

The Christian Visitor.

A FAMILY NEWS PAPER: DEVOTED TO RELIGIOUS AND GENERAL INTELLIGENCE

REV. I. E. BILL,

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth Peace, good will toward Men."

EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR

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Specimens of Mr. Spurgeon's Style of Preaching.

The following extract taken from one of Mr. Spurgeon's Sermons, as given in the "New Park Street" and "Penny Pulpit," published weekly by Alabaster and Passmore, and J. Paul, will convey to the reader a general idea of the character of Mr. Spurgeon's ordinary style of preaching.

THE PENITENT'S CONFESSION.

"I have sinned."—LUKE XV. 18.

Oh, here is a blessed confession! Here is that which proves a man to be a regenerate character—"Father, I have sinned." Let me picture the scene. There is the prodigal; he has run away from a good home and a kind father, and he has spent all his money with harlots, and now he has none left. He goes to his old companions, and asks them for relief. They laugh him to scorn. "Oh," says he, "you have drunk my wine many a day; I have always stood paymaster to you in all our revelries; will you not help me? Get you gone," they say; and he is turned out of doors. He goes to all his friends with whom he has associated, but no man gives him anything. At last a certain citizen of the country said—"You want something to do, do you? Well, go and feed my swine." The poor prodigal, the son of a rich landowner, who had had a great fortune of his own, has to go out to feed swine; and he is a Jew, too!—the worst employment (to his mind) to which he could be put. See him there, in squalid rags, feeding swine; and what are his wages? Why, so little that he would faint have filled his belly with the husks the swine eat, but no man gave to him. Look, there he is, with the fellow commoners of the sty, with all his mire and filthiness. Suddenly a thought, put there by the good Spirit, strikes his mind. "How is it," says he, "that in my Father's house there is bread enough to spare, and I perish with hunger? I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me one of thy hired servants." Off he goes. He begs his way from town to town. Sometimes he gets a lift on a coach perhaps, but at other times he goes trudging his way up barren hills, and down desolate vales all alone. And now at last he comes to the hill outside the village, and sees his father's house down below. There it is: the old poplar tree against it, and there are the stacks around where he and his brother used to run and play, and at the sight of the old homestead all the feelings and associations of his former life rush upon him, and tears run down his cheeks, and he is almost ready to run away again. He says, "I wonder whether father's dead. A dreary mother broke her heart when I went away; I always was her favourite. And if they are either of them alive, they will never see me again; they will shut the door in my face. What am I to do?—I cannot go back, I am afraid to go forward." And while he was thus deliberating, his father had been walking on the housetop looking out for his son; and though he could not see his father, his father could see him. Well, the father comes down stairs with all his might, runs up to him, and whilst he is thinking of running away, his father's arms are around his neck, and he falls to kissing him, like a loving father indeed, and then the son begins—"Father, I have sinned against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son," and he was going to say, "Make me one of thy hired servants." But his father puts his hand on his mouth—"No more of that," says he; "I forgive you all; you shall not say anything about being a hired servant—I will have none of that. Come along," says he; "come in, poor prodigal. Now," says he to the servants, "bring hither the best robe, and put it on him, and put shoes on his poor bleeding feet; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat and be merry: for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry." Oh, what a precious reception for one of the chief of sinners! Good Matthew Henry says, "His father saw him, there were eyes of mercy; he ran to meet him, there were legs of mercy; he put his arms around his neck, there were arms of mercy; he kissed him, there were kisses of mercy; he said to him—there were words of mercy—'Bring hither the best robe, there were deeds of mercy, wonders of mercy—all mercy. Oh, what a god of mercy he is!'" Now, prodigal, you do the same. Has God put it into your heart? There are many who have been running away a long time—Does God say "return?" Oh, I bid you return, then, for as surely as ever, though you do not return, he will take thee in. There never was a poor sinner yet who came to Christ, whom Christ turned away. If he turn you away you will be the first. Oh, if you would but try him. "Ah, sir, I am so black, so filthy, so vile." Well, come along with me—you cannot be blacker than the prodigal. Come to your Father's house, and as surely as he is God he will keep his word—"Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

Oh, if I might hear that some of you had come to Christ this morning, I would indeed bless God. I must tell here, for the honor of God and Christ, one remarkable circumstance, and then I have done. You will remember that one morning I mentioned the

case of an infidel who had been a scorner and scoffer, but who, through reading one of my printed sermons, had been brought to God's house, and then to God's feet. Well, last Christmas day, the same infidel gathered together all his books, and went into the market place at Norwich, and there made a public recantation of all his errors, and a profession of Christ, and then taking up all his books which he had written, and had in his house, on evil subjects, burned them in the sight of the people. I have blessed God for such a wonder of grace as that, and I pray that there may be many more such, who, though they may be born prodigal will yet return home saying, "I have sinned."

"A Sort of Spurgeonism."

Dissenters will universally rejoice to see the Church of England again aroused to imitate their most useful efforts. To Nonconformity the Church owes the rise, within her pale, of a numerous evangelical ministry, her Bible and missionary societies, her Sunday schools, and her increased interest in general education; and to dissent she now owes the present attempt of some of the best of her sons to go to meet those who will not come to join in her services. In the metropolis, and in several towns in the kingdom, Dissenters—amongst whom Baptists, we are thankful to observe, have been prominent—have met the working classes for worship in halls, mechanics' institutes, and other perfectly unsectarian places, and everywhere, we believe the success has been complete. Here, in London, the unparalleled success of the youthful minister of New Park-street Chapel, at Exeter Hall first, and of late at the Music Hall in the Surrey Gardens, has drawn the attention of all who take any interest in religion and even in public movements. That spacious building is now the resort every Sunday both of a string of carriages such as is seen at no other place of worship, and of thousands of our operatives who have hitherto worshipped nowhere at all. From the duke and duchess to the wearer of the fustian jacket, an interest is awakened by a service which comes out of church and chapel walls, which throws off all formality both in the worship and the preaching, and which adapts itself with entire freedom to the wants of the promiscuous multitude—an interest which is not, and will not, be kindled by the less free and impassioned, the more regular and dignified, services of our ordinary places of worship.

Lord Shaftesbury and some excellent clergymen of the Church of England have nobly cast aside the prejudices of their class, and thrown themselves into the new movement. They are all of them, we believe, men of the piety to rejoice in the success of Mr. Spurgeon; and, not of contention and strife, but of love, to imitate a mode of preaching the Gospel which he has proved to be successful. They have, "under the sanction of the Bishop of London, and of the Incumbent of the parish," hired Exeter Hall for a series of "Special Services" on Sunday evenings, to be conducted by some of the most popular evangelical preachers in the Church. The arrangements are very good. The names of the preachers are advertised in a very large placard for some time to come; regular attendants on worship are requested not to come, the services not being designed for them; and it is specially announced that there are "no reserved seats." The hymns to be sung, and the Litany, with a few other prayers, are supplied to all who enter, and tracts distributed to them as they leave the place.

Though in a certain sense warned away, we assumed that in the fulfilment of our editorial duties we must be welcome; and at six o'clock, accordingly, last Sunday evening, we joined the dense stream of human beings which half-an-hour before the time of service was flowing into the building. By half-past six it was full in every part, even the standing-room occupied; the clergyman, the Rev. W. Cadman, of St. George's, in the Borough, entered in his black gown and cassock, and the organ began. Looking around, it appeared evident, we thought, that a very large proportion of the audience were really working people; a few smock frocks and fustian jackets even were there; and on seats on the platform and side galleries, so frequently "reserved" and reserved on religious occasions too, we noticed some aged females in the homeliest attire. The sight was all that could be wished in regard to its object, and the humblest individual present must have felt that he was as welcome to a choice seat as the Earl of Shaftesbury, or any other of the aristocratic promoters of the effort. May not Dissenters learn something from this?

The worship began with singing very impressively the well-known hymn, "All hail the power of Jesus' name." Indeed nearly all the hymns are taken from our Dissenting hymn books. The third chapter of the Epistle to the Romans was then read; well read, but without comment. Then followed the Litany; and, to be candid, the thought did repeatedly occur to us, while it was most devoutly read and responded to, whether it might not form an occasional variety for our Dissenting services. Most heterodox it would seem to many; yet, if Evangelical Churchmen so often use our hymns of praise, why should we never avail ourselves of those beautiful, comprehensive, and touching forms of supplication which they have inherited from the devotion of past ages? Indeed they

are our inheritance as much as theirs; and few persons can have heard the Litany uttered from a heart which feels it, but must own that they rarely hear from Dissenting pulpits a series of petitions which every one present can so instantly and cordially appropriate. The murmur of response, too, is after all not ungrateful to a devout ear; on this occasion while there was an evident disposition to join in it, yet the manner of response seemed to indicate that the majority were unused to it. It was somewhat irregular and suppressed.

The whole introductory service, including two hymns, occupied thirty-five minutes. The sermon, which lasted just forty minutes, founded on Jer. xiii. 23, was thoroughly evangelical; and the preacher's powerful, yet solemn voice, and unaffectedly earnest manner, quite destitute as it was of the dramatic or the oratorical, imparted considerable weight to his remarks. The discourse was, perhaps, too exclusively theological, and too wanting in conversational racy expression, and in illustrations from common life, to be exactly the best adapted for the class invited: to the preacher's ordinary congregation it would be well suited. We fear, however, that few of our own Dissenting ministers have the courage, even when, as their platform speeches show, they have the ability, to follow Mr. Spurgeon in that thorough unbendingness which, in him, interests all classes.

Well, this is the "Sort of Spurgeonism" which Lord Dunsannon told the peers of the realm last Thursday he feared certain prelates and others were introducing into the Church of England. A little debate on "Spurgeonism in the Church," and worship in unconsecrated places, followed. The "Contents" on the noble lord's question had all their own way. The Bishop of London and Lord Kinaird adverted to the well-known and successful efforts of Mr. Spurgeon, and openly justified and commended the present attempt, amidst the cordial cheers of even the aristocratic and not easily moved peers. An attempt was made by a few to prevent, on a point of order, the Archbishop of Canterbury from speaking—but peer after peer insisted on his being heard. When he was heard, it was to enforce a briefly expressed sentiment which might be usefully remembered by some beyond the pale of the Establishment:—"He could not conceive anything more likely to injure the Church than the supposition that she would suffer from accommodating herself to the circumstances of the times, and he trusted the time might never come when the dignity of the Church of England was found incompatible with its utility." The legal question is, it seems, set at rest by Lord Shaftesbury's Act of last year, protecting Christian worship in places not duly consecrated.

It will be, indeed, matter for the deepest thankfulness to God, on the part of Mr. Spurgeon, if it should please a gracious Providence, not only to have blessed so remarkably his personal efforts, but to make him the indirect instrument of arousing our impassive State Church, and prompting her best members in this vast metropolis to novel and unwonted efforts for the salvation of the masses who neglect or dislike our usual worship. Twice in his prayers last Sunday, Mr. Spurgeon earnestly invoked the Divine blessing on the new movement in the Church of England; and all Christians will surely join him in praying for its success. May we express our hope that as "his zeal has provoked many" in the Church of England, it will not be without its influence on Dissenters. "A sort of Spurgeonism" needs to be introduced, in some quarters, into Dissent itself, as well as into the Church.—London Freeman.

Correspondence

For the Christian Visitor.

"Putting money in a bag with Holes."

—See Hag., I Chap.

Such is the propensity of poor, depraved human nature. The Jews laboured and erected for themselves convenient dwelling houses, to make themselves and families comfortable; but pleaded that they were too poor to build a sanctuary for the worship of God. How controlling is this spirit of self-gratification; and how fatal this self-deception? They were engaged in their avocations, and with diligence pursued their speculations; but it all came to naught. But why? Why, saith the Lord; "Because of this house of mine that layeth waste; and ye run every one into his own house." Thus we see an illustration of the truth of the proverb, "There is that which withholdeth more than is mete, and it tendeth to poverty." Trust, then, in the Lord, and do good. How much better for Christians would it be, if they would do their duty to the cause of religion, and enjoy the testimony of a good conscience, and the approbation of God, than indulging in a spirit of covetousness, a littleness of soul; and thereby provoking God to turn their blessings into a curse. They put their money in a bag with holes!

How many Judas' are there in the church, who betray their Master, by hoarding up hundreds a year, while their contributions to the cause of God are trifling. Let such remember, that though Judas had the sacc, and got the thirty pieces of silver; still the bag would not hold it; but it went to buy the

potter's field, and Judas "went out and hanged himself."

When we see the collector calling on a brother, who invites him into the best room, furnished with purple and scarlet hangings, mahogany sofas and chairs, a rich and costly carpet, and a centre-table covered with richly ornamented and profusely illustrated books of light reading, but who, when asked for a few pounds to pay his minister, who has labored for the good of his soul, and the souls of his beloved children, pleads poverty, and gives him nothing, or puts him off with a mere pittance merely, we say, that brother is "putting his wages in a bag with holes."

When we see a young lady decked out with a profusion of silks, flounces, rings, hoops and crinoline, who can spare but a trifle for the Female Benevolent Society, surely, we say, both she and her friends are "putting their wages in a bag with holes."

When we see young men leaving the society of the good and the modest, and like the prodigal, spending their substance in riotous living, bringing upon themselves poverty and shame; we mourn over their folly, as they are forsaking the fountains of living water, and hewing out unto themselves broken cisterns that can hold no water. Surely we can but say, these young men are "putting their money in a bag with holes."

When the house of God is neglected, in seasons of social and public worship, by church-members; when the minister of the Gospel "weeps between the porch and the altar," when by such inconsistent and unchristian conduct, the way of truth is evil spoken of, are not such persons incurring a fearful responsibility? for which God will hold them accountable in the day of judgment. Surely, we think, such professors of religion can never grow in grace; they are not laying up treasures in heaven; they cannot read their titles clear to mansions in the skies; are not rich in faith, rich in grace, nor rich towards God. No, they are "putting their money in a bag with holes."

God has a rod in the covenant; and when his children forsake him he will visit their iniquities with the rod and with stripes. Then, when he will take away his corn and wine—and recover his wool and flax, see Hosea 2nd chapter, that sinners in Zion will be afraid; and realize that they have been putting their wages in a bag with holes.

But, let all those characters look at this subject with reference to death and the judgment, and ask the question, What shall it profit man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? When like the rich man our souls be required of us, whose shall these things be? Not ours any longer. No! we have been all our days laboring and earning wages, to put it into a bag with holes.

D. N.

For the Christian Visitor.

MR. EDITOR:—An interesting Association has just closed its Session. The Western N. S. Baptist Association met at Hebron on Saturday, 13th June. Thirty-nine churches were represented by messengers and letters together with five new churches embracing a membership of 225 members. Total number of members including four churches, from which no information was received. Elder H. Ross represented the Eastern N. S., and Elder James Parker, the Central, N. S., Associations. Elder R. W. Cunningham, was chosen Moderator, but owing to ill health, declined serving, whereupon Elder George Armstrong, was chosen Moderator, and Elder J. V. Tabor, Secretary. A goodly number of ministers and delegates took seats as members of the Association. After the reading of the letters on Saturday, the usual business of appointing committees took place representing—Sabbath Schools, Sabbath Observance, State of Missions in N. S., including Gaelic, and French Missions, Temperance, Education, Religious Publications, and Colportage, Claims of Seamen, Questions in Letters, Bible Cause, Tobacco, and Foreign Missions. The Sabbath day services embraced an extensive circuit. Yarmouth Town, Goggin, Chebogue, Deerfield, Ohio, having ministers from the Association. A lively interest was enjoyed in the word preached. Rev. Dr. Tupper in his clear, lucid, and forcible style, preached the introductory sermon, on Monday, from I Cor. xv. 58.

The committee on the State of Missions, recommended one general society for Missions admitting appropriation of donors to their most favoured objects, but it met with opposition, and came to an exceedingly unnatural death, it being cast out without insertion in the minutes. This suffocating of a measure induced in one of the members of the Association, at least a strong inclination after a New Brunswick atmosphere. It is to be lamented that the Union Society has lost much of its popularity, and many churches contribute but a trifle of their indebted amounts. However the best organizations will fail unless they are kept before the churches. Your Quarterly meetings are indispensable to your success, but we live without them, and our public funds diminish accordingly, compared with our numerical progress, and monetary powers.

The French Mission has realized its first fruit in the person of an educated young lady, who was immersed by the Missionary on the 1st Sabbath in June. The prospects of the

* Additions by Baptism, 240. By letter, 85. By restoration, 14. Dismissed, 193. Expelled, 55. Died, 68. Remitted, 17. Revision of number of members, 62. Clear increase, 45.

Mission are favourable, excepting the failing health of the Missionary. It has a strong hold on the affections of the W. N. B. A.; the churches contributing in the Association nearly £100 towards the Mission, and house at no other exertion than a suggestion to give.

The Gaelic Missionary is hailed with much interest. This year he received a Mission of half a year from this Association. He is greatly encouraged. The French Mission is under the direction of its own Board; the Gaelic Missionary receives direction from the Domestic Mission Board now located in Bridgetown. His field of labour is Cape Breton.

The Domestic Mission is engrossing some deep attention. Elder T. C. Delong becomes its Missionary in Pulmed, Woods Harbour, and Barrington, and Bro. J. H. Saunders takes a Mission in Jordan Bay Church and surrounding places.

A deep interest is felt in Acadia College, so much as to demand full reports therefrom for the information of this Association. The Messenger is hailed as the unalienable right of N. S. Baptists, and dearly beloved. It is indeed the messenger of, and to, the churches. Colportage is not organized into any system here, but Bro. W. G. Goucher is performing a good work therein.

The claims of seamen are regarded, but system and co-operation is needed.

The Association on "The Bible Cause," sought to make the two societies equal in its report.

Tobacco has fared badly from the minister's mouths in this Association. Almost all have turned it out of doors, with a prohibition against its ever returning, and many of the private members have joined the rage of its extermination. I saw not a single smoke-cloud nor filthy quid during the Session.

The Foreign Mission money is this year self-directed, and not given to the direction of the Convention. It is devoted to the employing of native teachers, and building of Zayats in Henthadah, for our esteemed Arthur W. Crawley.

The next association is appointed to meet in Bridgetown, and the introductory sermon and Circular Letter to be received from Rev. J. C. Morse, and Rev. Dr. Tupper.

The amount of Funds for all purposes exceeded £400. Collections for Domestic Missions, during the Session £110 8s. 8d. The association was characterized with a spirit of religious cheerfulness, and harmonious action in general, and the Delegates and Ministers realizing the kindness of the 2nd Yarmouth Church and surrounding settlements, retired at the close of the Session with necessary attachment, anticipating a return of enjoyment in the forth coming Convention in Yarmouth Town.

I am Mr. Editor, affectionately,
J. V. TABOR.

ST. JOHN, June 20th, 1857.

No doubt the friends of the Bible Union would like to know how I succeeded in Canada last winter. I am happy to say, amidst the conflicting elements of opposition with which the Union has to contend, I succeeded well. I obtained a large number of new subscribers, and amongst the number five Baptist Ministers. There is a distinction between revision and translation, which is necessary for every age, to explain clearly to the people. I have found a great amount of misunderstanding completely removed by explaining this distinction, and pointing out the great advantage of a thorough revision of God's blessed word. I am fully persuaded, that any minister of the Gospel who reads Job, as revised by Dr. Conant, the splendid introduction and invaluable notes connected with the book, will derive immense benefit. If we can throw one ray of light on our present version, by rendering the original text more lucid, it is our duty as Christians to do so. God will smile on the humblest effort to advance the light of his word.

Yours truly,
JOHN ROWE.

Marine Department.

DEAR BROTHER:—Knowing that very few of your numerous readers ever see the "Sailor's Magazine," please insert a few passages from the June number, as they are fraught with interest to those who remember at the mercy sea, the men whose home is mostly on the flood.

E. N. H.

GROWTH OF THE SEAMEN'S CAUSE.

"As we look back to the time when the first Bethel Flag was unfurled in the port of London, and note how Christian hearts responded to the call from the ocean, as we see our own city catching the flame, and organizing in 1818 the "Society for promoting the Gospel among Seamen in the Port of New York," followed by similar movements in Boston and Philadelphia, in 1819; in Charleston, in 1822; in Portland, and New Orleans, in 1823; in Albany and Norfolk in 1824, with numerous others, both on the seaboard and in the interior, so that in six years about seventy societies were in operation, we are struck with the readiness with which, under God, the hearts of Christians awoke to this new call of benevolence. Onward the cause has gone, so that now the

most important ports along our whole coast, the Pacific included, have permanent provision for the sailor, and abroad at numerous stations he is hailed on his arrival by his best friend, the Chaplain, while the Bethel Flag has circumnavigated the globe, and is everywhere known as the signal calling to prayer and the service of God. These two-score years of labor in this ripe field have been rich in blessed fruits; on the sea in national and private vessels; in the Bethels, at home and abroad, in precious droppings of mercy; and in numerous instances large outpourings of the Divine Spirit, resulting in the conversion of whole crews, or a majority of them, to God. Thus, while other benevolent efforts have enjoyed the seal of Divine approval, the cause of the sailor has also been near the heart of the Master. We are constrained to say, and we do it thankfully and adoringly, "This is the Lord's doing and it is marvelous in our eyes."

PRINCIPLES AND METHODS OF OPERATION.

As almost an entire generation of the first laborers in this cause have gone to their reward, and a new one has succeeded upon whom the burden must rest, it seems proper to gather into a brief statement what experience has demonstrated respecting the principles and methods by which the work committed to us should be pursued, and which may now be regarded as the settled policy of this Society.

It is more and more manifest that the first aim of all our work is to bring the Gospel, in all its direct and indirect influences to bear upon the heart of the sailor. With this the work began under the full belief that the Gospel was "the power of God unto salvation" to every class, and as it has advanced, every year has furnished confirmation of this truth. Whatever may be the teachings of worldly wisdom, the Christian mind everywhere recognizes the Gospel as the true and most effectual elevator, and renovator, and saviour of men; and the church in all its branches would regard anything else as a strange doctrine. Accordingly this should be made a primary object in your work. Our seamen should be met everywhere with the Gospel, and our societies be both Domestic and Foreign Missionary Associations, as their work is both domestic and foreign. In every home port of sufficient importance the sailor should have his Bethel, and one to break to him the bread of life; and in foreign ports where he may chance to be, should have extended to him the warm hand of the sympathizing chaplain. It is true a wise Providence should control the selection of all points of labor at home and abroad, but with this kept in view the work itself should expand and increase in vigor as the wants of our rapidly growing commerce and its men require.

It has been demonstrated that every effort should be made to separate the sailor when on shore from the malign social influences which surround him. The fact forced itself very early upon the attention of those who labored in this cause, that a fearful barrier against all Gospel efforts was found in the vile places where the sailor made his home in port; that by ministering to his worst passions, and fostering the most beastly habits, they sadly diminished the prospect of doing him good. Hence the necessity of providing for him better boarding houses, out of which have grown up the Homes which to many a stranger and otherwise homeless one, have been a true sanctuary. In these retreats it is delightful to know that thousands have enrolled their names on the temperance record, and more delightful still may have entered the service of the Captain of salvation. These institutions, as far as possible, should be sustained and multiplied.

It has become manifest that there should be secured as far as possible a union and co-operation in our work among all the friends of the cause. The sailor, beyond almost all other men, is without any local residence, and like our commerce itself, has a national character. The work then of seeking his physical welfare, and the moral elevation of commerce, should be likewise a truly national work. It is believed that our progress therewith has been much retarded by the disconnected and scattered along the seaboard and upon inland waters have conducted their operations with little concert of knowledge of each other, so that nowhere has the cause come before the christian public in those imposing dimensions which its true character and importance demand. Our own society, estimated by the casual observer, according to the pittance reported of receipts and expenditures, is often thrust down to a secondary grade, on the scale of our great national charities, with the very erroneous inference following, that our wants and relative importance are equally small.

The Rev. Leigh Richmond was once conversing with a brother clergyman on the case of a poor man who had acted inconsistently with his religious profession. After some angry and severe remarks on the conduct of such persons, the gentleman with whom he was discussing the case concluded by saying, "I have no notion of such pretences. I will have nothing to do with him." "Nay, brother, let us be humble and moderate; remember who has said, 'making a difference.' With opportunity on the one hand, and Satan at the other, and the grace of God at neither, where shall you and I be?"