

visitor asked Spurgeon the secret of his success, his quiet, humble, reverent, truthful answer was, "I have a people who pray much for me."

Never have I seen a people so willing, generous, considerate, affectionate, nor an activity so widespread and universal; never a church so primitive and apostolic. Beyond baptism by immersion, there is nothing which might not be common to the most devout evangelical believers everywhere. If anything could be suggested as an improvement in the administration of this church—any change which would make it seem nearer the apostolic pattern, it would be to throw all pews absolutely open to all comers and trust to voluntary offerings for the support of the minister and the supply of current expenses. This matter has been considered, but many fear that "free pews" would be appropriated by so many now attending other places of worship that non-churchgoers would be practically excluded, and such think that a moderate rental secures a more miscellaneous attendance. Upon this I prefer not to retreat from opinions long held, that the only right and best way is God's way, and that there is no foundation in the Acts of the Apostles for any pew-sale or pew-rental. Yet fairness compels me to concede and to confess that strangers have always a cordial welcome and do feel at home, and that the "atmosphere" of the Tabernacle repels no one and makes no worshipper conscious of restraint or constraint.

At the time of Mr. Spurgeon's decease, in January last, it was prophesied by many that the whole church, like a sheaf whose bond is removed, would fall apart; but up to this time the audiences continue as large as ever, and there is no decline of interest apparent; while the contributions for current expenses and the offerings for benevolent work have rather increased than diminished—a practical proof that when the Gospel is faithfully preached and the Christian life is sedulously cultivated, there is created an *esprit du corps* that remains as a permanent bond of union and is the abiding secret of vitality and activity, even when so great a preacher and pastor is forever withdrawn.

To conclude, if it be asked what is the secret of the success attained in this church, which makes it pre-eminent perhaps above all others, it seems to me that this secret lies mainly in two things: First, that there has never been anything countenanced here but the simple preaching of the Gospel, unheralded by sensational announcements and advertisements, and unmixed with worldly leaven; and, secondly, that from the first there has been set up and held up here the simplest, purest type of apostolic worship. Hindrances either to the Gospel's power or the Spirit's working have been practically reduced to a minimum. No needless rites or ceremonies have here surrounded the administration of ordinances and sacraments. Beyond the decency and decorum of the service of worship, art has no place, and there is nothing to interfere with the exaltation of the Lord alone in the eyes of all men, in His house.

Why may not all that is essential in this church life be repeated in any