

Look on the fields, for they are white already to harvest.—John iv. 35.

Open Air Work.

OUT-DOOR preaching has often been blessed to the conversion of souls. The Union, alive to this department of Christian work, is desirous to have regular open-air preaching established at different parts of the city, where it can be done without infringing on the rights of their fellow citizens. Open air preaching has been carried on with marked success in England and elsewhere, for a number of years. In the City of London, the thirty-first annual meeting of "The Open Air Mission" was held on the 25th of March of this year. The Lord Mayor, M.P., presided on the occasion. Referring to his connection with the special services in Theatres and Mission Halls, he said, that while that was a very good method of evangelizing in the winter, open-air preaching was essentially the right means in summer. He was thankful that the Gospel was so widely preached in the streets of London; thousands there heard the Gospel,—it might be only a sentence or two, but by the blessing of God even these few words might prove the good seed which would be found to bear fruit unto life eternal.

The Right Honorable, the Earl of Shaftesbury was present, and also spoke in favor of the Mission, and said: "I look upon these Open Air Services as perfectly normal. They are certainly primitive; the very earliest preaching of the Gospel was in the open air, on the shores of the Lake of Galilee, by our blessed Lord himself. And they are unquestionably ecclesiastic. In the earliest days of the Reformation, there was Open Air Preaching at Paul's Cross. All the worthiest of the Bishops preached there; there, too, the Bishop of glorious memory, Bishop Latimer, preached the Gospel of the kingdom of God; and hundreds heard those words of truth, which went right home to their hearts, and brought forth good fruit in after days. Within a stone's throw of this very hall in which we are now assembled, on the steps of the Royal Exchange, the worthy Archbishop Tait also preached the word of God in the open air, and never was he more truly Episcopal than on that occasion." We cull those brief extracts from the 31st Annual Report of the Open Air Mission, to show the opinion of men in a position well qualified to judge as to the benefits of such work as the Toronto Mission Union proposes to undertake as one of its branches. Several of the members of the Union have been active in preaching in the open air at different points in and around the city since the spring, and it is our design to carry on this work more extensively as soon as suitable workers are found willing to co-operate.

—J. SALMON

Our Bible Class.

THE work on Chestnut Street, known as *Our Bible Class*, conducted by Mr. W. H. Howland, has grown to large proportions since it was commenced two years ago. Its present membership is estimated at 500, and Sunday attendance at 160 to 180. It consists of a Bible Reading or Lecture of an evangelistic character, held every Sunday at 3 p.m.; a Friday evening Gospel Service; once in the month a Blue Ribbon meeting; a Young Men's Social Improvement Society, meeting on Monday evening; a 'Helpers' Association and Sewing Society for aiding the poor, meeting on Thursday evening; a branch of the Bible and Flower Mission, meeting on Tuesday evening; Coal and Fuel Club, Friday evening; and a Truant School for the poor lads and lasses who, either from want of proper clothing, or general unmanageableness, are not eligible for the public schools.

The Class includes a great number of earnest Christian people; and has furnished many helpers for the work of the Prisoners' Aid Society and general Mission work, also for the Sunday Schools of the various churches. There has been a great and growing blessing on the work. It is very seldom indeed that a meeting is held without conversions, and many rejoicing ones bless the little Hall in Chestnut Street, because they have been there born anew. A most delightful, loving, and unselfish spirit has marked all its work, and has created a bond between the workers which holds out great promise for future exertions in the Master's work.

At their last meeting, the Class decided to incorporate their work with that of the Toronto Mission Union, giving up their individuality in their desire to aid unreservedly in the promotion of the great work of the City Mission, which is the object of that Society.

The meetings in connection with the various departments of work will be held after the 1st September in the new Hall of the Mission Union on College Street, and the Class will be known in future as "Our Mission Union Bible Class." All welcome, especially those who want to work for Him.

