

C.H. Spurgeon:

WHEN the reader receives this number of the magazine, the Editor hopes to be travelling along the Corniche Road, which in some places winds its wondrous way far above the sea. One gazes down from above, and draws his breath. During the past year we have often had to look down from the royal road of the truth upon those craggy paths which others have chosen, which we fear will lead them to destruction. We have had enough of The Down-Grade for ourselves when we have looked down upon it. What havoc false doctrine is making no tongue can tell. Assuredly the New Theology can do no good towards God or man; it, has no adaptation for it. If it were preached for a thousand years by all the most earnest men of the school, it would never renew a soul, nor overcome pride in a single human heart. We look down into the abyss of error, and it almost makes our head swim to think of the perilous descent; but the road of the gospel, to which we hope to keep by divine grace, is a safe and happy way. Oh, that all would travel it! Oh, that our earnest pleadings, which have brought upon our devoted head so much of obloquy, would recall the churches to the good old way!

Many of the papers in this volume have been reprinted, because friends have thought them specially useful, and many more have been translated to other magazines, which annexation we accept as a compliment, even where the name of The Sword and the Trowel has been inadvertently omitted. At the same time, borrowed articles should be acknowledged as distinctly as possible, and the paper in which they first appear should have the credit of them. In America, in all sorts of newspapers and magazines, we find pieces of our work, and we think, therefore, that our subscribers are not badly catered for.

Our band of friends and helpers has suffered serious diminution by death during the last few months. The gaps in our ranks are many and wide. We earnestly pray that others may be moved to take the places of those who have gone home. Of course, our unflinching faithfulness may have driven away a few friends, though we are sure it has brought us more. Hitherto nothing has flagged. The Orphanage, and its half a thousand children, has had its table always supplied; the College has gone on educating men to preach the faith once delivered to the saints; the Evangelists have traveled from place place, and God has made them as clouds that water the earth; the Colporteurs have kept steadily to their useful toil; and Mrs. Spurgeon's Book Fund has stocked poor ministers' libraries in thousands of cases. To a large extent these works are kept going by the generosity of friends who read the weekly sermons and The Sword and the Trowel. Thanks, hearty and many, to them all for their loving aid. They would do us great service if they could increase the number of our subscribers, by inducing friends to take in the magazine. Ask them to begin in January.

The sword and trowel have both been used this year with all our might. We have built up the wall of the city, and we have tried to smite the King's enemies. How could we help it? No loyal soldier could endure to see his Lord's cause so grievously wronged by traitors. Something will come of the struggle over The Down-Grade. The Lord has designs in connection therewith which his adversaries little dream of. Meanwhile, it behoves all who love the Lord Jesus and his gospel to keep close together, and make common cause against deadly error. There are thousands who are of one mind in the Lord; let them break through all the separating lines of sect, and show their unity in Christ, both by prayer and action. Especially do we beg for the fervent prayers of all the faithful in Christ Jesus.

If our readers have hitherto counted us worthy, we again beg for their loving, practical sympathy, as we have enjoyed it these many years. The relationship between us and many of our readers is such as will outlast life itself. Very tenderly have our friends loved us. In the cup of human sympathy our God has brought us draughts of heavenly consolation. The Lord recompense our faithful helpers, and grant them mercy in that day!

So prays the reader's willing servant,
C. H. SPURGEON.