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*presents*

# LIFE AND WORKS OF REV. CHARLES H. SPURGEON

Being A Graphic Account of the Greatest Preacher of Modern Times:  
His Boyhood and Early Life;  
Wonderful Success in London;  
Preaching to Vast Audiences at the Crystal Palace, Surrey Music Hall and in the Open Air;  
Famous Metropolitan Tabernacle;  
Pastor's College, Orphanage, etc., etc.

CONTAINING  
Personal Anecdotes, Vivid Descriptions of his Appearance and Characteristics;  
Last Sickness and Death;  
Magnificent Tributes, etc., etc.

Embellished with Numerous Fine Illustrations.  
[Not included in this text only version.]

TO WHICH IS ADDED A  
VAST COLLECTION OF HIS ELOQUENT SERMONS,  
BRILLIANT WRITINGS, AND WITTY SAYINGS.

By

**HENRY DAVENPORT NORTHROP, D. D.,**

Author of "Earth, Sea and Sky," "Beautiful Gems," etc., etc.

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## PREFACE.

THIS volume contains a graphic account of the Life and Labors of Rev. C. H. Spurgeon. It portrays the brilliant career of the most celebrated preacher of modern times, his matchless eloquence, his tender pathos, his ready wit, and his wonderful mastery over the human heart.

It is an interesting narrative of Mr. Spurgeon's life, and is enriched with the choicest of his sermons and lectures, and with a large collection of extracts from his most famous writings.

This comprehensive volume is divided into three parts.

- Book I. contains the great preacher's history. It relates the incidents of his early life, shows you the boy preacher at the age of sixteen, and traces his marvellous successes in the great metropolis. It describes the immense Metropolitan Tabernacle and its vast throngs, whom were not only the poor and illiterate, but the most famous persons of the realm, including Gladstone, Bright, Shaftesbury, and multitudes of others.

Mr. Spurgeon was not merely a popular preacher; he was a sunny genial, witty, great-hearted man. He was bold as Luther or Knox, yet possessed deep sympathies, fiery zeal, loving charity, and carried on many enterprises for the welfare of the poor and unfortunate. This work describes his College, where hundreds of poor young men were educated, and his Orphanage, which sheltered thousands of homeless children.

His last, lingering illness; the religious world watching at his bedside; the eagerness with which reports were awaited; his removal to the south of France in hope of recovery; and the final scene when he breathed his last, and both hemispheres were startled by the news, all are depicted in this volume.

- Book II. contains Mr. Spurgeon's most celebrated sermons and lectures. These are plain, pithy, expressed in vigorous Saxon, and go right to the heart. Young and old alike are interested in them. He was a master of the art of illustration, and had the rare faculty of making use of the scenes, facts and incidents he met with in his ordinary every-day life. There is, therefore, scarcely a dull page in his sermons or writings. He always had something practical and interesting to say, which secured for him a multitude of hearers and readers.
- Book III. comprises a very interesting collection of witty, wise, pathetic, eloquent extracts from the famous preacher's writings. These are illustrated, and are very captivating. Gems from the Spurgeon "Note-Book," quaint sayings of "John Ploughman," beautiful figures and weighty moral lessons, enrich this volume.

Mr. Spurgeon's death removes the most conspicuous figure in the religious world, and one of the most remarkable men of his time. His deeds will live after him. His noble record is made. Whatever monument of bronze or marble may be erected to his memory, his finest tribute will be the glowing

words he spoke, the myriads of souls he moved, the grand battle he fought and the brilliant achievements which cannot die.

**BOOK I.**  
**Rev. C. H. Spurgeon: The Story of His Life and Labors.**

**CHAPTER I.**  
**Birth and Ancestry.**

World-wide Fame.-- Unprecedented Success.-- The Great Preacher's Ancestors.-- Good Old Grandfather.-- Pen-picture of a Country Minister.-- Buckled Shoes and Silk Stockings.-- John, Father of Charles.-- A Good Mother.-- Reply of "Charley" to his Mother.-- Country Boys.-- Household Influence.-- Thirst for Knowledge.-- An Industrious Youth.-- A Remarkable Prophecy.-- "Old Bonner."

THE fame of Rev. C. H. Spurgeon has filled the world. His name is known among all civilized peoples, and his sermons translated into many languages. No other man of modern times preached to such multitudes of people; no other possessed a combination of gifts so rare. If success is the standard of merit, the great London preacher was the Saul among the prophets, standing head and shoulders above others.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon descended from the Essex branch of the same family. Early in his ministry in London, he was introduced, at a book-store in Paternoster Row, to Mr. John Spurgeon, a descendant of the Norwich branch of the family; and on comparing notes of their respective ancestors, piety, uprightness, and loyalty were found alike in both. The same spirit of religious intolerance which sent the immortal Bunyan to Bedford Jail for preaching the gospel also sent, in 1677, Job Spurgeon to Chelmsford Jail, where, for conscience' sake, he lay on a pallet of straw for fifteen weeks, in extremely severe winter weather, without any fire.

The great-grandfather of Pastor Spurgeon was contemporary with the opening period of the reign of King George III. The record preserved of his memory is, that he was a pious man, and ordered his household according to the will of God. From that day to this, the family has never wanted a man to stand before God in the service of the sanctuary.

**A Good Old Grandfather.**

James, the grandfather of Pastor C. H. Spurgeon, was born at Halstead, in Essex, September 29, 1776. As a boy he was seriously inclined, and whilst yet a youth became a member of the Independent church at Halstead. Whilst an apprentice at Coggeshall he was accepted as a member of the church there under the pastoral care of the Rev. S. Fielding. Following business pursuits till he was twenty-six years of age, his mind at that period was directed entirely to the work of the ministry, and in 1802 he entered Hoxton Academy. After two years' study, an application from Clare, in Suffolk,

was made to him to try and raise a congregation which was very low; and in this he succeeded so far, that in September, 1806, he was appointed pastor, and the church prospered under his pastorate.

The protracted ministry of Mr. Beddow in the Independent church at Stambourne, in Essex (a church which had only four ministers during the course of two hundred years), having terminated in 1810, Mr. Spurgeon received a unanimous call to the oversight of that church, which he accepted, and in May, 1811, he was recognized as their pastor. Himself the fourth of a succession of long-lived pastors in that village, he remained pastor over the church more than half a century, during which period he was peaceful, happy, and successful in his labors. He frequently remarked, when more than fourscore years old, "I have not had one hour's unhappiness with my church since I have been over it." Invitations from other churches were sent to him, but the love, harmony, and prosperity which prevailed between pastor and people induced him to decline them all, and he remained true to the people of his choice.

### **Pen-picture of a Country Minister.**

It is a recorded fact, worthy of perpetuation, that the venerable James Spurgeon never preached in any place away from his own church, but God fulfilled his promise, and gave him to hear of some good being done to persons in the congregation. He had a large head, and much that was good in it. He had a good voice, and was very earnest and practical in preaching the glorious truths of the gospel. The great usefulness of his life-long ministry will be known only in eternity. He was known widely in Essex as a man of the old school-- staid, quiet, and uniform in his dress and habits. He was the very picture of neatness, and in many particulars resembled John Wesley, especially in his manners and stature. He wore a dress cravat, a frilled shirt, and had a vest with deep pockets, as if provided for large collections. He was seldom without a packet of sweets, which he gave generously to the children wherever he went, so that they gathered round him and attached themselves to him with a firmness which riper years did not shake.

### **Last Days.**

He was always happy in the company of young people. He wore the breeches, buckled shoes, and silk stockings which marked the reign of George III., and he really looked to be a venerable Nonconformist minister of a past age. For more than half a century his life corresponded with his labors. His gentle manners, his sincere piety, and his uniformity of conduct secured for him the good will of his neighbors, and he was as friendly with the parochial clergymen as with his attached Nonconformist friends. He often went to the parish church to hear the sermon when the prayers were over, especially when the cause of missions was to be advocated.

He was blessed with a wife whose piety and useful labors made her a valuable helpmeet to her husband in every good word and work. In his last illness he was sustained by divine grace, and the desire he had so often expressed, that he might speak of Christ on his dying bed, was granted to him. He said the gospel was his only hope; he was on the Eternal Rock, immutable as the throne of God. Those who were privileged to witness his departure from earth will never forget his joy and peace,

and the glorious prospect he had of heaven.

### **The Senior Spurgeon.**

John Spurgeon, the father of Charles, was born at Stambourne in 1811. He was the second of ten children. He was a portly-looking man, a good specimen of a country gentleman, and was nearly six feet in height. For many years he was engaged in business at Colchester; but, with so excellent an example of a minister as was his father, it is not strange that his mind should have run in the same direction, though he did not fully enter on the ministry till he had reached the prime of life. For sixteen years he preached on Sundays to a small Independent church at Tollesbury, being occupied with business during the week. He next accepted a call to the pastorate of the Independent church at Cranbrook, Kent, a village of three thousand persons, where he remained five years.

The popularity of his son Charles in London was not without its influence on the father, whose personal worth and whose ministerial ability were not unknown in the metropolis, as he had spoken occasionally at meetings held by his son. The pastorate of the Independent church in Fetter Lane, Holborn, became vacant, and was offered to and accepted by Mr. Spurgeon; but his stay there was not long. A sphere more in accordance with his years and position was offered and accepted by him, and for time he was pastor of the Independent church worshipping in the Upper Street, Islington. That position he resigned at the end of the year 1876. He did good work in that locality, and much beloved by the people. His preaching was plain, earnest, and pointed, and he manifested affectionate solicitude for all under his pastoral care, especially the people.

### **A Good Mother.**

There are many large places of worship in the locality, and preachers of distinction are numerous in that populous suburb; but even there Mr. Spurgeon gathered a large and important congregation twice on the Sabbath, to whom his preaching was both acceptable and beneficial. The various branches of church work were carried on with energy and fidelity; and those which required female agency were fostered and watched over with affectionate solicitude by Mrs. [Eliza] Spurgeon, whose motherly affection secured for her a welcome in the families of the church. Mr. John Spurgeon has passed to his reward.

Mrs. John Spurgeon the youngest sister of Charles Parker Jervis, Esq., of Colchester, in which town her husband carried on business for many years. Wherever she has resided she has been known and esteemed for her sincere piety, her great usefulness and humility. She is low in stature, and in this respect her son Charles takes after her, but not in features, in which particular the other son, James Archer Spurgeon, assimilates more to his mother. The prayerful solicitude with which she trained her children has been rewarded by each one of them making a public profession of their faith in Christ. Two of her sons occupy foremost places in the metropolis as preachers of the gospel; and one of her daughters, the wife of a minister, not only assists her husband in the preparation of his sermons, but occasionally delivers addresses to small audiences.

Speaking one day to her son Charles of her solicitude for the best interests of all her children, Mrs. Spurgeon said,

"Ah, Charley, I have often prayed that you might be saved,  
but never that you should become a Baptist."

To this Charles replied,

"God has answered your prayer, mother,  
with His usual bounty,  
and given you more than you asked."

Both Mr. and Mrs. Spurgeon made great sacrifices of personal comfort to give a good education to their children, and the children were taught habits of thrift and self-denial. The care thus bestowed on their training when young has been to the parents a source of much satisfaction; the good results of that care are manifested in the happy home lives of their children. When, at some future period, the historian of the Metropolitan Tabernacle and of the Stockwell Orphanage is considering the primary causes of those great enterprises, the care which Mrs. Spurgeon bestowed on the early training of her family must be counted as a valuable auxiliary in preparing the way for such exemplary conduct.

### **The Country Boys.**

The villages of England, more than the towns, have the honor of producing our great men. In the village the faculties develop themselves as nature forms them, while in the large towns a thousand delusive influences are continually diverting the minds of the young into channels of danger and error. The parents of Pastor Spurgeon were residing at the village of Kelvedon, in Essex, when on June 19, 1834, their son Charles was born. The population of the place is only two thousand souls, and the resident clergyman, at the time just stated, the Rev. Charles Dalton, lived long enough to celebrate his jubilee as minister in that parish. The Spurgeon family belonged to the Nonconformists, under whose teaching they were all brought up. Charles and James Spurgeon were much separated during their early years. Charles was of a larger and broader build than James, and the boys of the village are said to have given them names designative of character, which also indicated friendship or attachment. Charles had as a boy a larger head than his brother, and he is represented as taking in learning more readily than James, whilst the latter excelled more in domestic duties. Besides the brothers there are six sisters living, two of whom are said to resemble Charles in mental energy.

### **Household Nurture.**

As the children were growing up, the father, like many professional and public men, feared his frequent absence from home would interfere with the religious education of the little ones. But happily for him he had a true helpmeet to co-operate with him in this important work, and happily for those children they had a noble mother who lived for them, and sought to build them up in true Christian character. Nor has she lived unrewarded for her pains. Oh, that all mothers learned the lesson well! Hear the good man speak thus of his wife:

"I had been from home a great deal, trying to build up weak congregations, and felt that I was neglecting the religious training of my own children while I was toiling for the good of others. I returned home with these feelings. I opened the door and was surprised to find none of the children about the hall. Going quietly upstairs, I heard my wife's voice. She was engaged in prayer with the children; I heard her pray for them one by one by name. She came to Charles, and specially prayed for him, for he was of high spirit and daring temper. I listened till she had ended her prayer, and I felt and said, 'Lord, I will go on with Thy work. The children will be cared for.'"

### **The Diligent Youth.**

When just old enough to leave home, Charles was removed to his grandfather's house at Stambourne, where, under the affectionate care of a maiden aunt, and directed by the venerable pastor, he soon developed into the thoughtful boy, fonder of his book than of his play. He would sit for hours together gazing with childish horror at the grim figures of "Old Bonner" and "Giant Despair;" or tracing the adventures of Christian in the "Pilgrim's Progress," or of "Robinson Crusoe." The pious precocity of the child soon attracted the attention of all around. He would astonish the grave deacons and matrons who met at his grandfather's house on Sabbath evenings, by proposing subjects for conversation, and making pertinent remarks upon them. At that early period in life he gave indications of that decision of character and boldness of address for which he has since become so remarkable.

In the spring of 1840, and before he was six years old, seeing a person in the village who made a profession of religion standing in the street with others known to be of doubtful character, he made up to the big man, and astonished him by asking, "What doest thou here, Elijah?"

In 1841 he returned to his father's house, which was then at Colchester, that he might secure what improved advantages in education a town could supply. His mental development was even then considerably in advance of his years; and his moral character, especially his love of truth, was very conspicuous.

Spending the summer vacation at his grandfather's, in 1844, when he was just ten years old, an incident occurred which had a material influence on the boy at the time, and even more so as Divine Providence opened his way. Mr. Spurgeon's grandfather first related the incident to the writer, but it has since been written by Mr. Spurgeon himself, with title of "The Rev. Richard Knill's Prophecy." The account is as follows:

#### **A Puzzling Question.**

"When I was a very small boy," writes Charles H. Spurgeon, "I was staying at my grandfather's, where I had aforetime spent my earliest days; and, as the manner was, I read the Scriptures at family prayer. Once upon a time, when reading the passage in the Book of Revelation which mentions the bottomless pit, I paused and said, 'Grandpa, what can this mean?' The answer was kind but unsatisfactory: 'Pooh, pooh, child, go on.' The child intended, however, to have an explanation, and therefore selected the same chapter morning after morning, Sunday included, and always halted at the same verse to repeat

the inquiry. At length the venerable patriarch capitulated at discretion, by saying, 'Well, dear, what is it that puzzles you?' Now, the child had often seen baskets with very frail bottoms, which in course of wear became bottomless, and allowed the fruit placed therein to fall upon the ground.

"Here, then, was the puzzle: If the pit aforesaid had no bottom, where would all the people fall who dropped out at its lower end?"-- a puzzle which rather startled the propriety of family worship, and had to be laid aside for explanation at a more convenient season. Questions of the like simple and natural character would frequently break up into paragraphs at the family Bible-reading, and had there not been a world of love and license allowed to the inquisitive reader, he would soon have been deposed from his office. As it was, the Scriptures were not very badly rendered, and were probably quite as interesting as if they had not been interspersed with original and curious inquiries."

### **A Walk Before Breakfast.**

On one of these occasions Mr. Knill, whose name is a household word, whose memory is precious to thousands at home and abroad, stayed at the minister's house on Friday, in readiness to preach at Stambourne for the London Missionary Society on the following Sunday. He never looked into a young face without yearning to impart some spiritual gift. He was all love, kindness, earnestness, and warmth, and coveted the souls of men as misers desire the gold their hearts pine for. He heard the boy read, and commended: a little judicious praise is the sure way to a young heart.

An agreement was made with the lad that on the next morning, Saturday, he would show Mr. Knill over the garden, and take him for a walk before breakfast: a task so flattering to juvenile importance was sure to be readily entered upon. There was a tap at the door, and the child was soon out of bed and in the garden with his new friend, who won his heart in no time by pleasing stories and kind words, and giving him a chance to communicate in return. The talk was all about Jesus, and the pleasantness of loving him. Nor was it mere talk; there was pleading too. Into the great yew arbor, cut into the shape of a sugar-loaf, both went, and the soul-winner knelt down; with his arms around the youthful neck, he poured out vehement intercession for the salvation of the lad. The next morning witnessed the same instruction and supplication, and the next also, while all day long the pair were never far apart, and never out of each other's thoughts. The mission sermons were preached in the old Puritan meeting-house, and the man of God was called to go to the next halting-place in his tour as deputation for the Society.

### **Singular Prophecy.**

But he did not leave till he had uttered a most remarkable prophecy. After even more earnest prayer with this little *protégé*, he appeared to have a burden on his mind, and he could not go till he had eased himself of it. "In after years," writes Mr. Spurgeon, "he was heard to say he felt a singular interest in me, and an earnest expectation for which he could not account. Calling the family together, he took me on his knee, and I distinctly remember his saying, 'I do not know how it is, but I feel a solemn presentiment that this child will preach the gospel to thousands, and God will bless him to

many souls. So sure am I of this, that when my little man preaches in Rowland Hill's chapel, as he will do one day, I should like him to promise me that he will give out the hymn commencing--

God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform.

This promise was of course made, and was followed by another-- namely, that at his express desire I would learn the hymn in question, and think of what he had said.

"The prophetic declaration was fulfilled. When I had the pleasure of preaching the Word of Life in Surrey Chapel, and also when I preached in Mr. Hill's first Pulpit at Wootton-under-Edge, the hymn was sung in both places. Did the words of Mr. Knill help to bring about their own fulfilment? I think so. I believed them, and looked forward to the time when I should preach the Word. I felt very powerfully that no unconverted person might dare to enter the ministry. This made me the more intent on seeking salvation, and more hopeful of it; and when by grace I was enabled to cast myself on the Saviour's love, it was not long before my mouth began to speak of his redemption. How came that sober-minded minister to speak thus to and of one into whose future God alone could see? How came it that he lived to rejoice with his younger brother in the truth of all that he had spoken? The answer is plain. But mark one particular lesson: would to God that we were all as wise as Richard Knill in habitually sowing beside all waters. Mr. Knill might very naturally have left the minister's little grandson on the plea that he had other duties of more importance than praying with children; and yet who shall say that he did not effect as much by that simple act of humble ministry as by dozens of sermons addressed to crowded audiences? To me his tenderness in considering the little one was fraught with everlasting consequences, and I must ever feel that his time was well laid out."

### **"Old Bonner."**

During the fostering care of his aunt Ann-- his father's unmarried sister at Stambourne, an attachment grew up which was as sincere in affectionate regard as that which usually exists between parent and child. This aunt had charge of the infant Spurgeon during most of the first six years of his life. He was the first grandchild in the family. Care was taken by his aunt to instruct him gradually as the mind was capable of receiving impressions; but from his childhood his mind seems to have been framed after nature's model. The book he admired at his grandfather's, which had for one of its illustrations the portrait of Bonner, Bishop of London, was the cause of his mind receiving its first impressions against tyranny and persecution; and being told of the persecuting character of Bonner, the child manifested a great dislike to the name, and called the picture which represented the bishop " Old Bonner." Even at that early period of life, before he was six years old, he exhibited a marked attachment to those who were known as the children of God.

Four years of the boy's life were spent at a school at Colchester, where he studied Latin, Greek, and French. He was a diligent student, always carrying the first prize in all competitions. In 1849 he was placed under the care of Mr. Swindell, at Newmarket. There he learned to practise much self-denial. The privations he voluntarily submitted to at that time showed how decided were his purposes to acquire knowledge, and as far as he knew to try and serve God. But the struggle which was going on in his mind, preparatory to his giving his heart fully to God, can only be described in his own

touching words, as recorded in one of his sermons. Speaking of a freethinker, he remarks: "I, too, have been like him. There was an evil hour in which I slipped the anchor of my faith: I cut the cable of my belief: I no longer moored myself hard by the coast of Revelation: I allowed my vessel to drift before the wind, and thus started on the voyage of infidelity. I said to Reason, Be thou my captain; I said to my own brain, Be thou my rudder; and I started on my mad voyage. Thank God it is all over now, but I will tell you its brief history: it was one hurried sailing over the tempestuous ocean of free thought." The result was, that from doubting some things, he came to question everything, even his own existence. But soon he conquered those extremes to which Satan often drives the sinner who is really repenting.

["LIFE AND WORKS" CHAPTER 2](#)