

# The Presbyterian Review.

Vol. X.—No. 7.

TORONTO, MAY 31, 1894.

\$1.50 per Annum

## Let Down Your Nets

Launch out into the deep,  
The awful depths of a world's despair;  
Hearts that are breaking and eyes that weep,  
Sorrow and ruin and death are there,  
And the sea is wide, and the pitiless tide  
Bears on its bosom—away,  
Beauty and youth in relentless ruth  
To its dark abyss for aye—for aye.  
But the Master's voice comes over the sea,  
"Let down your nets for a draught" for Me!  
He stands in our midst on our wreck-strewn strand,  
And sweet and royal is His command.  
His pleading call  
Is to each—to all:  
And whosoever the royal call is heard,  
There hang the nets of the royal Word.  
Trust to the nets and not to your skill,  
Trust to the royal Master's will!  
Let down your nets each day, each hour,  
For the word of a King is a word of power,  
And the King's own voice comes over the sea,  
"Let down your nets for a draught" for Me!

## A PARABLE.

For the Review.

I WAS in London on Sunday afternoon and went to a large and wealthy church—very large—one of the largest in the world. I felt tired and weary that day and thought it would be so helpful to sit in that wonderful cathedral surrounded by the memorials of the illustrious dead, and listen to a sermon by a distinguished preacher. I went and sat in the great area, subdued by the splendor of my surroundings, and by the chants of the choirsters. The great preacher chose for his text, "What is man that Thou art mindful of him, Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels." It was an eloquent sermon, how he glorified man, only a little lower than the angels, how aptly he illustrated thought after thought by references to the lives of them whose remains lay about him in crypt and corridor. I forgot about my weariness, as I followed the brilliant periods of the speaker and studied the gracefulness of his gesture. The sermon ended, the great organ poured forth a torrent of the eloquence of music—such as perhaps that organ alone, in all the world can produce—and then the audience arose and quickly dispersed, each his own way, and each saying "what a delightful service, how able he is." They were soon all gone and I was again alone, for I had no home to go to, at least not in London. But no sooner had the audience gone than my care and weariness returned. I was so depressed and engrossed with my own imaginary concerns that they held absolute sway, and every trace of the brilliant sermon vanished. I was just where I was when I first stood under the great dome.

I went out into the street, very quiet streets they are on Sunday, and walked down towards the river, through a densely peopled part of that immense city. I saw a few people hanging about the door of a small building which I recognized to be another place for worship. By way of contrast I thought I would look

in, what a contrast! A small audience, poor people no organ, the preacher was precenter too and he did not seem to be good at either. I sat down however, not knowing exactly what else to do with myself. I could see that I attracted attention, I seemed too respectable for the place, but I determined to sit down and see the end of it. They sang several hymns, and what was lacking in art was made up in power, that ministers voice seemed to make the plaster crack. He took for his text "The shadow of a Rock in a weary land." He could not preach, he did not pretend to, but talked about that text in a very interesting way, how all about that Rock there is only sand, how travellers are lost in that sandy desert, dying of heat and thirst and exhaustion; how some were able to endure longer than others but in the end it was always the same, it was a weary land in the end and the end was death. He then spoke of that wonderful Rock, that it sheltered from the scorching sun; that out of it flowed streams of water from which we could quench our thirst; that whole generations lived and died and were buried around that Rock, or rather he said they did not die but were put to sleep, and are now sweetly sleeping and awaiting the great awaking that is to come by and by. And then he urged us to come and abide in the shadow of that Rock, and told us to come one by one, for said he, of all the generations that ever came, all came one by one, never in companies, one by one, that each one who would come would get a personal interview and be allotted a place in the shadow of that Rock. It was delightful to hear him talk. At first I was wishing he could get on a little faster and that his voice was a little smoother, but I soon forgot all that. I thought of nothing else but that Rock, "The Shadow of a Rock in a weary land." I was sorry he stopped talking. He invited us all to come back again, but I would never be in that quarter of London, perhaps never in London again.

We all came away, out into the street, away from the tiny chapel, but not away from the text, "The shadow of a Rock in a weary land." There it was, I could see it everywhere. I walked to my lodging, several miles, and would you believe it, I never felt the least weary or lonely the whole way. After supper I tried to recall what it was that made me so blue, but I could not get a hold of it, the only thing I could think of or get a hold of was, "The shadow of a Rock in a weary land." He wasn't much of a preacher that old man, no he wasn't old either, not any older than I was and I was only about 40 and would feel scared and insulted if anybody said I was old, he did not pretend to be much of a preacher, but I wish I knew his name I love that man, he did me more good than any preacher I ever heard. I am now 55 years old and have been ever since sitting in "The shadow of a Rock in a weary land."