousand guineas.

And then I thought of his twin sons, Thomas and Charles, with whom I sat on the "apostles' benches" in their father's college. (They were two benches containing twelve sittings, which were filled by the votes of the brethren.) I knew how those boys revered their father, and how deeply they drank of his consecrated spirit. What a crushing blow to lose such a father as he! I know it will nearly break poor Tom's heart, for he has so much of the great preacher's emotional nature. Charles, doubtless, thought as much of the beloved one as his brother. How earnestly and fervently I prayed that day that the God of all comfort would comfort those three hearts in their great sorrow. As millions of hearts dwell on the bereavement, which all Christendom is called upon to endure, let them not forget in their daily visits to the throne, the crushed spirit of the noble woman who made Mr. Spurgeon's home a heaven on earth. Who shall say how much of his extraordinary success was due to his fellowship with her devout soul!

Then let us not forget his good old father, now in his eighty-second year, and his noble brother, James Archer Spurgeon; who, in addition to a large pastorate in Croydon, has superintended all the church business of the Tabernacle for the past twenty-five years. To-day five hundred orphaned boys and girls are mourning the loss of this good man, who was the only earthly father they knew. And nearly a thousand ministers trained in his college mourn the loss of a man who was their best earthly brother.

It seems unnatural to think of the Metropolitan Tabernacle without the great personality that preached from its platform, from 1861 to 1891, the glorious Gospel of the blessed God; and who, seven years before the Tabernacle was built, preached to the largest audiences in the world. But while the name of Spurgeon brings before us the greatest preacher since the Apostle Paul, it was reserved for those who personally knew him to understand how much of the child-nature contributed to his greatness.

I shall never forget an exhibition of this element at the end of my college course. At the close of his Friday afternoon "lectures to my students," he retired to a private room in the college building to be interviewed by the students for advice they might need. Desiring his counsel on a subject of some importance, I sought his aid. Knocking at the door, a familiar voice said, "Come in!" On my opening the door he said, "Well, Bro. Adams, what can I do for you? Come and sit down and tell me what you want." Then in an unofficial way he drew a chair to his side, in which I sat. And memory will never fail to recall that experience, for I at once felt as perfectly at home as if I had lived with him all my life. With a graceful ease the mighty man made the college boy feel that in him there was a great child-like heart, that brushed aside all thoughts of the personal greatness which had gathered about his name, and moved off from my spirit that feeling of awe which takes possession of us as we enter the presence of famous personages. His was indeed a most extraordinary soul, combining all the sweetness, simplicity, unsuspiciousness and truthfulness of a little child, and the firmness, fidelity, courage and heroism of true manhood. He was harmless as a dove and wise as a serpent; and the lion and the lamb never blended in more harmonious proportions in one spirit than that of Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

The most vivid reminiscence, among others, I can recall of an expression of the leonine element in his nature, was in a speech he delivered in the Tabernacle on one of the college anniversaries observed while I was there. Canon Farrar had just delivered a series of sermons on "The Eternal Hope," which so startled the religious world as to call forth a brilliant controversy on the subject, and to which the late Baldwin Brown contributed some clever articles. On that memorable evening Mr. Spurgeon stood forth as the champion of orthodoxy, and in the course of a vigorous speech, defending the evangelical faith, his mighty voice sent ringing through the building this verse of Scripture, "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned*," thus saith the Lord, whatever Canon So and So or anybody else may say to the contrary.

Whether he arraigned injustice, denounced wrongs, or assailed heresy, none of those attacked could say that there was any bad blood in his veins. Even in the "Down Grade Controversy," he exhibited no rancour towards any man. Though he exposed the evils of tampering with the Word of God, to the substitution of its doctrines by man's traditions, there was not a man in all the kingdom at whom he was angry. Through it all he preserved a beauty of temper, that made even his opponents stand still and admire. He fought as he believed for the truth of God, but never with any idea of slaying his antagonist. His keen eye readily detected honesty in an opponent, and with such he would readily cross swords; but any fawning and trimming friend soon felt the scornful contempt, which even his noble nature could not conceal.

Mr. Spurgeon was a great lover of mankind, and was far too noble to inflict intentional injury on even an opponent. His denunciations were always directed at evils, never at men. And he was as unsparing in the bestowment of proper praise for deeds that deserved it. While he did so little that justified reproof, and wrought so much that merited praise, I never knew a man on whom praise so completely palled. In fact he was so oblivious of self, that it always seemed a waste of time to praise him, for he never heeded it. It always pleased him to hear others praise the Great Master and to say nothing of His great servant.

I remember at one of the prayer-meetings held every Monday night in the Tabernacle, an illustration of this element in his nature. An American brother, who had got an introduction to Mr. Spurgeon on his visit, was asked to speak a word. In the course of his address he described the feelings he experienced the previous day as he sat in the Tabernacle gazing at the preacher for the first time. He said to himself, "Is this the man of whom I have heard so much from boyhood? Whose sermons have stirred my soul to its depths, and through which tens of thousands have been so greatly blessed?" He proceeded how he had read Mr. Spurgeon's sermons in the back-woods of America, and souls had thus been brought to the Saviour's feet. He carefully placed words of loving praise around the name of Spurgeon. I watched Mr Spurgeon's face and saw the tears of jow flowing from his eyes; and it was clear that he was oblivious of everything but the glad thought that souls had been saved, and the great Lord glorified. At the close of the American brother's address, Mr. Spurgeon gave out a hymn of praise to the great God, brushed aside the joyous tears and passed the eulogy by in silence. Such an exhibition of humility, in one so conspicuously great, it has not been the privilege of mortal man to look upon since the days of the apostle Paul.

There is no doubt that the frequent afflictions that befell him, personally and relatively, by God's spirit were so sanctified as to create in him great tenderness of spirit, and furnished him with spiritual ballast in his long and popular career. In the early years of his London ministry it was a common thing for him to preach from seven to ten times in a week. Though blessed with a heavy, thick-set physique and endowed with a marvellous degree of reserve and recuperative energy, yet it was no wonder that in such a prodigal use of his powers disease seized him early in his ministry. His grandfather suffered many years from the gout; whether invited or inherited this disease became the thorn in the flesh of Mr. Spurgeon. From this malady he suffered more than words can tell, especially during the London fogs. I believe this disease so enervated him that for many years every Sabbath day's preaching was followed by from twenty-four to forty hours pain.

Then consider the great affliction that befell his home when his dear wife became an invalid for life. What sympathy a sight of her sufferings would create in him! And what an educating force her unmurmuring resignation to her painful lot would be to his spirit, not only for a month, or a year, but for thirty years. I remember hearing him preach one Sabbath morning, being his first appearance in the pulpit after a considerable sickness, I think of about six weeks. His text, was John 13:7: "Jesus answered and said unto him, what I doest thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter." The title of that sermon in its published form was "The Unknown Ways of Love." I can now see him leaning on the pulpit rail, with the marks of suffering in his face and tones of sympathy quivering in his voice, speaking words of strong comfort to those who were in any form of trouble. No man could touch the fountains of emotions as he did, who had been a learner in the school of suffering. If the Lord loveth whom he chasteneth, Charles H. Spurgeon was greatly beloved of the Lord. But the fire never more completely purified gold, than did affliction refine the spirit of this true servant of God. These afflictions kept him humble before God, and dependent upon the believing prayers of his people.

Notwithstanding the vein of humor that pervaded his soul, he was the most spiritually-minded preacher, of the great preachers, since the days of the apostles. That vein of humor was not brass in him, but gold, for it was sanctified to the best of ends. He never lectured for money, like Beecher or Talmage; nor did he ever preach for personal fame. He felt that he was one of the Lord's stewards, and everything that came into his hands, whether salary from his church, profits on his writings, or contributions from the public, all was devoted to the Master's service. For the glory of Christ was the sole object of his life, and this I believe to be the key to his phenomenal success.

As a preacher, he took his stand January, 1854, in the great metropolis, and for thirty-eight years he stood without a compeer. The early part of Mr. Beecher's ministry in Brooklyn was the nearest approach to a rival, but the latter part of the great American's ministry was such a departure from the work of a Gospel preacher, as to destroy his right to comparison with Mr. Spurgeon. And no man who has heard the eminent preacher who is popular in Brooklyn, to-day (Dr. Talmage), think him worthy of being placed beside the great Tabernacle preacher. In the history of preaching Mr. Spurgeon was the greatest marvel of ancient and modern times. In this age of novelty and love of change, it must be regarded as the most extraordinary accomplishment of a human being; who, without organ, or choir, or attraction of ritualistic or architectural character, held together for thirty-eight years five to seven thousand people, by the simple might of Gospel preaching.

As an author, it is doubtful if any preacher can be compared with him in the number, value, and influence of his works. Over one hundred volumes have been issued by his publishers, eighty-five of which were entirely the product of his own brain. Among these are thirty-eight annual volumes of his sermons. That a preacher should have issued a discourse weekly for thirty-seven years is certainly unique; and is unprecedented in the history of literature. And Mr. Spurgeon had in his library some of his own productions which had been translated into sixteen languages, sent to him from different parts of the world.

As a philanthropist, his like can not be found the world over. His great college work, by which he has trained nearly a thousand men, who have gone into all parts of the world as heralds of the cross, would have stamped him as a great man, if he had done nothing else. But a catalogue of the other institutions he founded is so long as to make it impossible for me here to name them all. But his orphanage of five hundred boys and girls; costing in 1890, $60,000 to feed, clothe and educate, including the expenses of matrons and teachers; colportage work, by which he sends ninety godly men into the religiously destitute parts of England and Wales, preaching, praying, and distributing Christian literature as they go; his alms houses for twenty aged Christian women; the twenty mission halls for many miles around his Tabernacle, which are centres of Christian benevolence among the poor; his missionary society, by which many brethren are supported in foreign lands, and more than twenty other separate societies for the spread of truth, the checking of intemperance, the relief of the poor; all bespeak for him the first place among Christian philanthropists of the nineteenth century, and all centuries.

Had Mr. Spurgeon been a preacher only, ten thousand souls baptized into the fellowship of the Tabernacle church would have crowned him the greatest preacher of his time.

Had he been an author only, he would have stood first as the most powerful religious writer of the day.

Had he been only a philanthropist, the results of this department of his labors give him the right to number one on the list of the workers in this field of Christian toil.

Look at him from what standpoint you will, he was truly a great man; but judging by the monuments of all his toils, he certainly was the greatest man among men that have lived since the days of Paul.

Finally, this kingly man ever bore an unsullied reputation. Whatever evil reports the devil's spies brought up in print, proved themselves untruthful and rebounded to the shame of their fabricators. The purity of his personal life and the sanctity of his model home life, were always beyond reproach. And this transparency of character (secured by fidelity to the Christ he loved and lived for), invited and retained for a period of thirty-eight years the esteem, love and confidence of the greatest number of Christian friends, all over the world, that one man ever had. To his nearest and dearest friends Mr. Spurgeon was a profound mystery, for he proved himself to be the most myriad-minded man of the past eighteen centuries. He possessed a voice that could make twenty thousand persons hear distinctly every word. He had a marvellous mind for managing men and means, and his executive ability was easily the equal of any premier that ever lived. His mental endowments were keenly analytic, taking in the whole situation at a glance; swallowing the contents of a whole volume with rapid ease; pigeon-holeing every kind of knowledge that came to hand for quick appropriation, and, withal, possessing capacity for work that was simply elephantine. His like cannot be found in history. He stands alone the marvel of the ages, and our tiny faith presumes that another great soul like his will never again be enshrined in a mortal frame.

"Gone from our gaze, like a glorified vision,
Passed to the home where the ransomed ones dwell;
Like a bright seraph, thy spirit has risen
Fondly, but sadly we bid thee farewell.
Fadeless thy fragrance, though aught else may perish,
Crowned by the laurels thy conquests have won;
Tender and truly thy memory we'll cherish,
Always remembered BY WHAT THOU HAST DONE.

Oh, let thy mantle of eloquent pleading
Fall on some spirit devoted to God;
So may they labor with souls interceding,
Winning them back to the path thou hast trod.
Loyal like thee, may they toil on while living,
Sinking to rest like a bright setting sun;
Faithful and fruitful, their best talents giving,
Ever remembered BY WHAT THEY HAVE DONE."

When Inspiration is Gone, What?

BY REV. B. F. SIMPSON.

This question is not asked as assuming that the Christian doctrine of inspiration is to be given up entirely. It *is* asked in view of the fact that some are assuming that to-day, and are taking it for granted that when formal theories of inspiration are gone the Scriptures will have no authority, and must be relegated to out-of-the-way corners of antiquarian libraries. Is that the logical conclusion of the matter?

No dogma of the Christian church has been so persistently opposed, nor so persistently defended as that of the inspiration of the Bible. This fact is indicative of two things: (1) That this dogma is based upon fact, and (2) That the dogmatic statement of the fact has been imperfectly given. These suppositions account for the fact that the Bible still holds its place as an inspired book, and also for the other fact that opposition to formulated theories of inspiration still remains, and is as relentless as ever.

THEORIES OF INSPIRATION.

It is well understood that the more rigid theories of inspiration which have been formulated by the church are of comparatively recent origin. The writers of the Bible, themselves, have very little to say about inspiration. They do affirm that their message is true, and for the most part, they let the matter rest there. Neither the Apostolic Fathers nor the church Fathers, nor even the Reformers held any such theories of mechanical or verbal inspiration, as came into vogue in the post-reformation period.

These theories of inspiration were produced by peculiar circumstances. They may be said to have had a polemic origin. They were devised as an off-set to arguments which attempted to destroy the authority of the Bible altogether. They were special expedients invented and used to meet special exigencies in the church's life. That they had a use under these peculiar conditions no one cares to deny; but that they have a similar value or serve any similar purpose to-day many do emphatically deny. The methods of attack on the Sacred Scriptures to-day are of a different kind, and come from a different direction, and need to be off-set by a different means of defence. Formal theories of inspiration are looked upon with a good deal of suspicton to-day.

To some this means the denial of any inspiration in the Bible, and its practical abandonment as an authority in matters of religious teaching. They are unable to accept inspiration as a fact unless they can explain what it is in formal statement. They will not accept any influence of the divine mind on writers of holy writ unless they can explain the process by which the divine does influence the human. They must know that the Bible is the very word of God. They must know that the very forms in which its thought is uttered, its words, are all divine. They must know, too, that process by which God communicated Himself to men; or else they will have nothing to do with the book that claims to be a guide in matters of spiritual wisdom.

Others take a very different view of the situation. They look on with great calmness as they behold long-established theories as to the mode of inspiration passing away. They believe in inspiration; that is, they believe that the Bible is a God-given book, but they do not profess to know the process by which He wrought upon the mind of the human writer in giving us that book. They do not presume to analyze and explain God's processes in anything. They recognize an element of mystery as always present at that point where Deity and humanity come into contact with each other. They hold it to be presumption to say that we must know, at any point, the process by which God acts or else deny His activity altogether. They look upon human theories as to the method of inspiration as, for the most part, calculated to hamper and narrow our view of the real word of God.

Moreover these same persons do recognize a human element in the divine Word. They know of no way that God could reveal Himself to men except through a human medium. They recognize in both the written word and the incarnate word a revelation of God wrought out in the form and experience of human life. They recognize this dual characteristic of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. They see God's thought clothed in human language, and wrought out through human experience. They see there divine wisdom and instruction as applied to human life, and conveyed to us through human agents; and they are thus assured of its adaptation to all human experience, and human need at all times. This view, to them, is no detraction from the value of the Bible. It is rather the enrichment of this book in which God and men meet and mutually recognize each other.

But there is yet another class of men who are differently affected by this unsettlement of old views. Perhaps they have, formerly, assumed that some mechanical theory represented all there was of inspiration—all there was of any value in the Bible. They are now convinced that in the light of present investigation these old theories have become untenable and they follow to its desperate conclusion the principle enunciated by the advocates of verbal inspiration, that if verbal inspiration goes the Bible must go with it. This is the class of people to whom the title of this article is addressed. We submit that their conclusion is too radical, and is not warranted by the facts of the case. We ask such persons candidly to view the situation and see if the Bible has not some value for them, and has not some legitimate claims upon them if they cannot form a definite theory of its inspiration, or even if they must, for the present, reject any belief in an inspired book. For them inspiration has gone, but we claim the privilege of asking this one more question: When inspiration *is* gone what remains?

INSPIRATION GONE, THE BOOK REMAINS.

One thing is certain, the Book remains. The Bible is here, and it looks as though it was here to stay. As a book, as a literary production, it has qualities which will insure a permanent interest in it whatever may be our theory of its origin. Almost every book has some value. In our large libraries there are books old and new that are seldom read. But there is perhaps scarcely one book in any such collection that is not of interest to somebody or that will not at sometime be called for. Don't throw away the Bible. You may want to refer to it sometime. Keep it for its library worth. That it has high literary value all will concede.

ITS HISTORY REMAINS.

Another thing is worth keeping in mind, even by him who has rejected all views of inspiration. The Bible is a book of history. Its historical value will not be questioned even by the more radical historical critics. They may change the order of some of the books. They may drop out some portions that we should like to preserve, but their judgment of the Book as a whole will sustain its authenticity and its reliability as a historical document. What a field of history we then have here! It is the most ancient of all authentic records. Its history of one particular people is an epitome of the history of all peoples; it is the history moreover of a people whose life and thought have profoundly influenced all modern progress and civilization. The intelligent man will not dare to ignore history to-day. Whatever may be our theories in regard to evolution, the fact remains that the idea of evolution is regnant in human thought to-day. And this idea is revolutionizing our educational processes, and is giving to historic studies a prominence unknown in other times. As a historical document the Bible has claims on him who has lost faith in its inspiration. On this ground it is worthy of being preserved, and it would be a very unscholarly act, to say the least, to quite ignore it or to relegate it to the limbus of wornout and obsolete literature.

THE PERSONAL CHRIST REMAINS.

But with the historical character of the Bible acknowledged and established, it will at once appear that its record of facts is decidedly unique. Leaving out the larger part of the book for the present, let us look at this four-fold life of Christ, recorded for us by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Is this authentic history? Do these men speak that which they do know or testify that which they have seen? Are these records of such a character that we can rely upon them as stating historical facts? It will be generally conceded to-day that they are. But is this not an extraordinary series of facts? Let us look at this hero of the Gospel narrative. We have, first of all, a supernatural birth. We have an irreproachable and an unapproachable character. We have the record of works which are inexplicable from a human point of view. We have principles enunciated, of an ethical and religious nature, which anticipated the progress of the intervening time and are the despair of the moralists and religionist of to-day. We have the record of a death which with its accompanying circumstances is a manifestation of the supernatural. We have a resurrection which is the miracle of miracles, and which is as fully attested as any historical event can be. Now these things are surely matters of history. Their reliability as facts is in no way affected by our theories of inspiration or of no-inspiration. They have the simple but sufficient authority of truth. That is all their writers claim for them. We need not urge any further claim. But these facts have an apparent supernatural basis, and on a basis of unquestionable history they establish all that any one needs to claim as to the supernatural character of the Christian religion.

OTHER THINGS REMAIN.

Other similar facts could easily be added. There is, preceding the events mentioned, a line of prophecies whose fulfillment is evident of their supernatural character. There are the wonderful manifestations of the day of Pentecost. There is the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. There is the church itself as a factor in this great world's history, waiting to be accounted for. But there is no need to multiply examples. This much we must admit, that the fact of a supernatural revelation, independent of any theory of inspiration, must maintain its hold on all candid minds and must retain the authority which its intrinsic merit demands. He who speaks truth always speaks with authority, and the special truths of the Biblical record have an interest and a force which is peculiarly their own.

Then let those disturbed souls whose pet theories of inspiration are vanishing and who are about to say adieu to their Bibles, be calmed, be restrained. Their theory was only an assumption—perhaps, a presumption. But the Bible remains intact. *Manet immota fides.* If this record is not so much a revelation *from* God as it was formerly, in the broader perspective of its historical character and interpretation, it is becoming every day a more real and a more complete revelation *of* God. It has also acquired a new human interest, and now, more strongly than ever, will it command the recognition of every honest, intelligent student and more and more will it endear itself to the heart of every son of man who obtains a rational understanding of its contents.—*Standard.*

[Since writing the above my eye has fallen on these beautiful and expressive lines, which so accord with my own feeling that I sub-join them here. The lines are by John Campbell Shairp:

I have a life with Christ to live,
But ere I live it, must I wait
Till learning can full answer give
Of this or that book's date?
I have a life in Christ to live,
I have a death in Christ to die,
And must I wait till science give
All doubts a full reply?

Nay, rather, while the sea of doubt
Is raging wildly round about.
Questioning of life and death and sin,
Let me but creep within
Thy fold, oh Christ! and at Thy feet
Take but the lowest seat,
And hear Thine awful voice repeat,
In gentlest accents, heavenly sweet,
"Come unto Me and rest:
Believe Me and be blest."

B. F. S.

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