

THE  
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HARVEST-HOME.

DRYDEN sings,

"Come, my boys, come,  
And merrily roar out harvest-home."

The last sheaf tossed out of the rack was the signal for the merriest glee in the land where Dryden sang. The toil of the ploughman and the sower had culminated in the joy of the harvester. And the evening of the last load was a time for general rejoicing in the home. The table groaned with delicacies. Songs made the hours ring. And amid the festivities, let us hope that the Divine Donor was not forgotten, but that His bounty was a theme for grateful remembrance.

It seems a pity that we—sober-minded Canadians—have forgotten this pleasant custom of our forefathers. The ingathering is a season of sufficient gladness to justify neighbourly mirth. And provided that the season be conducted Christianly, and the accessories be pure and simple, such an occasion would leave a blessing with those who observed it.

Our Canadian harvest has been reaped. And it has been gathered with gladness, for—the country over—the crops have been good. While the motherland has been grieving over the grain rotting in the fields from the excessive rains, our people have been enjoying good harvest weather. The barns are now filled with plenty, and God has again redeemed his pledge to us that seed-time and harvest should not fail. He has answered afresh the prayer of our hearts, "Give us this day our daily bread."

Who shall fail to see God's hand in the present good? Who of the many toilers will fail to look above the sheaves to Him who gives the sun and showers? Ingratitude is an unworthy possession, and blights the soul which shelters it. If ever the grand old doxology,

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow,"

is in place, it is when the loaded wains are cautiously creeping towards the sheltering barn. How many sing it? It should be as universal as the love of Him who plans His seasons for the good of His numerous family.

We do not know the prevailing custom in our many churches. But we would suggest that in them all a Sabbath should be set apart for reflection upon the ingathering. Let the hymns be full of praise. Let the prayers teem with thanksgiving. Let the sermons deal with the matter of gratitude, or any other useful theme suggested by the season. And let this Sabbath be observed as well in our city churches as in the rural churches, for both city and country are interested in crowded barns and groaning granaries. The effect would be to lead us to connect the blessings of life more closely with Him who giveth

all, a state of mind to which we are not unduly prone.

"Be not too narrow, husbandman! but fling  
From the full sheaf, with charitable stealth,  
The liberal handful. Think, O think!  
How good the God of harvest is to you,  
Who pours abundance o'er your flowing fields!"

THE GOSPEL OF CLEANLINESS.

THE fever-scurge has again fallen upon the city of Memphis. It was hoped by all that the terrible experiences of a twelve-month ago were exceptional in their character. But with the return of the heated term, the devourer recommences his work of destruction. Every day fresh victims are reported, and the fever has become epidemic. Thousands deserted the smitten city, making their exit as informal and hasty as possible. And now since other cities have in self-protection closed their gates against the fugitives, they must stay and brave the plague.

Our American exchanges have raised the inquiry whether the people of Memphis have sufficiently observed the laws of nature as regards cleanliness. Mr. Keating says that "the soil is reeking with the offal and excreta of ten thousand families," that the city is without any "organized scavenger system," and that "the accumulations of forty years are decaying on the surface." A lady missionary writes to a Boston paper that "filth and vermin reign supreme." The "Christian Union" says that "It may be anticipated as an established fact that *any community on low land and in a temperate climate can render itself liable to the fever by want of cleanliness*; and, on the other hand, that the yellow fever *cannot be taken in a really pure air from persons, clothing, trunks or anything else*. The fever is absolutely impossible as an epidemic in a well-drained and cleanly kept community."

It would seem then that Memphis needs to have preached to it the gospel of cleanliness, or it must remain the victim of devastating disease. Nor is it the only place which needs plain talk on this subject. For we are convinced that much of the poor health prevalent may be traced to neglect of the simplest rules of cleanliness. Many are inherently dirty both in their persons and surroundings, and they not only suffer personally, but they bring suffering to others. And filth is to be found oftentimes in quarters where it would not be expected. Outhouses and sinks and yards are allowed to taint the air and breed diseases of various forms.

In our remembrance of religious duties, we must not forget to be clean. "Cleanliness is next to Godliness," so the proverb runs. Hyper-religious people may talk so much of the soul, as to forget that meantime that soul is linked to a body that needs some care. And such need to remember that a pure and healthy body is a grand environment for the soul. A sermon occasionally on the duties we owe to our bodies, to form pure habits of

living, to eat and drink without gluttony, and to keep all our surroundings cleanly, would be justifiably seasonable. A western minister, seeing that the civic authorities were neglecting sanitation, preached such a rousing sermon on the subject that the city was cleaned up, and that summer the death-rate was lower than ever before. And who shall say that that sermon was not as justifiable and prudent as it was practical?

ONE SERMON A DAY.

THIS is the freshest topic *up* for discussion. It is going the round of the United States Press. Surely there must be something in sermons after all, that they should set on fire the editors of papers the world over. There is bound to be a yearly run upon the subject of pulpit discourses. At one time, it is the question of extempore preaching; or at another, of the length of a sermon. In some form or other the discourse proves itself to be a matter of general interest. This year it comes before us in the shape of the enquiry, whether it would not be better for all parties concerned that there should be only one sermon in every church on the Lord's day. The continual discussion of the subject of sermons ought surely to enforce the conviction that the pulpit is not after all losing its power.

To some it may appear useless to argue against this new proposal. It is self-evident, they say, that a minister will be able to prepare better discourses, if he be allowed more time for study, and not to be distracted by the necessity arising from the preparation of two or more sermons for the one day, of having several concurrent trains of thought in his mind at one and the same time. The pastor it is alleged would certainly have more leisure for the discharge of parochial duties. There is doubtless some truth in this. It is illustrated in the ministerial life of Dr. Guthrie, who divided the labours of Free St. John's with Dr. Hanna. Never were there two such colleagues in the one charge. What the one had to perfection was almost entirely wanting in the other. The people enjoyed the privilege of listening to two preachers, who were eminent in opposite directions. Dr. Guthrie by his powerful eloquence and panoramic pictures drew the masses together and moved them to the heart. Dr. Hanna by such learned and exquisitely beautiful lectures as those which make up his classical work, "The Life of Our Lord," attracted the thoughtful and educated. While there was in the former the thrilling power that crowded the aisles, there was in the latter that which a refined audience could highly appreciate and enjoy. There was also in Dr. Hanna a simplicity and directness which was edifying to every person. And so between them they kept together one of the largest congrega-