

ment to Protestantism, arising, perhaps, more from the recollection of what their fathers suffered at the hands of the Papists, than from personal convictions; here is also a lingering respect for the Lord's Day, and a general observance of the forms of religion; but vital godliness cannot be said to prevail. If the churches may still be called living, there are unhappily but too many indications that the things that remain are ready to die. Weekly prayer-meetings, family worship, private reading of God's Word, and pastoral visitation are to a lamentable extent neglected. The people take little or no interest in either Home or Foreign mission work. Formalism and rationalism, like the lofty mountains that hem in their valleys, seem to have shut out the sunshine of God's favour, and the chill breath of a spiritual winter is passing over them. They need the sympathy and help of God's people, and I feel sure that they will gladly hail any efforts that may be made for the revival of spiritual life among them."

Paris, March, 1884.

T. H.

### "OH! WHERE IS MY BOY TO-NIGHT?"

MR. EDITOR,—These beautiful words have been sung till their touching pathos has struck the most exquisite chords of pain in many a wounded heart, and tears, which often flow only when the heart is weary of its bitter lot, pours out its complaint to God, can no longer be suppressed when that cry of anguish is heard in a song so wildly sad, waking in troubled soul echoes of a living pain.

Can we dare to let the fatal truth pierce deeply into our hearts that, while some of those "wandering boys" have been reclaimed, many a heart hears the death-knell of a soul in the tidings that death's dark river has been crossed.

Is there no gleam of light shed on this dark and turbid river? No power in its murky waters to cleanse the sin-stained soul from crimes that are blacker than the waters they pass?

Alas, alas, for the hearts that are wrenched and bruised, and bleeding with pain on this side the river—alas for the souls enduring their doom on that!

Is there no lesson here to be learned? Pause and listen now to the sounds, behold the scenes around us. You may listen and look, the evil is near you, perhaps nearer and more wounding than you dream of. Out in the streets of our towns and cities, clothed with the mantle of night, how many small regiments of boys may be seen, directing their march from highway to by-way, bent on no good intent! We have heard of the "innocent voices of children ringing out on the evening air." Let those who dream so fondly just lend a listening ear to all the sounds that fill the air, and a sorrowful search for innocence it would be. If this be innocence, what is sin? Could that mother hear the oaths that blacken the soul of her son, that even fall from his lips while the serpent is tightening his coil, what anguish would wring her heart, what fear for the days to come?

While the father plies his work, and the mother perhaps does the same, does the cry never ring in the heart, "O, where is my wandering boy to-night?" What is he learning outside? Do those who toil at night never start and pause a moment, as rising above the children's voices comes the fiendish laugh of the Prince of Darkness, as he scatters his seeds of sin, or his hideous war-cry marshalling to his aid the evil spirits who obey his will. They open wide the eyes of the children to behold evil, they pour into their ears, their hearts, the poisonous evil of cursing and crimes. O stay the evil by saving your boy, for this arch-fiend will cast most subtle and hurtful charms over these tender children's hearts, till they blindly follow their treacherous leader through clusters of deadly night-shade, and the poisonous vines of sin.

Shall you be to blame for this? Among the evils that curse our nation, this crime of children's freedom at night has the power to blast the children's lives, for time and eternity, to pierce hearts through with many sorrows, to scourge as with scorpions the souls of those who follow the trail of the serpent.

O, mothers, save your children, for the destroying angel passes through our land every night, and the soul outside is not safe. Would you not be repaid a thousandfold for all loving attention given during those evening hours by such treasures in happy and true homes? The heart of your child so long for sympathy. Give him your heart's deep love

and tender counsel, and with God's blessing he may learn and live the truth: "'Tis only noble to be good." Shall that knowledge lie in his path, as he is out on his hunt for pleasure? Nay, he will drink iniquity like water.

When your boy is out of your reach, and you know he has trodden far down the broad road of sin, will you dare to cry in your anguish of soul

"Go for my wandering boy to-night,  
Go search for him where you will;  
But bring him to me in all his guilt,  
And tell him I love him still."

To whom do you call? Who for you shall enter those haunts of blackest vice to search out your wandering boy, whom, now in the early sowing time, when the heart is young and tender, you willfully neglect? If you sow not the good seed, shall the weeds not grow rank and tall? If you satisfy not his soul with bread will he not eat the serpent? And how shall the poison be extracted?

Much is said and written on the causes of crime in children. The boys who roam the streets are sometimes said to be the children of parents who drink and degrade themselves in vice, caring nothing and providing nothing for their children. Too many of these are to be found even in small towns. Many a helping hand is needed to lead them, even a few of them, to Christ and God; but these are not all. The rich are neither too good nor too grand to have their sons scouring the dark streets after night. They think no one knows them. They may act as they like, and they do. Their parents may be at the concert, in the store, or perhaps even at prayer-meeting. Is this wrong? Oh, no! But why; if the children leave the house are they not taught to go? Could parents not give some time for the souls as well as for the bodies of their children? Were they filled with the love of God, and fear of sin, they could indeed. Does the praise or blame all lie with the mother? What of the fathers here? They think they have too much to do to pay any attention to the children in the evening. But God knows what their children need. If they neglect this duty to heaven and to earth while gathering the harvest of gold, what a harvest of tears and of bitter reproach, for the sake of a wayward son, may bring down their gray hairs with sorrow to the grave!

How do they look for it to be otherwise? If they allow their children to wander at will in the paths of the Destroyer, shall he not bind them with strong cords of sin, unknown to their dearest friends, then lead them willing captives in the ways of sin and death?

The picture is dark, and the heart may well be filled with pain, but does not God answer prayer, and shall not some children be saved from this and other evils? Dear friends of Jesus, pray for the children. He has told us to feed the lambs of the flock, and there is hope and life in His promise, so sure and precious: "He shall gather the lambs with His arm, and carry them in His bosom." Christ is so willing to take the children when they come, surely our hearts should be willing to lead them to Him. Bear the precious seed; "Overcome evil with good."

#### THE BOYS FOR JESUS.

The boys, the boys for Jesus!  
I breath it with a sigh;  
But the sigh is upward winging,  
And the sigh shall turn to singing,  
For 'tis heard beyond the sky

The boys, the boys for Jesus!  
I weep it out with tears,  
But a rain-bow through them glinting,  
Makes them shine with rain-bow tinting,  
Heaven's rain-bow 'mid my fears.

The boys, the boys for Jesus!  
The cry goes forth in prayer,  
And where the white robes glisten,  
My Father stoops to listen,  
And I read my answer there.

The boys, the boys for Jesus!  
And faith shall urge her plea;  
For 'tis writ in letters golden,  
In the Word of God enfolden,  
"Believe, and thou shalt see."

At a large evening party in Coahuila, Mexico, the Governor of the State invited an American young lady to dance. She declined, as her religious convictions did not permit her, as she was connected with the mission there of the Southern Baptist Board. It led to the Governor's acquaintance with the mission, and since to a gift to it from him of property valued at \$140,000.

### THE THIRD PAN-PRESBYTERIAN COUNCIL.

Delegates from France, Switzerland, Italy, Germany, Holland, Belgium, Bohemia, the Established, Free, and United Presbyterian, Reformed Presbyterian, and Original Secession Churches of Scotland, the Presbyterian Church in England, the Irish Presbyterian Church, Welsh Calvinistic Methodists, from all the Presbyterian Churches in the United States and Canada, from Ceylon, Australia, and New Zealand, in large numbers, assembled at Belfast previous to the opening of the Council. Among invited speakers were the following:

Revs. Prof. Brandes, D.D., Göttingen; J. B. Dales, D.D., Philadelphia; A. Decoppet, D.D., Paris; John Dalton, D.D., St. Petersburg; Donald Fraser, D.D., London; Prof. Lucien Gautier, Ph.D., Lausanne; John Hall, D.D., New York; Mr. Houston, Baltimore; President James McCosh, D.D., Princeton, N. J.; J. Leighton Wilson, D.D., Baltimore, Prof. Jean de Visse, Paris.

The following foreign missionaries were also present: Revs. J. Chamberlain, Madras; Gerald Dale, Zibley, Syria; Dr. Faulds, Japan; D. Laws, South Africa, Dr. Martin, M.D., Antioch, Syria; J. G. Paton, New Hebrides; S. Swanson, Amoy, China; J. Ingliss, D.D., New Hebrides; Elixier Bassin, Roumania.

The Belfast *Witness* states that on Tuesday morning, 24th ult., all was bustle in the neighbourhood of St. Enoch's Church from an early hour. From shortly after ten o'clock, delegates began to arrive at Clifton Street Church, where it had been arranged that they should be marshalled in procession. Shortly before eleven they issued from the church, each wearing the delegate's blue badge which had been provided, and the members of the Arrangement Committee a similar one of crimson hue. In good order they marched to St. Enoch's Church, not far off, and proceeded to take the places reserved for them. On entering this church it was at once seen that great pains had been taken to prepare and decorate it for the meeting. It has been re-painted and otherwise decorated throughout in most artistic style, and looked remarkably well. It is a most capacious church, being seated for about 2,000 persons, and of course capable of accommodating many more at a pinch. At the appointed hour the Rev. Dr. Watts appeared in the pulpit and commenced the service. After devotional exercises he proceeded to preach the

#### OPENING SERMON,

from Rev. v. 67. The sermon is an able and eloquent exposition of (1) the task which the Lamb undertakes; and (2) His qualification for the execution of it. The following are the concluding paragraphs: "The language, it is true, is symbolical, but its symbolism does not abate its significance. The doctrine it teaches is very precious and assuring to His Church. The claim advanced by it is just the claim on which our Saviour bases His right to commission her when He sends her forth to teach all nations. He who occupies the throne of God may well claim to have received all power in heaven and in earth. Surely if there be a throne from which the economy of Redemption can be efficiently administered, that throne must be the throne of which the Lamb took possession when He was exalted to the right hand of God the Father, with all thrones and principalities put in subjection under Him. A throne from which the wonders of the day of Pentecost proceeded furnishes ample guarantee of the final triumph of Christ's kingdom over all adversaries, and the assurance imparted by the conquests of that day is vastly strengthened when we contemplate the resources of the empire over which He has been exalted to reign, and consider the ends for which these resources have been placed at His disposal. As He has received power over all flesh in order that He may give eternal life to as many as the Father hath given Him, so hath He also received authority over all the powers of heaven and earth, in order that the great ends of His mediatorial office may be secured despite the combined antagonism of the powers of darkness. The task is a mighty one, but the throne occupied by the great Administrator is at once the instrument and pledge of triumphant success. Nor do the thrones or principalities of heaven bow with reluctance before the enthroned Lamb. The exaltation of the incarnate Word wakes all their harps anew. The Ser of Patmos hears 'the voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was ten thou-