

"OUR BIBLE CLASS," CHESTNUT STREET.

"To the poor the good news is proclaimed."

To the writer's thinking, "Our Bible Class," while in some respects it is a happy designation, is not altogether free from objection; until the writer had the satisfaction of visiting this so-styled "class," he was not aware that spite of a heavy snow-storm, he should find a small church filled with it. The modesty which selected this title for what at least *has developed* into a highly beneficent agency, is quite intelligible, and it is to be hoped, is duly appreciated; but none save they who, as friends or as foes, are conversant with the working of the "class" would suppose that it involves the existence of some five branch instrumentalities—of a Young Mens' Literary and Debating Society, which assembles on Monday evenings; of a Ladies' Flower Mission*, which meets on Tuesday evenings. A choir constitutes one of the features of "the class," and this meets for practice on Wednesday evenings; on Thursday evenings, the Womens' Christian Temperance Society holds its meetings in the room (or church) of the "class," and on Friday evenings, a meeting of the Hope and Help Society is held, the object of which is perhaps sufficiently indicated by its name; no one can doubt that in the heart of a poor and long-neglected neighbourhood, there is urgent need for kindly hearts and helping hands.

"Our Bible Class" may therefore be regarded as a sort of *illustrated Bible*, and no one who visits it can well fail to perceive the secret of its usefulness; "the law of kindness" instead of that of commerce rules in the hearts of the whole party, and as one crosses the threshold, one meets with an illustration of this, afforded by the circumstance of a boy being placed at the door, who supplies all comers with a hymn-book; no sooner does one look towards the end of the building, than one is greeted by the unuttered "WELCOME," on the wall; and on leaving, every one receives another greeting from the warm heart and kind hand of the Superintendent.

Simple as all this is, and at least so far as the promoters of it are aware, in harmony with the spirit of the Bible, there are certain persons—objects of pity rather than of scorn—who are so eminently apostolical in their succession, as to say in effect—"Master, we saw one casting out devils in Thy name, and he followeth not us; and we forbade him because he followeth not us." We have no doubt that they who, on the occasion of our visit, had gathered round them former inmates of the Central Prison, women of the class known as "abandoned," and others whom the love of whiskey had reduced to the possession of a bundle of straw—that they whose moral influence can produce such results, when they find themselves the objects of the jealousy and calumny of mere place-holders, will so far emulate the spirit of their Divine Master as to "*labour, working with their own hands* ; being reviled (to), bless; being persecuted (to), suffer it; being defamed (to),

* It may be well to explain that the object of this very considerate effort is to arrange flowers in bouquets, and convey them either to the sick beds in private houses, or to those in hospitals for adults or children; none but they who have known what it is to receive flowers when unwell, and in a sick-room, can adequately appreciate so welcome a boon; ladies who happen to have flowers wasting their sweetness on the desert air of their conservatories, will turn them to good account by sending them or BY TAKING THEM to the Mission Room.