

past achievements when relying on the living God; he indicated that Elijah's way was not the Almighty's, by pointing out what great things were yet intended to be wrought by him, and what vast consequences to mankind depended thereon; he then sought to apply these considerations to ourselves—What were we doing? what *might* we be doing, by the exercise of self-denial? what excuses did we present for not rendering our life a perpetual sermon? etc. Possibly it may not be amiss to supplement such enquiries by indicating what has been accomplished by a true-hearted lady whose invalided condition would have induced many in such circumstances to regard themselves as the exclusive object of others' solicitude. Mrs. Spurgeon—the lady referred to—tells her own story in the following words: "It was in the summer of the year 1875 that my dear husband completed and published the first volume of his 'Lectures to Students.' Reading one of the 'proof' copies, I became so enamoured of the book, that when the dear author asked, 'Well, how do you like it?' I answered with a full heart, 'I wish I could place it in the hands of every minister in England.' 'Then why not do so: *how much will you give?*' said my very practical spouse. I must confess I was unprepared for such a challenge. I was ready enough to *desire* the distribution of the precious book, but to *assist* in it, or help to pay for it, had not occurred to me. But 'John Ploughman' 'drives a straight furrow' to one's heart, and knows how to turn over the thick clods of selfishness which lie there choking up the useful growths, and very soon his words set me thinking how much I could spare from housekeeping or personal matters to start this new scheme. I knew it would necessitate a pressure somewhere, for money was not plentiful just then; but to see dear John's face beam so radiantly, at the idea of my scattering his books far and wide, was worth any effort; and love, even more than obedience, constrained me to carry

out the suddenly formed plan. Then comes the wonderful part: I found the money ready and waiting! Upstairs in a little drawer were some carefully hoarded crown-pieces, which owing to some-foolish fancy I had been gathering for years, whenever chance threw one in my way; these I now counted out, and found they made a sum *exactly* sufficient to pay for one hundred copies of the work! If a twinge of regret at parting from my cherished but unwieldy favorites passed over me, it was gone in an instant, and then they were given freely and thankfully to the Lord, and in that moment, though I knew it not,

#### THE BOOK FUND WAS INAUGURATED!

"It took but a very short time to distribute the copies so purchased, and then the publishers kindly gave me another hundred. By the time these were disposed of, friends began to take an interest in the little work, and as the exceeding value of the book became better known, the desire to circulate it increased, and funds flowed in plentifully, enabling me to continue and enlarge the scheme. Gradually, by God's gracious help, 'the little one became a thousand,' and now, instead of sending out books singly, and by post, my grants consist of a large parcel of eight or nine good sized volumes, enough to gladden any poor minister's heart, and make him sing for joy. During the five years of the Book Fund's existence, forty-one thousand, six hundred and thirty volumes have been distributed, and these mainly, so far as fallible human judgment can declare, to ministers who could not afford to purchase for themselves; poor pastors whose total income has not exceeded £150 per annum. The amount of good done by this provision of mental food for preachers can scarcely be over-estimated, and it is pleasant to think the benefit is not a fleeting or evanescent one, for God's blessing on the books will secure an inexhaustible treasure of truth and grace to the possessors. That much of the work has been accomplished in